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Daylight Savings Time Linked to Workplace Injuries

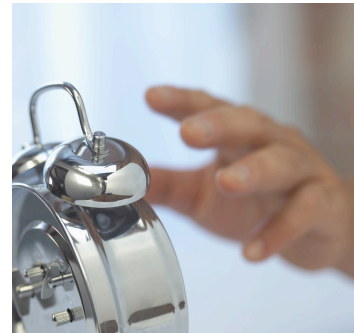
Daylight Savings Time, the practice of temporarily advancing clocks during the summertime so that evenings have more daylight and mornings have less, has been observed since 1895. The practice is the source of much annual anticipation for individuals eager to benefit from longer days and more day lit hours.

A study from the American Psychological Association, however, suggests "springing forward" from Standard Time to Daylight Savings Time may have some unintended consequences such as disrupted sleep patterns and an increased risk for workplace injury.

According to the study's authors, the hour of sleep lost when Americans set their clocks an hour ahead each spring results in higher rates of workplace accidents caused by sleep loss. The study analyzed

accident and time use data from the Mine Safety and Health Administration and Bureau of Labor Statistics, concluding that the average person sleeps about 40 minutes less the Sunday night of the time switch resulting in approximately 3.6 more work injuries the following Monday in hazardous occupations such as mining and construction.

Besides increased risk for work injury, "springing forward" has also been linked



to increased risk for auto accidents on the Monday following the annual time change. A study by the U.S. National Highway and Safety Administration found a 17 percent increase in car accidents caused by fatigue resulting from spring Daylight Savings Time.

Drs. Christopher Barnes and David Wagner conducted the study with assistance from organizational behavior doctoral candidates at Michigan State University. Findings have been published in the American Journal of Psychology. Daylight Savings Time this year begins on March 11th at 2:00 a.m. local time.

Remember, if you are injured on the job call the law office of Charlie Lavis.

DHHS Web Tool Helps Americans Find Health Insurance



Need to explore health insurance options but don't know where to start? An online tool from the U.S Department of Health and Human Services can help you find the health insurance best suited to your needs.

Whether looking into community, public, or private insurance options for yourself, family members, or small business employees, the DHHS Find Insurance Options tool was created to help consumers explore and price insurance options.

By simply entering your state of residence and answering a few questions, the

tool quickly generates insurance options specific to your situation and provides easy to use 'Learn More' links for each insurance solution identified. The tool is up to date with current health insurance policies under the Affordable Care Act. All information entered is confidential and will not be saved by the Department of Health & Human insurance companies.

- Need insurance? Already have insurance but want to check out what options are available? The DHHS tool is available at <http://finder.healthcare.gov/> free of charge.
- For help with insurance coverage or related issues visit <http://www.healthcare.gov/using-insurance/index.html>
- For help understanding the Affordable Care Act, visit www.healthcare.gov/using-insurance/understanding/index.html

Report: Louisiana Infrastructure in Need of Improvement

The Louisiana Section of the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) has released its 2012 Report Card for Louisiana's Infrastructure. The Louisiana Report Card Committee collected and analyzed data, assigning grades to nine infrastructure categories: aviation, bridges, dams, drinking water, levees, ports, roads, solid waste, and wastewater. The purpose of the report was to assess Louisiana's public infrastructure in a comprehensible document, give state politicians an objective assessment to support informed resource allocation decisions, and provide suggestions for infrastructure improvements.

According to a Committee press release, grades are "based on factors such as the infrastructure's overall condition, capacity, funding, operation and maintenance, public safety, and

resilience". Data used to generate the report was collected over 18 months and included technical reports, inspection records, maintenance schedules, and budgets. Only two of the nine categories, dams and solid waste, received above average grades. Final grades assignments are listed below.

Aviation = C
 Bridges = D +
 Dams = B -
 Drinking Water = D +
 Levees = C -
 Ports = C -
 Roads = D
 Solid Waste = C +
 Wastewater = C -

"With three D's and three C-minuses incritical areas, we are

rapidly approaching a period of being unable to sustain competitive economic growth," said executive project director and engineer Kam Movassaghi.

Along with shedding light on problem areas, the report card also offers over 40 specific recommendations for improving distressed infrastructure areas. Common recommendations included using updated financing models for infrastructure development and maintenance, more public emphasis on conservation efforts and improving planning efforts. Inadequate funding was cited as a cause of physical insufficiencies in all nine-infrastructure categories

The report card and technical reports are available at www.lasce.org.

Tax Time Stress? Take Advantage of the Earned Income Tax Credit



Could you use a larger income tax refund this year? If you earned \$49,078 or less last year you may be eligible for the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). The Earned Income Tax Credit is an often-missed tax credit available to low- to moderate-income workers who qualify.

According to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), approximately 127,000 New Orleans area residents claimed the credit last year for an average collection of \$2,494 per person. Despite this sizeable chunk of change, many taxpayers are unaware of the Earned Income Tax Credit and do not claim it on their income tax forms.

Eligibility for the Earned Income Tax Credit includes factors such as filing status, earned income, and family size. This year the maximum EITC is \$5,751 for a family of five although

having children is not a requirement for receipt of EITC. Qualifying individuals must file a federal tax return to receive the EITC, even if no tax is owed or the individual is otherwise not required to file a tax return.

- For more eligibility criteria, visit <http://www.irs.gov/individuals/article/0,,id=96406,00.html>. If you do not currently meet eligibility requirements, remember that the EITC may be an option in the future.
- If you need help preparing your taxes and make less than \$50,000 a year, the federal VITA program can help! VITA volunteers provide tax credit information and free basic income tax return preparation to qualified individuals in local communities. Find a VITA program near you by calling 1-800-906-9887 or visit the IRS website at <http://www.irs.gov/individuals/article/0,,id=107626,00.html>
- April 17th is the regular filing deadline for Federal Income Tax Returns.
- The regular deadline for Louisiana state income forms is May 15, 2012.

Consumer Tips

Fresh, Frozen, or Canned Vegetables?

Vegetables are an important source of fiber, vitamins, minerals and antioxidants -- all of which contribute to a healthy body. The U.S. Department of Agriculture Food Guide Pyramid recommends the average child eat between 1-3 cups of vegetables a day and the average adult eat between 2-3.5 cups of vegetables a day, depending on age, sex, and level of physical activity. Use the list below to find out the pros and cons of fresh, frozen, and canned vegetables as well as buying tips for each variety.

Fresh	Frozen	Canned
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + High in nutritional value + Natural and flavorful + No added salt, fat, or preservatives + Many fresh vegetables such as bagged spinach or carrots are fast and easy to prepare - Can be expensive if out of season - Shorter shelf life - Some fresh vegetables often require peeling, chopping and seeding, which can take time - can be difficult to tell when ripe \$ Potatoes and onions can stay for several weeks in a cupboard. Carrots, cabbage, cauliflower and celery tend to last more than a week in the refrigerator. \$ When in season, fresh vegetables can be a bargain. Know what is in season and save. Check out http://www.fieldtoplate.com/guide.php for a month-by-month guide to seasonal produce. \$ Log on to http://www.localharvest.org/ to find a farmer's market near you to score in season produce at fair prices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Can be more nutritious than fresh vegetables, especially if the veggie is out of season + Economical + Long shelf life (~12-18 months) + Easy to prepare + Frozen at peak of ripeness + Available year round - May have added salts, fats, or sugars - Freezing can change taste & texture \$ Look for "early" or "fresh picked" varieties to provide the best flavor and quality. \$ Avoid large, unsealable bags of frozen vegetables if you can't use the whole bag at once so ice crystals won't form and reduce veggie quality. \$ Be aware of nutritional labels. Some frozen veggies have added salt, sugar, cream or butter sauces you may not want to eat or pay more for. \$ Don't buy any packages that are limp, wet, or sweating, as these are signs the veggies may have defrosted or are in the process of defrosting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Usually less expensive than fresh or frozen varieties + Easy to prepare + Long shelf life + Priced the same year-round - Typically high in sodium and preservatives - Lower nutritional count than fresh and frozen veggies because most canned vegetables are cooked before packaging and go through a longer process from field to shelf \$ Note the manufacturer's date at the bottom of a can when purchasing canned vegetables. Canned veggies start to lose about 5 to 20% of their vitamins after one year. \$ Don't buy any cans that are rusted, badly dented or bulging at the top as the contents of these cans are likely spoiled or low quality. Small dents in cans are typically normal. \$ Store cans away from the sunlight in a cool, dry place \$ Store brand canned veggies often provide the same quality at a lower price. Check weekly store coupons for deals.



Meet Charles E. Lavis, Jr.

Charles Lavis is the founder and managing shareholder of Lavis Law Firm, APLC. He was born in New Orleans in 1965 and has practiced law there for 15 years. Charles represents workers, consumers, homeowners and business owners against insurance companies and corporations. He represents clients in matters involving BP Oil Spill Claims, Job Injuries, Accidents, Products Liability, Hurricane Insurance Claims, Personal Injury, Wrongful Death and Survival Actions, and Insurance Bad Faith. If you have questions, please call Charles at **1-866-558-9151**.

***Please Think of Us
As Your Law Firm***

***If you have a legal
question or problem,
please don't hesitate
to call or e-mail.***

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**Work Injury?
Beware of Online Stalking!**



If you were hurt on the job and are collecting wage loss benefits, company detectives may be stalking you to try to prove you are malingering.

For about \$300, Private Investigators (PIs) can mount a Global Position System (GPS) to the underside of your car and follow you throughout the day from their laptop computer. Some GPS devices are powered by the car's battery and typically placed

under the dashboard while other devices are equipped with their own batteries to enable inconspicuous placement on the vehicle's body.

PIs use the GPS device to see if you are working and not reporting your wages or if you are participating in physical activities beyond your work restrictions.

Using a GPS in this fashion may have potential criminal stalking and civil privacy implications. For example, California and Texas ban the use of GPS trackers without consent with exceptions for law enforcement and car owners. If you find one of these devices on your vehicle, immediately contact your local police department.

For more information on what PI's investigating a case can legally do read <http://www.lsbpie.com/pilaw.html#illegal> or speak to an experienced attorney.

Please Refer Us to Your Family and Friends

We want you to think of us as your law firm. If you have legal matters that need attention, please let us know. If we cannot handle the matter, we will refer you to a competent firm that can. Please feel free

to refer us to your family, friends, and neighbors for their legal needs. We welcome the opportunity to help.

Call us. You're going to feel a whole lot better about things.

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Thanks!

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