

Section 2.—Standard Time and Time Zones

Standard time which was adopted at a World Conference held at Washington, D.C. in 1884, sets the number of time zones in the world at 24, each zone extending over one twenty-fourth of the surface of the earth and including all the territory between two meridians 15° longitude apart. The basis of world time is Greenwich time and all other time zones are a definite number of hours behind Greenwich.

Canada has seven time zones, the most easterly being Newfoundland standard time, three hours and thirty minutes behind Greenwich time. In the west, Pacific standard time, used throughout British Columbia and part of the Northwest Territories, is eight hours behind Greenwich, and Yukon standard time, used throughout the Yukon Territory, is nine hours behind Greenwich. Some municipalities adopt the time used by the local railways which, in certain cases, differs from the standard. There are also villages that adopt such time as seems best to suit their convenience but in general the legal boundaries of the different time zones are actually in use.

Daylight Saving Time.—For some years before World War I there was active propaganda, particularly in the cities, for the use during the summer months of an earlier time usually referred to as 'daylight saving time', one hour ahead of standard time. It was considered from the economic as well as from the health point of view that people in industrial towns and cities would gain by having longer periods of sunlight at their disposal for recreation. Canada adopted daylight saving time in 1918 but the Canadian Act lapsed at the end of that year. Since that date however most cities and towns have adopted daylight saving for varying periods in the summer months.

Legal Authority for the Time Zones.—Most of the regulations made in Canada concerning standard time have been passed by the provincial legislatures and the Northwest Territories Council. Legislation, besides determining the boundaries of zones, regulates such matters as the times of coming into effect or expiration of Acts, ordinances, contracts and agreements, times of opening and closing registration offices, law courts, post offices and other public offices, times of open or close seasons for hunting and fishing, and times of opening and closing business houses and places of amusement.

PART IV.—GEOPHYSICS AND ASTRONOMY

Section 1.—Geophysics

Geophysics began with the observations made by early navigators of the weather, ocean tides and the lodestone. These studies gradually developed into modern meteorology, physical oceanography and terrestrial magnetism. To them were added other physical studies of the earth so that geophysics now includes also seismology—the study of earthquakes; hydrology—the study of waters in rivers, lakes, glaciers and underground (but not in the oceans); volcanology—the study of volcanoes and the earth's heat; tectonophysics—the study of the forces which build mountains and slowly cause changes in level of land and sea; the study of the earth's gravity; and several minor studies such as the determination of the ages of ancient rocks and minerals from their content of radioactive elements. In addition magnetic, electrical, gravitational, seismic and radioactive methods of geophysical prospecting are used to direct drilling in almost all the searches going on in Canada for oil and gas. Both airborne and ground devices are widely used by mining companies to prospect for metals.

The Dominion Observatory and the Geological Survey at Ottawa and the Physics Department of the University of Toronto are carrying out major programs of geophysical research. Several other universities across the country and various provincial governments are also doing geophysical work and the major oil companies as well as numerous geophysical prospecting establishments have developed geophysical techniques as their most effective approach to the problem of finding oil fields and mineral deposits. A detailed study of these activities is given in the 1956 Year Book, pp. 42-55.