

STOP THE TIME CHANGE IN B.C. (2016)

Twice a year, in B.C. and in most parts of Canada, Canadians join with approximately 76 other countries around the world and practice Daylight Saving Time (DST). Since 2007, the clocks have moved forward on the second Sunday in March and then moved back on first Sunday of November.

In 2007, the B.C. government received 4,300 submissions from businesses, individuals and organizations and conducted a 4-week public consultation on expanding DST by an extra 3 weeks every year in order to align with the U.S. and other jurisdictions. The final tally showed that 92 percent of respondents favoured DST and the extra hour of daylight during the evening hours.

Currently, 78% of the world does not change time. In North America, only Saskatchewan, northeast B.C. and Arizona don't change time. Neither do other areas and countries, such as Hawaii, Puerto Rico, China, Japan, Russia, South Korea, India and most of Australia, South America and Africa.

In November 2015, a petition was launched to Stop the Time Change in B.C. Within the 4 months during Standard time (Nov – March), the petition has obtained almost 25,000 signatures, raised awareness across Canada and definitely started the conversation. There was a meeting held in November 2015 with provincial Ministers Terry Lake and Todd Stone to discuss the petition and start the conversation within the B.C. Legislature.

Bills introduced in the Oregon Senate would give voters an opportunity to put an end to DST, according to KOMO.¹ If either pass, Oregon would follow Hawaii and Arizona as the only states that don't follow the time change. One of the bills, Senate Bill 99, would ask voters in the 2016 election whether they want to ditch the archaic practice. That law would go into effect in 2021, giving businesses time to prepare. Another bill, sponsored by Republican Sen. Brian Boquist of Dallas, would make the change immediately.

Washington introduced a similar bill this year, which would put the state on Pacific Standard Time year-round. KATU reports: "What I'm suggesting is that we save time by simplifying our lives," said Washington State Rep. Elizabeth Scott. She said the bill to drop daylight saving time would reduce heart attacks, car wrecks and work accidents found to increase with the sleep-schedule disruptions. Farmers she checked with already run their combines at night using aircraft-scale headlights, and dairy cattle care about the sun, not the time on the clock face.

Background

The primary goal of Daylight Saving Time is to conserve energy, but whether DST actually saves energy is unclear and there are many contradictory studies. There are, however, even more studies that tell us that the change itself can cause accidents, injuries and even deaths. Many of these issues are related to sleep pattern change that the biennial shift mandates.

There is a growing collection of evidence to show that the biennial time change has plenty of unintended consequences, examples such as these can directly affect the operation of business.

Workplace accidents

Workplace accidents may be another side effect of sleep loss from the one-hour time change. They increase in

¹ http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2015/03/12/end-daylight-savings-time-oregon_n_6852880.html

frequency that Monday. "Perhaps even scarier, is the spike in injury severity," said Christopher Barnes, an assistant professor at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. "Instead of bruising a hand, maybe you crush a hand." A study Barnes led in 2009, and reported in the *Journal of Applied Psychology*, looked at the severity of workplace accidents in miners on the Monday following the time change. The researchers found a 5.7 percent increase in injuries and a 67.6 percent increase in work days lost to injuries. Barnes said the results were likely to be similar in other workplaces with similar hazards. Sleep loss determines the difference between the relatively common near-miss that happens in mining, and a true accident, said Barnes. "We're closer to disaster than we realize," he said. "The margin for error is not very big." "If I were in that environment, one thing I would try to do is schedule you're most dangerous tasks for other days."

Sleep loss

Alterations to sleeping patterns can mean employees have to make substantial changes to their routines, and some studies have shown that absenteeism goes up in the first few weeks of the introduction of Daylight Saving Time. In a culture where we are constantly being told we need more sleep, the start of DST piles another hour per person onto the national sleep debt. "We're already a highly sleep-deprived society," said Russell Rosenberg, Vice-chair of the National Sleep Foundation. "We can ill afford to lose one more hour of sleep. Additionally, the shift in the period of daylight can present a challenge in catching up on sleep. "It does take a little extra time to adjust to this time change, because you don't have the morning light telling your brain it's time to wake up," he said

Heart attacks

As our workforce is continuing to age, the connection between sleep and heart attacks gained attention following a 2008 Swedish study that showed an increase of about 5 percent in heart attacks on the three weekdays following the spring time shift. "Sleep and disruption of chronobiological rhythms might be behind the observation." Heart attacks have been found to be highest on Mondays after the time change, so a shift in sleeping patterns may explain that as well as Dr. Imre Janszky told *My Health News Daily*. According to a 2012 study at the University of Alabama Birmingham, the Monday and Tuesday after daylight saving time in the spring have also been associated with a 10% increase in heart attacks. The study found a corresponding 10 per cent decrease in heart attack risk over the 48 hours after people "fall back" and gain an extra sleeping hour in the fall.

Traffic accidents

An increase in traffic accidents is perhaps the best studied health consequence of the time shift. Sleep loss puts people at much higher risk for motor vehicle accidents," Rosenberg said. A 1996 study published in the *New England Journal of Medicine* showed an 8 percent increase in motor vehicle accidents on the Monday following the time change. A 2001 study from Johns Hopkins and Stanford universities also showed an increase on the Monday following the change. At least one U.S. agency has taken the point to heart. Last November, as the clock shifted back to daylight standard time, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration warned drivers that, with nightfall occurring earlier in the evening, "adjusting to the new, low-light environment can take time, and that driving while distracted puts everyone — and especially pedestrians — at greater risk of death or injury."

Tourism Boost - many tourism and outdoor activity businesses believe that daylight saving time could provide a financial boost for the tourism industry. Shifting that extra hour to the end of the day could boost outdoor activities and bring in an extra two (2) percent in revenue from visitors, according to timeanddate.com

Conclusion

Moving clocks forward and backward every year in an increasingly complex digital world is not without consequences either. Air traffic schedules, train schedules, public transport schedules all must be changed

biennially. It complicates timekeeping, disrupts meetings and even livestock have been shown to have trouble adjusting to new routines.

Moving the hours around twice a year is a complex matter. Although it was originally brought forward by Benjamin Franklin as a way to conserve energy, and that remains its primary purpose to this day, there is in fact no consistent evidence to show it is helping us. There is on the other hand, plenty of evidence to show that constantly shifting back and forth does harm.

It is imperative that we work with other jurisdictions in the Pacific Time Zone to make this happen, by working with and presenting our position to groups such as:

- a. Pacific Northwest Economic Region (PNWER) - is a statutory public/private non-profit created in 1991 by the states of Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, Montana, Washington, and the Canadian provinces of British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, and the Yukon and Northwest Territories; and the
- b. Pacific Coast Collaborative - a formal basis for cooperative action, a forum for leadership and information sharing, and a common voice on issues facing Pacific North America. With a combined population of 54 million and a GDP of \$3 trillion, Alaska, British Columbia, California, Oregon and Washington are poised to emerge as a mega-region and global economic powerhouse driven by innovation, energy, geographic location and sustainable resource management, attracting new jobs and investment while enhancing an already unparalleled quality of life.

It is for that reason that the Chamber of Commerce advocates a no-time-shift policy and remains on Daylight Savings Time for the calendar year

THE CHAMBER RECOMMENDS

That the Provincial Government works with their partners in the Pacific Northwest Economic Region (PNWER) and Pacific Coast Collaborative to have the Pacific Time Zone in Canada and U.S.A to remain on DST throughout the year.