



THE STOUFFER REPORT

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Senate District 21
Jefferson City, MO 65101

For the Week of:
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Missouri's Deer Population and Controlled Hunts

Deer season is well underway for Missouri hunters. So far, more than 256,000 deer have been harvested since Sept. 15. Unfortunately, that probably will not make a dent in deer populations statewide. Deer season provides a great activity for hunters. However, this can be a dangerous time for Missouri motorists

We've all seen the headlines:

- "[Number of deer-related accidents on the rise](#)" — *Springfield News-Leader*, November 10
- "[Man survives tangle with flying deer](#)" — *Columbia Daily Tribune*, November 14
- "[Deer jumps over deputy's squad car](#)" — *KMBC Channel 9 News*, November 20

. On a personal level, Sue Ellen and I have experienced about a dozen vehicle collisions with deer, not to mention thousands of dollars in crop damage as well.

There are several tips available to help you avoid running into these fast, four-legged creatures. According to the [Missouri Department of Conservation](#), drivers should be especially alert for deer on roadways early in the morning and late in the evening. Make sure you constantly scan the roadsides and if you see a deer, be prepared to see more. There are more collisions this time of year because of deer breeding activity. Young deer are also on the move because they are leaving family groups and establishing their own home ranges.

It's important to remember to take extra care when driving through wooded areas or near bodies of water. Flash your lights to scare deer that are standing in or along the roadway. If a collision is imminent, it is always better to hit the deer rather than going into a ditch or oncoming traffic.

The Missouri Conservation Department favors the use of hunting, where appropriate, to control the deer population. Our state offers numerous managed deer hunts for archery, crossbow, muzzleloading, and modern firearms from mid-September through January. These hunts achieve deer management goals while also providing additional hunting opportunity. Hunters are selected by random drawing, and all hunters have an equal chance of being selected for the 2007-2008 managed hunts. However, a [weighted random drawing system](#) will go into effect this year and can affect your chances of being drawn in the future. For more information on how this weighted random drawing system might effect you, visit the Missouri Department of Conservation's Web site (www.mdc.mo.gov).

Many hunters have donated their harvest to a charitable meat donation program created to help feed those in Missouri who are less fortunate. This statewide system called, [Share the Harvest](#), is managed by the Missouri Conservation Department and the Conservation Federation of Missouri and provides an easy way for hunters to donate venison to Missourians in need of red meat. Share the Harvest benefits all who are involved: hunters do their part to help Missourians in need; cooperating processing plants get positive feedback for their involvement; participating organizations have a ready-made service project for a great cause; and the Missouri Department of Conservation has another way to manage our state's deer population.

For more information about road safety during deer season, managed hunts in your area, or Share the Harvest visit the Missouri Conservation Web Site (www.mdc.mo.gov). If you have questions or comments about any other issue, please call my office toll free (866) 768-3987 or send me an e-mail at bstouffer@senate.mo.gov.

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