

October Brings Increased Deer Movement

(MSC News)--No matter which part of the local region motorists are traveling in, extra awareness of deer crossing area roadways is needed.

That's because October through December is the time when vehicle-deer crashes increase, with the deer rutting season, the underway fall harvest, and other factors, leading to a higher movement of the animals.

Nemaha County Sheriff Rich Vernon says that while it goes against natural reactions, hitting a deer, as opposed to swerving to miss it, is the best bet to avoid serious injury or death. "We've worked a lot of rollover accidents and stuff that have been the result of trying to avoid deer," Vernon tells MSC News. "The best bet is if you can stop, that's fine, but don't swerve to go around or off the roadway to miss a deer. The results, most of the time, will be much worse than what they would be if you just hit the deer."

Dawn and dusk are the main times of the day when deer movement increases, especially near wooded areas, ponds and streams.

Also, if one deer is seen, it's likely more are nearby.

If a deer is struck, motorists should not approach the animal, as it could be dangerous.

If there's any consolation for Kansas drivers involved in a crash with the animal, it's the fact that they are allowed to keep the carcass for processing if they choose. "It's only legal if you call us for us to issue a tag, or the Department of Wildlife," Atchison County Sheriff Jack Laurie tells MSC News. "They issue us a handful of tags every year for it, and there's quite a few people that actually do take them. It doesn't make a difference to us as long as they're off the roadway or gone, that's the main thing, so they don't cause any problems later down the road."

Other tips offered by authorities on staying safe while driving during deer rutting season is to be alert, slow down in the night time hours, always be prepared for deer coming from the side of the road, and don't overdrive headlights.

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