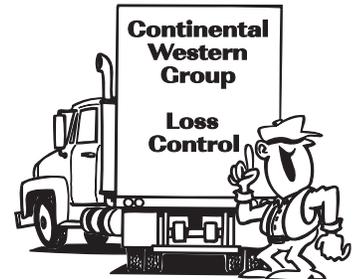


TRUCK TALK

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It's Deer Season Again!



Our chances of becoming involved with one of these beautiful creatures go up drastically between the months of October and January and most of these occurrences happened between dawn and dusk when these primarily nocturnal animals begin to forage for food and water. Each year approximately 700,000 animal vehicle collisions cause approximately \$1.2 billion in damage to vehicles and property. An average of 164 deaths annually is directly attributed to vehicle-animal crashes. Due to sporadic rain during much of 2007 in the Midwest, many deer are forced to broaden their search for water which in many cases will cause them to cross roadways that they otherwise might avoid.

Though there is no foolproof way to avoid deer, there are several things that you can do to improve your chances of seeing deer in time to react in a safe and sane manner.



#1 Be aware of your surroundings and particularly pay attention to areas around 'Deer Crossing' signs.



#2 In today's world, deer can be commonly found in urban as well as rural surroundings – NEVER drop your guard!

#3 Be particularly alert at dawn and dusk, as these are the most active times for deer to be out and active. During the peak of breeding season, deer are active and may be seen at any time of the day or night.



#4 At night, use your high-beam lights whenever possible to improve your visible distance both ahead and to the sides.

#5 If you see a deer on or near the road and you feel that you have time to avoid hitting it, reduce your speed by tapping on your brakes (this also warns motorists behind you) and sound your horn. These actions will hopefully place you and your vehicle in a position to avoid hitting the animal and possibly scare it back into its more normal habitat.



#6 If a collision seems inevitable DO NOT SWERVE to avoid the animal as you may lose control of your vehicle and worsen an already BAD situation. Hitting the deer with the VEHICLE IN CONTROL most certainly will result in an accident with less damage.



#7 Consider installing 'deer guards' on your vehicles – many motor carriers are having positive cost/benefit results from these products and they certainly reduce the amount of damage incurred with a deer hit and as a result reduce the downtime repairing this damage.



There is some really good statistical data available on this subject at <http://www.deercrash.com>. This site is prepared by the Texas Transportation Institute and has a lot of good information on vehicle-animal crashes.