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John McElroy:

Automakers could reduce traffic fatalities simply with better headlights. With Automotive Insight, I'm John McElroy.

According to researchers, there is a direct relationship between headlights and pedestrian fatalities. We all overdrive our low beams at night, says Michael Flannagan at the University of Michigan's Transportation Research Institute. Most low beams are not bright enough at speeds over 40 miles an hour to light up unexpected objects like pedestrians or animals. In fact, poor lighting is the main cause of pedestrian fatalities at night. Flannagan says there are 2,300 pedestrians killed because of this problem and any improvement in lighting would reduce the number of people killed, and that's a key reason why automakers are getting more interested in Xenon or HID headlamps, because even though they're more expensive, they are a lot brighter.

With Automotive Insight, I'm John McElroy, WWJ Newsradio 950.

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