

Daylight Saving Time ending and people are getting hurt

Each fall when Daylight Saving Time ends motorists and pedestrians are seemingly given a bonus hour of sleep. In theory the roads should be safer, but this is not necessarily the case.

A 2011 survey by the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia (ICBC) revealed that failing to adapt to the time change that comes with the end of Daylight Saving Time (DST) can actually cause drivers and pedestrians to be at greater risk on the road.

According to the survey, 30 per cent of drivers overcompensate for that extra hour of sleep by staying up later and therefore losing any potential benefit. While 24 per cent of drivers feel more alert the morning after the time change, 19 per cent actually feel less alert, despite the fact they should feel more rested.

The decrease in light during the evening commute causes some of the negative effects of the time change as drivers may feel more fatigued without realizing it. The impacts can be felt through poorer concentration, reduced alertness behind the wheel and slower reaction time to potential hazards.

Overall, there is a 10 per cent increase in the average number of crashes during the late afternoon commute in the two weeks following the end of DST compared to the two weeks preceding the change.

The following safety tips will help reduce the chances of injury for you and others;

Keep your regular sleep cycle. Go to bed at the same time you normally would and benefit from that extra hour of sleep.

Don't assume you are more rested and alert on the road the mornings following the change.

Plan ahead for the darker, late afternoon commutes where there will be slower traffic flow, less visible pedestrians and cyclists and an even greater need to signal properly.