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## Fall Most Dangerous Time of Year For Deer/Vehicle Crashes

(LANSING, MI) — Almost 50 percent of deer crashes occur in Michigan during the months of October, November and December. In 2015, 44 percent of all deer-vehicle crashes occurred in the fall, according to a coalition of traffic safety organizations working to reduce these types of crashes.

“Vehicle-deer crashes in Michigan are expensive, causing at least \$130 million in damage annually,” said Lori Conarton, Chair of the Michigan Deer Crash Coalition.

In 2015, there were 47,001 deer vehicle crashes, up from 45,690 during 2014. Oakland County had the most deer/vehicle crashes with 1,873 crashes. The remaining top nine were Kent (1,528), Jackson (1,324), Lapeer (1,230), Ingham (1,087), Eaton (1,071), Washtenaw (1,062) Genesee (1,037), Calhoun (1,009) and Montcalm (999). (A full county listing is attached).

“Injuries and deaths are associated with motorists veering to avoid the deer,” said Conarton, who represents the Insurance Institute of Michigan on the coalition. “So when a deer crash is unavoidable, it is important to have your hands on the steering wheel, slow down and stay in your own lane.”

The state has a 1.75 million-strong deer herd. Deer frequently travel in groups. If you see one deer cross the road, chances are there are more nearby.

Last year, 11 people were killed in deer crashes, five were on motorcycles. Another 1,132 motorists were injured in deer/vehicle crashes.

The Coalition offers the following safety tips:

- Stay awake, alert and sober.
- Always wear a safety belt.
- Be especially attentive at dawn and dusk.
- If you see one deer, slow down. Chances are there are others nearby.
- If a crash is unavoidable, don’t swerve, brake firmly, hold onto the steering wheel, stay in your lane and bring your car to a controlled stop.

If you are on a motorcycle, follow these tips:

- Be alert for deer whenever you ride.

- Slow down.
- Cover the brakes to reduce reaction time.
- Use high beam headlights and additional riding lights when possible.
- Wear protective gear at all times.

The MDCC – a broad affiliation of groups representing law enforcement, traffic safety, insurance, natural resources, higher education and strategic regional planning in the public and private sectors – seeks to increase awareness of the problem among the driving public and reduce the number of deaths and injuries occurring each year on state roads. Members are: AAA Michigan • Insurance Institute of Michigan • Michigan Department of Natural Resources • Michigan Department of State • Michigan Department of Transportation • Michigan Driver & Traffic Safety Education • Michigan Sheriffs’ Association • Michigan Office of Highway Safety Planning • SEMCOG (Southeast Michigan Council of Governments) • State Farm Insurance • Transportation Improvement Association.

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#### Deer Crashes by County:

	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>			
			Grand Traverse	619	629
			Gratiot	850	801
Alcona	391	443	Hillsdale	773	814
Alger	83	78	Houghton	171	146
Allegan	831	838	Huron	909	937
Alpena	341	291	Ingham	940	1,087
Antrim	435	409	Ionia	450	494
Arenac	386	391	Iosco	190	198
Baraga	158	137	Iron	250	229
Barry	624	595	Isabella	823	907
Bay	426	485	Jackson	1,279	1,324
Benzie	319	281	Kalamazoo	837	917
Berrien	716	830	Kalkaska	260	207
Branch	761	790	Kent	1,338	1,528
Calhoun	900	1,009	Keweenaw	22	18
Cass	379	411	Lake	211	205
Charlevoix	560	540	Lapeer	1,153	1,230
Cheboygan	449	409	Leelanau	315	293
Chippewa	238	224	Lenawee	574	651
Clare	512	517	Livingston	722	773
Clinton	1,015	959	Luce	82	54
Crawford	265	228	Mackinac	267	221
Delta	532	488	Macomb	627	630
Dickinson	419	400	Manistee	474	455
Eaton	1,077	1,071	Marquette	249	295
Emmet	464	442	Mason	671	682
Genesee	964	1,037	Mecosta	792	737
Gladwin	394	372	Menominee	149	160
Gogebic	50	42	Midland	791	828

Missaukee	350	368
Monroe	357	349
Montcalm	968	999
Montmorency	198	198
Muskegon	447	541
Newaygo	554	565
Oakland	1,750	1,873
Oceana	445	473
Ogemaw	370	418
Ontonagon	151	140
Osceola	608	588
Oscoda	132	144
Otsego	211	226
Ottawa	874	970
Presque Isle	441	364
Roscommon	283	306
Saginaw	831	882
St. Clair	755	784
St. Joseph	437	484
Sanilac	1,053	979
Schoolcraft	140	119
Shiawassee	760	783
Tuscola	763	825
Van Buren	510	651
Washtenaw	952	1,062
Wayne	394	400
Wexford	479	343
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>45,690</b>	<b>47,001</b>