

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PRIORITIZE INSURANCE AND ROAD SAFETY WHEN DRIVING IN THE DARK

JACKSON, Miss. – Mississippians are driving in the dark more now that we have fallen back to Standard Time. Shorter days and deer on the move are just some of the challenges drivers may face at this time of year. The National Safety Council says roadway visibility is about 500 feet with high-beam headlights.

“Collision with a deer or other animals is covered under the comprehensive portion of your automobile policy,” said Insurance Commissioner Mike Chaney. “Deer collisions can cause thousands of dollars in damage. If you do hit a deer, contact your agent as quickly as possible to report any damage to your car.”

Deer become more active from October through January and during those months, there is a dramatic increase in the movement of the deer population. As a result, more deer-vehicle collisions occur in this period than at any other time of year. Mississippi Department of Transportation statistics show there were more than 3,800 deer crashes last year.

“Deer are unpredictable animals, especially when startled,” said Brad White, MDOT Executive Director. “Drivers should remain alert, especially in morning and dusk hours when deer tend to be more active. Motorists should also avoid distractions and always wear a seat belt.”

Keep these tips in mind:

- Deer are unpredictable, especially when faced with glaring headlights, blowing horns and fast-moving vehicles. They often dart into traffic.
- Deer often move in groups. If you see one, there are likely more in the vicinity.

- When driving at night, use high beam headlights when there is no oncoming traffic. The high beams will better illuminate the eyes of deer on or near the roadway.
- Brake firmly when you notice a deer in or near your path, but stay in your lane. Many serious crashes occur when drivers swerve to avoid a deer and hit another vehicle or lose control of their cars.
- Do not rely on devices such as deer whistles, deer fences and reflectors to deter deer.
- In the event your vehicle strikes a deer, try to avoid going near or touching the animal. A frightened and wounded deer can hurt you or further injure itself.
- Call the police if the deer is blocking the roadway and poses a danger to other motorists.

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