



The Impact of Daylight Savings Time on Accident Rates and Legal Claims

In theory, daylight savings time is supposed to make our lives more convenient – but what if the simple act of moving our clocks forward is more dangerous than many of us realize?

Various studies have indicated that a wide range of traffic accidents become more common after daylight savings time goes into effect. The cause of this phenomenon has sparked ongoing debate. Many suggest that setting our clocks forward might not be such a smart idea after all, and the United States government has seriously considered abolishing daylight savings time on more than one occasion.

For [victims of traffic accidents in San Jose](#), the threat of daylight savings time accidents is especially obvious. After all, serious injuries, missed wages, and emotional distress show just how dangerous daylight savings time can be.

The Impact of Daylight Savings on San Jose Accident Rates

Although moving the clocks forward might seem logical, various studies have confirmed that daylight savings time causes an increase in traffic accidents. There is some debate among researchers when it comes to just *how* dangerous roads become after clocks move forward, but it is certainly a high enough number to warrant concern.

The most agreed-upon number of deaths is approximately 30 per year. In other words, eliminating daylight savings time could save dozens of lives in just the first 12 months. Within just three years of eliminating daylight savings time, about 100 people would be spared. Some studies have indicated that accidents increase by up to six percent in the week following daylight savings.

Daylight Savings Causes Widespread Harm

Traffic fatalities only represent one aspect of daylight-savings-related hazards. There are many others to consider:

- **Animal Deaths:** According to a study by the [University of Washington](#), collisions with animals become especially prevalent in the hours and days following daylight savings. Deer collisions seem especially common, with some papers suggesting a 16 percent increase after clocks move forward. Tens of thousands of deer would presumably escape death each year with the elimination of daylight savings time. San Jose is home to plenty of deer, especially at [Almaden Quicksilver County Park](#).
- **Property Damage:** The same University of Washington Study study suggests that daylight savings time across the United States causes almost \$1.2 billion in damages annually. This property damage involves not only wrecked vehicles but also damaged infrastructure, businesses, and even homes.
- **Injuries:** Finally, researchers at the University of Washington state that eliminating daylight savings time would prevent over 2,000 traffic injuries yearly. These injuries affect pedestrians, motorcyclists, cyclists, and motorists. Common traffic injuries include whiplash, traumatic brain injuries (TBIs), fractures, burns, and many others.

Why Is Daylight Savings Time So Dangerous?

The statistics surrounding daylight savings time highlight clear dangers, but they do not explain the *cause* of accidents after clocks move forward. What is it about daylight savings time that leads to a sudden increase in San Jose accident rates?

The explanation is simple: **Drowsy driving.**

When tired, people are more likely to make mistakes while driving. Perhaps most obviously, they are also more likely to *fall asleep* behind the wheel. Even if a driver “nods off” for a few seconds, they might suddenly open their eyes to find themselves crashing into a pedestrian, swerving into oncoming traffic, or flying off an overpass.

That being said, driving can be dangerous even if motorists manage to stay awake throughout their entire journeys. Why? Because just a few hours of sleep deprivation can affect our driving abilities. The [Sleep Foundation](#) states that after being awake for 20 hours, we reach impairment levels equivalent to a 0.08 percent BAC Breathalyzer result. Staying away for 24 hours equals a BAC level of 0.01 percent. In other words, drowsy driving can be just as bad as drunk driving. In many cases, it is *more dangerous*.

Of course, missing an hour of sleep is not the same as staying up all night. To that end, comparing 20 hours of sleep deprivation to daylight savings is excessive. On the other hand, research confirms that at its core, sleep deprivation of *any level* can potentially affect our driving abilities. Even a slight level of impairment has the potential to cause accidents, and this is the root cause of accidents after daylight savings.

The *interruption* of regular sleep patterns might be more relevant to this discussion than the number of missed sleep hours. According to the [National Institutes of Health](#), sleep disruption leads to several common issues among healthy adults. Perhaps most notably, these issues include “cognitive, memory, and performance deficits.” Driving requires our full attention, and this highly complex task is likely much more difficult with the cognitive and performance issues detailed by the National Institutes of Health.

Reach Out to a Car Accident Attorney in San Jose

Victims who have experienced daylight savings time accidents can pursue compensation for their medical expenses, missed wages, and other damages. If you have experienced daylight savings traffic hazards firsthand, consider contacting the [Hann Law Firm](#). At this experienced San Jose law firm, our qualified slip and fall lawyers, business lawyers, and [auto accident attorneys](#) are ready to provide targeted assistance. At the end of the day, it doesn't matter when your accident occurred. Traffic accident victims *always* have rights in California – and Hann Law fights for these rights on your behalf.

[Click here to schedule a consultation.](#)

Sources

1. <https://www.npr.org/2022/11/04/1134239948/daylight-savings-time-deer-vehicle-crashes>
2. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7084938/>



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