

## Tailgate Meeting Guide: Avoiding Collisions with Wildlife

Many BC motorists are exposed to the hazards of colliding with wildlife. Crashes result in injuries and fatalities to drivers and passengers and millions of dollars of property damage losses for vehicle owners and insurers. Plus, these collisions cause traumatic suffering and life-ending injuries to thousands of animals each year. Use the information and resources below to lead a discussion with your employees about vehicle-wildlife collisions and what can be done to prevent them.

### Get the facts

Each year in BC:

1. there are 11,000 reported vehicle-wildlife collisions<sup>1</sup>; studies indicate only about 50% of vehicle-wildlife crashes are reported.
2. these collisions result in 3 to 5 human fatalities and injuries to another 600<sup>+</sup> people<sup>1</sup>.
3. about 80% of collisions involve deer; the remaining 20% involve moose, elk, bears, coyotes, etc.<sup>2</sup>

### Tips for preventing collisions with wildlife

Know **where** to expect wildlife

- Along two-lane highways and connector roads from rural and suburban areas
- Where creeks and water sources intersect roads
- Near good habitat and forage – green belts, parks, fields and golf courses
- Along long, wide, straight stretches of highway



Know **when** to expect wildlife

- **Daily peaks** – For most BC communities the peak periods for wildlife collisions occur between **5:00 and 8:00 pm** and **6:00 and 8:00 am**. Low light levels and reduced driver visibility combined with increased animal activity are key factors during those peak periods.
- **Seasonal peaks** - Animals have seasonal habits associated with feeding and reproductive cycles. Animal movements – and their roadway crossings – change with the seasons. Collisions with deer frequently occur in **spring** (May) and **fall** (October – November). Collisions with moose often occur in winter (December and January) during deep snow conditions and in June and July when cow moose seek roadside mineral licks to increase their sodium intake.

### Adjust your driving habits

- Slow down when you see wildlife crossing warning signs. The BC Ministry of Transportation gathers data on collision locations and places signs in areas where collisions have been common.

- In wildlife corridors, slow down at dusk and dawn. This provides you with additional time to react correctly when an animal comes onto the roadway.
- Slow down even more when you see an animal at the roadside. Animal reactions are unpredictable – just as they look to be leaving the roadway, they can quickly turn and dart in front of you. And, where there is one animal there is often another not far behind. Be ready should it jump into your path.
- Limit exposure by reducing travel at dusk and dawn. If your route intersects a known wildlife corridor, adjust your schedule to avoid travelling through those areas when the risk is greatest.
- Actively watch for wildlife. When you see wildlife, flash your headlights or hazard lights to alert others.

### Tailgate Meeting Discussion Topics and Activities

1. Chat with the crew to identify locations of wildlife crossings and frequent wildlife collisions along the routes they travel. If the group is unsure you may be able to follow up with the local highway maintenance contractor, or speak with others who know the road.
2. Ask if any employees have experienced a near miss with wildlife. Have them explain the circumstances and what they did to avoid the crash, and what they would do differently.
3. Discuss how supervisors and drivers can work together to adjust routes and schedules to minimize exposure during peak periods and at frequent crossing / collisions locations.
4. Review manoeuvres drivers can use to avoid colliding with an animal.
5. Use resources at the links below to gather and provide more information.

### Resources

[Wildlife Collision Prevention Program](#)

[BC Ministry of Transportation](#)

[RoadWatchBC](#)

[American Automobile Association](#)

[Workplace Safety North](#)

[Frequently Asked Questions WCPP](#)

[Wildlife Roadsharing Resource Centre](#)

[Wildlife Myths and Misconceptions](#)

6. Watch a video. [Avoiding Vehicle - Wildlife Collisions](#)
7. To report an animal that's been struck, use the [Drive BC – Report a Highway Problem](#) web page, or phone a Conservation Officer at 1-877-952-7277.

### Sources

<sup>1</sup> [ICBC quick statistics](#). Dec 2017.

<sup>2</sup> [Wildlife Accident Monitoring and Mitigation in British Columbia](#). 2010. Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure.

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