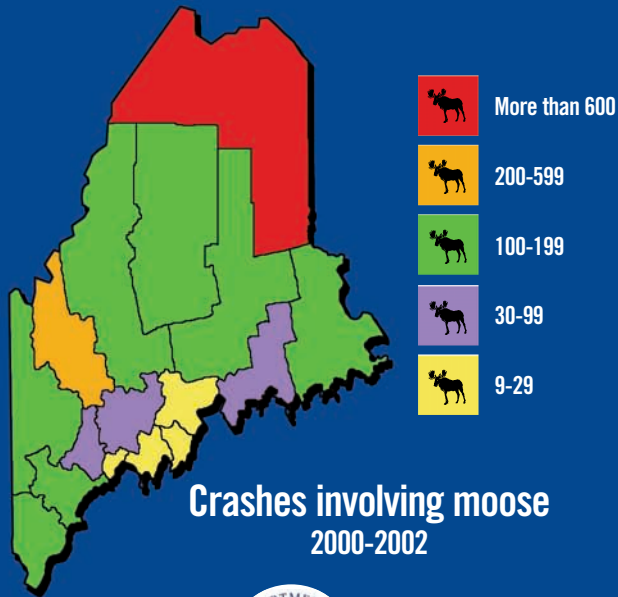


Drive safely all the time.



A Maine Department of Transportation Publication

Our thanks to the following agencies for providing their expertise with this publication:
Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife
www.mefishwildlife.com

Maine Secretary of State - Division of Motor Vehicles

- Maine Department of Public Safety
 - Division of Highway Safety
 - State Police

Maine Turnpike Authority

For more information contact:

Bureau of Planning
Maine Department of Transportation
Tel 207-624-3300 | Fax 207-624-3301
TTY 207-287-3392
E-mail: safety.web@maine.gov
www.maine.gov/mdot-stage/safety-programs/pdf

CAUTION: WILDLIFE AHEAD



Maine Department of Transportation
16 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333



It happens all the time. There's a moose in the road. A car comes along and WHAM! In Maine, cars and trucks crash into moose and deer thousands of times every year. It's that big a problem.

Of course, most people are delighted to see a beautiful white tailed deer or a majestic bull moose. But few people know how to handle a head-on encounter with Maine's largest and wildest creatures.



Experts from several state agencies have put together a number of safety tips to help you avoid the tragic results of colliding with moose, deer, and bears.

From dusk till dawn.

Moose and deer are most active around dawn and dusk. They also travel at night. So be especially alert after sunset because these dark colored animals can be very hard to see until they are right in front of your headlights.

Tip: Deer eyes reflect light from headlights very well. But because moose are taller, drivers won't see their eyes reflected in the headlights. This makes moose even harder to see in time to avoid a collision.

November is deer collision month.

Collisions with deer increase in the fall, peaking in November during breeding season.

Summer is moose collision season.

Collisions with moose increase dramatically in the summer months. Autumn incidents are also common. But don't let your guard down. Crashes happen twelve months a year.

Warning signs mean business.

The locations for Maine's moose and deer crossing signs are chosen based on where there are high concentrations of wildlife and where collisions have been a problem.



Drive safely all the time.

Of course, using all of your safe driving skills will improve your chances of avoiding a collision with a moose or deer.

Pay attention and keep to the speed limit.

Driver distractions and inattention combined with excess speed often result in vehicle-wildlife collisions. Always scan the roadside as well as the road.

Good visibility is a must.

In reduced visibility due to darkness, rain, or fog, travel speed should be adjusted to the conditions. Slowing down when visibility is reduced greatly increases your safety.

Animals live in the woods.

Be alert in rural and forested areas. Use high beams whenever possible. Watch for the reflective eyes of deer or the silhouette of a moose.

Herd the one about the traveling moose?

Moose and deer often travel in small herds. If one animal crosses the road, you can bet that there are more animals nearby.

How far ahead can you see?

Do not drive "beyond your headlights." If you can't stop within the distance of your headlight visibility, you could hit something just beyond your viewing area. You won't see the animal in time to stop.

The Moose Standoff.

If you see a moose standing in or near the roadway, use extreme caution, especially during mating season from late August through October.

- Slow down.
- Do not try to drive around the moose.
- Stay in your vehicle. Do not get out to observe or to chase it off the road. By getting out of the car, you put yourself and other drivers at risk. Moose can be unpredictable and may attack your vehicle. This is no joke.

Believe it or not! What at first appears to be a gentle, lumbering moose will suddenly charge a car, smash into it head first, total the chassis, and then stride quietly away.

- Give moose plenty of room and let them wander back off the road.

What if a crash is unavoidable?

If a crash with an animal is imminent, apply the brakes and steer straight. Let up on the brakes just before impact to allow the front of your vehicle to rise slightly and aim to hit the tail end of the animal. This can reduce the risk of the animal striking the windshield area and may increase your chances of missing the animal.

Duck down to protect yourself from windshield debris.

Be aware that wildlife collisions can occur at any time and under almost any circumstances anywhere in Maine. Moose have been hit in heavily populated neighborhoods in Portland, Lewiston-Auburn, and Bangor — Maine's three largest communities.

So pay attention, stay alert and always remember ...safety is no accident.

