



# SAFETY DIRECTOR'S BULLETIN

## Avoiding Vehicle – Deer Collisions

(Original Distribution - September 2009)

### **Tips Which Could Help Avoid Vehicle-Deer Collisions**

#### **Buckle Up**

Make sure to wear your seat belt. This will also keep you positioned behind the steering wheel and able to regain steering control.

#### **There's Always More Than One**

Typically, if you see one deer, there are more to follow, so proceed with caution. Remember deer usually travel in a herd and seldom alone. During the spring and summer, does, fawns and antlerless bucks will be feeding in groups along the roadside. During the fall rutting season it is typical to see a rutting buck chasing a doe without so much as pausing before advancing into the street.

#### **Take Caution on Two-Lane Roads**

*Deer are common wherever foliage and grass are found.* Take extra care to watch both sides of the road ahead when driving on two lane roads during evening and early morning hours in the fall and early winter months.

#### **Heed Deer Crossing Signs**

When you see a deer crossing sign, remember it's placed at that location for a reason and means deer are prevalent in that particular area. If you notice any deer, especially if they are close to the road, slow down as much as possible and proceed with expert caution. *Sometimes sounding your horn can startle the animal and cause it to dart into the road or straight into traffic, so if you must sound the horn, do so quickly.* You should exercise extra caution when driving in heavily deer populated areas.

#### **Avoid Swerving**

Statistics show that when most drivers swerve to avoid hitting deer, they hit another object instead, such as a tree or another vehicle. Steer to the right if necessary, into something soft such as an open space or brush.

#### **Hitting a Deer**

*Unfortunately, in some cases, hitting a deer can be unavoidable.* Ideally, what you want to do is prevent the deer from landing on the hood of the vehicle and slamming into your windshield. Should the animal make contact with the windshield, there's a good chance it will smash right through, causing the driver to lose control of the vehicle, resulting in serious injury and in some cases, even death to the driver and passengers.

- When hitting a deer seems unavoidable, try to think fast and be aware of the situation.
- **Experts advise: *braking up until the very last second of impact, and then releasing the brakes, should propel the deer away from your vehicle instead of on to the hood or windshield.***

All vehicle-deer collisions must be reported to the police as soon as possible. In the event that the deer is alive but injured, avoid all contact and move away, keeping a good distance from the animal.

*This bulletin is intended for general information purposes only. It should not be construed as legal advice or legal opinion regarding any specific or factual situation. Always follow your organization's policies and procedures as presented by your manager or supervisor. For further information regarding this bulletin, contact your Safety Director at 877.398.3046.*