

Missouri Department of Transportation

Deer will dare; drivers beware

Published on Thu, 10/17/2019

JEFFERSON CITY —The Missouri Department of Transportation reminds motorists to watch out for wild animals such as deer that might appear without warning in Missouri roadways during the fall.

The peak period for deer/vehicle collisions is October and November during breeding season when deer are moving about, especially at dawn and dusk. Shorter days mean drivers are on the road when deer are more active, which leads to a larger number of crashes involving wildlife.

“To avoid hitting a deer, always be cautious and alert,” said Natalie Roark, state maintenance director. “Animals may appear suddenly and swerving to avoid them can cause drivers to lose control of their vehicles resulting in serious injury or death. Be alert to roadside conditions and slow down if deer are spotted, and always buckle up and put your phone down. Distracted driving—particularly when wildlife is on the move—can be deadly.”

[Note: Castlereagh residents often warn their visitors that if you see one deer, there will ALWAYS be another one.]

If a deer/vehicle collision has resulted in the death of the deer in the roadway, Roark cautions motorists not to jeopardize their safety to remove the animal in a high traffic area. Instead, drivers should notify MoDOT at 1-888-ASK-MODOT ([888-275-6636](tel:888-275-6636)). Crews will pick up dead deer that pose a safety hazard, meaning the carcass is in the driving or passing lane, or partially in either lane or on the shoulder.

If a deer is located on the shoulder, MoDOT will remove it during normal working hours. MoDOT will not pick up dead deer that are off of the roadway unless they impede mail delivery or are located in a neighborhood, especially at or near a bus stop.

Missouri law allows an individual who has struck and killed a deer with their vehicle to claim the deer carcass if written authorization to possess the deer is granted by a Missouri Department of Conservation agent.