



Safety Message of the Day for IMEA Members



Daylight savings time safety Safety Message

How the switch can cause health and work issues

Every year, twice a year, we switch between standard and daylight savings time. No one really knows why anymore, but one thing we do know is it throws us off our routines — sometimes for at least a couple of days. This can be especially true of the switch to daylight savings time specifically, where we lose an hour of sleep as our clocks “jump ahead”.

Now, researchers are discovering that falling back and springing forward are affecting more than our schedules — they are also linked to changes in our diets, health, and can even increase the chances of an accident.

Using U.S. Department of Labor and Mine Safety and Health Administration data, researchers studying industrial and organizational psychology found that the number of workplace accidents spikes after daylight savings time changes every March. The time change results in up to 40 minutes less sleep for the average worker. This has led to a 5.7 percent increase in workplace injuries and up to 68 percent more days lost due to those injuries (meaning they were more severe).

It can even affect your driving skills. Twenty years ago, researchers from Johns Hopkins and Stanford published a comprehensive 21-year study on fatal car crash data. They found an increase in crash deaths on the Monday after the switch to daylight saving time, from an average of 78.2 deaths on any Monday to 83.5 deaths after the time change.