Driving Safely Where Deer Are Present Fatality Report

Police Officer Clearing Dead Deer Struck By Car

A 32-year-old police officer died after being struck by a vehicle. David Petzold was trying to remove a dead deer from a local highway when he was struck by a van driven by a 52-year-old woman.

Just prior to 6 a.m., Investigator Petzold discovered a deer carcass on a main thoroughfare. He apparently pulled his cruiser to the side of the road, turned on his emergency flashers, and radioed another officer for help. He then got out of his car and began moving the deer.

He was in the left-hand lane of the highway when he was struck by the van. Capt. Scott Snyder of the Pennsylvania State Police said that although the route is known for speeding, there was no immediately obvious cause for the crash.

Petzold was flown to hospital, where he was pronounced dead. County Coroner Scott Grim ruled the death an accident, saying Petzold died of blunt force injuries.

Although it’s not known whether speed was a factor in this death, we could all stand to slow down a little. Whether you’re heading in to work or you’re on the job, stick to the posted limit.

If you work on the highway and have to get out onto the road, protect yourself. Make certain you’re visible for a minimum of 1,320 feet (400 meters). If necessary, park your vehicle a quarter of a mile away and walk up to where you’ll be working. But proper highway barricades and warning signs are always better.