

In a typical year, deer kill more people in the U.S. than all commercial airlines, train, and bus accidents combined. Annually, drivers hit 1.8 million deer nationwide. This results in approximately 100-150 human deaths per year.

Each year, more than 100 deer/vehicle collisions occur on the reservation. This is due to the high traffic volume, high population of deer, narrow major two lane roads and high traffic speeds. The majority of these collisions occur during the month of November between the hours of 6am – 8am.

Employees should be aware of the increase in deer population and take precautions when traveling on the reservation. Although most deer/vehicle collisions occur in the fall and early winter, caution should be taken year-round. Employees should watch for deer crossing the roadway.

The chances of striking a deer and/or experiencing a serious wreck can be reduced by taking the following simple precautions:

- Use extreme caution when driving at dawn and dusk, when deer are most active and visibility is poor.
- Slow down when approaching deer standing near roadsides. Deer may "bolt" or change direction at the last minute, and possibly run into the road in front of you.
- If you see a deer cross the road, use extreme caution. Expect other deer to follow.
- Use high beams when there is no oncoming traffic. High beams will illuminate the eyes of deer on the side of the road, giving you more reaction time. BUT, when a deer or other animals are noted on the road, dim your headlights as animals startled by the high beam may "freeze" rather than leaving the road.
- If a collision seems inevitable, don't swerve, but maintain full control of your vehicle. The alternative of swerving into oncoming traffic or a tree could be even worse than the collision with the deer.
- Observe speed limits. Excessive speed can increase the chances of a collision and worsen them when they occur.
- Always wear a seat belt. Most people seriously injured in deer/vehicle collisions are not properly restrained.
- Use special caution in areas posted with deer crossing signs.