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SAFETY REMINDER: RURAL ROAD INTERSECTIONS

For drivers traveling the gravel roads that cross farm country in our area, the crops go by in a blur of green. However, these annual crops bring an often-ignored danger: Many intersections are sheltered by the towering corn, making it nearly impossible to see each other until just before an accident happens, with potentially deadly results.

Each year, the risk climbs with the growing corn, beginning around mid-July, when the plants can top eight feet and lasts until harvest in early October. Sparse traffic and the lack of stop signs can contribute to the dangers. Eight months a year, motorists can easily spot other vehicles. Many drivers barely slow down when approaching intersections as the corn grows taller, often-traveling 50 miles per hour or more as they pass through these intersections. Relying on looking for dust to determine if another vehicle is approaching is a very dangerous practice. Often, after rains and for several days following, the dust on gravel roads is non-existent or minimal, making this practice a very reckless one.

Capt. Jamie Van Voorst said, "We encourage drivers to treat every gravel road intersection as if there was a stop sign, or at the minimum, a yield sign present. Always expect another vehicle to be approaching the same intersection as you are; take the time to be safe."

