

Fall is dangerous for drivers with more deer, glare from sun

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WRAL staff

Deer and the glare from the sun can create the perfect storm when it comes to driving in the Triangle area during the fall.

A new study from the Auto Accident Team shows a 20.3% increase in deadly crashes from summer to fall.

As more drivers grab their sunglasses and put their visors down to avoid the glare this fall, the state Department of Transportation is increasing their messaging across North Carolina to make sure drivers are aware of changing conditions.

The onset of cooler weather also means it's mating season for deer.

According to AAA, the most crashes involving animals occur in October, November and December. It's also darker earlier in the evening once [Daylight Saving Time ends during the first week in November](#).

"Mating season is during this time, so deer are a lot more active," said Tiffany Wright from AAA. "The chances of animals darting into the roadway are higher and this further increases the risk of a potential, deadly collision."

The NCDOT said this time of year is the worst for those type of crashes.

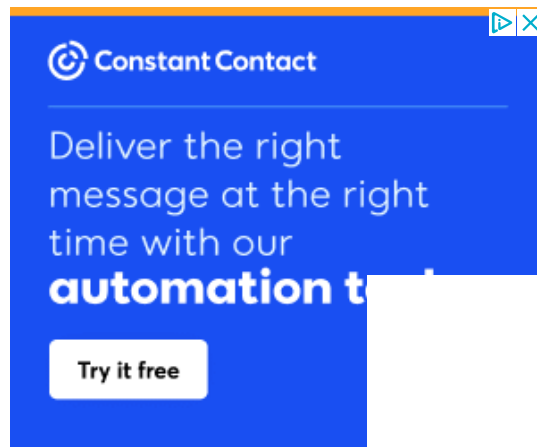
A new study from the Auto Accident Team indicates the Raleigh-Cary metro area is the worst area in the country to drive during the fall. Drivers told WRAL News they weren't surprised.

"You look down at your phone once, or you look behind you when your kids are yelling, and the deer will run across the road right in front of you," one driver said.

The North Carolina Department of Transportation reports 7% of crashes in the state involve animals. Between 2018 and 2020, animal crashes in the state caused 719 injuries and three deaths.

Deer are most active between 5 a.m. and 8 a.m. and again between 5 p.m. and 8 p.m., according to AAA.

If a deer does jump out in front of you, don't swerve, just try to brake and come to a stop, the NCDOT said. That's why car maintenance for brakes and tires is especially important this time of year.



AAA shared the following safety tips for drivers:

- If you see a deer, slow down and watch out for other deer that may follow.
- While slowing down, honk your horn to scare the animal.
- Brake firmly and do not swerve.

In the event of a collision, AAA says:

- If possible, immediately move the vehicle to a safe location, out of the roadway. Your safety and the safety of your passengers is most important.
- Once you are in a safe location and no longer driving, call the police.
- Turn the vehicle's hazard lights on.
- Avoid making contact with the deer/animal. A frightened or wounded animal can hurt you or further injure itself.
- Contact your insurance company as quickly as possible to report any damage to your vehicle.
- Take photos of the damage if you can do so safely and without entering the roadway.

Deer-related crashes should be reported to the NCDOT. To report an injured deer, call 800-662-7137.

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