

For Immediate Release
March 8, 2007

DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME

The McGuinty government is extending daylight saving time, keeping Ontario in sync with the United States, our most important trading partner, and other Canadian jurisdictions.

Daylight saving time in Ontario will now start on the second Sunday of March, and end on the first Sunday in November. Previously, daylight saving time began on the first Sunday in April, and ended on the last Sunday in October.

History of Daylight Saving Time

Daylight saving time was originally instituted during the First World War as a means to save energy in Europe, the United States and Canada. It was cancelled at the end of the war, but many countries returned to daylight saving time during the Second World War.

After the Second World War, the use of daylight saving time in Ontario was a matter of local custom and practice. Municipal by-laws dealt with whether or not a city would observe daylight saving time. Historically, daylight saving time began in April and ended in October.

The United States established a formal system of time zones and daylight saving time in 1966, and adjusted its start and end dates in 1986. In Ontario, the Time Amendment Act, 1986, revised the Time Act to set start and finish dates for daylight saving time, consistent with the dates set by the United States.

Extension of Daylight Saving Time

In 2005, the United States passed legislation that extends daylight saving time by four weeks, beginning on March 11, 2007, starting three weeks earlier in the spring, and ending one week later in the fall. The McGuinty government consulted with Ontarians to consider the advantages and disadvantages of changing daylight saving time in this province, as well.

An inter-ministerial committee, led by David Zimmer, Parliamentary Assistant to Attorney General Michael Bryant, consulted with 23 stakeholder groups representing agriculture, education, energy, finance and capital markets, industry, trade and manufacturing, public safety, transportation and government sectors.

The committee heard from business groups who were unanimous in recommending that Ontario stay in sync with the United States to avoid confusion and disruption in cross-border trade and communication. Parents and educators believed the extra daylight provided by the change would help keep youth active in outdoor activities. The committee also heard that an extra daylight hour would have the potential to reduce pedestrian injuries and fatalities in the latter part of the afternoon.

Ontario was one of the first Canadian jurisdictions to announce that it will be synchronizing its daylight saving time period with the United States. All other Canadian jurisdictions will also adopt the new dates, except Saskatchewan, which does not use daylight saving time.

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