



Watch Out for Animals

The following are tips on how to avoid animal/vehicle collisions or reduce the severity if a collision occurs.



- **Drive at a safe and prudent speed**, since excessive speed reduces the reaction time and increases braking distance.
- **Always wear your seat belt.** Most people injured in animal/vehicle crashes were not wearing their seat belt.
- **Be extremely alert in early morning and evening hours**, the most active time for deer and other animals.
- **Slow down and be careful when approaching a horsedrawn vehicle or someone riding an animal**, since most animals are easily frightened by motor vehicles. Allow plenty of room for passing safely. Be prepared to stop if the animal you are attempting to pass appears frightened.
- **Be more observant** and use special caution in areas marked with deer or other animal crossing signs.
- **During periods of darkness, use your bright lights when no traffic is approaching.** High beams will illuminate the eyes of animals on or near the roadway much sooner, allowing a greater reaction time. Continually scan for animals and the reflection of light in their eyes. Also look for animals' silhouettes in back-lit conditions.
- **Slow down when approaching a deer or other animal standing near the roadside.** The animal may "bolt" or instantly change direction onto the road.
- **Expect a second animal to follow when you see one near or crossing the road.**
- **Focus your vision far down the road.** If the headlights or taillights of other vehicles or roadway signs appear to flash, flicker or momentarily disappear, it might be an animal or pedestrian crossing the roadway.
- **Warn other drivers by turning on your 4-way flashers and flashing headlights** when deer or other animals are on or near the road.
- **Remember where you have seen deer cross the road.** They are creatures of habit and use the same paths.
- **Watch for evidence where animals were previously struck.** This should be another warning sign that animals are in the area.
- **Use one long horn blast to frighten deer or other animals on the road. Flashing your lights may cause it to further fixate on your vehicle.** Brake firmly in a controlled fashion and do not swerve. Attempt to steer around the animal only if your speed has been significantly reduced and you can do it safely and in a controlled manner while remaining on the roadway.
- **If a collision with an animal cannot be avoided, strike the animal using controlled breaking and do not swerve.** It is better to strike an animal than another vehicle or fixed object. Bring the vehicle to a complete stop off the side of the road and turn on the emergency flashers
- **Never touch a struck animal.** In attempting to flee, the injured and frightened animal may hurt you. Protect the scene to prevent additional accidents and contact the nearest law enforcement agency.