

# DOES DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME SAVE ENERGY? EVIDENCE FROM A NATURAL EXPERIMENT IN INDIANA

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**Abstract**—We take advantage of a natural experiment in the state of Indiana to estimate the effect of daylight saving time (DST) on residential electricity consumption. Our main finding is that, contrary to the policy's intent, DST increases electricity demand. The findings are consistent with simulation results that identify a trade-off between reducing demand for lighting and increasing demand for heating and cooling. We estimate a cost to Indiana households of \$9 million per year in increased electricity bills. We also estimate social costs of increased pollution emissions between \$1.7 to \$5.5 million per year.

## I. Introduction

SEVENTY-SIX nations currently practice daylight saving time (DST), which directly affects more than 1.6 billion people worldwide. The well-known “spring forward, fall back” describes the annual ritual: turn clocks forward one hour in the spring and turn them back one hour in the fall. Less well known is the fact that DST is a policy designed to conserve energy.<sup>1</sup> Benjamin Franklin (1784) is credited with the basic idea after observing that people slept during sunlit hours in the morning and burned candles for illumination in the evening. He argued that if people adjusted their schedules to earlier in the day during summer months, when day length is longest, an immense sum of tallow and wax could be saved by the “economy of using sunshine rather than candles.”<sup>2</sup> It was William Willet (1907), however, who first proposed the simple advancement of clock time during summer months in order to avoid “The Waste of Daylight.”

The idea finally took hold during World War I when Germany implemented a DST policy, with the aim of reducing demand for electrical lighting to free up more coal for the

war effort. Thirty-one other nations followed with DST policies, including the United States, but the practice was generally repealed worldwide soon after the war. Decades later, and for the same reason, 52 nations implemented various DST policies during World War II. Year-round DST was practiced in the United States for three years and then repealed entirely.

The first DST law in the United States that was not part of a wartime initiative was the Uniform Time Act of 1966, which established that DST would begin on the last Sunday in April and end on the last Sunday in October.<sup>3</sup> Then the oil embargo of the early 1970s prompted temporary changes, when the Emergency Daylight Saving Time Energy Conservation Act of 1973 imposed year-round DST for fifteen months. A more enduring change, again with the intent of energy conservation, occurred in 1986, when the start date was moved forward three weeks. The DST regime in practice today includes a further extension authorized within the Energy Policy Act of 2005. Having begun in 2007, DST now starts three weeks earlier, on the second Sunday in March, and lasts one week longer, until the first Sunday in November. Figure 1 shows the sunrise and sunset times, the time shifting of DST, the 2007 extensions on both ends, and the day length throughout the year (the middle line) for a representative location in southern Indiana, the regional focus of this paper.

Congressional debate about the most recent extension to DST focused on the potential energy savings. While politicians argued that each additional day of DST would save the equivalent of 100,000 barrels of oil per day (Congressional Record 2005a, 2005b), surprisingly little research has been conducted to determine whether DST actually saves energy.<sup>4</sup> Even among the few studies that have been conducted, the evidence is mixed. Nevertheless, with worldwide energy demand expanding rapidly, along with concerns about climate change, it is increasingly important to know whether DST, one of the most uniformly applied policies on the planet, has the intended effect of energy conservation.

In this paper, we further the understanding of DST effects on energy consumption with a focus on residential electricity demand. Our research design takes advantage of the unique history of DST in of Indiana, combined with a data

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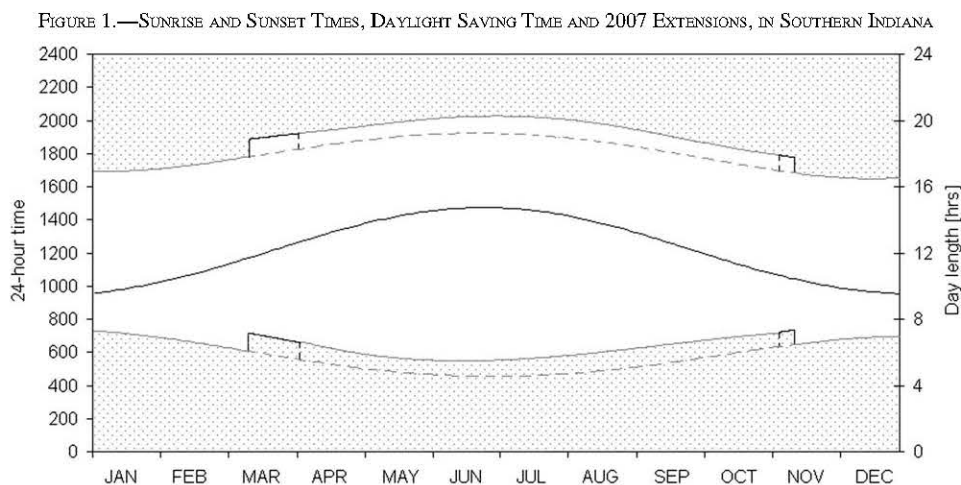
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<sup>1</sup> A common misperception is that DST is an agricultural policy. Farmers have historically been one of the most organized groups against the practice of DST because it requires them to work in morning darkness for an extra hour in order to coordinate with the timing of markets. See Preau (2005) for a detailed discussion of DST's long and controversial history.

<sup>2</sup> To encourage the behavior, Franklin (1784) satirically proposed firing cannons to awaken people at dawn and a tax on window shutters that keep out sunlight. Interestingly, Franklin also recognized that his calculations of the economic savings during the summer were an underestimate because of general equilibrium effects. He wrote, “I have calculated upon only one half of the year, and much may be saved in the other, though the days are shorter. Besides, the immense stock of wax and tallow left unconsumed during the summer, will probably make candles much cheaper for the ensuing winter, and continue them cheaper as long as the proposed reformation shall be supported.”

<sup>3</sup> Individual states could opt for an exemption, but only Arizona, Hawaii, Indiana, and a few U.S. territories have done so in various ways over the years. The exemption in Indiana, as we will see, provides the basis for this paper.

<sup>4</sup> Other effects of DST have been studied in more detail. These include studies that investigate the effects on safety (Coate & Markowitz, 2004; Sullivan & Flannagan, 2002; Coren 1996a, 1996b), health (Kantermann, Juda, Merrow, Roenneberg, 2007), economic coordination (Hamermesh, Myers, & Pockock, 2008), and stock market performance (Kamstra, Kramer, & Levi, 2000, 2002; Pinegar, 2002).



set of monthly billing cycles for the majority of households in the southern portion of the state for 2004 through 2006. While some counties in Indiana have historically practiced DST, the majority have not. This changed with a state law requiring all counties to begin practicing DST in 2006. The initial heterogeneity of DST among Indiana counties and the policy change in 2006 provide a natural experiment to empirically identify the relationship between DST and residential electricity demand.

The results provide the first estimates of DST effects on electricity demand using residential microdata. A unique feature of the research design is that we are able to estimate an overall DST effect and different effects throughout the year over the entire DST period, including the periods of transition. We also simulate the effect of DST on household electricity consumption using an engineering model (eQuest). These results are comparable to the empirical estimates and highlight seasonal differences in the quantity and timing of electricity demand for lighting, heating, and cooling. A further contribution of the paper is that we estimate changes in pollution emissions due to DST and quantify the associated social costs and benefits.

We find that DST results in a 1% increase in residential electricity demand, and the effect is highly statistically significant. We also find that the effect is not constant throughout the DST period. In particular, DST causes the greatest increase in consumption later in the year, with October estimates ranging from an increase of 2% to nearly 4%. Consistent with Benjamin Franklin's original conjecture, our simulation results show that DST saves on electricity used for illumination but increases electricity used for heating and cooling. Both the empirical and simulation results suggest that the latter effect is larger than the former. Moreover, we find that DST costs Indiana households an average of \$3.29 per year in increased electricity bills, which aggregates to approximately \$9 million for the entire state. Finally, the social costs in terms of increased pollution emissions range between \$1.7 and \$5.5 million per year.

While these results clearly run counter to the policy intent of DST regarding electricity consumption, some limitations should be kept in mind. Because of data availability, we are not able to estimate the effects of DST on commercial electricity demand, which could be positive or negative. Furthermore, our study focuses on Indiana because of the state's unique natural experiment, but DST effects are likely to differ in other regions of the United States. Despite these limitations for generalizing the results, we argue later in the paper that residential consumption is likely to be the portion of aggregate electricity demand that is most responsive to DST. Moreover, because of its climate and population, Indiana is one of the most representative states in terms of demand for heating and cooling. Hence, the results should at the very least raise questions about the rationale for DST as a conservation policy.

The remainder of the paper proceeds as follows. The next section reviews existing evidence on the effect of DST on electricity consumption. Section III describes the research design and data collection. Section IV contains the empirical analysis. Section V provides a discussion of the results with comparisons to engineering simulations and cost estimates. Section VI concludes with a brief summary and further remarks about the generalizability of our results.

## II. Existing Evidence

The most widely cited study of the DST effect on electricity demand is the U.S. Department of Transportation (1975) report that was required by the Emergency Daylight Saving Time Energy Conservation Act of 1973. The most compelling part of the study is its use of the equivalent day normalization technique, which is essentially a difference-in-differences approach. Using hourly electricity load data from 22 different utilities for a period of days before and after transitions in and out of DST, days are partitioned into DST-influenced periods (morning, evening) and uninfluenced periods (midday, night). It is then assumed that

differences in the difference between influenced and uninfluenced periods, before and after the transition, are due to the DST effect. The results indicate an average load reduction of approximately 1% during the spring and fall transition periods, but a subsequent evaluation of the study, conducted by the National Bureau of Standards (Filliben, 1976), concludes that the energy savings are questionable and statistically insignificant.

The California Energy Commission (2001) conducts a simulation-based study to estimate the effects of DST on statewide electricity consumption. A system of equations is estimated to explain hourly electricity demand as a function of employment, weather, temperature, and sunlight. The commission then simulates electricity use under different DST regimes. The results indicate that DST leaves electricity consumption virtually unchanged between May and September but may reduce consumption between 0.15% and 0.3% during April and October.<sup>5</sup> More recently, the CEC (2001) modeling approach is used to consider the actual extensions to DST that occurred in 2007 (CEC, 2007). Based on the spring and fall extensions, the simulation predicts a decrease in electricity consumption of 0.56%, but the 95% confidence interval includes 0 and ranges from a decrease of 2.2% to an increase of 1.1%.

As required by the Energy Policy Act of 2005, the U.S. Department of Energy (2008) estimates the effect on electricity consumption of the 2007 DST extensions. The study is based on utility data and comparisons of 2006 and 2007 consumption during the period of extended DST. The main finding is evidence in support of electricity savings of 0.5% for each day of extended DST. Increases in demand are found in the mornings, but these are more than offset by decreases in demand during the evenings. Electricity savings are slightly greater during the spring transition compared to the fall transition, and southern regions of the United States experience smaller savings.<sup>6</sup>

Kellogg and Wolff (2008) take advantage of a quasi-experiment that occurred in Australia with the extension of DST in conjunction with the Sydney Olympic Games in 2000. Using a comparison of electricity load data from two states, where only one experienced the extension of DST, they find that DST increases demand for electricity in the morning and decreases demand in the evening. While in some cases the net effect is an increase in demand, the combined results are not statistically different from 0. Kellogg and Wolff also apply the CEC simulation technique to determine whether it reasonably predicts what actually occurred with the Australian DST extension. They find that

the simulation fails to predict the morning increase in consumption and overestimates the evening decrease. Their study provides the first empirical results that question whether DST policies actually produce the intended effect of reducing electricity demand.

Using an engineering simulation model, Rock (1997) also finds evidence that DST might increase, rather than decrease, electricity consumption. He calibrates a model of energy consumption for a typical residence using utility records and chosen parameters for construction type, residential appliances, heating and cooling systems, lighting requirements, and number of occupants. In order to account for differences in weather and geographic location, the model simulates DST scenarios for 224 different locations within the United States. The results indicate that DST increases electricity consumption by 0.244% when averaged over all locations.

A similar methodology is employed in two recent studies that take place in Japan, where DST is continually debated but not currently practiced. Fong et al. (2007) use a simulation model to investigate the effects of DST on household lighting, and they find a reduction in electricity consumption that differs by region.<sup>7</sup> Shimoda et al. (2007) conduct a similar exercise, with the added consideration of DST's effect on residential cooling. When considering both effects, they find that implementing DST results in a 0.13% increase in residential electricity consumption. The underlying mechanism for the result is that residential cooling is greater in the evening than in the morning, and implementing DST aligns an additional hour of higher outdoor air temperature and solar radiation with the primary cooling times of the evening.

This review of existing studies suggests that the evidence to date is inconclusive about the overall effect of DST on electricity consumption. None of the empirical studies finds an overall effect that is statistically different from 0, and the simulation-based studies find mixed results. What is more, no empirical study has ever been conducted that estimates the overall DST effect throughout the entire year. Hence, given the widespread practice of DST, its conservation rationale, and the recent changes to policy, there is a clear need for more empirical evidence about the potential impacts of DST on electricity consumption.

### III. Research Design and Data Collection

Our study takes advantage of the unique history of DST in Indiana. The practice of DST has been the subject of long-standing controversy in the state, due in large part to the importance of agriculture in Indiana, and the state's split between the Eastern and Central Time Zones. For more than thirty years prior to 2006, the resultant policy has been

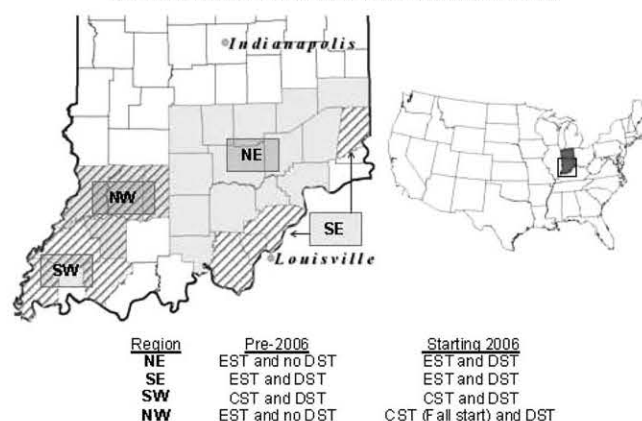
<sup>5</sup> The Indiana Fiscal Policy Institute (2001) attempts to replicate the CEC approach and estimate the potential effects of DST in Indiana; however, the results are not conclusive. While the statistical models are reported as very preliminary and appear to have never been completed, the results indicate that DST in Indiana could either increase or decrease electricity consumption.

<sup>6</sup> A similar set of results is found in an earlier report that sought to anticipate the potential energy-saving impacts of extended DST (U.S. Department of Energy, 2006).

<sup>7</sup> Aries and Newsham (2008) review other studies, many of them technical reports not published in peer-reviewed journals, that focus on lighting energy use in the United States and other countries. They find no clear DST effect other than some evidence for a reduction in evening peak demand for electricity.



FIGURE 2.—SETS OF INDIANA COUNTIES IN THE STUDY WITH DIFFERENT TIME ZONES AND DIFFERENTIAL PRACTICE OF DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME



three different time scenarios within the state: 77 counties on Eastern Standard Time (EST) that did not practice DST, 10 counties clustered in the northwestern and southwestern corners of the state on Central Standard Time (CST) that did practice DST, and 5 counties in the southeastern portion of the state on EST that did practice DST.<sup>8</sup> The different time zones changed in 2006 when the entire state began practicing DST as required by a law that passed the state legislature in 2005. Also beginning in 2006, a handful of counties switched from EST to CST.

Focusing on the southern portion of Indiana, the shaded counties in figure 2 are those in our study. It is useful to partition the counties into four sets, as shown in the figure. The southeast and southwest counties experienced no change; they practiced DST prior to 2006 and have remained on EST and CST, respectively. The northeast counties began practicing DST for the first time in 2006 but remained on EST. The northwest counties also began practicing DST for the first time in 2006, but changed time zones from EST to CST simultaneously at the spring transition into DST. In effect, the northwest counties did not advance clocks one hour in April 2006 but did turn them back one hour at the end of October 2006.<sup>9</sup>

The pattern of time and timing in southern Indiana creates a natural experiment to identify the effect of DST on residential electricity demand. The empirical strategy relies on having monthly billing data for households located within

the different sets of counties before and after the policy change in 2006. Considering only the DST periods of each year, we can partition electricity demand into pre-2006 and 2006 periods. Among the different counties, we thus have treatment and control groups when moving from the before to after period. The northeast counties serve as a treatment group because they began practicing DST for the first time in 2006. The other sets of counties serve as a control group because their clock time never changed during the DST period of the year, before and after the policy change.<sup>10</sup> The key identification assumption is that after controlling for changes in observables, such as weather and the practice of DST, changes from year to year in electricity demand would otherwise be the same for the treatment and control groups of counties. With this assumption, identification of the DST effect comes from a difference-in-differences estimate between the two groups, before and after the policy change.

Table 1 shows selected variables from the 2000 U.S. Census for the different sets of counties and in total. The majority of people live in the eastern counties. The northern counties have a larger fraction of the population classified as rural and farm, although the overall proportion of people living on farms is small. All four sets of counties are similar with respect to median age and average household size. Electric heat is more common in the eastern counties, and income is higher in the southern counties, where average commute times are also somewhat higher.

We obtained data on residential electricity consumption from Duke Energy, which provides electrical service in southern Indiana to the majority of households in the counties shown in figure 2.<sup>11</sup> The data set consists of monthly billing information for all households serviced by Duke Energy in the study area from January 2004 through December 2006. All households in the service area faced the same standard residential rate, and there were no rate changes between 2004 and 2006.

Several variables are important for our analysis. The meter position is a unique number for each electricity meter. We refer to these positions as residences, and for each one, we have data for its postal code and county. For each monthly observation at each residence, we also have codes that identify which ones belong to the same tenant. This enables us to account for the fact that people move and to identify the observations that belong to the same tenant within each residence.<sup>12</sup> Each observation includes usage amount, which is electricity consumption in kilowatt-hours

<sup>8</sup> These differences in the practice of DST were possible because of a 1972 amendment to the Uniform Time Act of 1966 (15 USC 260-67). The amendment was a direct response to Indiana's ongoing time regime debate, and it permitted states with multiple time zones to allow exemptions from the practice of DST.

<sup>9</sup> Northeast counties included in the study: Bartholomew, Brown, Crawford, Decatur, Franklin, Jackson, Jefferson, Jennings, Lawrence, Monroe, Orange, Scott, Ripley, and Washington. Southeast counties: Clark, Dearborn, Floyd, and Harrison. Southwest counties: Gibson, Posey, and Warrick. Northwest counties: Daviess, Knox, Martin, and Pike. Counties in southern Indiana not included in the study because data were not available from Duke Energy are the following: Ohio and Switzerland in the southeast, Spencer and Vanderburgh in the southwest, and Dubois and Perry in the northwest.

<sup>10</sup> Recall that clock time did not change for all counties in the control group, but for different reasons. The policy had no effect on the southeast and southwest counties, but clock time did not change for the northwest counties because the first practice of DST and the switch in time zones occurred simultaneously.

<sup>11</sup> Cinergy formerly provided electrical service in southern Indiana but was acquired by Duke Energy in 2005. Alternative electrical service providers are the investor-owned utility Vectren and rural electric membership cooperatives.

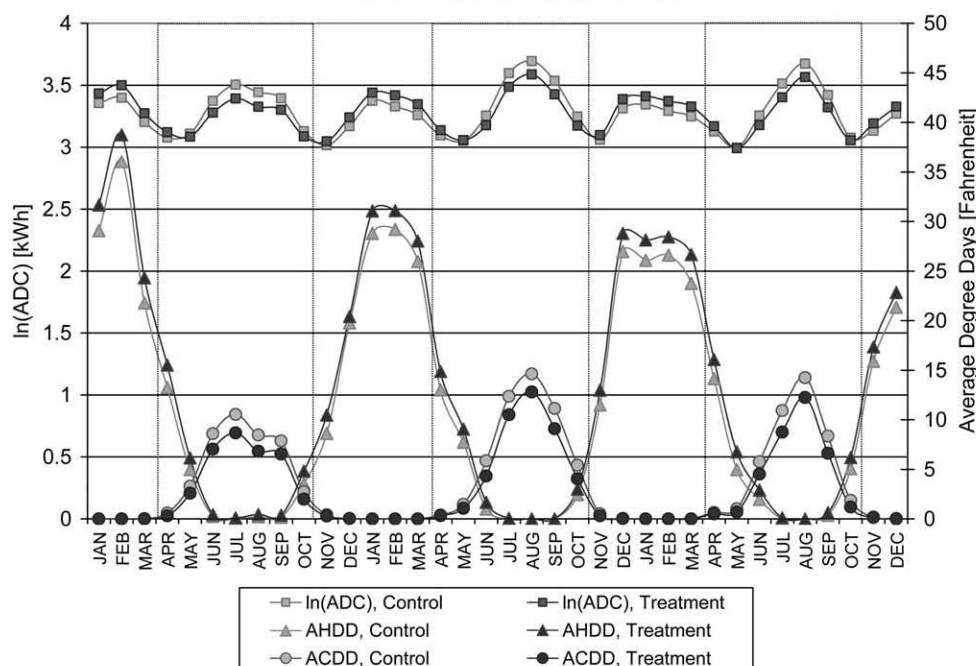
<sup>12</sup> The data do not permit us to follow tenants from one residence to another, but this is not a limitation for our analysis.

TABLE 2.—DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR SETS OF COUNTIES IN THE DATA SET

Variable	Set of Counties				Total
	Southeast	Southwest	Northeast	Northwest	
Observations	1,295,108	316,746	5,097,035	558,503	7,267,392
Residences	39,643	9,595	157,477	17,174	223,889
Tenants	66,148	14,387	276,339	27,209	384,083
Average daily consumption (kWh/day)	35.10 (25.26)	35.91 (26.08)	35.86 (28.99)	35.00 (26.95)	35.66 (28.08)
Average cooling degree days	4.01 (5.09)	3.88 (4.92)	3.14 (4.18)	3.59 (4.53)	3.36 (4.43)
Average heating degree days	11.19 (11.29)	11.86 (11.82)	12.91 (12.44)	12.47 (12.30)	12.53 (12.23)

Standard deviations reported in parentheses.

FIGURE 3.—AVERAGE DAILY CONSUMPTION, AVERAGE HEATING DEGREE DAYS, AND AVERAGE COOLING DEGREE DAYS, BY MONTH, 2004–2006, CONTROL AND TREATMENT SETS OF COUNTIES



trol and treatment sets of counties, along with AHDD and ACDD. As expected, the correspondence between ADC and the weather variables is close. Electricity demand is greater in months with high AHDD and ACDD. Also worth noting are the differences between the treatment and control groups. Inspection of the trends for ADC reveals that the control group tends to have greater electricity demand during the DST periods, while the treatment group tends to have greater electricity demand during the non-DST periods. It appears that differences in AHDD and ACDD influence this pattern, as the control group tends to be hotter during the DST periods and the treatment group tends to be colder during the non-DST periods. These patterns underscore the importance of accounting for weather when trying to explain variation in electricity demand.

#### IV. Empirical Analysis

Indiana's 2006 change to DST policy provides a natural experiment for identifying the effect of DST on residential

electricity demand. The approach is based on a comparison between the treatment and control groups of counties. Referring back to in figure 1, recall that the northeast counties began practicing DST in 2006. The other sets of counties either practiced DST for all the years 2004 through 2006 or had no change in clock time during the DST period in 2006 due to the offsetting effect of changing time zones. Our identification strategy thus comes from a difference-in-differences (DD) comparison between the two groups, before and after the DST policy change.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>15</sup> An alternative identification strategy is to compare the DST and non-DST periods with a DD approach in the years prior to the policy change. This strategy relies on the assumption that different sets of counties would have the same differences in consumption at different times of the year, if not for the differential practice of DST. We find this assumption less plausible because of the potential confounders of differences in the distribution of air conditioning or electric heat. We estimate models using this approach and find results with magnitudes nearly twice as large as those presented here but do not include these data here. The following estimates should therefore be considered conservative.

TABLE 3.—DIFFERENCES IN AVERAGE DAILY CONSUMPTION BETWEEN 2004–2005 AND 2006

	DST Period		Non-DST Period	
	Treatment: Northeast	Control: Southeast, Southwest, Northwest	Treatment: Northeast	Control: Southeast, Southwest, Northwest
Years 2004–2005	3.1256	3.2239	3.2940	3.2147
Year 2006	3.1814	3.2607	3.3068	3.2366
Difference	0.0558	0.0368	0.0128	0.0219
Difference-in-difference (DD)	0.0191		–0.0091	

Average daily consumption reported as  $\ln ADC$ . In order to account for the unbalanced panel, we first calculate averages within tenants and then average between tenants. Difference is interpreted as the percentage change from the years 2004–2005 to year 2006. Difference-in-difference is the percentage difference in the treatment group compared to the control group. Differences may not compute exactly due to rounding. For the non-DST control group, we exclude electricity bills in the northwest counties during November and December 2006, when and where there was a policy change due to the shifting of time zones.

We begin with a simple comparison of means for average daily consumption. First, consider only the monthly electricity bills with start and end dates entirely within the DST period of each year. The first two columns of table 3 report  $\ln ADC$  for both the treatment and control groups, before and after the policy change. We also report the before- and after- difference and the DD between groups. These comparisons indicate that electricity demand increased for both groups, but demand increased 1.9% more in the treatment group. Although this result suggests that DST may increase electricity demand, the simple comparison of means does not provide a formal test or control for other variables that may be changing differentially over time between groups, namely, weather.

As a point of comparison, we conduct the same procedure using electricity bills with start and end dates entirely outside the DST period of each year. This calculation can be thought of as a quasi-counterfactual because it provides an estimate of how the two groups differ in their differences to 2006 during the non-DST period of the year, when there was no policy change.<sup>16</sup> We again find that electricity demand increased for both groups, but in this case, demand increased 0.91% less in the treatment group. The fact that this result, when there was no policy change, has a lower magnitude and the opposite sign provides further evidence that DST may increase electricity demand.

To more rigorously investigate the DST effect on residential electricity demand, we estimate standard DD, treatment-effects models. We once again begin using only electricity bills that fall entirely within the DST period of each year.<sup>17</sup> Our regression models, which we estimate with the fixed-effects estimator, have the following general specification:

$$\ln ADC_{it} = \delta Year2006_t \times NE_i + f(ACDD_{it}, AHDD_{it}, NE_i) + \theta_t + v_i + \varepsilon_{it}, \quad (1)$$

where subscripts  $i$  denote tenants,  $Year2006_t$  is a dummy variable for whether the observation occurs during 2006,

$NE_i$  is a dummy variable for whether the residence is in the northeast set of counties,  $\theta_t$  is a time-specific intercept,  $v_i$  is a tenant-specific intercept, and  $\varepsilon_{it}$  is the error term. Equation (1) does not specify a particular functional form for the weather variables because we try several different specifications, some of which allow the effect of weather to differ between the treatment and control groups. The estimate of  $\delta$  is of primary interest: it captures the average DD in electricity demand for 2006 between the treatment and control groups. Again, the key identification assumption is that, after controlling for differences in weather and time-invariant unobserved heterogeneity among tenants, electricity demand would have followed the same trend in the treatment and control groups, but for the effect of the change in DST.

All standard errors are clustered at the billing cycle within each county over all months in order to make statistical inference robust to potential serial and spatial correlation. The importance of considering serial correlation in DD estimation is well known (see Bertrand, Duflo, & Mullainathan, 2004), and clustering at this level accounts for potential serial correlation of household electricity demand for each tenant. Clustering at the billing cycle also has the advantage of accounting for potential serial correlation due to the timing of meter reads earlier or later in the month, which is not captured with month-year dummies used to control for the time trend in specification (1). The relatively broad level of clustering should also allay concerns about potential spatial correlation. Within counties, billing cycles are closely aligned with neighborhoods because they are designed as walking routes for meter reading. The clustering thus accounts for spatial correlation that may arise because of unobserved neighborhood characteristics, such as the density of housing, type and date of construction, and possibly socioeconomic characteristics.

Table 4 reports the fixed-effects estimates of equation (1). We provide four specifications that account for weather in different ways. The variables  $ACDD$  and  $AHDD$  enter linearly in Models a and b. The only difference is that Model b includes interactions with the treatment group so that weather is allowed to affect electricity demand differently in the treatment and control groups. Models c and d are more flexible, with dummy variables for  $ACDD$  and  $AHDD$  binned at each integer. This includes eighteen dummies for  $ACDD$  and sixteen dummies for  $AHDD$ . In

<sup>16</sup> For this calculation, we exclude electricity bills in the northwest counties during November and December 2006, when and where there is the confounding effect of a time-zone change.

<sup>17</sup> To be even more specific, for these DST and non-DST models, we drop the monthly electricity bills that straddle the date of transition in or out of DST. Later in this section, we use these dropped observations to estimate the DST effect at the spring and fall transitions.

TABLE 4.—NATURAL EXPERIMENT DST PERIOD FIXED-EFFECTS MODELS FOR CHANGED AVERAGE DAILY CONSUMPTION IN 2006

	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
Year 2006 $\times$ Treatment group	0.0096** (0.0030)	0.0080** (0.0029)	0.0103** (0.0027)	0.0089** (0.0029)
Average cooling degree days (ACDD)	0.0487** (0.0012)	0.0481** (0.0013)	—	—
Average heating degree days (AHDD)	0.0035** (0.0011)	0.0005 (0.0013)	—	—
ACDD $\times$ Treatment group	—	−0.0004 (0.0009)	—	—
AHDD $\times$ Treatment group	—	0.0029* (0.0013)	—	—
ACDD dummies	—	—	Yes	Yes
AHDD dummies	—	—	Yes	Yes
ACDD dummies $\times$ Treatment group	—	—	—	Yes
AHDD dummies $\times$ Treatment group	—	—	—	Yes
Month-year dummies	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	3,685,287	3,685,287	3,685,287	3,685,287
Tenants	343,530	343,530	343,530	343,530
$R^2$ (within)	0.310	0.310	0.310	0.310

The left-hand-side variable is  $\ln ADC$ . Standard errors, reported in parentheses, are clustered at the Billing Cycle  $\times$  County level, of which there are 388 clusters. Models c and d include eighteen categories for ACDD and sixteen categories for AHDD. All weather dummies are also interacted with the treatment group in Model d. \*\* and \* indicate statistical significance at the 99% and 95% levels, respectively.

TABLE 5.—QUASI-COUNTERFACTUAL NON-DST PERIOD FIXED-EFFECTS MODELS FOR CHANGED AVERAGE DAILY CONSUMPTION, 2006

	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
Year 2006 $\times$ Treatment group	−0.0030 (0.0029)	−0.0004 (0.0028)	−0.0064* (0.0031)	−0.0029 (0.0031)
Average cooling degree days (ACDD)	0.0065 (0.0292)	−0.0483** (0.0178)	0.0244 (0.0248)	−0.0060 (0.0211)
Average heating degree days (AHDD)	0.0150** (0.0004)	0.0144** (0.0005)	—	—
ACDD $\times$ Treatment group	—	0.1008* (0.0494)	—	0.0453 (0.0424)
AHDD $\times$ Treatment group	—	0.0008 (0.0005)	—	—
ACDD dummies	—	—	—	—
AHDD dummies	—	—	Yes	Yes
ACDD dummies $\times$ Treatment group	—	—	—	—
AHDD dummies $\times$ Treatment group	—	—	—	Yes
NWchg2006	0.0062 (0.0077)	0.0039 (0.0076)	0.0041 (0.0079)	0.0015 (0.0076)
Month-year dummies	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	2,374,790	2,374,790	2,374,790	2,374,790
Tenants	340,328	340,328	340,328	340,328
$R^2$ (within)	0.080	0.080	0.080	0.081

The left-hand side variable is  $\ln ADC$ . Standard errors, reported in parentheses, are clustered at the County  $\times$  Billing Cycle level, of which there are 387 clusters. Models c and d include 31 categories for AHDD, and each of these dummy variables is interacted with the treatment group in Model d. \*\* and \* indicate statistical significance at the 99% and 95% levels, respectively.

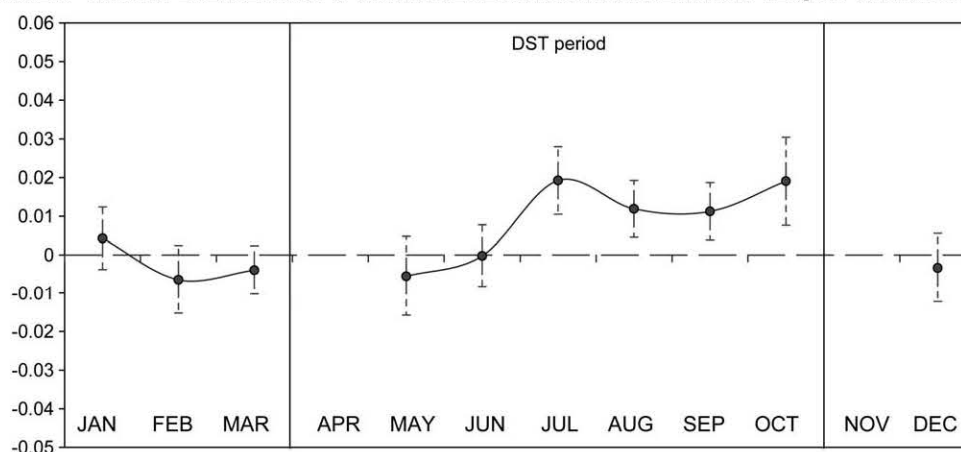
parallel, the only difference in Model d is that each weather dummy variable is also interacted with the treatment group to allow differences in the effect of weather between groups. The estimate of  $\delta$  for all four models is positive, highly statistically significant, and of similar magnitude. The estimates fall between 0.008 and 0.0103. The interpretation is that DST causes an increase in electricity demand that ranges from 0.8% to 1.03% over the entire DST period.

Table 5 reports the fixed-effects estimates for the quasi-counterfactual experiment. Using only data for the non-DST period of each year, we estimate a slightly modified version of equation (1). To take advantage of all the data, we include an additional dummy variable, *NWchg2006*, to account for the time zone change that occurred in the north-west counties at the end of 2006. Another difference is that

Models c and d do not include dummy variables for ACDD, as there are exceedingly few cooling degree days in Indiana during the non-DST period of the year. These models do, however, include 32 dummy variables for AHDD, which are also interacted with the treatment group in Model d. All estimates of the quasi-counterfactual DST effect are negative and have relatively small magnitudes, ranging from 0.3% to 0.6%. While three of the four estimates are not statistically distinguishable from 0, despite having close to 2.4 million observations, the coefficient in Model c is marginally statistically significant. Generally we interpret these results in support of our key identification assumption that the trend in electricity demand is similar between the treatment and control groups of counties, other than for the change in DST policy and differences due to weather.



FIGURE 4.—MONTHLY ESTIMATES AND 95% CONFIDENCE INTERVALS FOR THE DST EFFECT AND THE QUASI-COUNTERFACTUAL



We now disaggregate our estimate of the overall DST effect into monthly estimates in order to investigate whether the effect of DST differs throughout the year. In particular, we estimate equation (1) separately for each month of the year based on the meter read date. Following the same practice, we estimate equations for both the DST and non-DST periods, and we continue to exclude observations that straddle the DST transitions, meaning that we do not have monthly models for April or November. For simplicity, we report disaggregated estimates consistent with inclusion of the weather variables in column a in tables 4 and 5.<sup>18</sup> Rather than report each of the ten equations, we focus on estimates of  $\delta$ , that is, the DST and quasi-counterfactual effects. We illustrate these results graphically in figure 4, along with the 95% confidence intervals (standard errors are again clustered at the County  $\times$  Billing Cycle level over all months). We find that the effect of DST is not statistically different from 0 in May and June. It is, however, positive and statistically significant for July through October, with magnitudes ranging from 1% to 2%. As expected, during the non-DST months, we find no statistically significant differences between the treatment and control groups.

The fact that monthly billing data are structured around billing cycles, with consistent read dates within each month, allows us to decompose the estimates even further. We separate the observations into billing cohorts where the month is divided into three segments: those with read dates in the first third of the month, the second third of the month, and the last third of the month.<sup>19</sup> We then estimate parallel models for each cohort in each month. In effect, this disaggregates

the monthly estimates into third-of-month estimates. These results are shown in figure 5. We again do not find consistent evidence for DST effects in May and June, yet through the DST period, there is a clear upward trend. In the later half of the DST period, nearly every estimate indicates that DST causes an increase in electricity consumption, with the effect appearing to be strongest during the October read dates, when estimates range between 2% and 4%. In the non-DST periods, all coefficients except one are not statically different from 0, as one would expect if in the DST periods we are identifying the effect of changing the clock.

The final set of models that we estimate takes advantage of the monthly observations that straddle the transition dates in and out of the DST period. We have thus far dropped these observations from the analysis, but we now use them to focus on estimates of the DST effect at the time of transition. In parallel with equation (1), we estimate models for the spring and fall transitions that have the following form:

$$\ln ADC_{it} = \delta DSTfrac \times Year2006_t \times NE_i + \beta_1 ACDD_{it} + \beta_2 AHDD_{it} + \gamma_1 Year2005_t + \gamma_2 Year2006_t + v_i + \varepsilon_{it}, \quad (2)$$

where the main difference is the interaction of *DSTfrac* with the treatment effect variable.<sup>20</sup> The new term is the fraction of the number of days in the billing cycle that are in the DST period. Once again, the coefficient  $\delta$  is of primary interest, and its interpretation remains the same: the percentage change in average daily consumption due to the practice of DST. But here the effect is identified off the marginal changes in the number of days in DST.

Table 6 reports the fixed-effects estimates of equation (2) for both the spring and fall models. For the spring transition, we find a positive and statistically significant effect,

<sup>18</sup> Alternative specifications of the weather variables have little effect on the coefficient estimates of interest.

<sup>19</sup> Because there are 21 billing cycles in each month, this procedure means that there are 7 billing cycles in each cohort. In principle, we could estimate the DST effect for each billing cycle separately rather than combining them into cohorts. But there is a trade-off between having more precisely timed estimates and having fewer data on which to estimate the effect. We thus follow the segmentation in Reiss and White (2003), whereby 7 billing cycles are combined into one cohort.

<sup>20</sup> We again report only specifications in which the weather variables enter linearly and without interactions with the treatment group.



FIGURE 5.—THIRD-OF-MONTH ESTIMATES AND 95% CONFIDENCE INTERVALS FOR THE DST EFFECT AND THE QUASI-COUNTERFACTUAL

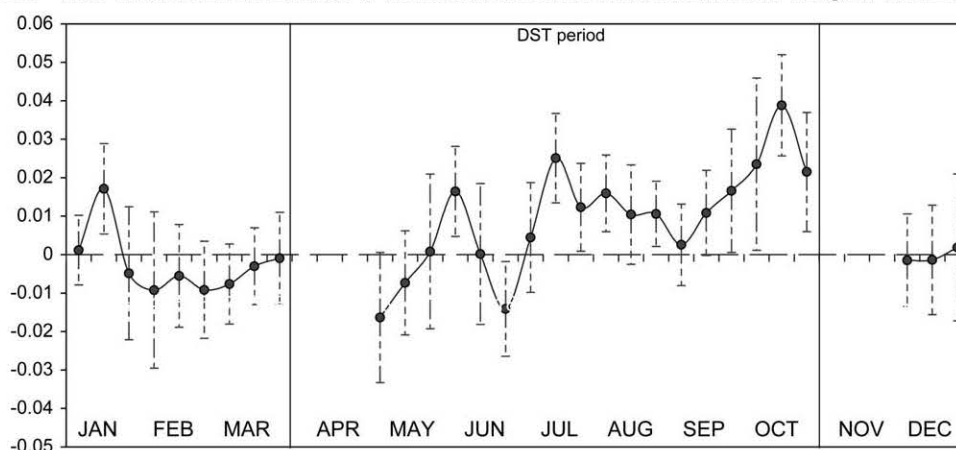


TABLE 6.—FIXED-EFFECTS MODELS FOR THE SPRING AND FALL TRANSITIONS IN AND OUT OF DST

	Transition Models	
	Spring	Fall
Fraction DST days $\times$ Year 2006	0.0123** (0.0060)	0.0048 (0.0069)
$\times$ Treatment group		
Average cooling degree days (ACDD)	0.0347** (0.0040)	0.0501** (0.0066)
Average heating degree days (AHDD)	0.0126** (0.0007)	0.0131** (0.0009)
Year 2005	0.0130** (0.0020)**	0.0043 (0.0029)
Year 2006	0.0148** (0.0029)	0.0257** (0.0065)
Number of observations	580,888	603,253
Number of residents	282,703	283,964
$R^2$ (within)	0.008	0.036

The left-hand-side variable is  $\ln ADC$ . Standard errors, reported in parentheses, are clustered at the County  $\times$  Billing Cycle level, of which there are 374 and 277 clusters for the spring and fall models, respectively. \*\* and \* indicate statistical significance at the 99% and 95% levels, respectively.

with a magnitude of approximately 1.2%. The coefficient estimate for the fall transition model is also positive but has a very small magnitude and is not statistically different from 0. While both of these transition results are of interest, they should be interpreted with caution because they are based on an attempt to extract a daily effect out of inherently monthly data. This, of course, makes it difficult to precisely estimate the effect. The same caution does not apply to the estimates reported previously, where the models are based on data for which all days in the monthly billing cycle are subject to the same treatment effect.

## V. Discussion

In this section, we consider two questions. First, what are the underlying mechanisms that give rise to the estimates of the DST effect on residential electricity consumption? To answer this question, we provide evidence from an engineering simulation model. Second, given that DST causes an overall increase in residential electricity consumption,

what are the costs? We answer this question in terms of increased residential electricity costs and the social costs of increased pollution emissions.

### A. Engineering Simulations

We ran simulations on eQuest, an interface program based on a versatile U.S. Department of Energy simulation model of a building's energy demand, including electricity.<sup>21</sup> The program has standardized design parameters for various building types, but users can alter all parameters. We ran many simulations with different sets of parameters based on advice we received from program experts. Although the numerical estimates differ among simulations, the general pattern of results remains the same. We report the results for a single-family residence in southern Indiana with parameter settings thought to be most representative.<sup>22</sup> Using 2006 as the calendar year, we ran simulations for the DST periods of the year, with and without the option to implement DST.

The first column of table 7 reports the simulated percentage change in electricity consumption by month. Electri-

<sup>21</sup> The program description and download can be found at [www.doe2.com](http://www.doe2.com). eQuest has the complete DOE-2 (version 2.2) building energy use simulation program embedded. Rock (1997) uses an older version of DOE-2.

<sup>22</sup> Details about the program settings for the results presented here are the following. We use the multifamily, low-rise schematic to model a single-family dwelling in Evansville. The dwelling is a single-story, wood-frame construction, with front and rear entry points and appropriate square footage for a family of four (approximately 1800 square feet). The rectangular footprint (35  $\times$  51 feet) is oriented north-south in the length-wise direction, with doors on both north and south sides. We modify the roof to pitched with recommended default settings. Day lighting controls are set at 100% to simulate electricity use change due to daylight relative to clock time. Occupancy schedules are default, based on daytime work and leisure outside the home. Heating in the residence is forced-air resistance electric, and cooling is typical Freon-coil air-conditioning. Seasonal thermostat set points to initiate the HVAC system for occupied are 76°F for cooling and 68°F for heating, for unoccupied 80°F and 65°F, respectively. Fans are cycled intermittently at night but are shut off from midnight to 4:00. Further details about the simulations and results are available on request.

TABLE 7.—SIMULATION RESULTS FOR CHANGES IN MONTHLY ELECTRICITY DEMAND IN KWH PER DAY DUE TO DST

	DST Effect	Difference in Average Daily Consumption (DST – no DST)		
		Lighting	Cooling	Heating
April	0.73%	–4.1	6.8	2.2
May	1.69%	–6.0	10.5	4.4
June	0.03%	–7.5	6.8	0.4
July	–0.05%	–7.5	6.7	0.0
August	0.60%	–5.7	9.7	0.0
September	2.31%	–1.9	11.7	2.6
October	2.39%	2.4	10.4	1.8
Overall	0.98%	–4.5	9.1	1.7

Simulation results based on 2006 simulations in southern Indiana. Quantities reported in the last three columns are changes in average daily consumption (kWh/day) due to DST for the period indicated. DST effect is the percentage change and does not correspond exactly to the percentage change in lighting, cooling, and heating, as the overall effect also captures other relatively small changes in electricity consumption.

city consumption increases in six out of the seven months. The only month associated with a savings is July, and the magnitude is 0.5%. The increased consumption that occurs in the spring months of April and May, at approximately 0.7% and 1.7%, respectively, tapers off in midsummer. By September and October, the simulated increase in consumption is well over 2%. Note that the pattern of these results is similar in many respects to our estimates in the previous section. We found some evidence, based on the model presented in table 6, of an increase in electricity consumption at the time of transition in April. Referring back to figure 5, we also found that the largest increases in consumption occur in late summer and early fall. In particular, the October read dates, which reflect half of September's consumption because of nearly a thirty-day lag on average, have magnitudes of increased electricity consumption that are similar to the predictions of the simulation model.

Beyond corroboration of our findings, the value of the simulation exercise is that we can decompose electricity consumption into its component parts. The last three columns in table 7 report the simulated change in average daily consumption by month for lighting, cooling, and heating separately. In all months other than October, DST saves on electricity used for lighting; therefore, it appears that the "Benjamin Franklin effect" is occurring. But when it comes to cooling and heating, the clear pattern is that DST causes an increase in electricity consumption. The changes in average daily consumption are far greater for cooling, which follows, because air-conditioning tends to draw more electricity and DST occurs during the hotter months of the year.<sup>23</sup>

These results indicate that the findings of Shimoda et al. (2007) for Japan apply to Indiana as well. Moving an hour of sunlight from the early morning to the evening (relative to clock time) increases electricity consumption for cooling because demand for cooling is greater in the evening and the

buildup of solar radiation throughout the day means that the evening is hotter. Though not shown here, this is precisely the pattern that we find in the simulated daily electricity profiles for each month. In some months, as can be seen in table 7, the cooling effect outweighs the Benjamin Franklin effect.

There is also evidence for a heating effect that causes an increase in electricity consumption. When temperatures are such that heating is necessary, having an additional hour of darkness in the morning, the coldest time of day, increases electricity consumption. Kellogg and Wolff (2006) find evidence for the heating effect in their study of DST extensions in Australia. Although the magnitude of the heating effect does not appear to be as large in our Indiana simulation results, it is likely to be more substantial when considering extensions to DST, which push clock-shifting further into the colder and shorter days of the year.

### B. Costs of DST in Indiana

To begin calculating the costs of DST in Indiana, we need to establish the baseline of what electricity consumption would be without the practice of DST. We take advantage of all the data during the DST period to establish the baseline. For all observations that were subject to DST, we subtract the estimate of 0.96% that comes from Model a in table 4. Average daily consumption is then calculated from these adjusted observations and all others that were not subject to DST, yielding an overall estimate of 30.12 kWh per day. It follows that the effect of DST, under the pre-2007 dates of practice, is an increase in consumption for the average residence of 61.01 kWh per year ( $0.0096 \times 30.12 \text{ kWh/day} \times 211 \text{ days/year}$ ). Extrapolating this estimate to all 2,724,429 households in Indiana implies that DST increases statewide residential electricity consumption by 166,217 megawatt hours per year (MWh/year).

With this estimate, it is straightforward to derive the increased residential electricity costs per year. The average price paid for residential electricity service from Duke Energy in southern Indiana is \$0.054 per kWh. Multiplying this price by the change in a household's consumption implies a residential cost of \$3.29 per year. Extrapolating once again to the entire state yields a cost of \$8,963,371 per year in residential electricity bills due to the practice of DST.<sup>24</sup>

The statewide increase in electricity consumption of 166,217 MWh per year also provides the basis for calculating the social costs of pollution emissions.<sup>25</sup> We follow the

<sup>23</sup> The relatively large DST effects on air-conditioning in September and October may be explained by the combination of shorter days and a considerable number of cooling degree days, in which case clock shifting is likely to increase demand for cooling when it is already high in the early evening.

<sup>24</sup> A more precise estimate would account for price differences in different areas of the state. But the estimate presented here should be treated as an underestimate. According to the Energy Information Administration (2006), the average retail price of electricity throughout Indiana in 2006 was \$0.0646/kWh. At this price, the increased cost to residential electricity bills is \$10,737,645 per year.

<sup>25</sup> The focus on changes in consumption rather than generation means that we do not take account of transmission and distribution losses, which can be substantial. This is one respect in which the social costs of pollution emissions reported here should be treated as conservative.

TABLE 8.—SOCIAL COSTS TO INDIANA OF POLLUTION EMISSIONS FROM DST

	Emissions (tons/MWh)	$\Delta$ Emissions (tons)	Marginal Damages		Total Damages	
			Low	High	Low	High
Carbon dioxide	1.134E-00	188,490.08	\$2.82	\$20.55	\$531,485	\$3,872,566
Lead	6.752E-07	0.11	572.52	2,457.32	64	276
Mercury	2.490E-08	0.00	58.90	58.90	0	0
Methane	1.336E-05	2.22	79.96	343.16	178	762
Nitrogen oxides	5.275E-03	876.79	77.20	179.41	67,686	157,304
Nitrous oxide	4.868E-05	8.09	853.54	7,690.35	6,906	62,226
Particulates	8.540E-04	141.95	954.91	3,282.86	135,548	465,999
Sulfur dioxide	1.060E-02	1,761.90	518.98	518.98	914,391	914,391
Total					\$1,656,259	\$5,473,524

Emissions (tons/MWh) taken from Ecobilan's TEAM model.  $\Delta$  emissions are the product of emissions and the DST change in electricity consumption of 166,217 MWh/year. All dollars values are reported in 2007 dollars.

general approach used in Kotchen et al. (2006). The first step is to determine the fuel mix for electricity generation. According to the Energy Information Administration (2006), the fuel mix for generation in Indiana is 94.8% coal, 2% natural gas, 0.1% petroleum, and 4.9% from other sources (gases, hydroelectric, and other renewables). We assume the change in generation due to DST comes entirely from coal because it accounts for such a vast majority of the state's electricity generation. Emission rates, in tons of emissions per MWh of electricity generation from coal, are taken from Ecobilan's Tool for Environmental Analysis and Management (TEAM) model, a life-cycle assessment engineering model (Ecobilan, 1996). The first column in table 8 reports the marginal emissions for carbon dioxide, lead, mercury, methane, nitrogen oxides, nitrous oxide, particulates, and sulfur dioxide. The second column reports the change in emissions for each pollutant, which is simply the product of marginal emissions and the change in overall electricity generation.

The next step is to quantify the marginal damages of each pollutant. For this we use a benefits transfer methodology and report low- and high-marginal damage scenarios where possible. The two exceptions are mercury and sulfur dioxide. We have only one estimate for mercury, and the values for sulfur dioxide are the tradable permit price in 2007 rather than the marginal damages. The reason for using the sulfur permit price is that total emissions are capped, so the marginal costs are reflected in the permit price, as the increase in emissions due to DST must be abated somewhere because of the binding cap. Table 8 reports the range of values in 2007 dollars for all pollutants, and we refer readers to Kotchen et al. (2006) for details on the specific references for each estimate.

The final step is to multiply the marginal damages by the change in emissions for each pollutant. The last two columns of table 8 report these total damage costs for each pollutant for the low and high scenarios. After summing the results across all pollutants we find that the low and high estimates for the social costs of emissions are approximately \$1.7 million and \$5.5 million per year, respectively. In the low scenario, increases in carbon dioxide, particu-

lates, and sulfur dioxide account for the vast majority of the costs. In the high scenario, increases in carbon dioxide account for a much greater share of the costs, with the difference reflecting uncertainty about the economic impacts of climate change. In both scenarios, the costs due to emissions of lead, mercury, and methane are negligible.

## VI. Conclusion

The history of DST has been long and controversial. Throughout its implementation during World Wars I and II, the oil embargo of the 1970s, more consistent practice today, and recent extensions, the primary rationale for DST has always been energy conservation. Nevertheless, there is surprisingly little evidence that DST actually saves energy. This paper takes advantage of a unique natural experiment in Indiana to provide the first empirical estimates of DST's overall effect on residential electricity consumption.

Our main finding is that, contrary to the policy's intent, DST results in an overall increase in residential electricity demand. Estimates of the overall increase in consumption are approximately 1% and highly statistically significant. We also find that the effect is not constant throughout the DST period: there is evidence for an increase in electricity demand at the spring transition into DST, but the real increases come in the fall, when DST appears to increase consumption between 2% and 4%. These findings are generally consistent with our simulation results and those of others that point to a trade-off between reducing demand for lighting and increasing demand for heating and cooling (Shimoda et al., 2007). Similar results have also been found with empirical evidence based on extended DST in Australia (Kellogg & Wolff, 2008). According to the dates of DST practice prior to 2007, we estimate a cost to Indiana households of \$9 million per year in increased electricity bills. Estimates of the social costs due to increased pollution emissions range from \$1.7 to \$5.5 million per year.

Although this paper focuses exclusively on residential electricity consumption, we argue that it is likely to be the portion of aggregate electricity demand that is most responsive to DST. Changes in the timing of sunrise and sunset

occur when people are more likely to be at home, where and when behavioral adjustments might occur. Commercial and industrial electricity demand, in contrast, is likely to be greatest at inframarginal times of the day and generally less variable to changes in the timing of daylight. But future research that accounts for commercial and industrial electricity demand will be important to understand the overall effect of DST on electricity consumption. In terms of energy consumption more generally, more research is also needed to consider the DST effects on demand for natural gas, oil, and gasoline.

It is also worth considering how the Indiana results might generalize to other locations in the United States. Answers to this question are, of course, limited by the fact that Indiana is the only place where such a natural experiment has occurred. There are nevertheless several reasons that we might infer that the qualitative results will hold across a much broader area. First, Indiana ranks twenty-fourth and twentieth, respectively, in terms of population-weighted CDD and HDD among the 48 coterminous states.<sup>26</sup> Hence, the state is among the most representative in terms of the standard measure for predicting energy demand. Second, existing simulations suggest that DST increases electricity consumption on average over 224 locations throughout the United States (Rock, 1997), and our results provide empirical evidence that corroborates the results of engineering simulations, many of which highlight the potential for DST to increase energy demand. Third, even when prior research finds little or no electricity savings at the transitions of DST in the United States, the effect is smaller in more southern regions (U. S. Department of Energy 2008), meaning that Indiana might provide an overestimate. Finally, the fact that we identify the underlying trade-off between artificial illumination and air-conditioning suggests that the DST effect that we estimate may be even stronger in the more populated southern regions of the United States. Farther south, the days are shorter during the summer, meaning that decreases in electrical use from lighting are likely to be smaller, and air-conditioning is more common and intensively used, so that increases in electricity for cooling are likely to be larger.

In conclusion, we find that the long-standing rationale for DST is questionable. If anything, the policy seems to have the opposite of its intended effect. We should keep in mind, however, that this surprising result may not have always been the case. Air-conditioning is an important factor, and only recently has it become so prevalent; between 1978 and 2005 electricity used for air-conditioning in U.S. households increased almost 250% (Energy Information Administration, 2008). While this particular trend is not likely to reverse anytime soon, there are other arguments made in favor of DST. These range from increased opportunities for

leisure, enhanced public health and safety, and economic growth. In the end, a full evaluation of DST should account for these multiple dimensions, but the evidence here suggests that continued reliance on Benjamin Franklin's old argument alone has become misleading.

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<sup>26</sup> These calculations are made from data provided by the National Climatic Data Center on state-level HDD and CDD. Data are available at <http://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/oa/documentlibrary/hcs/hcs.html>.



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