Daylight Savings Time

Benjamin Franklin first proposed daylight saving time in 1784, however it wasn't implemented in the United States until the first world war in 1918. At the time of implementation, it was used as an effort to conserve fuel needed to produce electric power. It was then repealed in 1919, reinstated during World War II, repealed again, and then finally reinstated in its current form in 1974.

The Energy Policy Act of 2005 extended Daylight Saving Time in the U.S. beginning in 2007, though Congress retained the right to revert to the 1986 law should the change prove unpopular or if energy savings are not significant.

Most of the United States begins Daylight Saving Time at 2:00 a.m. on the second Sunday in March and reverts to standard time on the first Sunday in November. In the U.S., each time zone switches at a different time. Daylight Saving Time is NOT observed in Hawaii, American Samoa, Guam, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands, and Arizona.

The main purpose of daylight saving time is to make better use of daylight and conserve energy. We change our clocks during the summer months to move an hour of daylight from the morning to the evening. In the summer, people who rose before the sun rises used more energy in the morning than if DST were not in effect. In the winter, the afternoon Daylight Saving Time advantage is offset for many people and businesses by the morning's need for more lighting. In spring and fall, the advantage is generally less than one hour. So, the rationale was that daylight saving time saves energy for lighting in all seasons of the year, but it saves least during the four darkest months of winter.

Many people intensely dislike Daylight Saving Time. Frequent complaints are the inconvenience of changing many clocks and adjusting to a new sleep schedule. Some argue that the energy savings touted by DST is offset by the energy used by those living in warm climates to cool their homes during summer afternoons and evenings. Similarly, the argument can be made that more evening hours of light encourage people to run errands and visit friends, thus consuming more gasoline.

Discussion Questions:

1. Does daylight savings time change your operation in any way?
2. Does the extra daylight help you in the summer? Or in the winter?
3. What agricultural purpose do you see for daylight savings time?