



When Michigan farmers are planting crops in the spring and harvesting them in the fall, we see more tractors, planters, combines, and farm trucks on the roads.

These farm vehicles are considered slow-moving vehicles (SMVs) and drive slower speeds, usually less than 25 mph.

Be prepared to slow down if you come upon any vehicle—including an Amish buggy—displaying the reflective orange and red SMV triangle sign.

Do not try to pass these vehicles or buggies unless you can see the road is clear of oncoming traffic.



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This material was developed through a project funded by the Michigan Office of Highway Safety Planning and the U.S. Department of Transportation.

Catalog No. 9510 • michigan.gov/ohspcatalog
8-2022

Rural Road Safety

19%
of Americans live
in rural areas

but make up
45%
of traffic crash
fatalities

Michigan's rural countryside is dotted with small towns and villages often surrounded by farm fields and forests. Traveling to these communities can be just as much fun as being there.

Driving through Michigan's rural areas comes with plenty of beautiful scenery and roadway safety concerns.

Emergency care in a rural area could be delayed due to the longer distances between a traffic crash site and the nearest emergency medical services agency.

If you are in or witness a traffic crash, call or text 911 so emergency responders can get to the scene and provide care as quickly as possible. Be prepared to tell the emergency responders your location, if anyone is injured, and if anything is blocking the road.

Depending on your location in the state, GPS devices may not be accurate or even work.



Throughout most of the state, we can see wildlife crossing the roadways year-round. Deer, elk, and moose movement increases in April through June and from October through December.

There are more than 50,000 deer-related traffic crashes each year in Michigan.

They are the most active at dawn and dusk, so be prepared for deer to dart out on to the road when driving in rural areas.

When driving at dawn or dusk, keep your vehicle's headlights on to better see the road in front of you to help avoid a traffic crash.

Rain, snow, ice, and wet leaves can create slippery roads. It can be easy to hit a slick spot and lose control of your vehicle.



Driving at slower speeds in rainy, snowy, or icy weather may help avoid traffic crashes and save lives.



Fog can significantly reduce a driver's ability to see on rural roads. Visibility can be reduced to just a few feet in front of you.



Drive with your vehicle's headlights on low beam to improve visibility. Never use your vehicle's headlights on high beam while driving in foggy conditions.



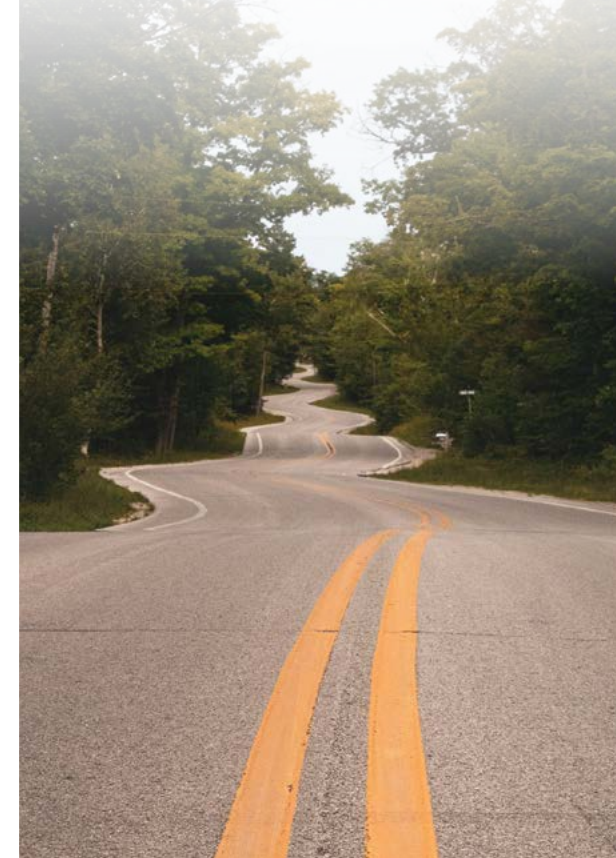
Winding country roads, hidden driveways, unexpected sharp curves, and steep hills can challenge even the most experienced drivers, especially in unfamiliar surroundings.

Road surface changes from asphalt to loose gravel or dirt may result in losing control of the vehicle when driving too fast.

Take your time, slow down, and never pass the vehicle in front of you unless you can see the road is clear of oncoming traffic.

Most rural roadways are two-way roads. This increases the risk of a traffic crash from unsafe and illegal passing of vehicles.

Be aware of narrow roads; roads with little or no shoulder; and deep roadside ditches, drains, and culverts while driving in rural areas.



With few or no sidewalks and narrow road shoulders in rural areas, pedestrians often walk on the roadway.

Pedestrians must walk on the left side of the road facing oncoming traffic and should wear highly visible clothing to avoid being struck by a vehicle.

Drivers should be alert to pedestrians on the road, especially with low visibility at dawn and dusk and during foggy, rainy, or snowy conditions.

Be extra cautious at railroad crossings in rural areas since some do not have gates or flashing lights.

