



# NEWS RELEASE

**Date:** Tuesday, October 4, 2016  
**District 9:** Inyo, Mono & Eastern Kern - [www.dot.ca.gov/dist9](http://www.dot.ca.gov/dist9)  
**Contact:** Florene Trainor, [florene\\_trainor@dot.ca.gov](mailto:florene_trainor@dot.ca.gov)  
Public Information Officer  
**Phone:** (760) 872-0603 office, (760) 937-1553 cell

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Deer Migration in Full Force

**Bishop** – As the weather changes, the deer population is moving to their winter range. The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) would like to remind motorists to remain alert for migrating deer on the highways in the Eastern Sierra.



“It’s important that motorists, when driving through areas frequented by deer, elk and other animals, do all they can to protect themselves as well as some of California’s greatest natural resources – our wildlife,” said Caltrans Director Malcolm Dougherty.

The Defenders of Wildlife, a national, nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting native animals and plants, report that more than 200 people are killed in collisions with wildlife each year with an estimated 1.5 million animals hit annually in the United States.

To reduce deer/vehicle accidents Caltrans identifies known deer migration crossings on State highways with warning signs. New construction and rehabilitation projects include flattening of the slopes next to the roadway and the removal of bitter brush seed from the re-vegetation mix. Biologists from Caltrans and Department of Fish & Wildlife continue to study the habits of the deer population working to develop new technology that will improve driver safety as well as deer safety.

#### Ways to Prevent a Collision with a Deer:

1. **Watch for the rest of the gang.** Deer are pack animals, and rarely travel alone. If a deer crosses in front of you, chances are there are more nearby. Slow down and keep an eye out for more deer darting across the road.
2. **Timing is everything.** Deer are most active at dusk and dawn: periods when your vision is most compromised. Slow down and stay alert, especially after dark.





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3. **Wear your seatbelt.** It may not prevent a collision, but if the inevitable happens a seatbelt can reduce injuries.
4. **Take a moment to reflect.** First, look for the road signs. The yellow diamonds with the deer on it are placed in high-traffic areas for deer. You may also spot a deer because their eyes will brightly reflect a car's headlights, making them easier to spot.
5. **Stay Center.** On a multi-lane road, the center lane is your safest bet for avoiding a deer collision, as long as your local traffic laws permit it. This gives deer plenty of space; and in case your vehicle does startle them, it gives you more time to react if one darts onto the road.
6. **Stay the course.** If you see a deer, brake firmly and calmly, and stay in your lane. Swerving could make you lose control of your vehicle and turn a bad situation much worse. Not to mention, deer are unpredictable, and you could swerve directly into their changed path.
7. **Honk!** Some experts recommend that one long blast of the horn will scare deer out of the road. Do not rely on hood whistles or other devices designed to scare off deer — studies have shown them to be largely ineffective at minimizing accidents.

## What to do if you hit a deer.

1. Pull to the side of the road as soon as it is safe to do so.
2. Turn on your hazard lights and remain in the vehicle until you are sure it is safe.
3. Call emergency services if injuries are involved or the local police for property damage.
4. Stay away from the deer. If it is still alive, it could be confused, injured and dangerous if approached. When contacting the authorities, let them know if the deer is in a dangerous spot on the road so that it can be removed.

For more deer migration information visit the Caltrans District 9 webpage:  
<http://www.dot.ca.gov/d9/deer.html>

