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Contents:

For mandatory inspections and assessments: digital is the simple and quick way to book your desired time slot

Digital is easier and quicker. This also applies to DEKRA Automobil's private customers seeking an appointment for a mandatory vehicle inspection, a damage assessment or a used car evaluation. The testing organization has now installed a range of online tools that are available around the clock: apart from the online booking service, a reminder service for a mandatory vehicle inspection and an online chat for service queries.

Warning motorists! Motorcycles are out and about again

DEKRA accident experts warn motorists to be on their guard. Motorcyclists are now out and about again, and although somewhat forgotten by many in the winter break, they represent a perennial danger for motorists. The narrow silhouette means they are easily overlooked, but bikes usually far exceed cars in agility and acceleration. It is not rare for motorbikes to suddenly appear behind a car or truck.

Highway accident: red alert when getting out the vehicle

Highways are considered very safe roads, yet DEKRA accident experts issue a red alert in the event of an accident. It's not only the actual accident that is dangerous for vehicle occupants. The high driving speeds and the reduced curbsides harbor risks, too. Following vehicles can crash into the rear of the accident vehicle or catch persons seeking safety on the side of the road.

Other topics:

Season start for Pedelec riders: safety has priority

Lausitzring 2023: Motorsport, music, events

Date	Stuttgart, April 2023
Contact	Tilman Vögele-Ebering
Tel. direct	+49.7 11.78 61-21 22
Fax direct	+49.7 11.78 61-27 00
Email	tilman.voegel-ebering@dekra.com
Internet	www.dekra.com

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Booking appointments: Online is faster and simpler

Online appointments for mandatory vehicle inspections and assessments

Digital – the quick and easy way of booking your slot

Digital is easier and quicker. This also applies to DEKRA Automobil's private customers seeking a date for a mandatory periodic vehicle inspection, damage assessment or a used car evaluation. The testing organization has now installed an array of online tools available around the clock – apart from the online booking service, a mandatory inspection reminder service and an online chat for service queries.

“The online appointment service is the quickest and easiest way to book a definite time slot at the test center of your choice,” says Andreas Steinwandt, head of customer processes at DEKRA Automobil GmbH. “Naturally, motorists can still turn up without appointment and have their vehicle inspected. However, an appointment frequently avoids lengthy waiting times.”

Many of the more than 700 test centers have been gathering experience of using the online appointment service for some time now. “It has turned into the standard procedure at many locations and has frequently generated customer interest.” explains Steinwandt. “On any one day in Germany we regularly record appointments running into four figures. It means customers can quickly and comfortably obtain their appointment for a new test sticker, assessment, or evaluation.”

However, the digital approach taken by the experts offers even more ways of making life easier for customers. Anybody using the free reminder tool can ensure that they don't forget the upcoming mandatory vehicle inspection date. DEKRA has been offering this service on its website since 2022. And now things are going to get even easier; all the customer now has to do is scan in the QR code. More information can be found on www.dekra.de/hu-erinnerung

Another digital highlight is the chatbot on the websites of our DEKRA branches. . With the help of artificial intelligence, the digital assistant answers questions about automotive services around the clock from any smartphone or PC. “We are in the process of enriching artificial intelligence with complementary information and fine-tuning the function more and more,” says Steinwandt.

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Warming up for the start of the season

Warning, motorists!

The motorbikes are out and about again

DEKRA accident experts warn motorists to be on their guard. Motorcyclists are now out and about again and although somewhat forgotten by many in the winter break, they represent a perennial danger for motorists. The narrow silhouette means they are easily overlooked, but bikes usually far exceed cars in agility and acceleration. It is not rare for motorbikes to suddenly appear behind a car or truck.

It is a common and dangerous situation – a vehicle intending to turn left fails to notice a motorcycle that has already started to overtake. “When turning left and entering junctions keep your eyes peeled and exercise caution. And better safe than sorry, if in doubt double check the rear-view mirror,” recommends DEKRA accident researcher Luigi Ancona. Motorcyclists can do their bit in such situations by taking pains to “appear” in the rear-view mirror of the vehicle in front before overtaking. This means avoiding the dangerous blind spot where motorists can’t see you in the rear-view mirror. Obviously, turn on your lights too.

Bike riders face several dangers in spring when the road often has frost heaves and grit residual that can easily trigger a fall. Not only does the bike need to come up to operating temperature after the winter break, so does the rider! Some time is required to get back up to last year’s level of expertise. A relaxed easing-in tour along a known route brings back the routine and confidence.

Additionally, Ancona recommends warm protective clothing that can deal with the fluctuating temperatures experienced in the spring. It not only serves to protect against wind and rain, it also constitutes the only “crumple zone” for the rider in an accident. An equipment check before the first tour is therefore a safety must. And finally, don’t forget to give your bike the once over before the season kicks off. Work on safety-relevant parts is, however, for the expert. Unprofessional tinkering not only leads to expensive repairs, but also can cause accidents.

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Pedelec accidents at a high

Seasonal start for Pedelec riders

Safety has priority

The German love affair with the Pedelec continues unabated. In 2022, sales of electric bicycles hit new highs with 2.2 million units sold. There are now considerably more than ten million e-bikes on the road. Nevertheless, the boom also has a downside. According to Destatis, the number of Pedelec accident injuries has also reached a new record with 17,045 injured and 131 fatalities in 2021. DEKRA experts remind readers that safety must find its place at the start of a new season.

Caution is a good piece of advice to be heeded, especially for elderly Pedelec riders. This is because they usually suffer more serious injuries in an accident than the young. However, this does not let off younger users. One consequence of the increasing popularity of e-bikes among the young is that the Pedelec users involved in accidents are becoming younger and younger. “The risk of being killed in a Pedelec accident is, on average, more than twice that of conventional cycles,” warns DEKRA accident researcher, Luigi Ancona. “We recommend wearing a helmet on every journey to provide better protection to the head.”

Pedelecs accelerate faster and the speeds travelled are normally higher than on unmotorized bikes; moreover, the greater weight brings with it its own challenges, for example when starting off, stopping or negotiating bends. “In particular, less experienced riders are advised to take the time to re-acquaint themselves with their bike after the winter break. Also not to be forgotten is a brief system check, for example, of brakes, handlebars, and tires,” says Ancona.

The Federal Statistics Office reported that turning off a road and crossing a junction were some of the most dangerous situations for cyclists in 2021. Also frequent are accidents in which the rider loses control of the Pedelec, for example, by riding too fast or skidding in a curve. Caution is also required when turning at junctions, ends of streets and property driveways. The most common errors are incorrect use of the road, for instance, cycling on a pavement, excessive speed and riding under the influence of alcohol.

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Accident on federal highways: free-flowing traffic a risk

Highway accident

Red alert when disembarking

Highways are considered very safe roads, yet DEKRA accident experts issue a red alert in the event of an accident. It is not only the actual accident that is dangerous for vehicle occupants. The high driving speeds and the reduced curbsides harbor risks too. Following vehicles can crash into the rear of the accident vehicle or catch persons seeking safety on the side of the road. In 2021, there were a total of 318 fatalities and more than 25,000 injured on Germany's highways.

“After a collision on the highway it is important to quickly leave the danger zone in and around the vehicle, but not too hastily. Everyone must be aware that there is a high risk of being hit by fast moving traffic.” warns DEKRA accident researcher Markus Egelhaaf. “It is extremely important that before leaving the vehicle everybody dons a high visibility vest, pays attention to oncoming vehicles and does not blindly run across to the side of the road.”

“You should generally leave the vehicle from the side facing away from the moving traffic and then only after you have made sure that the road is clear. Move behind the crash barrier or to a safe distance from the road. Never try to get to the central isle in moving traffic.” emphasizes Egelhaaf. It is also important to make an emergency call as soon as possible and provide rescue services with precise information such as the exact location, including direction of travel, the accident situation and any injured. It is helpful to run against the oncoming traffic behind the crash barrier and make other drivers aware of the accident.

Also, those who have to stop on the highway because of a breakdown are at high risk due to moving traffic. Then it is essential to engage the warning lights, move over to the right and put on a high visibility vests. Then get all occupants to disembark on the side away from the traffic, ensure they make their way to the crash barrier and call the recovery service. Exercising the appropriate caution and set up the warning triangle at a sufficient distance. If the vehicle remains on the road, it is essential to make an emergency call so that the police can cordon off the area if necessary. Egelhaaf: “Never push

the vehicle off the road in moving traffic on your own, or change a wheel under tight conditions on the side of the road. This is far too dangerous.”

If you are approaching an accident or a broken-down vehicle on the highway you should “be particularly careful, slow down and, if the traffic conditions allow, keep a lane free between the stricken vehicle and your own car. If help is required at the scene of the accident, everyone is legally obliged to do so,” reminds the DEKRA accident researcher. If moving traffic is endangered by the position of the accident or broken down vehicle, 110 should be called immediately and the situation as well as the precise location of the obstruction reported. A high visibility vest that fits should be available for every occupant inside the vehicle. If children are on board, make sure that new vests are purchased as they grow older.

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Lausitzring 2023: Motorsport, music, events

The 2023 season at the DEKRA Lausitzring promises to be memorable one. Visitors can look forward to an exciting mix of motorsport, music and a host of other events. Motorsport friends, sports fans and music fans will all find something to fire the imagination. August promises to be action packed with the DTM weekend, the concurrent Family and Friends Festival and the DMV Racing Days all taking place in the month. June has the thrilling ADAC Race Weekend as well as the P9 Race Weekend. Other events include driving training or drag racing. Ambitious sports men and women can look forward to the Lausitz Marathon in May and the Velofondo 24-hour cycling event in September. Rock fans will be eagerly anticipating the G.O.N.D. Music Festival in July, and September will enable visitors to experience first-hand the fascinating world of eMobility on the “Green Mile”. For further information on all the events taking place in 2023 consult www.dekra-lausitzring.de.

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