

Mayor's Communiqué

(June 2011)

Daylight Saving Time (DST) –“YES” or “NO”

The Town of Creston's Council recently approved the wording of a future Opinion Poll which asks: “Do you support Mountain Daylight Saving Time in this area?” The timing for bringing this Opinion Poll forward has yet to be determined, but Council wants to start having the conversation and getting the public informed with the facts in advance.

The Creston Valley is designated as being on Mountain Standard Time on a year-round basis. When most of Canada changes their clocks to Daylight Saving Time in April, and then back again in November, we in the Creston Valley do not. Some like this idea as they consider it one less chore that has to be done (re-setting their clocks), but in many cases technology now does that for you automatically.

This issue is not necessarily a high priority in the process of conducting our Town's business BUT it is a sensitive and high profile issue within the Creston Valley as a whole. This issue was first presented to our Town Council at our December 2008 meeting and in spring of this year, the item appeared on our docket again and a decision was made to ask our citizens for their opinion.

History & Facts:

- In 2006, the Province of BC undertook public consultation and reported that 92% of the population favoured the change to extend the period of Daylight Saving Time in order to align with the balance of North America.
- In 1972, a BC Time Zone Referendum was held to pose the question: “Are you in favour of Pacific Standard Time, including Pacific Daylight Saving Time, as it is now applicable throughout the province”? This referendum was conducted in the Electoral Area Districts of Columbia River, Kootenay, Nelson/Creston, North Peace River, and the South Peace River.

The result of the referendum was “NO” by 63.38%. As a result, all of these areas stayed in Mountain Standard Time.

- In 1952, a BC Plebiscite for Daylight Saving Time asked: “Are you in Favour of Daylight Saving Time?”

The result of the referendum was “YES” by 53.6%. Interestingly, there is no clear record as to why the Creston Valley did not adopt Daylight Saving Time in 1952 as a result of this affirmative vote.

Having the Town of Creston gather an opinion from its citizens regarding the time issue will have no validity without input from the majority of citizens in the Creston Valley as a whole. It has been discussed that a sensible time to ask the Creston Valley citizens about the issue is at our upcoming municipal and regional elections in November 2011. Alternatively, there has been discussion about conducting a “mail-in ballot” Opinion Poll this summer. Stay tuned for the decision!

With an Opinion Poll pending, those that are “undecided” on this time issue could now take the opportunity to research different sources and become aware of the “pros” and “cons” associated with adoption of Mountain Daylight Saving Time. Many opinions have already been expressed and I am sure many more opinions will be offered in the near future regarding why people should vote either “YES” or “NO” for adoption of Mountain Daylight Saving Time. I have my own personal views and if individuals ask, I will be happy to discuss the matter with them further.

If the result of a combined Opinion Poll for the Town of Creston, and Electoral Areas A, B & C was “YES” (over 50% of ballots cast) then a request to adopt Mountain Daylight Saving Time would be forwarded to the Province of BC for action.

Conversely, if the results of the Opinion Poll were “NO” then no further action would be taken and we would remain on Mountain Standard Time year-round, just as we're doing now.

A decision either way will help end the ongoing debate about adoption of Mountain Daylight Saving Time in the Creston Valley, once a fair and democratic Opinion Poll has been taken.

I want to hear from you:

Please share your concerns, your experiences, and your issues (both positive and negative) on how we can improve the quality of life in our community (the Town and the Creston Valley).

Thanks

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