

Alberta psychologist touts permanent move away from daylight saving time



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CALGARY – A University of Calgary psychologist is encouraged by the growing movement in North America to abolish time changes and says Albertans would reap the **benefits from a permanent move to standard time.**

Ahead of Sunday's return to standard time, Dr. Michael Antle, a professor with the U of C's department of psychology says his circadian rhythm-focused research has found the health of individuals, and society as a whole, in Alberta would improve if daylight saving time (DST) became a thing of the past.

"The human circadian clock runs a little slow and we have to nudge it forward and reset our clocks each day," said Antle in a statement released Wednesday. "Slow clocks **need morning light. With daylight saving time, we get less light in the morning and more light in the evening and this actually exacerbates the constant mismatch between our body clock and our social clocks.**"

In 2017, Alberta, under the New Democratic Party government, explored potentially scrapping time changes in the province. A legislative committee voted the idea down, stating the impact on businesses would be extensive, despite the fact the majority of Albertans who weighed in on the private member's bill were in favour of the move.

According to Antle, evidence shows **the later sunrises and sunsets that accompany the return of DST each year contribute to increased rates of cancer, obesity, diabetes, heart attacks and seasonal depression.** He adds **school children are negatively impacted by DST** and **standard time increases the likelihood of well-rested students and higher grades.**

At present, British Columbia, Ontario, the European Union and 27 American states are considering abolishing time changes, with most in favour of a permanent move to DST, not standard time. Should Alberta follow suit, **Antle encourages the adoption of permanent standard time** due to the province's geographical location.

"If we move to permanent DST, in December, our sunrise in Calgary will happen after 9:30 in the morning. In Edmonton, it will be closer to 10. In Grand Prairie, almost 10:30. That's not good for anybody."

"We all need as much morning light as possible."

Alberta will return to standard time this Sunday, Nov. 3, when the clocks go back an hour at 2 a.m. The return of DST is scheduled for Sunday, March 8, 2020.



Changing to Daylight Saving Time can interfere with sleep routines. (Gastón M. Charles / shutterstock.com)