

DAYLIGHT SAVINGS

Every March, most Americans welcome the switch to daylight saving time because of the longer days, but also dread losing an hour of sleep after they move their clocks forward. Now a new study shows that losing just an hour of sleep could pose some dangerous consequences for those in hazardous work environments.

According to the September 2009 issue of the Journal of Applied Psychology, which is published by the American Psychological Association.

"One hour of lost sleep may not seem like a lot. But our findings suggest it could have an impact on people's ability to stay alert on the job and prevent serious injuries." said the article's lead author, Christopher Barnes, PhD. Barnes and co-author David Wagner, PhD, were both doctoral students in organizational behavior at Michigan State University when they conducted this research.

On average, there were 3.6 more injuries on the Mondays following the switch to daylight saving time compared to other days, and 2,649 more days of work were lost as a result of those injuries. That's approximately a 68 percent increase in lost work days. In their analysis, the researchers controlled for weekends and holidays. Work experience did not appear to play a role in the number of injuries suffered.

So, as we go out to work, take a moment and realize that statistically you may not be at the top of your game. Your awareness of hazards may be down. Take extra time in evaluating the task to be done prior to doing them. Take a minute and do a safety check to ensure you don't become one of these statistics.

