

Tips for Avoiding Deer Collisions

- Stay alert, awake, and sober. Always wear your seatbelt and drive at a safe, sensible speed for conditions. Deliberately look for deer, particularly when driving during peak collision times.
- Most deer-vehicle collisions occur in the months of October, November, and December. Peak times for collisions are the last week of October and the first two weeks of November. Highest-risk periods are from sunset to midnight and the hours shortly before and after sunrise.
- Drive with extreme caution, at or below the posted speed limit, in areas with deer-crossing signs, in areas known to have a large population of deer, in places where deer commonly cross roads, and in areas where roads divide agricultural fields from forestland.
- 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. High-beam headlights will not necessarily frighten a deer, so do not rely on the high-beams to deter deer, but rather rely on them to better illuminate them.
- Do not rely on devices such as deer whistles, deer fences, and reflectors to deter deer, as these devices have not been proven to reduce deer-vehicle collisions.
- Deer are often unpredictable, especially when faced with glaring headlights, blowing horns, and fast moving vehicles. Sometimes they stop in the middle of the road when crossing. Sometimes they cross quickly and come back. Sometimes they move toward an approaching vehicle. Assume nothing, slow down, and blow your horn to urge the deer to leave the road. 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.
- Don't swerve your vehicle to avoid striking a deer. If a collision with a deer is eminent, then hit it while maintaining full control of your vehicle. Many serious crashes occur when drivers swerve to avoid a deer and hit another vehicle or lose control of their cars.
- If you do strike a deer, and are uncertain whether or not the deer is dead, then keep your distance, as this is an injured, wild animal with sharp hooves that can inflict injuries. If the deer is blocking the roadway and poses a danger to other motorists, you should report the incident to the Game Commission or a local law enforcement agency.

For more information about how to avoid deer collisions, contact your local Erie Insurance Agent or log onto www.erieinsurance.com.