DEER 09/25/16 L. ERICKSON

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation, also known as WisDOT (WIZ-dot), estimates deer and motor vehicle crashes will be high again this fall when deer activity increases. During their mating season, deer become very active and travel across land and busy roadways. Wisconsin law enforcement agencies reported more than 18 thousand deer-related vehicle crashes last year. Lisa Erickson has the story.

MP3 RUNS: 1:30 O/C: THIS IS LISA ERICKSON

LISA ERICKSON: DEER AND VEHICLE COLLISIONS ARE COMMON IN WISCONSIN, ESPECIALLY DURING THE RUT. DAMAGE TO VEHICLES CAN BE COSTLY.

DENNIS AULD: IT’S VERY HIGH. WE’RE RIGHT NOW, WE'RE DOING 35 TO 40 CARS A WEEK. SO ONCE YOU GET INTO THAT TIME OF YEAR. QUITE A FEW. IT’S HARD TO SAY AS FAR AS AN AVERAGE, BUT WHAT I WILL SAY IS ONCE YOU GET INTO THESE MONTHS AT LEAST HALF OF THESE VEHICLES WE GET INTO THE SHOP ARE INVOLVED IN DEER COLLISIONS.

LISA ERICKSON: THAT WAS DENNIS AULD (AWLD) FROM ABRA AUTOBODY SHOP IN HUDSON. HE ALSO ADVISES PEOPLE TO GET RID OF AS MANY DISTRACTIONS AS POSSIBLE, LIKE CELL PHONES. LOCAL CONSERVATION OFFICER BRAD PETERSON ADVISES PEOPLE TO PAY ATTENTION DURING CERTAIN TIMES OF THE DAY.

BRAD PETERSON: WELL, GENERALLY THE MOST DANGEROUS TIME FOR PEOPLE ON THE ROAD IS DUSK AND DAWN. WHEN OUR DEER ARE GONNA BE THE MOST ACTIVE. THAT'S WHEN THEY ARE GOING TO BE OUT SEARCHING FOOD MOVING, FROM LOCATION TO LOCATION. OBVIOUSLY THEY ARE A LOT MORE ACTIVE DURING THE RUT.

LISA ERICKSON: RIVER FALLS RESIDENT TIM GAVIN HAS BEEN IN TWO ACCIDENTS INVOLVING DEER.

TIM GAVIN: JUST KIND OF A SURPRISE, DIDN’T REALLY SEE IT COMING VERY MUCH. BUT, AH, CAUGHT ME BY SUPRISE. A ONCE WAS WEST OF RIVER FALLS AND ONCE WAS NORTHEAST OF RIVER FALLS. THE FIRST TIME WAS NOT MY VEHICLE, BUT IT DID COME OUT TO ABOUT 3,500 HUNDRED BUCKS AND SECOND TIME JUST GRAZED IT, THERE REALLY WASN’T ANY DAMAGE, BUT THAT WAS ON A MOTORCYCLE. THERE’S REALLY NOT MUCH YOU CAN AT THAT SITUATION OTHER THAN SLOW DOWN AND DON’T OVERREACT.

LISA ERICKSON: FOR THE FALCON NEWS SERVICE, THIS IS LISA ERICKSON.

Local law enforcement and WisDOT recommend people to hit the deer if the animal is in their path instead of swerving off the road, which can cause injuries or more damage to the vehicle. The DNR also reminds people that if you see one deer, there likely will be more.

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