

Environment aware:

Animal-vehicle collisions

Use this guide to help lead a discussion with employees to raise awareness about animal-vehicle collisions. Empower them with strategies to minimize risks and become safer drivers. Use the form on Page 2 to record meeting details.

According to the Federal Highway Administration, over 1,000,000 animal-vehicle collisions occur annually which presents a danger to human safety, costs over \$8 billion, and results in approximately tens of thousands of serious injuries and hundreds of fatalities on U.S. roadways. Review these tips to help drivers avoid collisions with animals.

1 Reduce speed and maintain distance:

- Slow down, keep your eyes on the road, and scan ahead when encountering areas with wildlife crossing signs, known wildlife habitats, or deceased animals present. This allows more reaction time if an animal suddenly appears.
- Keep a safe distance from the vehicle in front of you in case they brake suddenly for an animal.

2 Use your eyes:

- Animals' eyes often reflect light, creating "eye-shine." Look for this reflective glow, especially during low light.
- Minimize distractions inside your vehicle. Focusing on the road helps you spot animals early.
- Remember, animals often travel in groups. If you see one, be prepared for others to follow.

3 Be aware of peak times and areas:

- Animals are most active during specific hours (e.g., deer between 6 and 9 pm).
- Be aware of increased wildlife movement during specific seasons, such as mating or hunting season.
- Be especially cautious on two-lane roads bordered by woods or fields, or where streams cross under roads as many animal-vehicle collisions occur on these roads.

4 Use high beams:

- When there's no oncoming traffic, use your high beams. Brighter lights improve visibility and help you spot wildlife sooner.
- Remember to turn off your high beams when an oncoming car is within 500 feet.

5 If an animal suddenly appears:

- Avoid swerving: Swerving can lead to loss of control or collisions with other vehicles which often cause more injuries than hitting an animal.
- Keep hands on the wheel: Apply brakes smoothly but firmly to slow down without skidding.
- Use your horn: The noise might scare the animal away.
- Unavoidable collision: Stay calm and maintain control.
 - Lessen impact: Firmly press and release brakes at the moment of impact to try to prevent animal from going through the windshield.
 - Large animals: Lean toward the door frame as they tend to roll over the center of the vehicle windshield and roof.
 - Consider swerving when safe: Staying in your lane is typically the safest option, but if a large animal like adult moose you may want to swerve if safe and able to maintain control.

For additional information related to driver safety, visit MyNSightOnline.com/DriveThe5

For further guidance, refer to the Federal Highway Administration Wildlife Crossing Program (highways.dot.gov/federal-lands/wildlife-crossings).



For assistance with risk management services or safety resources, contact us at RMSolutions@nationwide.com or 1-800-260-1356.

NationwideAgribusiness.com

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Toolbox Talk

Date: ____/____/____

Environment aware: Animal-vehicle collisions

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Discussion notes:
