

Daylight saving time is connected to a spike in workplace injuries

Is daylight saving time actually dangerous for workers? Clocks in Pennsylvania sprang forward an hour on March 9, giving residents one extra hour of daylight in the evenings. But the extra hour came at the expense of sleep for many. Americans sleep for an average of 40 fewer minutes on the Sunday before daylight saving time, leading to more tired workers in the days after the change.

The result: More Americans are injured at work on the Monday after daylight saving time begins. In one study, researchers examined 576,292 mining injuries from 1983 until 2006. They found, that coal miners reported about 63 work related injuries on an average Monday. On the Monday after the switch to daylight saving time, workers reported 5.7 percent more injuries, or an additional 3.6 injuries. Other research has shown that being tired or fatigued can lead to mistakes at work. For industrial workers, miners and others who are exposed to hazards, errors can lead to serious injury or death.

Researchers also found that the severity of injuries increased on the Monday after DST began. The reasons for the increased severity are less clear than the connection between more fatigue and more injuries. One possibility is that workplaces try to protect workers from highly dangerous hazards by using multiple safeguards. In order to be harmed by a highly dangerous hazard, a worker must make multiple mistakes "" which could be easier to do when a worker is extremely tired.

The change from daylight saving time to standard time in the fall does not come with a change in the number of accidents.

That's because in the fall, when we gain an hour of time, people receive an average of 12 more minutes of sleep.

Source: The Atlantic, "[Be Careful! Workplace Injuries Spike Following the Switch to Daylight Saving Time](#)," □ Rebecca J. Rosen, March 10, 2014