

CHANGE OF SEASONS BRINGS CHANGES TO OUR ROADS

Every season brings its own set of challenges on the road. Be alert to them as we move into the fall:

- Remember that bridges and overpasses can become icy more quickly than regular roadways; patches of fallen leaves can be slippery, too.
- As the sun rises later and sets earlier, your commute may find you driving directly into the sun. Be sure your windows are clean, inside and out, and have sunglasses handy.
- If you're driving in the dark, allow time for your eyes to adjust—it can take two to five minutes for eyes just to begin to adjust to the change from a bright environment to darkness. Fall weather can include rain, fog, sleet and snow. Use the “three-second” rule when following other drivers; increase your following distance in severe weather.
- Always stick with the basics: Buckle up, focus on your driving, driver sober and at a safe and legal speed.

Don't veer for deer

Deer are on the move, creating additional hazards on our roads—especially for motorcyclists and those in Greater Minnesota. Motorcyclists accounted for 17 of the 18 deer-vehicle crash deaths in Minnesota from 2011–2013 and 64 of 68 serious injuries.

The 7,010 deer-vehicle crashes reported during those three years resulted in 996 injuries overall, with more than two-thirds of the injuries and 89 percent of deaths occurring outside the 13-county metropolitan Twin Cities area.

If you're driving a vehicle:

- Watch for deer during dawn and dusk when most deer-vehicle crashes occur.
- Deer are herd animals. If you see one, there are likely more in the area.
- Don't veer for deer. It's safer to hit the deer than head into oncoming traffic or off the road.
- Deer are unpredictable. Slow down, blow your horn and stop if the deer stays on the road.

If you're on a motorcycle:

- Only ride during daylight hours and avoid dusk and dawn.
- If you're approaching a deer, use both brakes to stop.
- If a crash is imminent and there's enough space to get around the deer without leaving the roadway, use maximum braking and just before impact, attempt to swerve around the deer in the opposite direction the deer is traveling.
- Keep head and eyes up to improve chances of keeping the bike up if a crash is about to occur.
- Wear full protective gear including a DOT-approved helmet.

It's just plain scary to drink and drive

This Halloween, remember that Buzzed Driving is Drunk Driving

In past years, almost half of motor vehicle traffic deaths on Halloween night have involved a drunk driver (U.S. DOT).

Avoid this real-life horror show:

- ▶ Plan ahead for a safe ride home—use a designated driver, taxi or public transportation, or call someone for a ride.
- ▶ Walking under the influence can be deadly, too—have a sober friend walk you home.
- ▶ If you see a drunk driver on the road, pull over and call law enforcement.
- ▶ Don't let friends drive drunk—take their keys and help them get home safely.

Share the information on this page and the next to raise awareness among your workforce and reduce their risks behind the wheel, on and off-the-job. Find more free resources on the Minnesota NETS website at minnesotasafetycouncil.org/NETS/ImpairedDrivingMaterials.cfm.

