

# Winter safety: Clock the time change



Incident notification



Alert



Information



Toolbox talk



## Why are we doing this talk?

### Staying safe during the winter

The clocks go back an hour at 02:00 on Sunday 29 October.

The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents says there is a surge in the number of accidents when the clocks go back. Casualty data shows more pedestrians are killed or injured in the afternoon and early evening rather than in the mornings, so please take extra care whether walking or driving during this period.

During the winter months the number of injuries also increases onsite. Particularly, where mobile construction plant can meet pedestrians and pedestrians are at risk of slips, trips or falls.

## How can it affect us?

### How the clocks going back affect your mind and body

With the seasonal clock change, now is the time to assess the impact on working conditions onsite of darker evenings and winter weather. We need to reduce risks by planning ahead.

The time change affects our internal biological clock. It needs to re-synchronise, but this doesn't happen straight away. It usually takes up to three days for our brains and bodies to adjust to the one hour shift. This can alter the quality of our sleep, making us more tired during the day.

Reduced daylight and Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) can also affect people's susceptibility to fatigue and awareness both around construction plant onsite and during their daily commute. For more information on SAD follow the link

<http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/seasonal-affective-disorder/pages/introduction.aspx>

It is therefore also important that leisure time is used to recuperate and avoid behaviours or practices that can contribute to fatigue and which could place colleagues and the public at risk.

### Hazard perception

Plant operators and vehicle drivers must take care when manoeuvring, only doing so when it's safe. They should ensure reversing aids are in good working order and windscreens clear of dirt. This photograph illustrates the effects of low winter sun on general visibility!

Lower lighting levels and adjusting to the clock change can present extra risk. Particular attention should be paid when approaching construction plant. This is fully explained in the [safety awareness around excavators tool box talk](#).

The safety of people around plant includes thinking about cyclists on roads. Skanska has extended the Fleet Operator Recognition Scheme (FORS) to all its contracts. You can find more guidance on [www.forsonline.org.uk/](http://www.forsonline.org.uk/)



## What

do we need to do?

### Winter working checklist

- Ensure adequate access lighting to all areas. Where necessary provide lighting towers which can be moved. Also provide adequate task lighting.
- Maintain pedestrian access free from slippery conditions such as ice, snow or excessive water. If required have available salt bins to grit surfaces in cold weather.
- Assess the risk to personnel from wind, rain or snow particularly if they are working at height. STOP activities when necessary (handheld anemometers allow for easy measurement of wind speeds during lifting operations and work from scaffolds).
- Employees should be wearing PPE suitable for the prevailing weather conditions.
- Use simple Stretch & Flex exercises to warm up before starting work.
- Anyone experiencing the signs or symptoms of fatigue should report this to their manager or supervisor.
- Ensure trade contractors and suppliers vehicles are FORS compliant.

## Q&A

What did we understand?

1. What date do the clocks go back in October?
  - a) 22<sup>nd</sup>
  - b) 24<sup>th</sup>
  - c) 25<sup>th</sup>
  - d) 28<sup>th</sup>
  - e) 29<sup>th</sup> – correct answer
2. Can you name some physical or mental signs of fatigue?
3. What type of observations or near miss events would indicate the potential for worker fatigue?
4. What should you do if you feel muscle pains before or during work? – correct answer: report them straight away to your supervisor