

# Do Deer Whistles Work?

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Dear NETS Members,

January 25, 2010

Kevin Wright of Union Gas asked about member experience with deer whistles.

Responses and respondents are provided below.

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Please contact me if you have any questions or suggestions.

Jack Hanley

NETS

Executive Director

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## Question

Can you send out the following request to the NETS group with a direct response to me?

Are any of the NETS Member companies utilizing **Deer Whistles (please indicate wind or electronic type)** with any level of effectiveness. Effectiveness level would be based on employee reports that deer seem alerted by approaching vehicle and/or reduced deer strikes?

Please indicate the name and type of whistle being used as we are considering the use of this device.

Thank you,

Kevin P. Wright, BHK, CRSP  
EHS Services

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## Responses

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1.	Liberty Mutual/ Dave Melton	<a href="http://www.deercrash.com/">http://www.deercrash.com/</a>
2.	Nationwide/ Bill Windsor	Research has shown deer whistles to be ineffective. Attached is a IIHS advisory that provides some basic information. There is more information if you go to <a href="http://www.IIHS.org">www.IIHS.org</a> and search for deer.
3.	AstraZeneca/ Mary Rose	This question occasionally comes in from our field reps, but our research has shown they are not effective so we do not provide them to our drivers. I've attached a website that includes some commentary on their effectiveness:  <a href="http://cru.cahe.wsu.edu/CEPublications/eb1677/eb1677.html">http://cru.cahe.wsu.edu/CEPublications/eb1677/eb1677.html</a>
4.	Sunoco/ Bill Sanicky	Never have been able to prove that they work and we do not install them on any vehicles. Vehicles that had them struck deers.
5.	UPS/Gerry Eaker	We have not found any credible studies that prove statistically that they work
6.	Kidds Distribution/ Scott Duncan	The response on the A9 road in Scotland (extremely bad stretch of road was a cull.  <a href="http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/low/scotland/4523200.stm">http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/low/scotland/4523200.stm</a>  another approach (and more human) was partnership working between specialists in road safety and animals  <a href="http://forargyll.com/2009/04/deer-warning-april-may-the-most-likely-time-for-road-collisions/">http://forargyll.com/2009/04/deer-warning-april-may-the-most-likely-time-for-road-collisions/</a>  The most successful methods that seem to have worked in Scotland were simply fencing to prevent the deer's movements onto or across major roads and high risk roads as well as managed visual signage with education aimed at drivers at times of year where it was more prevalent.
7.	NHTSA/ Cheryl Neverman	When I worked for the Iowa Highway Safety Office (a hundred years or so ago) the State Patrol installed them on all state-owned vehicles including our highway safety office staff vehicles. They did a before and after study showing a reasonable reduction in crashes involving deer, but I have no idea where you could find the study or whether they still use them. The study included damage reports to state-owned vehicles. It was (really)

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		about 23 years ago. J The Federal government fleet does not use them
8.	GE/ Jeri Hall	GE Healthcare has not had any experience with these devices, but would be interested in other's feedback as we have alot of property damage claims due to hitting deer.
9.	J & J/ Gabriel Kardos	<p>If you click on the link below there is a good newsclip on Utube saying the whistles don't work especially during mating season. At J&amp;J we don't have them as a safety feature included in our policies or guidelines.</p> <p>I particularly encounter deer where I live next to a national park almost on a daily basis in the evening and have deer whistles on my personal car, have not seen them run from the road because of my whistles, they just freeze. Best defence is to take it slow when you see deer crossing signs, use high beams and if you have to hit the deer then hit it (I hit one last year). It much safer to hit the animal than to swerve to avoid which may lead to a much more serious event in my experiences of animal hits. I was once overtaking a bus, a cat ran out infront of the bus where I couldn't see it, I grabbed the steering wheel tighter and just ran over the cat and continued my overtaking of the bus, had I not, I'd be very injured possibly dead today.</p> <p>I went back to see the poor cat, it was gone so they really must have 9 lives so it was a happy ending for all!</p> <p><a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v= l4F9vrmtQQ">http://www.youtube.com/watch?v= l4F9vrmtQQ</a></p>