

DEER SAFETY

Heightened Awareness of Deer Needed

Citizens are reminded to heighten their awareness of deer during the fall breeding “rutting” season. Collisions between deer and automobiles result in a substantial cost, including damage to vehicles, the loss of a valuable wildlife resource and human injuries or fatalities. As our population continues to grow, this danger becomes greater.



Most of these accidents occur between dusk and dawn. Watch for deer where roads pass through wooded or rural areas. The most important thing drivers can do to reduce the chances of an accident with a deer is to drive the speed limit. At night, reduce speeds below the limit, especially in rain, snow, or fog. Here are some other tips to keep in mind as a driver.

- **Never “VEER” for DEER.** Slow down and avoid hitting deer, but do not swerve. This can cause you to lose control and strike another vehicle, or to leave the highway and strike a tree or other object. Injuries to drivers and passengers increase when the vehicle swerves.
- Deer usually travel in groups and generally maintain a home range of about one (1) square mile. If you see a deer cross the road, slow down and use caution. Additional deer may be out of view and more are likely to follow.
- A deer standing calmly in a field may suddenly jump into the road. Anticipate the potential for this rapid change in posture.
- Elevate your deer awareness at locations with deer crossing signs. Deer crossing signs indicate areas where heavily used deer trails cross roadways. Slow down and watch for the eye-shine of deer near the roadway edges.
- Be especially aware during the morning and afternoon. Deer tend to be more active during the early morning hours and late afternoon hours year round. They are moving between evening feeding areas and daytime bedding sites.



- Never approach an injured animal. Finally, in the unfortunate event of striking a deer, never approach an injured animal. Pull to a safe location with hazard lights on and call the police. Make it a safe season for you....and the deer!
- If you happen to notice an animal carcass lying along or in the roadside, please report it by using the County Highways online [Maintenance Request Form](http://www.stmarysmd.com/dpw/) at <http://www.stmarysmd.com/dpw/> or simply call the Department of Public Works & Transportation at 301-863-8400.