

Drivers beware: Deer on move

(KLZA)-- Fall has arrived, and that means more wild animals, especially deer, are on the move as cooler temperatures begin to settle in and nights become longer.

The Missouri Department of Transportation reminds motorists to be prepared for the sudden appearance of wild animals on roadways throughout the fall months.

Shorter days mean motorists are driving in the dark more often and when deer are more active. This leads to a peak of vehicle collisions involving deer and other wildlife from mid-October through the end of November.

Missouri continues to climb the ranks for deer collisions. According to State Farm Insurance, the Show-Me State now ranks 10th in the country for potential animal collisions - up from 14th last year - with a 1 in 80 chance of hitting an animal while driving.

In 2022, Missouri drivers experienced 3,699 crashes involving a deer. One deer strike occurred approximately every 2 hours and 20 minutes in the state. In these crashes, there were 5 fatalities and 424 people were injured.

Drivers should never swerve to avoid animals in the road, as it can cause loss of control of their vehicles, resulting in serious injury or death. To avoid hitting a deer, always be cautious and regularly scan both sides of the roadway.

According to Missouri Law, an individual who has struck and killed a deer with their vehicle may claim the deer carcass if written authorization to possess the deer is granted by a Missouri Department of Conservation agent. The Wildlife Disposition Form is free, but the MDC must be contacted to obtain the permit.

If a deer is struck along a state-maintained road and is completely off the roadway, MoDOT will not pick it up unless it impedes mail delivery or is in a neighborhood, especially at or near a bus stop. If a deer is located on the shoulder, MoDOT will address the deer during normal work hours. MoDOT crews are not called out after hours to remove an item unless it is a road safety hazard in a driving lane.

MoDOT does not have specialized crews assigned to remove dead animals from the roadway and does not contract out any roadkill removal.

Many Signals Communications