



K a n s a s I n s u r a n c e D e p a r t m e n t

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 29, 2006

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CONSUMER ALERT!

'Tis the Season:

Don't Become the Victim of a Deer-Vehicle Collision

TOPEKA, KS – One of the frightening realities of driving on Kansas roads and highways this time of year is the possibility of an unexpected encounter with a deer. The incidence of deer-vehicle accidents typically rise in the fall and spring and occur mainly around sunset and sunrise.

Statistically, one in every 100 drivers nationally is likely to have a collision with a deer at some time during their driving years. The Insurance Institute for Highway Safety estimates that deer-vehicle crashes cost up to \$1.1 billion in property damages and cause tens of thousands of injuries, and more than 200 deaths every year. Approximately 87% of all animal-vehicle related accidents involve deer.

While car-deer crashes are unfortunately inevitable, there are some things motorists should be aware of regarding deer-related collisions:

- Deer aren't just found on rural roads and near wooded areas, many deer crashes occur on busy highways near cities.
- Deer are unpredictable. When faced with glaring headlights, blowing horns and fast-moving vehicles, they often startle and dart into traffic.
- Deer often move in groups. If you see one, there are likely more to follow.

Drivers should consider the following driving tips and precautionary measures to help avoid a collision:

- Stay alert, always wear your seatbelt and drive at a safe, sensible speed for conditions.
- Deliberately watch for deer, particularly when driving during peak collision times.
- Highest-risk periods are from sunset to midnight and the hours shortly before and after sunrise.
- When driving at night, use high-beam headlights when there is no opposing traffic. The high beams will illuminate the eyes of deer on or near a roadway.
- Watch for the reflection of deer eyes and for deer silhouettes on the shoulder of the road.

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- High-beam headlights will not necessarily frighten a deer, so do not rely on the high beams to deter deer, but rather rely on the lights to better illuminate the animal.
- Do not rely exclusively on devices such as deer whistles, deer fences and reflectors to deter deer.
- Sometimes deer will move toward an approaching vehicle. Assume nothing, slow down and blow your horn. If the deer stays on the road, stop, put on your hazard lights and wait for the deer to leave the roadway; do not try to go around the deer while it is on the road.
- Deer frequently travel in groups and in single file. If you see one deer on or near the road, expect that others may follow.
- Brake firmly when you notice a deer in or near your path, *but stay in your lane*. Many serious accidents occur when drivers swerve to avoid a deer and hit another vehicle or lose control of their cars. The fact is you will risk less injury by hitting the deer.
- If you do hit a deer, and are uncertain whether or not the deer is dead, keep your distance. You are dealing with an injured, wild animal with sharp hooves that can inflict serious bodily injuries.
- If the deer is blocking the roadway and poses a danger to other motorists, you should stop and report the incident to the local law enforcement agency immediately.

The tips above may not always prevent an accident, but they could save you and your family from a more serious accident.

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