

NEWS RELEASE



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NJDOT, DEP WARN MOTORISTS TO DRIVE WITH EXTRA CAUTION AS DEER ACTIVITY INCREASES, DAYLIGHT DECREASES DUE TO EARLIER TWILIGHT

(Trenton) – Drivers are reminded to be extra vigilant on roadways this fall as the mating season for white-tailed deer gets underway and daylight is limited during peak commuting hours, the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) and the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) announced today.

Deer are more likely to suddenly enter roadways at this time of year, also known as the fall rut, as bucks pursue does, increasing the risk for drivers to stop suddenly or be involved in collisions. Deer activity is more likely to occur during early morning hours and around sunset, when visibility may be limited and more motorists are on their work commutes.



“Deer are involved in thousands of collisions with motor vehicles in New Jersey every year, most of which occur during the fall mating season,” **New Jersey Fish & Wildlife Assistant Commissioner David Golden said.** “We urge all drivers to be especially alert to the possibility of deer suddenly darting onto roadways, as well as know how to reduce the risk of a collision and possible serious injury to themselves, their passengers or others.”

Peak mating season for deer in New Jersey runs from late October to mid-December.

Awareness will become even more important when daylight saving time ends at 2 a.m. on Sunday, Nov. 6. This means that many commutes will then align with the time when deer are most active, and lighting conditions may be the most difficult for driving. Reduced lighting as well as sun glare can make it very difficult for drivers to see deer that are about to cross the road.

These tips can help drivers stay safe during peak periods of the annual fall rut:

- Slow down if you see a deer and then watch for sudden movement. If the deer is in the road and doesn't move, wait for the deer to cross and the road is clear. Do not try to drive around the deer.
- Watch for "Deer Crossing" signs. Drive slower when traveling through areas known to have a high concentration of deer so there is enough time to stop, if necessary.
- Use high beams during dark periods if there is no oncoming traffic or vehicles ahead. High beams will be reflected by the eyes of deer on or near roads. If you see one deer, assume that others may be in the area.
- Don't tailgate. The driver ahead might have to stop suddenly to avoid colliding with a deer.
- Always wear a seatbelt, as required by law. Drive at a safe and sensible speed, following the speed limit, factoring for weather, available lighting, traffic, curves and other road conditions.
- Do not swerve to avoid impact if a collision appears inevitable; a deer may counter-manuever suddenly. Brake appropriately and stay in your lane. Collisions are more likely to become fatal when a driver swerves to avoid a deer and instead collides with oncoming traffic or a fixed structure along the road.
- Report any deer-vehicle collision to a local law enforcement agency immediately.
- Obey the state's hands-free device law or refrain from using cellular devices while driving.



Drivers are encouraged to check the NJDOT's traffic information website www.511nj.org for real-time travel information. For NJDOT news, follow the Department on Twitter [@NewJerseyDOT](https://twitter.com/NewJerseyDOT) or on the [NJDOT Facebook page](#).

For general information about white-tailed deer in New Jersey, visit <https://dep.nj.gov/njfw/wildlife/white-tailed-deer/>

For information about white-tailed deer seasons and regulations, visit <https://dep.nj.gov/njfw/hunting/deer-season-and-regulations/>

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