

Sleep expert says B.C. should stay on Standard Time rather than switch to Daylight Saving



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A Vancouver sleep expert is wound up over [the Daylight Saving Time legislation](#) being tabled by the B.C. government Thursday, and is lobbying to keep the clocks on Standard Time instead.

The legislation set to be introduced by Premier John Horgan aims to keep the province on permanent Daylight Saving Time (DST), meaning we would continuously stay on the time we put our clocks forward to in the spring.

But Myriam Juda, a Simon Fraser University research associate in the Department of Psychology, says **it's much better for our health to stay on the time we set our clocks back to every fall.**

"Our biological clock and circadian rhythm need morning light exposure," she said. **"If we don't get light in the morning, our clock drifts to a later time so it gets harder and harder to wake up."**

Juda adds that **sleep deprivation and disruption of circadian rhythm are both associated with health problems such as diabetes, obesity, cardiovascular disease, and depression.**

"Not to mention fatigue and the risk of accidents that comes when you're fatigued," she added.

In September, the province released results from a public survey that found **93 per cent of British Columbians who participated are in favour of getting rid of seasonal time changes** and sticking to DST.

More than 223,000 people filled out the online survey aimed at finding out British Columbians thoughts on seasonal time changes.

But Juda says **staying on Standard Time wasn't presented as an option in the survey.**

Juda and SFU professor Ralph Mistlberger have now written a letter to the premier's office in support of permanent Standard Time.

The letter cautions that **if DST is kept year-round, sunrise would be later in the winter, leading to 67 days with decreased exposure to morning sunlight compared to permanent Standard Time.**

"If we are on permanent Daylight Saving Time, let's say in December, the sun would only rise at 9 a.m.," Juda said. **"So we would not get enough morning light exposure."**

Horgan has said in the past he wants to stay on the same time as the west coast, U.S. states and the Yukon.

Washington and Oregon are in support of permanent DST but they need the support of the U.S. Congress, which is currently tied up with impeachment proceedings and will be entering an election cycle in 2020.

California was originally in favour of following along, but has now taken a step back and is considering permanent Standard Time.

The legislation will not automatically get rid of the seasonal time changes, only give the province the power to do it at any time once passed.

—*With files from Richard Zussman*

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