Weekly Safety Tip

Holiday Home Safety

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SAFETY TIPS

Holiday Home Safety

Safety Council OF NORTHWEST OHIO alliance

Ladder + Decorations = Fall Danger

Hanging holiday decor and lighting often calls for using a ladder.

Using a ladder to put up outdoor lighting and other decorations can increase the risk of falls at this time of year.

Make sure you and your decorations stay safe this holiday season by following the Ladder Safety Tips provided below.

Ladder use can pose an unintended "holiday safety challenge," but there are 10 risk minimizing things you can do to reduce the hazards.

1. Use three points of contact climbing or descending.
2. Wear appropriate footwear.
3. Do not climb above second step from the top.
4. Do not lean off of the ladder; keep the center line of your body inside the rails of the ladder; and always -- face the ladder.
5. Beware of ***line-of-fire*** or changes of force that could cause the climber or the ladder to fall.
6. Do not carry materials when climbing or descending and never throw objects off or up the ladder. Use a hand-line or rope.
7. Belt-off to a secured ladder if both hands are required to perform the task.
8. Do not rest the rungs against a round surface.
9. When pulling on light strings, lines, or ropes, use limited force to avoid losing your balance if the line gets caught on something, slips, or something breaks.
10. When working from a ladder where your feet are 12 feet or greater above the ground keep the area clear of "interested observers" and control materials & tools in an attached bucket to help prevent falling objects from injuring those on the ground, particularly someone helping stabilize the ladder for you.

More 'Actionable' Safety Tips:

- Don't hang decorations alone. You will need someone to assist with ladder placement & stability and watch out for you and keep the area clear.
- Before ladder placement, take a minute to scan the set-up area for ***hazards/traps*** in your surroundings so you can consider whether decorations could get caught on or in things in that location; then, decide on your "plan" for doing it safely, before you start.
- Climb and descending a ladder, carefully and deliberately.
- Encourage others to ***say something if they see something*** unsafe.
- Finally, be willing to ***listen-up*** if someone suggests a safer way.

DA Varwig for SCNWO

Weekly Safety Share

SAFETY SHARE

No to Permanent DST

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A Health & Well-Being Moment

No, permanent daylight saving time wouldn't be better for you!

The labels we put on time are arbitrary, and it feels like it shouldn't matter what number we attribute to any given hour. Similarly, as anyone who has flown across multiple time zones can attest, while jetlag is objectively awful, it always goes away sooner or later as we acclimatize to whatever new time zone we get off the plane in.

Shouldn't we also be able to acclimatize to perpetually late sunrises and sunsets? Or, as one Patsy Mink—a Democratic congresswoman from Hawaii—put it in 1974, "The human being is a very adaptive animal. There is no reason we have to be a slave to the sun." But is this true?

According to a recent paper published in the journal PNAS, which models the relative effects of permanent DST and ST, **the answer is "no."** *humans aren't very adaptive when it comes to the sun.*

The paper's research finds that a year-round shift to DST—like the one that happened in 1974—would lead to worse health outcomes than simply staying on standard time. In particular, the paper finds that:

"***Shifting to permanent Standard Time would lead to a decrease in the prevalence of stroke and obesity***."

As the paper's co-author Lara Weed, a PhD Candidate at Stamford University's Zeitzer Circadian Research Lab, explains to *Popular Science*, there has been plenty of research into the effects of the biannual shift from standard time to DST and back again, and the scientific consensus is that those effects are largely adverse. "Switching time policies can have acute negative consequences," Weed says. "The change [in] societal time can disrupt our body clocks through changes in our light, diet, and normal timing of activities."

The results of this time change disruption manifest in effects like an increased rate of traffic accidents and workplace injuries, along with less directly visible effects like an increased rate of cardiovascular events. While changing every six months seems to exacerbate these effects, Weed and her team found that a permanent shift to DST—while less damaging than the current biannual back-and-forth—would also cause problems.

Perhaps this shouldn't be surprising. **Circadian rhythms are important**, and there's clear evidence that people whose sleep cycles are subject to long-term alterations are more vulnerable to the effects described in the paper.

The classic example is that of people who work night shifts and sleep during the day; Weed explains, "We know there's a link between circadian disruption, such as [that experienced] in shift work, and long-term negative cardiovascular and cardiometabolic health outcomes."

Why circadian disruption leads to these negative health outcomes is less clear. "Scientists are still figuring out exactly why this occurs," says Weed. However, it seems that at least part of the reason is that, ultimately, standard time is a better reflection of our natural sleep cycle than DST.

Humans are diurnal, so our natural inclination is to be most active during daylight hours.

As such, it makes sense that we're given to rising with the sun and going to sleep once it sets. Weed explains that waking up before the sun disrupts this rhythm: "We need light in the morning to regulate the circadian clock," she says. "Compared to Standard Time, permanent DST has darker mornings, which can make it more difficult to stay in sync." In other words, we *are* slaves to the sun.

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