



DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME

Research Paper B34 - (Revised March 2014)

Lorraine Luski

Research Officer

Revised by

Nolan Wilson

Legislative Learner

Legislative Research Service

Daylight Saving Time (DST) will arrive at 2 a.m. local time Sunday, March 9, 2014, signaling the need to advance clocks and timepieces by one hour from 2 a.m. to 3 a.m.

This backgrounder examines basic questions, history, and recent events related to both Standard Time and Daylight Saving Time. It is a condensed and updated version of an [earlier research paper](#) last revised in March 2013.

Contents

INTRODUCTION	1
WHAT IS DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME?	1
WHAT IS STANDARD TIME?	2
Time Zones of Canada	3
BRIEF HISTORY OF DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME	3
DST in Ontario	3
Ontario's Response to the US Energy Policy Act of 2005	4
Ontario's Time Zone Anomalies	4
REGULATION OF DST IN CANADA	4
Saskatchewan	5
JUSTIFICATION FOR DST	5
OPPOSITION TO OBSERVING DST YEAR-ROUND	6
GENERAL OPPOSITION TO DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME	6

Recent Research from LLRS

Financial Accountability Office

Jeff Parker

[Issue Binder 1305](#)

Overview of Ontario's Finances

Anne Marzalik

[Research Paper 11-24](#)

Ontario Municipal Board Review

[Issue Binder 1310](#)

Minimum Wage

[Issue Binder 1307](#)

Developmental Services

[Issue Binder 1311](#)

Hon. Lincoln M. Alexander

[Issue Binder 1403](#)

LRS provides confidential, non-partisan research and analysis to Members and staff.

**Papers can be accessed at the links provided,
or by calling (416) 325-3900 to request a print copy.**

To request custom research call (416) 325-3900.

INTRODUCTION

Daylight Saving Time (DST) will arrive at 2 a.m. local time, Sunday, March 9, 2014, signaling the need to advance clocks and timepieces by one hour from 2 a.m. to 3 a.m. In 2007 the United States set the new North American standard for DST—to commence three weeks earlier, on the second Sunday of March, and to end one week later on the first Sunday of November as part of its energy saving Energy Policy Act, 2005. Provinces and territories that observe DST, like Ontario, saw the advantage of remaining synchronized with the US, and amended their time statutes accordingly.

This backgrounder examines basic questions, history, and recent events related to both Standard Time and DST. Examples of the various recent relevant news stories through the US and Canada include the following:

- Identical bills filed in the Florida House and Senate seek to require that the state observe DST for the entire year. State Representative Mark Danish, sponsor of [HB 701 – Daylight Saving Time](#), the House bill, claims that year-round DST would be a boon to local residents seeking to do activities in the evening and wanting to avoid the effort of adjusting clocks and personal schedules. Short-titled the “Sunshine Protection Act,” advocates also claim that year-round DST would improve tourism in the state. If passed, Florida will observe DST permanently after entering it in March of 2014.¹
- The Tennessee General Assembly is considering legislation, [HB 1909](#) and [SB 2059](#), which would require the state to cease the practice of adjusting the time in observance of Daylight Saving Time. Clarifying statements have indicated that either bill, if adopted, would come into force during the 2014 period of DST, thereby ensuring that Tennessee remains permanently one hour ahead of Standard Time.²
- The town of Creston, British Columbia has never observed DST but the town council has announced plans to pose a non-binding referendum question to gauge public interest in adopting the time-changing practice. The results of the referendum, to be held in conjunction with the November 2014 municipal election, will be forwarded to the BC provincial legislature.³

WHAT IS DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME?

Daylight Saving Time, the practice of advancing the clock one hour (usually for a period of approximately six months), also known as “summer time” in some countries, is a deviation of Standard Time. Since 2007, DST has begun in Canada and the United

¹ Matthew Beaton, “[More Florida sun: Proposed bill calls for year-round daylight saving time](#),” *The News Herald*, February 24, 2014.

² Associated Press, “[Bill Would Make Tennessee Time Uniform](#),” *News Channel 5*, February 18, 2014.

³ Star Nelson, “[Creston ponders tinkering with time: Town considers switch to daylight time, will put the question to citizenry in November referendum](#),” *Daily Bulletin*, January 21, 2014, in Canadian Newsstand Core (accessed February 25, 2014).

States at 2 a.m. local time on the second Sunday of March and ended at 2 a.m. on the first Sunday of November. DST seeks to shift the hours of human activity to make better use of the daylight.⁴ It provides a longer period of daylight to enjoy outdoor activities during summer evenings. The decline in the use of artificial light and appliances conserves fuel and energy, thereby generating financial savings. Studies done by the US Department of Transportation in the 1970s indicated that the country's electrical usage declined by about one percent each day with DST.⁵

WHAT IS STANDARD TIME?

Sir Sandford Fleming, a Canadian railroad planner, engineer and citizen of Peterborough, Ontario is widely credited with inventing the worldwide system of standard time zones.

Prior to the establishment of standard time, local time (also known as solar time) was determined by the position of the sun at midday, and varied from one community to another. Prior to 1883, there were 100 or more local time zones in the United States based on solar time.⁶ Before the adoption of standard time, 12 noon in Kingston was twelve minutes later than 12 noon in Montreal and thirteen minutes before 12 noon in Toronto. With the introduction of railways, local time became highly inconvenient and inefficient. Travellers sometimes carried a number of watches, or one with six different faces, each labelled with the name of a different city. Train schedules based on local times created nightmares for railway stationmasters and chaos for a transcontinental railway.⁷

The solution was to adopt a system by which the clocks would read consistently in one large region. Railways began using Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) as the Standard Time for England, Scotland and Wales in the 1840s, although it would not become the legal standard until 1880.

On November 18, 1883, North American railways adopted a system of one-hour time zones proposed by William F. Allen, secretary of the General Time Convention. Fleming, acting as chair of the standing committee on time for the American Society of Civil Engineers, was a key player in the process of encouraging the US Congress to call the 1884 International Prime Meridian Conference.⁸

⁴ David S. Prerau, *Seize the Daylight: The Curious and Contentious Story of Daylight Saving Time* (New York: Thunder's Mouth Press, 2005), p. xv.

⁵ California Energy Commission, Bob Aldrich, [Saving Time, Saving Energy: Daylight Saving Time, Its History and Why We Use It](#) (2005), accessed on March 7, 2011.

⁶ US House of Representatives, "Energy Conservation Potential of Extended and Double Daylight Saving Time," n.p.

⁷ The CRB Foundation Heritage Project, "Sanford Fleming makes trains run on time." accessed on 4 October 1999 (link no longer active).

⁸ *Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online*, "Fleming, Sir Sandford."

Time Zones of Canada

There are six time zones in Canada, identified by their hours from the Greenwich meridian:

Newfoundland Standard Time (NST): 3½ hrs

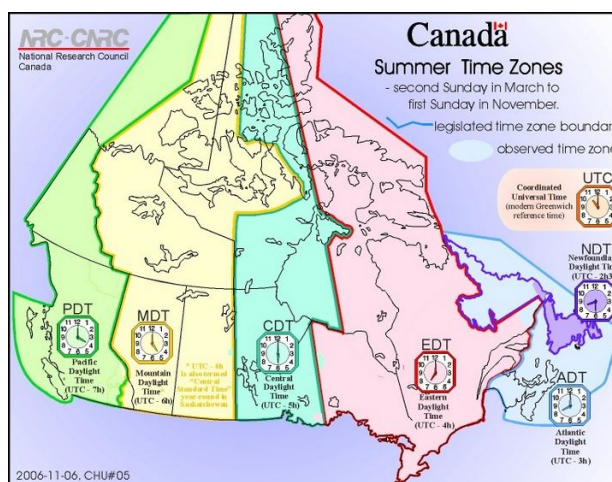
Atlantic Standard Time (AST): 4 hrs

Eastern Standard Time (EST): 5 hrs

Central Standard Time (CST): 6 hrs

Mountain Standard Time (MST): 7 hrs

Pacific Standard Time (PST): 8 hrs



Map reproduced with the kind permission of the Institute for National Measurement Standards, National Research Council of Canada.

BRIEF HISTORY OF DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME

During World War I, clocks in several countries, including Australia, Great Britain, Germany, and the United States, were advanced one hour in an effort to save energy used for artificial lighting. In the United States, the measure proved so unpopular that it was repealed after the war. During World War II, Congress reinstated DST from February 2, 1942 until September 30, 1945. England used “double summer time,” advancing the clocks two hours from Standard Time in the summer and one hour in the winter. In Canada, federal legislation established DST during a limited portion of the Second World War.

DST in Ontario

Within Canada, all 10 provinces and three territories regulate time through legislation or regulation. As early as 1895, Ontario enacted a brief time statute known as *An Act respecting the Legal Meaning of Expressions relative to Time*. The first section stated that expressions of time in the Province would refer to Standard Time, and provided for two time zones. The parts of the province to the east and west of 87° W longitude (present day Terrace Bay) would be deemed to be five and six hours (respectively) behind Greenwich Time. The 1895 boundary between the Eastern and Central Time Zones fell about 225 km. east of today’s boundary of 90° W longitude near Shebandowan, a small hamlet west of Thunder Bay.

No reference to “Daylight Saving Time” was made in any Ontario time statute until the passage in 1986 of a Private Member’s Bill by Ross McClellan, amending Bill 58 such that DST would start on the first Sunday in April and end the last Sunday of October. This provided for nearly seven months of DST in Ontario, an adjustment consistent with action taken by the US Congress earlier that year.⁹

⁹ Ontario, Ministry of Municipal Affairs, *News Release* (March 10, 1987).

Ontario's Response to the US Energy Policy Act of 2005

The Ministry of the Attorney General (AG) administers Ontario's *Time Act*.¹⁰ In 2005, Attorney General Michael Bryant asked his Parliamentary Assistant (PA), David Zimmer to investigate the impact that the extension of DST could have on the different sectors in Ontario. Mr. Zimmer led an inter-Ministry committee over a period of three months with the goal of preparing a report with recommendations for Cabinet. The PA also created a website and held consultations with different levels of government on the question of harmonizing with the United States on DST. According to the Attorney General:

Representatives from finance and capital markets, trade, manufacturing and industry unanimously urged us to harmonize daylight saving with the US. In fact, they told us that any misalignment could have a real and negative impact, namely: trade disruption as well as cost coordination, delivery system supply chain and border pressures.¹¹

On October 20, the Attorney General announced that Ontario would synchronize its DST schedule with the United States. PA Zimmer told the *National Post* that "a good, solid 75% [of Ontarians consulted] were in favour of extending DST."¹²

In April 2006 the Ontario government enacted Ontario Regulation 111/06 under the *Time Act*.¹³ The regulation, which came into force on January 1, 2007, established DST conventions as they currently exist in Ontario.

Ontario's Time Zone Anomalies

The Northwestern Ontario communities of Atikokan, Pickle Lake and Mishkeegogamang (formerly New Osnaburgh) are located west of the 90th meridian and therefore fall within the Central Time Zone. Like Saskatchewan, they do not observe DST and have no plans to change the status quo. As a further anomaly, the community of Pickle Lake, which is situated quite near to the 90th meridian, has chosen to observe Eastern Time as local time, even though it is physically located within the Central Time Zone. There are a number of these time zone anomalies located throughout Canada.

REGULATION OF DST IN CANADA

While the federal government regulated DST as national policy during World War II, and municipal governments had jurisdiction thereafter, provincial and territorial governments now regulate DST through various statutes.

¹⁰ See the [Time Act](#), accessed March 8, 2011.

¹¹ Legislative Assembly, *Hansard*, 2nd Sess., 38th Parl. ([October 20, 2005](#)), accessed on March 8, 2011.

¹² Lee Greenberg, "Ontario to extend daylight savings," *National Post*, (October 21, 2005), p. A4.

¹³ See [O. Reg. 111/06](#), accessed March 8, 2011.

Saskatchewan

All provinces observe DST except Saskatchewan, which remains on Central Standard Time (CST) year-round. The question of DST in Saskatchewan has been overshadowed by the more pressing question of whether to accept Mountain Standard Time (MST) or CST as the uniform time in the province.

There are some in the province who argue that, in a sense, Saskatchewan is already observing DST. This is because Saskatchewan observes CST as its official time instead of MST (which is the “true” time associated with the 105° W meridian which runs through the middle of the province). Thus, Saskatchewan observes time that is one hour ahead of the official Greenwich Time for that part of the hemisphere.

JUSTIFICATION FOR DST

The general justification for DST is that increasing the amount of daylight available adds convenience to evening schedules and reduces power usage demands. In 2000, the experience of brownouts and rolling blackouts in the United States prompted legislators from California and several Western states to consider year-round DST or even Double Daylight Saving Time as a means of reducing power consumption.¹⁴ As an energy conservation measure, the US *Energy Policy Act* declared that, commencing in 2007, DST would start three weeks earlier in the spring and end one week later in the fall. The Act also required the US Department of Energy to evaluate the effect of Extended DST (EDST) upon energy consumption and to report to Congress.¹⁵ In October 2008 analysts submitted their report to Congress indicating that the total electricity savings of EDST were 1.3 trillion watt-hours or 0.5% per EDST day, or 0.03% of electricity consumption over the year. Total 2007 electricity consumption in the United States was 3,900 trillion watt-hours.¹⁶ Some studies dispute the anticipated energy savings associated with DST.¹⁷ A study by the California Energy Commission concluded that EDST in 2007 had a neutral effect on energy use in the state.¹⁸

¹⁴ US House of Representatives, Committee on Science, Subcommittee on Energy, Hearing Charter for Hearing on “Energy Conservation Potential of Extended and Double Daylight Saving Time,” (May 24, 2001).

¹⁵ The *Energy Policy Act* (2005), Section 110.

¹⁶ US Department of Energy, Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, [Impact of Extended Daylight Saving time on National Energy Consumption: Report to Congress](#) (Energy Policy Act of 2005, Section 110) October 2008, p. I, accessed on March 7, 2011.

¹⁷ An examination of electricity usage and billing in Indiana since the state adopted DST in 2006 found that the time change led to a 1% overall *rise* in residential electricity use. This cost the state an extra \$9 million, according to the researchers. Charles Q. Choi, “Spring Forward or Not?” *Scientific American*, March 2009, p. 18.

¹⁸ Ibid.

OPPOSITION TO OBSERVING DST YEAR-ROUND

While some have advocated for year-round DST, critics of this suggestion have presented reasons for avoiding it during the late sunrise months of November through February. At the end of a two-year trial in the United States in 1974-75, data compiled showed a statistically significant increase in fatal traffic accidents between 5:30 and 9:30 a.m. during the late sunrise months of January and February 1974, compared with 1973. While the increase in accidents could not be definitively attributed to the time change, neither could DST be ruled out as a factor in these accidents.¹⁹ The morning darkness was and remains a concern for parents whose children wait for school buses or walk to school in the morning during November through February. Daylight Saving Time is most acceptable to the public when sunrises are not too late and sunsets are not too early.²⁰ Some experts believe that the best period for DST in terms of light symmetry, is the six-month period starting on the first Sunday in April and ending on the last Sunday in September.²¹

GENERAL OPPOSITION TO DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME

In general, some people resent the twice a year inconvenience of resetting their clocks and the time on their various appliances.²² Others dislike adjusting their sleeping patterns and some with sleep problems find the change disruptive and disorienting. They complain that adjusting to DST or back to Standard Time is "like getting jet lag without even leaving home."²³

Stanley Coren, who authored the book *Sleep Thieves*, published data claiming that the spring shift to DST increases driver fatigue resulting in an increase in automobile collisions.²⁴ Other experts dispute these claims.²⁵ However, a Hamilton sleep disorder specialist has observed that the loss of as little as one hour of sleep (as happens during the shift to DST) can have a significant impact on individuals already suffering from sleep deprivation.²⁶ A Swedish study noted that since 1987, the number of heart attacks rises about 5% during the first week of DST due to disruption of sleep patterns and biological rhythms.²⁷

¹⁹ Ian R. Barkky and Elizabeth Harrison, "Standard and Daylight-saving Time," *Scientific American* (May 1979), p. 50.

²⁰ Barkky and Harrison, "Standard and Daylight-saving Time," p. 50.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 53.

²² Sheila Danzig, [End Daylight Saving time](#), 1997, accessed on May 13, 2003.

²³ Wood, "Changing clocks a sore subject."

²⁴ Stanley Coren, [Sleep Deficit, Fatal Accidents and the Spring Shift to Daylight Savings Time](#) (1998) Presented at INABIS '98, 5th Internet World Congress at McMaster University, Canada, December 7-16th, 1998, accessed on 13 May 2003.

²⁵ Nicolas van Rijn, "Accident unrelated to time change: study – Statistics show losing sleep has little or no effect," *Toronto Star*, 17 October 1998, p. A4.

²⁶ Suzanne Morrison, "All work and no sleep plays havoc with lives; Studies say lack of sleep causes premature aging, weakens immune system and leads to accidents," *The Hamilton Spectator*, 31 March 2001, p. A1.

²⁷ Charles Choi, "Spring Forward or Not? *Scientific American*, March 2009, p.18.

Researchers at Stanford and Johns Hopkins universities reported in the journal *Sleep Medicine* that there may be a link between the spring change to DST and an increase in fatal auto accidents on the Monday following the spring change to DST. Reviewing records on fatalities kept by the US National Highway Transportation Safety Administration from 1974 to 1995, the data showed that an average of 78.2 fatalities had occurred during the weeks prior to the shift while an average of 83.5 fatalities occurred immediately following.²⁸ Several economists from British Columbia have even suggested that disrupted sleep routines lead to unusual declines on the stock market on the Monday following the start/end of DST.²⁹

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Derek DeCloet, "Thank God it's Monday: Don't Call your Broker Yet (Stock Market Decline Follows Switch to Daylight Savings Time)," *Canadian Business*, April 3, 2000, pp. 19-20.