

Safety Fact Sheet



These programs offered by the Utah Safety Council offer practical strategies to reduce collision related injuries and fatalities on Utah roadways.

AVOIDING ANIMAL COLLISIONS

Did you know that there are approximately 1.5 million animal-car accidents every year that result in 10,000 injuries and 150 deaths? And that's not even considering the animals! Let's remember that we must not only watch out for cyclists and pedestrians, but we must also keep an eye out for cute critters. Heed these tips to avoid collisions with our furry friends.

- **Take note of the environment.** Are you in the mountains, the countryside, the city, or the suburbs? Be aware of the types of animals that are common in these areas.
- **Scan the roadsides.** Animals are not always easy to see and dart out quickly onto the road. Scan the sides of the road and look as far ahead as possible for signs of activity. If you see one animal, more are probably nearby.
- **Look for clues.** Road signs, dead animals off to the side, tracks, and other clues will help you be prepared for animals on the road.
- **Obey the speed limit.** Driving at an appropriate speed will give you more control and lessen the risk of injury should you come in contact with an animal.
- **Be extra vigilant during dusk and dawn.** Animals are more active during these times, and our vision is less superior. Studies show that night-time driving is a major risk factor for animal-related crashes. Extra caution is critical when driving during these times.

When confronted with an animal:

- **Consider your safety first.** Do what is best to protect yourself. The animal's safety is secondary.
- **Don't swerve.** Swerving or making abrupt maneuvers could wind you up in a ditch, tree, on-coming traffic, or other dangerous scenario.
- **Brake as necessary.** Do what is best for the situation at hand to avoid impact or reduce its force.
- **Contact local authorities.** Report unusual animal activity or any collisions to the police.