

## Time To Ditch Daylight Saving Time — It's A Killer That Doesn't Save Energy

JOHN MERLINE | 06:00 AM ET 03/09/2018

Sunday, March 11, is the start of daylight saving time across the country. But it might be the last time people in Florida have to switch their clocks.

The legislature there voted overwhelmingly to abolish the biannual changing of the clock, and stick with daylight saving time year round.

Florida isn't alone in questioning the sanity of repetitive clock changing.

Last year, Massachusetts considered switching to Atlantic Standard Time, which would permanently set their clocks ahead one hour. Maine also passed bills to ditch daylight saving time. **Arizona and Hawaii stick with standard time year round.**

The European Union, meanwhile, is studying whether switching their clocks back and forth each year is worth it.

The answer is, it isn't.

The main reason for imposing daylight saving time has always been that it "saved" energy, since it would stay light an hour longer in the evening. The U.S. extended daylight saving time in 2007, as part of President Bush's woefully misguided energy bill — which also banned traditional incandescent light bulbs — specifically because it was supposed to cut the nation's energy consumption.

At the time, Massachusetts Rep. Ed Markey said it would save consumers \$4.4 billion over 15 years.

But research shows this is simply not the case. In fact, it's just as likely that **daylight saving time costs energy.**

One of these studies, published by the prestigious National Bureau of Economic Research, looked at energy use in Indiana, which imposed daylight saving time statewide for the first time in 2006.

Researchers found that **residential electricity use in areas of the state that adopted DST for the first time actually increased by 1%.**

Another opportunity to study the energy impact of DST came after the change in start dates went into effect in 2007. Researchers looked at energy use in California and found it didn't change at all.

Worse, these **nonexistent energy gains come at a terrible price in lost lives, more health problems, and lost productivity.**

Studies have consistently found, for example, that there are **more car crashes on the first Monday after daylight saving time goes into effect, because of sleep deprivation.** One of these studies, published in the Journal of Accident Analysis and Prevention, found that springing forward causes **an extra 195 auto fatalities and 171 pedestrian deaths each year.**

Another found that **workplace injuries climb almost 6%**, and their **severity increases as well**, on the first Monday after springing forward, because **workers** are operating on an average of 40 minutes less sleep than on a typical Monday.

A study of miners found **an increase in mining injuries** and a **67% increase in lost workdays** after the spring time shift.

Unfortunately, there's no comparable reduction in auto fatalities and workplace injuries on the first work day after falling back.

There's more.

Health.com reports that heart attacks spike after daylight saving time goes into effect, and the number of strokes increases both when DST starts and ends.

There's also the post-DST phenomenon known as **cyberloafing**. Apparently, workers spend more time than normal doing non-work activities on the first Monday of DST.

And you better hope you don't go before a judge on the Monday after the spring forward, because **judges have been found to impose 5% longer sentences** on that day compared with other days of the year.

Then, of course, there's the hassle of running around changing clocks all over the place twice a year. Collectively, we probably waste millions of hours on this pointless exercise. That's to say nothing of the hassle of **resetting one's internal clock** twice a year.

**Going permanently on daylight saving time might not be the solution**, either. According to **Ars Technica**, **Russia tried that a few years ago**, and found that **it gave people stress and health problems when it stayed darker for longer during winter mornings**. So **it ended up reverting to standard time, year round**.

Likewise, **the U.S. tried year-round daylight saving time in 1974**, and **abandoned it after several children died in accidents during the winter months because they were going to school in the dark**.

Ireland Member of European Parliament Sean Kelly recently said that, for a policy that does nothing to save energy, "there are an awful lot of disadvantages ... that make it outdated at this point."

He's got that right. Congress should put this costly biannual ritual to rest once and for all.

Pick a time zone and stick with it — year round. Anything else is a needless waste of time, energy, health and human lives.

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