



State of Illinois
JB Pritzker, Governor



Illinois Department of Transportation
Omer Osman, Secretary

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CONTACT:

Maria Castaneda (IDOT)	312.447.1919
Paul Wappel (IDOT)	217.685.0082
Tim Schweizer (IDNR)	217.785.4344

Steer clear: Deer mating season is here

IDOT, IDNR remind motorists to stay alert, slow down, don't veer for deer

SPRINGFIELD – As the days get shorter, the temperatures drop and the leaves change color and fall, the Illinois Department of Transportation and Illinois Department of Natural Resources are reminding motorists that autumn is accompanied by deer mating season in Illinois. During this time of year, deer become especially active, mainly at dawn and dusk from October through December.

“Although a collision with a deer can happen any time of year, we are entering the peak season,” said Illinois Transportation Secretary Omer Osman. “Deer can often appear suddenly in some surprising environments so you are urged to be on alert. Slow down, pay attention in areas where they are known to travel and remember – don’t veer for deer. While the urge to swerve is instinctual, it could cause you to lose control of your vehicle and increase the severity of a crash.”

Safe driving tips for deer mating season:

- Be aware of your surroundings, especially in areas with deer crossing signs.
- Scan the sides of the road for eye shine – the reflection of headlights in their eyes.
- Slow down if you see a deer. They travel in groups, so more are likely nearby.
- Prepare for the unexpected. Deer may stop in the middle of the road or double back.
- If a collision is inevitable, try to glance your vehicle off the deer and avoid swerving into the opposite lanes of traffic.

In 2020, 13,787 motor vehicle crashes involved deer in Illinois. Of these, 13,166 resulted in damage to property or vehicles, while 611 caused personal injuries. Ten of the crashes resulted in fatalities.

More than 43% of crashes involving deer in Illinois occurred in October, November and December, with November being the highest-risk month. Rural environments were the site of more than 62% of all motor vehicle crashes involving deer, with more 72% occurring at twilight or nighttime.

The top 10 Illinois counties for crashes involving deer in 2020:

1. Cook	469	6. Kane	275
2. Madison	375	7. McHenry	271
3. Will	322	8. Fulton	268
4. Sangamon	308	9. Lake	250
5. Peoria	306	10. Williamson	249

“Whether in rural or urban areas, deer are part of the Illinois landscape and we need to be alert to their presence,” said Illinois Department of Natural Resources Director Colleen Callahan.

“Please be cautious while on the road as deer are particularly active during the mating season in the fall and during busy driving times around dawn and dusk.”

If you hit a deer, pull off to the shoulder, turn on your hazard lights and call 911 to report the accident. Do not exit the vehicle to check on an injured deer or pull it from the road.

For information on how to claim a deer involved in a crash, or to report possession of a deer killed in a deer-vehicle crash, click [here](#) or visit the IDNR [website](#).

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