

Study: Daylight-saving time affects work habits

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People adjust their daily routines to accommodate different time zones and changes in daylight-saving time, new research from The University of Texas at Austin shows.

When daylight-saving time ends on Sunday, Hawaii and Arizona residents will likely shift their days forward, going to bed and getting up later. The study showed when the rest of the country is on daylight-saving time people in those states that do not observe daylight-saving time are less likely to be asleep at 7:30 a.m. than the rest of the country. They are 50 percent more likely to be working early in the morning.

The schedule change is an effort to stay in synch with the rest of the country, much the same way spouses prefer to work similar hours.

“The stockbroker on the West Coast gets to work early to keep up with the East Coast markets,” said Daniel Hamermesh, the Edward Everett Hale Centennial Professor in Economics and lead author of the study. “In turn, the waiter at the coffee shop adjusts his schedule to match the stockbroker’s.”

Hamermesh also found daylight-saving time and time zones affect television audiences’ viewing habits.

“Viewers on the coasts are more likely to stay up later than viewers in the middle of the country, because television schedules put prime-time and late-night shows on later in those regions,” Hamermesh said. “This research shows that it matters when activities take place. Time has a direct impact on activity and the economy.”

The study used data from the American Time Use Survey, an on-going project from the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Source: University of Texas at Austin

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