Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

2011 Hunting Incident Report
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Hunting Incident -- is when a person is injured by the discharge of a hunting firearm or bow and arrow arising from the activity of hunting, including travel to and from the hunting field.

There were 26 total hunting incidents during the 2011 hunting season. Two of the 26 incidents were fatal. Thanks to the efforts of our hunter education program hunting is a safe activity in Wisconsin and getting safer all the time. Hunting incidents are continuing a downward trend and for 2011 we were below the 10 year average of about 32 incidents per year.

Gun deer hunting, turkey and waterfowl hunting were the three hunting activities with the highest number of incidents with gun deer hunting having the most. Hunting on game farms continue to be a location where several pheasant hunting incidents occur annually. Other game hunting remained basically the same compared to 2010.

Rifles and shotguns remain the hunting implement involved most often in hunting incidents. Shotguns (62%) and rifles (38%). No handgun or muzzleloader incidents occurred in 2011.

There were three major causes for incidents for 2011: Shooters failure to positively identify the target, victim out of sight of the shooter and victim covered by shooter swinging on game. It’s not a good enough reason to take a shot when a hunter only thinks they are seeing a legal target; they must know and be certain the target is legal. Having a safe zone of fire and safe backstop is equally important to knowing your target. Planning your hunt and hunting your plan is important. Know where your hunting partners are at all times.

Self inflicted injuries accounted for 38% of the total number of incidents. This is an increase of 10% from 2010.

Juveniles (under age 18) make up 23% of the incidents in 2011. That means that 77% of all hunting incidents were caused by adult hunters. Historically juveniles have contributed to nearly 33% of the total numbers of incidents. It is important to note that the numbers of incidents caused by juvenile shooters was a single digit (6) incidents out of 26 incidents for 2011.

To summarize this report, 2011 was the third time in history that we had a gun deer season without a fatality. 1972 was the first year without a fatal incident for gun deer hunting. We were well below the 10 year average for hunting incidents and expect to continue that trend into the future. Incidents that were caused while hunters were either moving or shooting at moving game increase the propensity for something to go wrong. We cannot rest on past success and must stress the importance of knowing and practicing the 4 basic rules of firearms safety every time we handle a firearm. Remember the slogan ”Safe Hunting is No Accident.” 2012 can be the safest season ever. . . .IF all hunters follow those 4 simple rules.

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History of Hunting Incidents & Fatalities

![Chart showing the history of hunting incidents and fatalities from 1985 to 2011. The chart displays the total number of accidents and the number of fatalities each year. The data shows a decrease in both categories over the years.]
### Wisconsin Hunting Incident Rate Per 100,000 Hunters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>License Year</th>
<th>Total Number of Incidents</th>
<th>Incidents per 100,000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>3.61111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>4.435825</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2.506053</td>
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<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>4.186997</td>
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<td>2007</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>3.742728</td>
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<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>4.294515</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>5.325037</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>4.84226</td>
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<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>4.886903</td>
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<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>6.8205</td>
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<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>6.68359</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **1967 Hunter Education Begins**
- **1980 Mandatory Blaze Orange for Gun Deer Season**
- **1985 Mandatory Hunter Education Begins**
Where Incident Occurred – All Incidents 2011

- Field/Cropland: 15%
- Wooded Area: 40%
- Public Hunting Grounds: 27%
- River, Stream or Lake: 6%
- Other: 12%

Other Includes:
- Private Pond: 1
- Private Property: 1
- Wooded Swamp: 2
Animals Hunted by Shooter – All Incidents 2011

- Deer: 9
- Waterfowl: 4
- Pheasant: 3
- Squirrel: 3
- Turkey: 4
- Coyote: 2
- Other - Blackbird: 1
Firearms Involved in Incidents – All Incidents 2011

Type:
- Rifle: 38%
- Shotgun: 62%

Action:
- Slide/Pump: 38%
- Semi Auto: 31%
- Lever: 15%
- Bolt: 12%
- Break/Hinge: 4%
Contributing Factors to Incidents – All Incidents 2011

- Walking Carrying Firearm with Safety Off
- Carless Gun Handling/Finger on Trigger
- Horseplay w/ Firearm
- Improper Crossing of Obstacle
- Loading Firearm
- Trigger Caught on Object
- Shooter Stumbled and Fell
- Firearm Fell, Insecure Rest
- Ricochet
- Shooter Failed to Identify Target
- Victim Moved in Line of Fire
- Victim Covered by Shooter Swinging on Game
- Victim Out of Sight of Shooter
Incident Conditions – All Incidents 2011

Precipitation
- None: 92%
- Snow: 4%
- Raining: 4%

Light Conditions
- Daylight: 92%
- Dawn: 8%

Weather
- Clear: 54%
- Cloudy: 31%
- Partly Cloudy: 15%

Topography
- Level: 54%
- Rolling: 19%
- Steep Hill: 4%
- Swamp/Marsh: 23%

Ground Cover
- Grass: 57%
- Leaves: 23%
- Snow Cover: 8%
- Other: 12%
Incident Statistics – All Incidents 2011

Self Inflicted

Yes 38%
No 62%

Shooter/Victim Information
Two-Party Incidents 2011

Members of the Same Hunting Party
(includes self-inflicted injuries)

Could Shooter See Victim?
(includes self-inflicted injuries)

Self Inflicted
Yes
No

27%
38%
35%
Incident “Shooter” Statistics – All Incidents 2011

Hunter Education Graduate?

Years Hunting Experience

Gender

Age

- Over Age 60: 8%
- Under 12: 8%
- Age 50-59: 24%
- Age 40-49: 4%
- Age 30-39: 4%
- Age 24-29: 15%
- Age 18-23: 15%
- Age 12-17: 15%
- Age 18-23: 15%
- Age 12-17: 15%
- Age 30-39: 4%
- Age 40-49: 4%
- Age 50-59: 24%

- Male: 85%
- Female: 6%
- Unknown: 9%
Activity “Shooter” Was Involved In - All Incidents 2011
Distance From Muzzle to Wound – All Incidents 2011

(Includes Self Inflicted)
Incident “Victim” Statistics – All Incidents 2011

Hunter Education Graduate?

Years Hunting Experience

Age

Gender

Male 88%

Female 12%

Age 12-17 26%

Age 60 & Over 23%

Age 50-59 14%

Age 40-49 9%

Age 30-39 9%

Age 0-5 5%

Age 6-11 0%

6-10 Years 4

11-15 Years 4

16-20 Years 2

20+ years 10

0-5 Years 6
Incident “Victim” Surroundings
Two-Party Incidents 2011  (Does not include Self Inflicted Incidents)

- Dense Cover: 3
- Light Cover: 7
- Open Area: 5
- Boat: 1
Incident “Victim” Clothing Color
Two-Party Incidents Only 2011  (Does not include Self Inflicted Incidents)

Cap

- Blaze Orange: 31%
- Blaze Orange/Camo: 6%
- Camouflage: 50%
- Other: 13%

Trouser or Pants

- Blaze Orange: 31%
- Blaze Orange/Camo: 6%
- Camouflage: 36%
- Brown: 4%
- Unknown: 4%

Coat or Vest

- Blaze Orange: 7
- Camouflage: 6
- Brown: 1
- Other: 2

Legend:
- Blaze Orange
- Camouflage
- Brown
- Other
- Blue/Green
- Unknown
2011 Hunting Incidents by County – All Incidents

Note: All incidents non-fatal unless otherwise stated.
History of Gun Deer Incidents

2011 Gun Deer Incidents
Gun Deer Season Incidents 2011

Non Fatal = 8
Fatal = 0
Total = 8
1.29 per 100,000 participants
Incidents by Day of Week
Gun Deer Season - 2011

Incident Victim Clothing Color
Gun Deer Season – 2011 Two Party Incidents Only
(Does not include Self Inflicted Incidents)
2011 Deer Season Safety Violations - Firearms

- Shoot From/Across Rd. - H82
- Hunt Deer with Illegal Firearm - H54
- Transport Uncased Firearm in Vehicle - H44
- Transport Loaded firearm in Vehicle - H43
- Hunt Before/After Hours - H23
- Hunt Without Blaze Orange - H08
- Hunt within 50 Feet of Rd. - H07
Remember Safe Hunting is no Accident!

Treat Every Firearm As If It Is Loaded

Always Point the Muzzle In A Safe Direction

Be Certain Of Your Target & What’s Beyond

Keep Your Finger Outside The Trigger Guard Until Ready To Shoot