

1700 W. Ave. K,
Suite 101,
Lancaster, CA 93534

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Safe Driving Tips as
DAYLIGHT
Saving Time
Ends



On November 4, daylight savings time ended for California and much of the country.

Now, we have more sunlight in the morning and less in the afternoon, with the current sunset time at about 4:45. As you already know, this is at the peak of rush hour traffic, the end of late school activities and the start of school sports. That's a lot of traffic going on at the same time, in the dark.

And with the holidays approaching and even more people on the roadways shopping and heading to holiday parties, now's a great time to go over some safe driving tips as daylight savings ends. The numbers speak for themselves.

The [National Highway Traffic Safety Administration \(NHTSA\)](#) says that over the past five years, 300 people died in drunk-driving crashes during the Christmas through New Year's holiday period. In December 2016, more than 780 people lost their lives in drunk driving crashes. The rate of fatalities typically increases during the holidays due to more people on the roads, attending parties, and drinking and driving.

Here are some [safety tips during the time change](#) to heed.

Stay Alert

Studies show a dramatic increase in the number of car crashes during the late afternoon commute in the first two weeks after the end of daylight savings time. That's because we tend to rationalize that extra hour of sleep, thinking if we just keep pushing along, we can stay awake longer and be fine. However, this actually makes us feel even more tired, as our body clocks react internally to the darkness.

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You may assume the only adjustment you have to make to your car as daylight savings time ends is to fix your clock. But it goes beyond that.

In the summer, you likely return home from work in the daylight, so the road in front of you as well as any hazards are much easier to spot. When drivers, bicyclists and pedestrians have spent the past eight months driving in light, it's very hard to suddenly adjust and compensate for darkness. Try these tips to stay more alert:

- ✓ Keep your regular sleep schedule, heading to bed at the same time you normally would each day.
- ✓ Give yourself plenty of time to arrive at your destination.
- ✓ Approach all crosswalks, intersections and stop signs with caution.
- ✓ Obey the speed limits and adjust your speed accordingly to the darkness and weather conditions.
- ✓ Maintain a safe following distance so you can react quickly if need be.

Prepare Your Vehicle

You may assume the only adjustment you have to make to your car as daylight savings time ends is to fix your clock. But it goes beyond that. With cooler weather and darker conditions this winter, heed these tips for preparing your vehicle for the change:

- ✓ Top off your windshield wiper fluid and replace your wiper blades.
- ✓ Stock your car safety kit with blankets, flashlights, etc.
- ✓ Take your car in for a tune up and oil change.
- ✓ Check and clean your headlights, taillights, brake lights, and signal lights so you can best see other drivers on the road.

Drowsy driving can be just as dangerous as driving under the influence

Get Plenty of Rest

This may sound easier said than done but it's still important. Getting the proper amount of sleep each night will keep you more alert at the wheel and help you avoid distracted driving. California in particular has experienced an uptick in collisions involving sleepy or fatigued drivers over the last few years. In 2014, there were 4,700 collisions involving sleepy drivers, increasing to more than 5,800 in 2015, and to 6,930 in 2016.

The [California Highway Patrol](#) reminds us that drowsy driving can be just as dangerous as driving under the influence, as it impairs judgment, performance, and reaction time in the same way alcohol and drugs can. Being well rested behind the wheel is your best defense in reducing the chance of a car crash.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says that being awake for 18 hours is the same as someone who has a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of 0.05 percent. Extend those waking hours to 24 hours and this equals having a BAC of 0.10 percent, higher than the legal limit of 0.08 percent BAC.

As we all continue to adjust to the time change while enjoying the holidays at the same time, it bears repeating that we should all take extra care driving, walking and cycling this December and into the New Year.

Contact Kuzyk Law

If you need a personal injury lawyer for any type of accident attributed to the end of daylight savings time, drunk driving or drowsy driving, [contact](#) Kuzyk Law today for your free, no-obligation consultation at 661-945-6969.

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We Navigate the Complex Legal System.

If you have been injured or lost a loved one in a car wreck, an experienced car accident injury attorney can mean the difference between receiving fair compensation and possibly owing a lot of money. Kuzyk Law has helped thousands of clients throughout the Antelope Valley recover hundreds of millions of dollars from insurance companies. Put our expertise to work for you.

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