

TO SWERVE OR NOT TO SWERVE ?? THAT IS THE QUESTION ??

THE ANSWER: DON'T SWERVE

Loss-of-control crashes are sometimes the result of trying to avoid animals or wildlife that are on the roadway. Swerving to miss an animal is not the way to go. Some industry best practices include these essential driving techniques.

By applying them, the loss-of-control crash caused by avoiding wildlife on the roadway, can be avoided:

MAINTAIN PROPER FOLLOWING DISTANCE

If the vehicle ahead brakes suddenly to avoid an animal or swerves and loses control, you must have enough space to perceive the hazard, react properly, and brake. Maintaining a minimum of a six-second interval between you and the vehicle ahead can give you the time and space you need to avoid a crash.

OBSERVE PROPER SPEED FOR CONDITIONS

Many of these types of crashes happen in the dark. As a general rule, a tractor-trailer's clean, properly adjusted, working low-beam headlights will illuminate about 250 feet in front of the vehicle. High beams will illuminate approximately 350-500 feet. You must be able to take controlled action within that distance. Do not over drive your headlights.



AVOID DISTRACTIONS/BE ATTENTIVE TO THE ROAD AHEAD

Nocturnal animals (animals that are active during the night) have eyes that will reflect the light from your headlights making them more recognizable, if you are looking for them. Keep your eyes on the road, be aware of animal warning signage, scanning from shoulder-to-shoulder, watching for those glowing eyes.

REACT PROPERLY TO HAZARDS/MAINTAIN ONE LANE

When an animal runs out in front of your vehicle, your first reaction may be to swerve to avoid it. Don't! Swerving can cause you to lose control, drive off the road into the ditch, or across oncoming lanes. The proper reaction is to slow down, grip the steering wheel firmly, control your braking, and steer slightly to control the impact while maintaining your lane. Do not swerve to miss an animal.

By applying some of these techniques, loss-of-control crashes due to wildlife on the roadway can be avoided and the resulting damage minimized. Don't jeopardize your life, or the lives of others, by trying to save a squirrel, a raccoon, a deer, a Sasquatch, a wild turkey, etc.



Knowledge Verification

Please answer, and forward a completed copy to your Safety Department/Safety Representative.

- 1. Driver's should never over drive your headlights. True False
- 2. 4 second space between you and a vehicle in front is a good gap. True False
- 3. Don't jeopardize your life by swerving to avoid an animal. True False

Driver's Name:

Driver's Signature:

Witness Name:

Date:



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- Value Driven Driving:
- Module 1 - Preventing Rear-End Crashes
- Module 2 - Preventing Loss of Control Crashes
- Module 3 - Preventing Lane Change Crashes

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