

Woman Killed on Highway 401 Over-night on August 11, 2011 Near Woodstock Ontario

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The following is being reported this morning in the local London Free Press.

A woman was killed on Hwy. 401 early Thursday when she was hit by several vehicles after walking away from a crash.

Ontario Provincial Police have closed the eastbound lanes of Hwy. 401 at Woodstock exit 238.

Police said a Mazda car travelling east on Hwy. 401 about 2:30 a.m. exited onto an off ramp and rolled.

The woman driver walked from the crash, across a tall grassed area and back onto the eastbound Hwy. 401. Police said she was struck by several vehicles.

The woman was pronounced dead at the scene.

The Woodstock fire department and the Woodstock Police Service canine unit responded to the crash. The canine unit searched the area to confirm there were no other occupants of the Mazda who might have been injured and walked away from the scene.

Traffic is being diverted onto Hwy. 403.

Police said it isn't known how long the section of 401 will be closed.

Anyone who witnessed the crash or saw the woman on Hwy. 401 are asked to the Oxford County OPP at 519-688-6540.

It is enlightening how people do not understand how collisions like this occur as noted by the following commenter to the newspaper article.

So what you are saying is..... A person driving along hits something and doesn't have the brains to see what they hit. How can people be so blind and stupid. Hit by several???? WTF!!! Not one driver stopped...? You can't tell me that a car hit a person and didn't know it, let alone "several".... I can't wrap my head around this at all.

Jolene Clark, August 11th 2011, 8:05am

In the early hours of night vehicles on Highway 401 are certainly travelling at the average speed of about 116 km/h or about 32 metres every second. Most drivers do not think of driving with their high beams because of the high traffic volume. Yet low beams offer in the range of only 50 metres of reasonable visibility ahead. If there was overhead lighting that could change the scenario but for now let us assume not. So you may have 1.5 seconds to see something lying on the pavement. But the shape that you see will

not the clearly defined layout of a person's body. It will be some crumpled and deformed object. Many drivers think they have hit some debris but rarely can anyone realize that it is a body. In 1.5 seconds you cannot reasonably expect a driver to detect something, realize it should be avoided and complete that avoidance motion. As unfortunate as it is that is the reality from my examination of a number of similar events in night-time conditions.

We tend to react with emotion when we see unpleasant things occurring and we lash out whether we have a full understanding of the event or not. Since we are not the judge or jury this has little consequence but sometimes we need to evaluate what message we send before we send it.