

WISCONSIN HUNTING



CONGRATULATIONS

WISCONSIN HUNTERS

ON ANOTHER SAFE 9-DAY GUN DEER SEASON

Treating every firearm as if it is loaded, always pointing your muzzle in a safe direction, being certain of your target and what is beyond it and keeping your finger outside the trigger guard until you are ready to shoot always leads to a safe and successful hunt!



Adventures and Memories...
ENJOY WISCONSIN'S WILD SIDE

PHOTO CREDIT ANGELA MARSH PERGANDE

2018

ANNUAL PROGRAM REPORT



Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
Bureau of Law Enforcement
Pub-LE-006-2019

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ANNUAL PROGRAM REPORT

Program Scope

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) Hunter Education and Bowhunter Education Program mission is to promote safety, conservation, and Wisconsin's hunting heritage through a comprehensive educational program.

The Wisconsin DNR Hunter Education Program goals are:

1. To develop, deliver and maintain standardized curriculum that meets or exceeds the International Hunter Education Associations (IHEA) and the Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies (AFWA) recommendations and standards for basic and advanced hunter education programs.
2. To enhance and sustain a progressive, professional, consistent, effective and efficient WI DNR Hunter Education Program.
3. To recruit, reactivate and retain safe, knowledgeable and responsible hunters.
4. To increase public awareness and understanding of the value and role of hunting in sound wildlife management and conservation.

One of the Bureau of Law Enforcement goals is to enhance opportunity, safety and enjoyment of outdoor recreational experiences in Wisconsin. This strategy to accomplish this goal is to;

Enhance outdoor recreational sporting opportunities by reducing the number of incidents, fatalities, user conflicts and property damage through education and collaborative efforts with internal and external partners.

Hunting in Wisconsin is safe; as demonstrated by the continued downward trend in hunting incidents.

Wisconsin has a strong tradition of safe hunting, it is everyone's responsibility to continue this tradition.

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Program Summary

Accident Investigation, Reporting and Administration

Conservation Wardens conduct thorough investigations to learn what happened in hunting-related shooting incidents. The program's lengthy historical data and inquiries into the circumstances of each incident is used to make effective modifications to the hunter education curriculum, regulations, media outreach efforts, and training our volunteers and department staff.

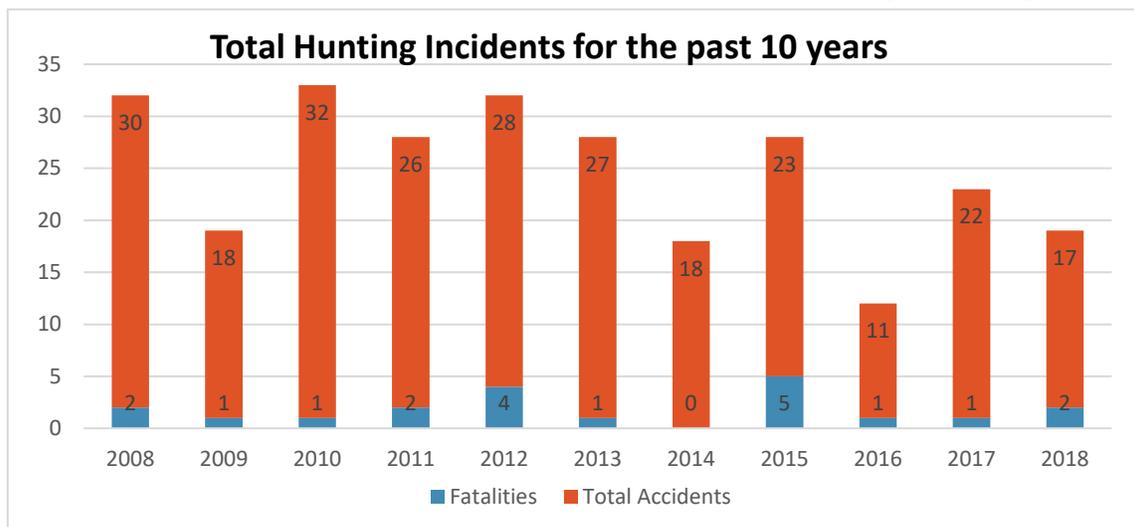
State of Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Bureau of Law Enforcement		<input type="radio"/> Preliminary <input type="radio"/> Final NON-RELEASEABLE Document		Hunting Incident Report Form 4100-101 (R 4/16)	
Accident- means any incident where a person is injured (or killed) by the discharge of a firearm or arrow (including crossbow bolt) while a person is hunting, fishing or trapping. This includes hunting, fishing, or trapping that involves captive wildlife (under Chapter 169, Stats.) or farm-raised deer (under Chapter 95.55, Stats.). Injuries caused by scopes hitting the person's face, a gun blowing up, a bow/crossbow limb breaking, or cocking/de-cocking string strikes from a crossbow are not considered a reportable accident.					
The definition of a Firearm does <u>not</u> include a pellet, bb gun, or air rifle.					
Incident Criteria					
Incident Date	Day of Week:			Time of Incident	
	<input type="radio"/> S <input type="radio"/> M <input type="radio"/> T <input type="radio"/> W <input type="radio"/> Th <input type="radio"/> F <input type="radio"/> Sa			<input type="radio"/> am <input type="radio"/> pm	
County	<input type="radio"/> City <input type="radio"/> Village <input type="radio"/> Township				
	of _____				
<input type="radio"/> Private Land <input type="radio"/> Public Land <input type="radio"/> State Park		PHG Name:			
Injury Type:	Was Injury Self-Inflicted?		Name of Hospital or Clinic Where Taken/Treated		
<input type="radio"/> Fatal <input type="radio"/> Non-Fatal	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No				
Describe Injury – Be Specific					
Shooter					

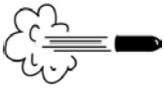
29.341 Duties on accidental shooting

(1) Any person who, while hunting any wild animal or bird, discharges a firearm or arrow, and by that discharge injures or kills another person, shall immediately give his or her name and address to the injured person, render assistance to the injured person and obtain immediate medical or hospital care for the injured person, and immediately report the injury or death to the sheriff or police of the locality in which the shooting took place.

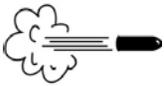
2018 All Incident Summary

There were 17 hunting incidents, including two fatalities during the 2018 hunting season. Hunting is a safe activity in Wisconsin and continues to be safe, with the number of incidents in 2018 below the 10-year average.





The point of always identifying your target, what's in front of it and beyond it before shooting needs to be reinforced by all hunters! Never shoot at sound and movement. Having a safe zone of fire and safe backstop are equally as important as knowing your target.



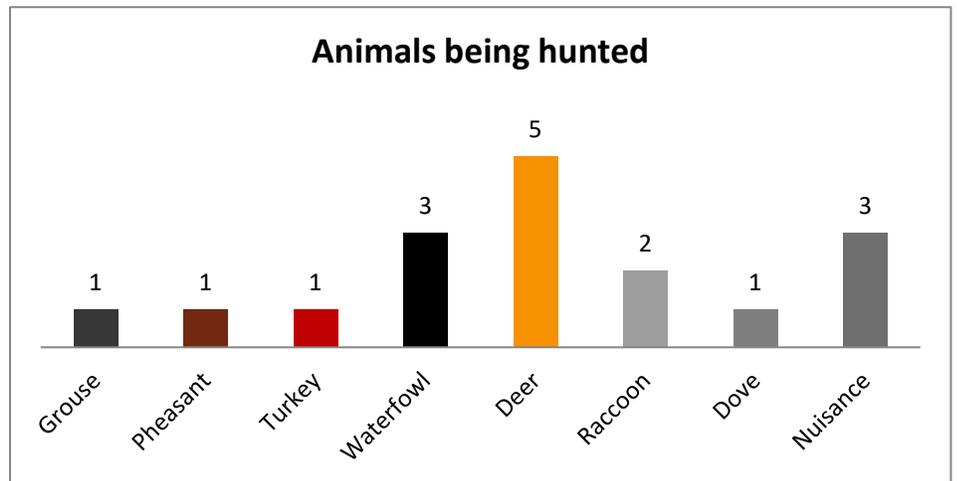
41% of the incidents were self-inflicted which means the muzzle was not pointed in a safe direction and towards the hunter's body; this is a 5% increase from last year. Constant attention to the **4 basic rules of firearms safety** are necessary to keep yourself and others safe while afield.

Even as we congratulate ourselves we must continue to improve on this record because as we all know any incident is ONE too many. In 2018, Wisconsin finished well below the 10-year average of 22 incidents per year.

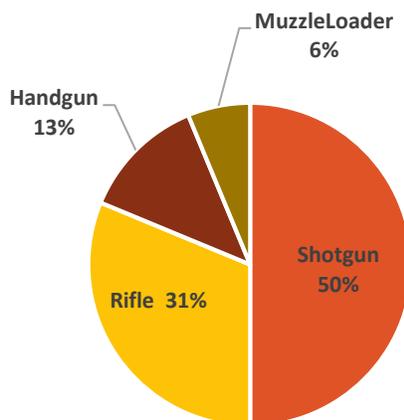
Animals being hunted

Based on license sales gun deer hunting was the hunting activity with the highest number of incidents.

The rate for gun deer hunting incidents was approximately 0.18 per hundred thousand hunter days afield. This is the lowest rate of all hunted species. Pheasant hunting had the highest incident rate in 2018 at approximately .25 incidents per hundred thousand hunter days.



Type of Firearm

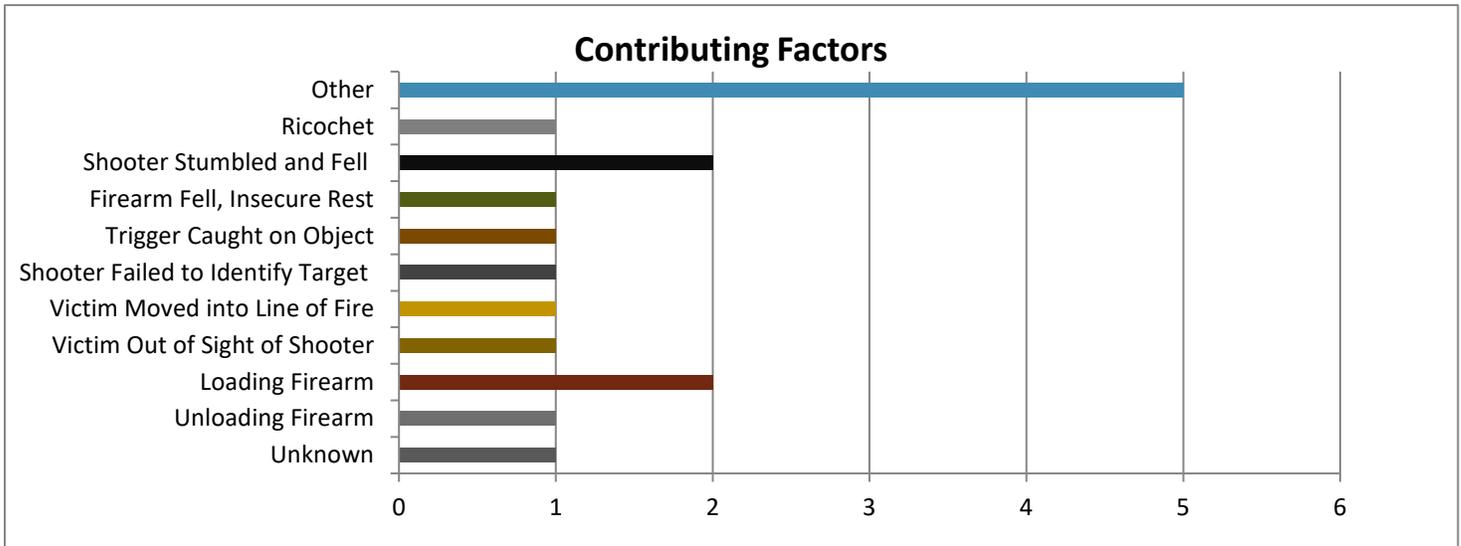


Type of firearm

Rifles and shotguns remain the type of firearm involved most often in hunting incidents.

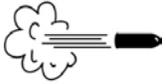
There were no incidents involving bows or crossbows in 2018.

Contributing Factors



*****Other** contributing factors included:

- ✓ two hunting incidents where dog stepped on firearm causing it to discharge
- ✓ shooting at birds beyond killable distance to cut off birds from approaching victims hunting group
- ✓ victims out of sight of shooter plus ricochet
- ✓ shooting after hours

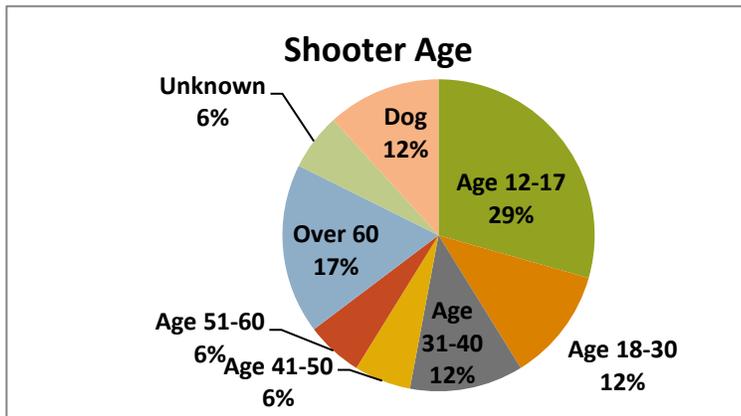


*In every hunter education course, DNR Volunteer Hunter Education instructors stress the need to fully understand and follow the four basic rules of firearm safety. Protect yourself and your fellow hunting partners by following these essential four rules. The four rules of firearm safety can be remembered by the acronym **TABK**.*

- **Treat every firearm as if it was loaded** - Never assume a firearm is unloaded and never treat it that way, even if you watch as it is unloaded. Make it a habit to treat firearms like they are always loaded.
- **Always point the muzzle in a safe direction** – A five-year average says 36% of all hunting incidents are self-inflicted injuries. That means the muzzle was pointed at some part of the hunter's body. A safe direction is a direction where the bullet will travel and harm no one in the event of an unwanted discharge. There are no accidental discharges with firearms, *only unwanted discharges*.
- **Be certain of your target and what is beyond it** - Positive target identification is a must. To shoot at something you only think is a legal target is gambling with human life. You must be certain and correct in judgment before deciding to shoot. Otherwise, it is reckless behavior. In addition to identifying the target, a hunter must know that a safe backstop for their bullet is present in every shooting situation. We don't always hit our target, and, in some cases, the bullet passes through the target. A safe backstop guarantees that no one will get hurt.
- **Keep your finger outside the trigger guard until ready to shoot** - Your finger has no business being anywhere near the trigger until you intentionally want to shoot something.

Shooter Statistics

Shooter age



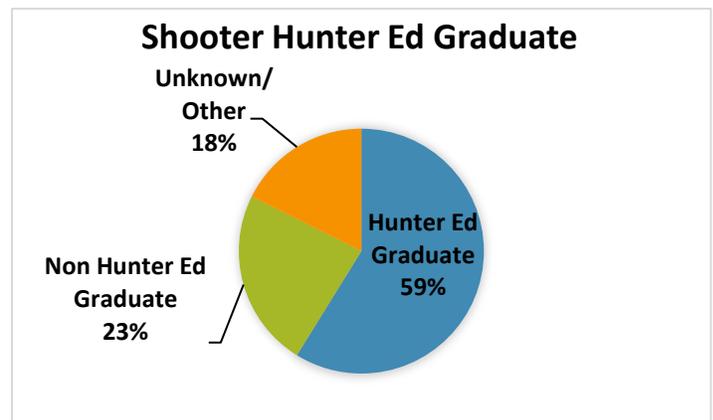
29% of the shooters were juveniles (under age 18) 53% of the hunting incidents were caused by adult hunters. Historically, on a ten-year average, juveniles have contributed to just over 22% of the total numbers of incidents.

In 2018 there were two incidents that involved dogs stepping on the firearm causing it to discharge. There was also one incident where the shooter was unknown.

Shooter hunter education graduate

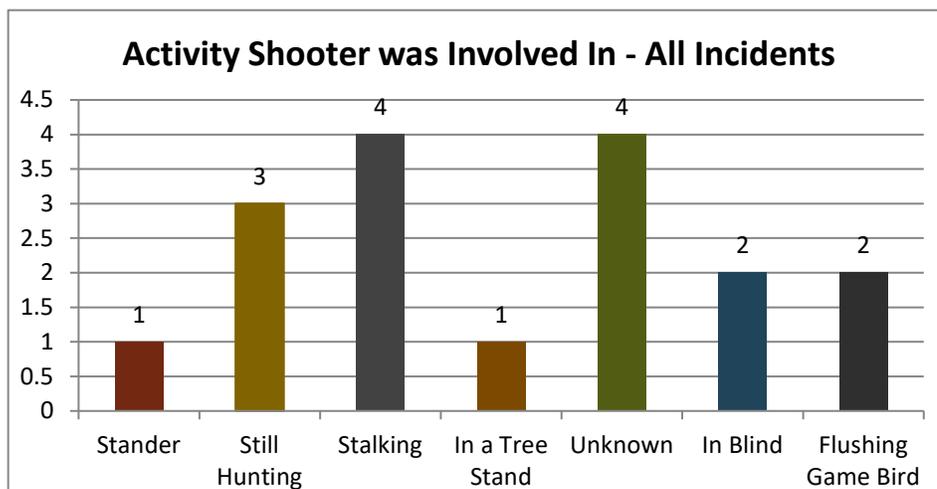
The Hunter Education Program is committed to teaching, developing and retaining safe, knowledgeable, and responsible hunters whether they are a novice or experienced hunter. 23% of the shooters involved in an incident had not completed a hunter safety education course and 59% were graduates of the hunter education program.

The average age of the shooter in all incidents in 2018 was 37. Hunter education is mandatory for anyone born on or after January 1, 1973.



Activity shooters involved in

The activity the shooter was involved in at the time of the incident helps focus hunter education lessons to include hunting methods and how to safely engage in each.



These activities include: still hunting, which involves stopping for extended periods to scan and listen for game; and, stalking, which involves following tracks.

Still hunting and stalking remain among the most common activities involved in hunting incidents.

2018 Deer Season Summary

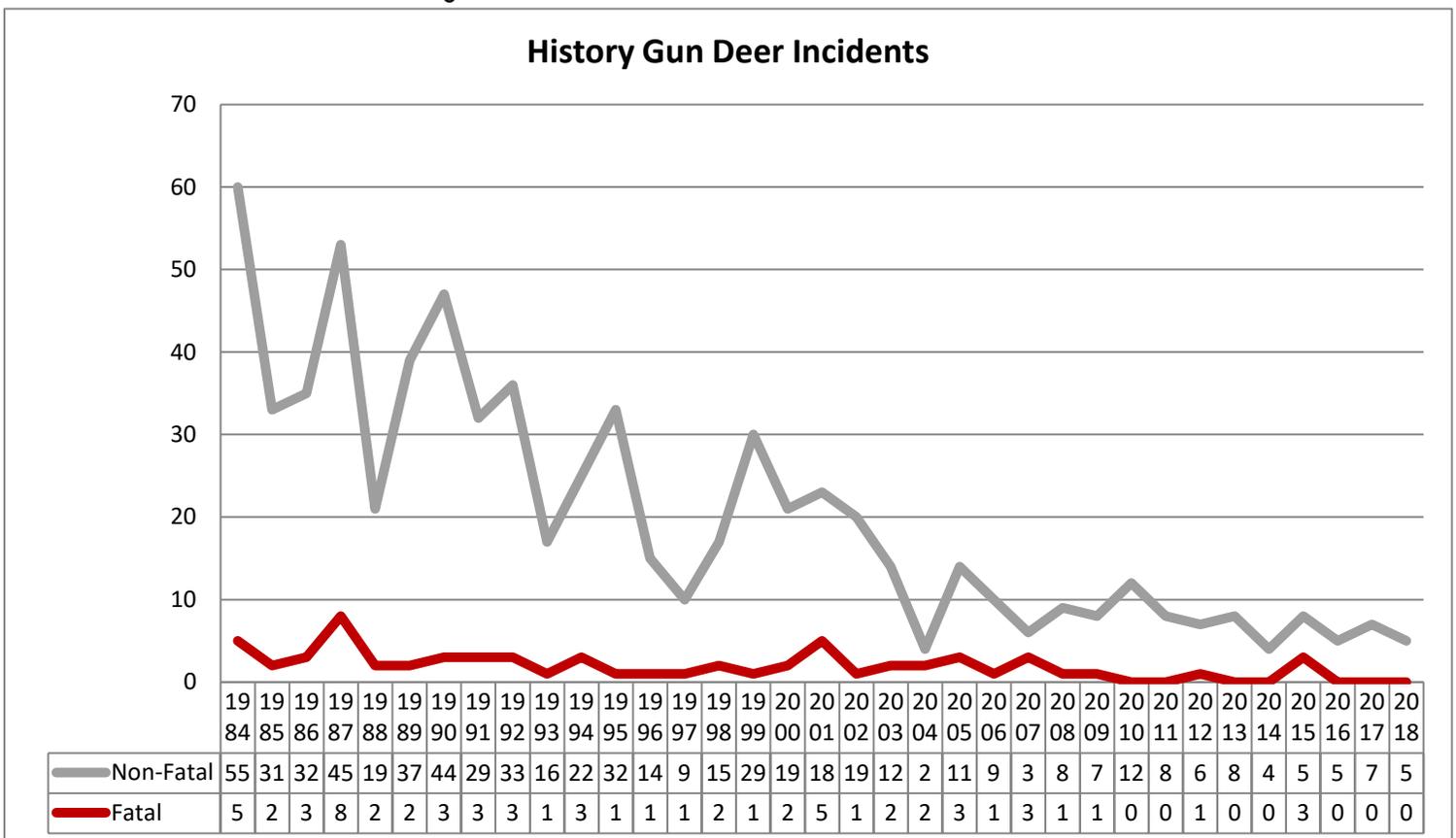
Nearly 600,000 hunters head to the woods for the opening weekend of the annual nine-day gun deer hunt year after year. DNR Bureau of Law Enforcement’s conservation wardens investigated 5 non-fatal hunting incidents in fifteen counties during the gun-deer season. One incident occurred in each of the following counties; Columbia, Polk, Dunn, Bayfield and Sauk. One of the incidents involved a deer drive. The average age of the shooter involved in these 5 incidents was 28 years of age. There were no fatalities during the nine-day gun deer hunt in 2018. As always, one incident is one too many, and our hearts go out to anyone impacted by a hunting incident.

Deer hunting in Wisconsin is safe; as demonstrated by our continued downward trend in hunting incidents. Seven out of the last 10 deer seasons were fatality-free and nine out of the last 10 deer seasons involved single digit incidents.

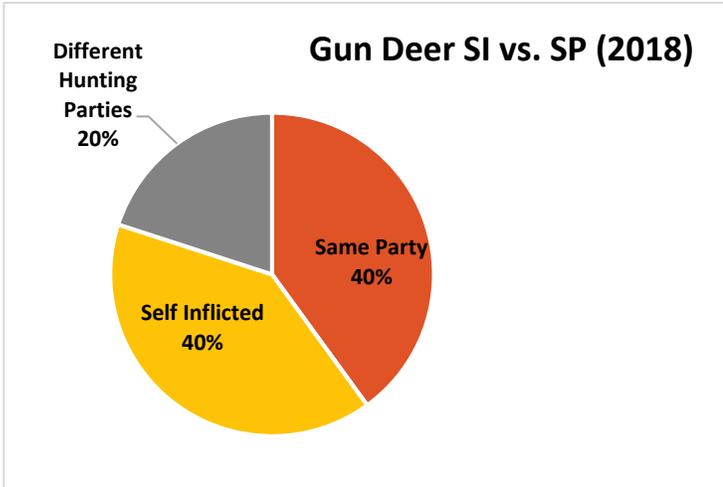
Female participation in hunting continues to be a popular trend. Approximately 33% of the 21,000 plus hunter safety graduates in Wisconsin were female, not including archery. 11% of the licensed deer hunters were female and 28% percent of first-time gun deer buyers were female, which remains steady.

History gun deer incidents

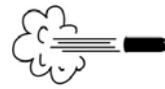
Note the downward trend in gun deer season incidents.



Gun deer self-inflicted (SI) vs same party (SP)



Two of the five deer season incidents involved a self-inflicted injury (40%). Two of the other incidents involved members of the same hunting party, and one incident involved a members of different hunting parties.

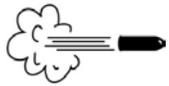


Always point the muzzle in a safe direction, away from yourself and others.

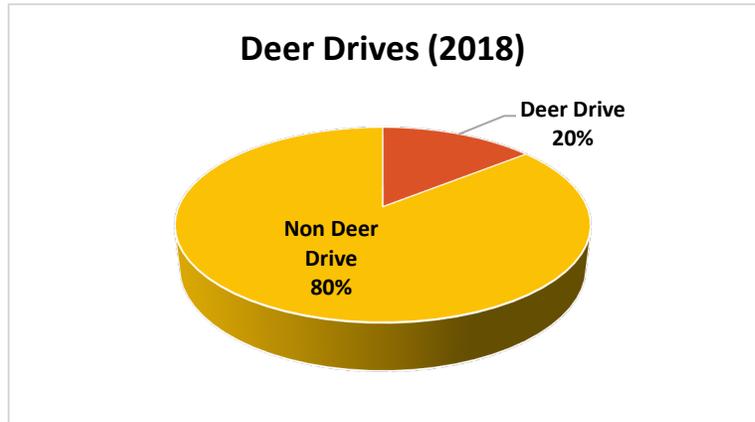
Having a safe zone of fire and safe backstop is equally important as knowing your target, what's in front of it and beyond it.

Deer drives

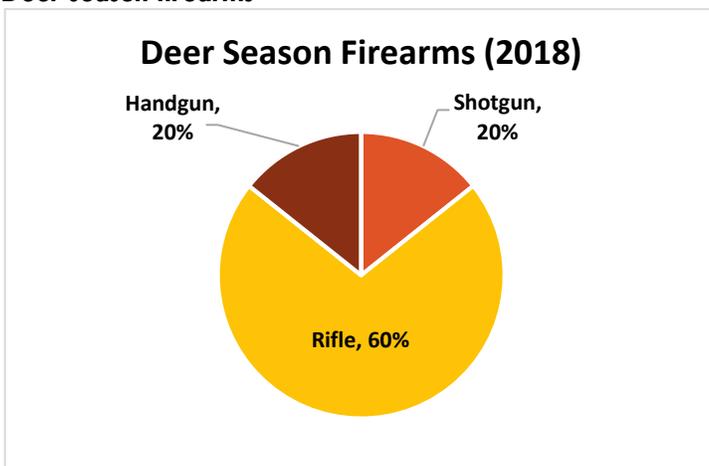
20% of the gun deer incidents in 2018 involved same party deer drive incidents.



Planning your hunt and hunting your plan is essential; know where your hunting partners are at all times.

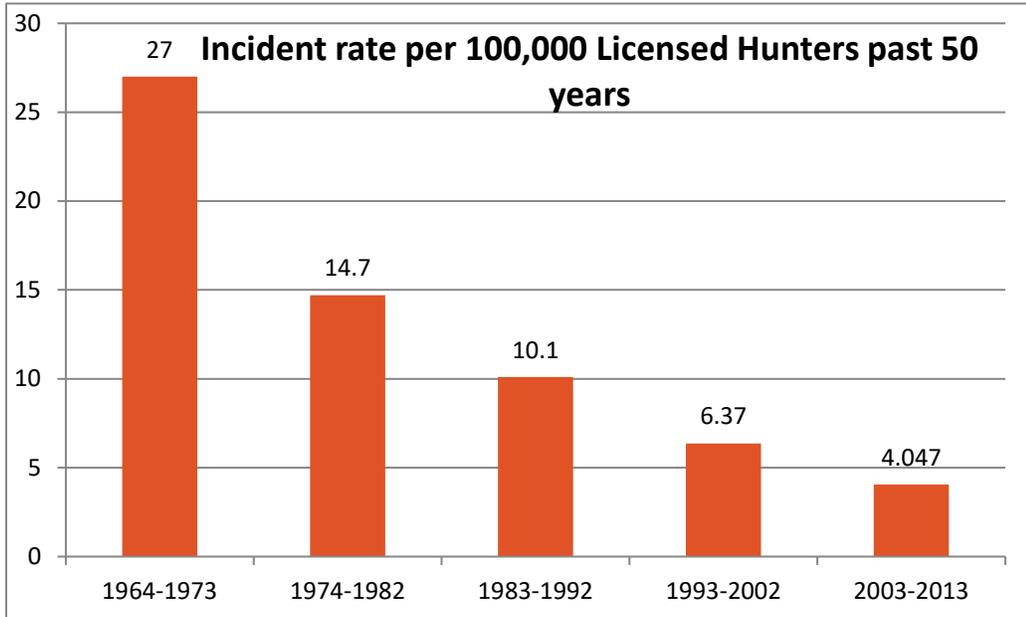


Deer season firearms



Even though our number of licensed hunters has remained fairly steady over the past 50 years, our hunting incident rate has dropped substantially.

Licensed hunters & Incident rate per 100,000 (all licensed hunters)



The average annual hunting incident rate for the last 50 years broken into 10-year increments

Enforcement

One of the goals of the warden service is to create a safe and enjoyable outdoor recreational environment for everyone. State Conservation Wardens provide guidance and education for a hunter who is unaware of law changes or makes an error. In the interest of public safety, Conservation Wardens place emphasis on safety violations, which include possessing loaded firearms inside motorized vehicles, discharging firearms across a highway, and hunting without the required color clothing during gun deer seasons.

Of the approximately 1,200 hunting citations issued, 24% were related to hunting safety violations.

HUNTING SAFETY CITATIONS FOR 2017	
Place or possess a loaded firearm (other than a handgun), inside a moving or stationary motorized vehicle	26
Discharge a firearm from or across a highway or within 50 feet of the center of a roadway	60
Hunt within 50 feet of road’s center	73
Hunt without required color clothing during a gun deer season	36
Load (other than a handgun) or discharge a firearm in or from a motorized vehicle.	33
Shine wild animals while possessing a firearm, bow and arrow or crossbow	12
Place, possess or transport a loaded or an uncased cocked crossbow in or on a vehicle.	10
Hunt deer or bear before or after hunting hours. - less than 30 min	16
Hunt game (other than bear or deer) before or after hunting hours - less than 30 min.	8
Transport loaded or uncased firearm or a strung or uncased bow on ATV or UTV	12

Safety Education

Due to the work of the Volunteer Hunter Safety Education Instructor Corps, Conservation Wardens, and the DNR's Recreational Safety and Outdoor Skills Section, 2018 was another safe year, staying just below the 10-year average.

We currently have about 4,200 active volunteer hunter education instructors. Just over 1000 Internet field day certified instructors, and just over 800 archery instructors.

In 2018, over 20,000 students were certified. 13,216 in basic hunter education, 2,463 took the internet field day, 5,696 adults certified, and 1,241 students certified in archery.

- ✓ 657 traditional hunter education courses
- ✓ 120 internet field day courses
- ✓ 49 adult test-outs (ended as of 4/1/2018)
- ✓ 65 archery courses including adult online certifications

Public Outreach

Each year the hunter education program develops a media outreach plan related to hunting safely; the 4 basic rules of firearm safety, tree-stand safety and the promotion of getting enrolled in hunter education classes.

WDNR uses a multi-media approach including: digital advertisement, radio interviews, radio ads, social media, and news print releases. During the fall of 2018 there were a total of 93 paid radio spots plus 25 bonus spots for a total of 118 spots during an eleven-week time frame over 82 radio network stations.

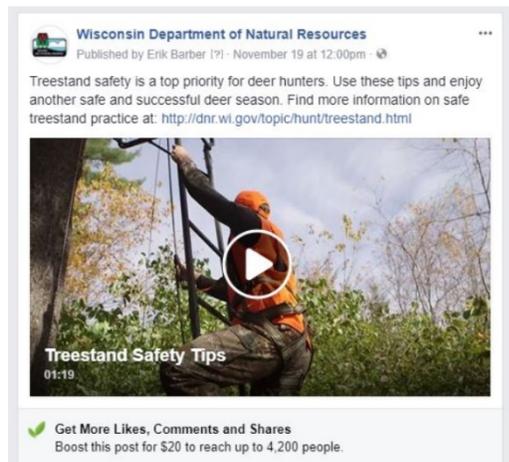
The hunter education program also maintains a presence at Wisconsin's Midwest Outdoor Heritage Education Expo and other localized events throughout the year.

The DNR's Webpage is updated with home page banners and features that link to safety videos and educational opportunities.

Multiple Facebook posts were used during the 2018-gun deer season reaching over 40,000 people with firearm safety and tree-stand safety messaging.



The 2018 digital tree-stand safety campaign and TABK hit almost 3 million impressions and over 17,000 clicks.





Untracked Incidents and Treestand Safety

Every year, media outlets have reported on hunter deaths or injuries throughout the season. These reports are often related to death by natural causes or injuries from tree-stand falls. Although to hunting WDNR does not track or include these events in statistical reports.

Our efforts to promote safe tree-stand behavior include public safety announcements each year leading up to and during hunting seasons.

WDNR's message reminds hunters to take the time and always inspect their stands, especially those that are left up all year. An inspection should include an inspection of the tree; checking the integrity of the straps to make sure animals haven't chewed on them and they are not decayed; pulling on the stand and move it around to see how much it moves; and checking the hardware to make sure nuts and bolts are tight and make any adjustments that need to be made.

The WDNR strongly recommends that people take the free Tree Stand Safety Course which is provided directly from our tree-stand safety web page <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/hunt/treestand.html>.

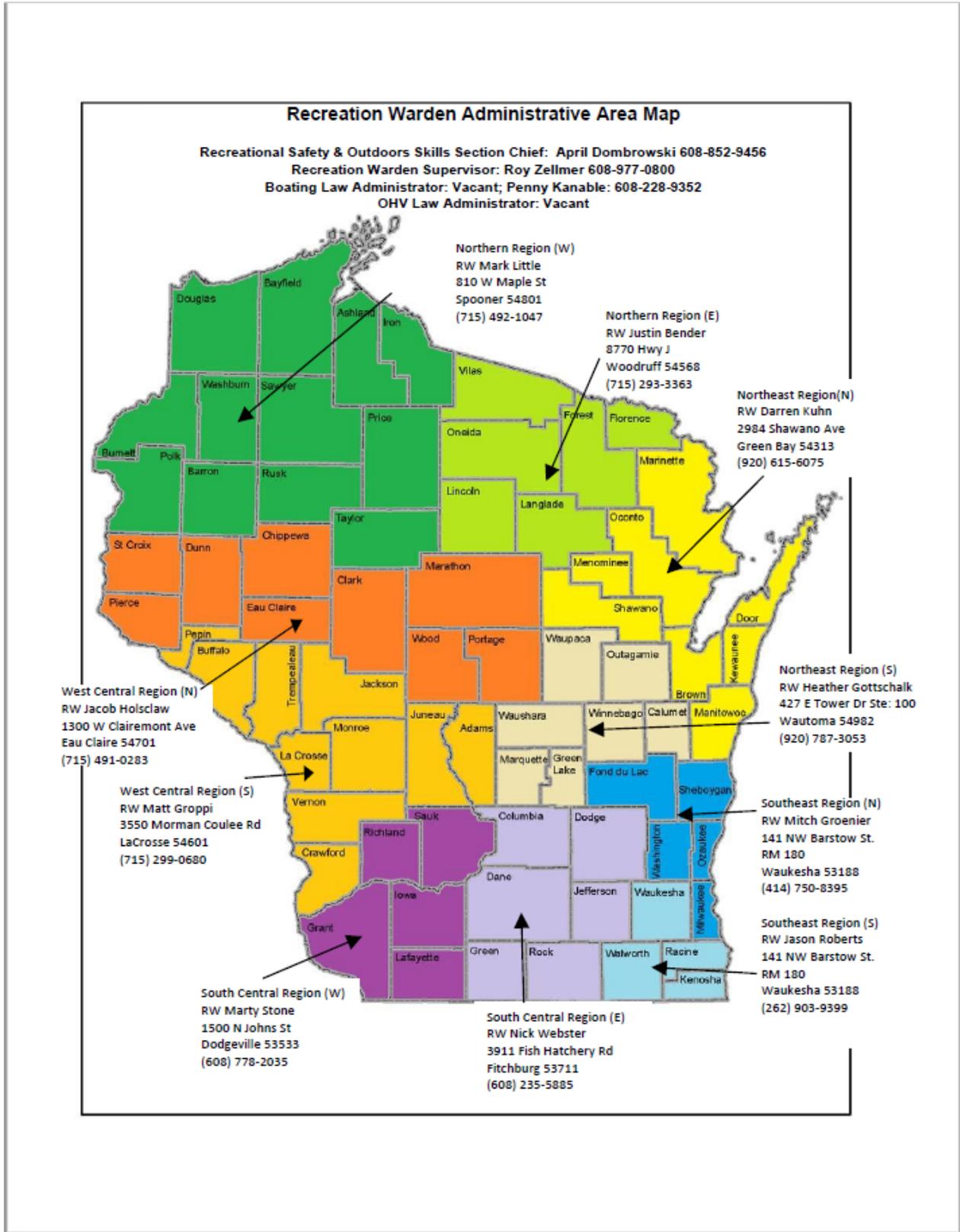
Tree-stand safety is a mandatory part of the Wisconsin Hunter Education program with emphasis on the use of:

- safety harnesses
- maintaining 3 points of contact with your ladder stand
- use of a haul line (to raise and lower) unloaded firearms and bows
- use of a life line to keep you connected from the time you leave the ground to the time you get back down
- regular safety inspections of all tree-stands
- suspension trauma



**“Stay Connected”
“Live to Hunt Again”**

Recreation Warden Administrative Area Map



Wisconsin hunting incident summary - 2018

#	Date/Time	Final Report	Location	Injury Description	Fatal	Self-Inflicted (SI) or Same Party (SP)	Shooter Age / Sex / Hunter Safety Certified	Victim Age / Sex / Hunter Safety Certified	Type of Firearm
1.	01/12/2018 2:00pm	Y	Crawford Private	gunshot to the right side of head, bullet broke skin and lodged between the skin and the skull	No	Neither	13yr M Yes	19yr M Yes	.22 Caliber Slide/Pump Action Rifle
Synopsis:	The shooter was shooting at sparrows that were on the frozen ground around a cattle feeder in the barn yard. Victim walked out of steel shed at the exact time the shooter shot. The bullet ricocheted off the frozen ground and struck the victim in the side of the head.								
2.	05/05/2018 04:43pm	Y	Adams Public	gun shot to left foot	No	SI - Self Inflicted	48yr M Yes	Same as Shooter	12 Gauge Semi-Auto Action Shotgun
Synopsis:	The shooter/victim was hunting turkey. Shooter attempted to attach a clip-on cloth turkey tail fan to the barrel of his shotgun when the shotgun discharged causing pellets to strike left foot.								
3.	07/12/2018 9:04am	Y	Sheboygan Private	gun shot to right leg	No	SI – Self Inflicted	67yr F No	Same as Shooter	.22 Caliber Revolver Handgun
Synopsis:	The shooter/victim shot at nuisance raccoon. Shooter returned to residence to retrieve additional ammunition and was reloading and struggling to refit the detachable cylinder when it discharged resulting in a gunshot wound to the right leg.								
4.	09/02/2018 5:30pm	Y	Waukesha Public	Circular wound to left shin	No	Neither	17yr M Yes	17yr M Yes	20 Gauge Slide/Pump Action Shotgun
Synopsis:	The shooter was hunting dove. Victim's group dropped shot on shooter's group and shooter began firing at birds in the direction of the victim's group.								
5.	09/26/2018 12:00pm	Y	Iron Public	gunshot wound to the chest	Yes	SI - Self Inflicted	74yr M No	Same as Shooter	12 Gauge Slide/Pump Action Shotgun
Synopsis:	The shooter/victim was hunting grouse. Shooter/victim was attempting to cross a log that covered hunting trail when shotgun went off hitting victim in chest causing a fatal injury.								
6.	09/30/2018 7:19pm	Y	Polk Private	.22 caliber bullet wound entering left side of abdominal area exiting right side	No	Neither	17yr M Yes	33yr F Yes	.22 Caliber Bolt Action Rifle

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Synopsis:	The shooter was hunting raccoon and failed to identify his target and shot victim (a bowhunter) who was walking along a field edge after shooting hours.								
7.	10/08/2018 5:30pm	Y	Polk Private	Single BB passed through webbing of hand between thumb and forefinger	No	SI – Self Inflicted	40yr M Yes	Same as Shooter	12 Gauge Semi-Auto Action Shotgun
Synopsis:	The shooter/victim was hunting waterfowl. The shooter was loading two shells into the magazine tube and had placed one in the action of the shotgun. The shooter pushed the bolt release and the bolt struck the shell in the action and the shell exploded causing BB to penetrate through shooter/victim's hand.								
8.	10/19/2018 6:58am	Y	Calumet Private	Single gunshot wound to the left side temple area of victim's head	Yes	SP – Same Party	17yr M Yes	16yr M Yes	12 Gauge Semi-Auto Action Shotgun
Synopsis:	Waterfowl hunters hunting from boat along shoreline. Shots were fired from seated positions from stern and bow of boat. Shooter prepared to fire as victim stood up from seated position in the middle of the boat.								
9.	10/22/2018 4:30pm	Y	Dodge Public	Shotgun blast to right leg and pellets grazed left leg	No	SP – Same Party	Dog	n/a	12 Gauge Semi-Auto Action Shotgun
Synopsis:	Shooter/Victim was hunting waterfowl with dog from jon boat. Shooter/victim shot duck and sent dog on retrieve. Shooter laid shotgun on seat port side of the boat muzzle forward facing. Dog climbed into the boat and while shooter/victim was handling the dog the dog walked on top of the gun stepping on trigger and trigger guard area causing the shotgun to discharge.								
10.	11/18/2018 1:20pm	Y	Columbia Public	Flesh wound to the top of left foot/ankle area	No	SP – Same Party	24yr M Yes	23yr M Yes	.308 Caliber Semi-Auto Action Rifle
Synopsis:	The shooter and victim were part of a 6-person deer drive. The victim started walking into a low wet area with thick red willow. Victim jumped a deer and as it started running towards the standers the shooter shot 2 rounds striking victim in left foot.								
11.	11/18/2018 3:30pm	Y	Polk Private	Possible graze wound from stray bullet. Doctor called it a contusion, no stitches were needed.	No	Neither	Unknown	61yr M No	Unknown
Synopsis:	The shooter is unknown. Victim was knocked unconscious while checking his cattle and reported the incident a month later.								

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12.	11/18/2018 5:05pm	Y	Dunn Private	Bullet wound to forearm	No	SP – Same Party	17yr M Yes	21yr M Yes	30.06 Caliber Unknown Action Rifle
Synopsis:	The shooter shot after hours at what he assumed was a deer hitting victim who was field dressing a deer at the time.								
13.	11/20/2018 2:45pm	Y	Bayfield Private	Gunshot entrance wound to right wrist and exit wound on right arm	No	SI – Self Inflicted	58yr M No	Same as Shooter	.32 Special Caliber Lever Action Rifle
Synopsis:	Shooter/Victim leaned rifle against ladder stand. Shooter/victim climbed up stand to clear snow from seat and while standing at the top of the ladder stand the rifle discharged striking the victim.								
14.	11/24/2018 12:00pm	Y	Sauk Private	Left hand superficial graze wound to palm	No	SI – Self Inflicted	39yr M Yes	Same as Shooter	10mm Caliber Semi- Auto Action Handgun
Synopsis:	Shooter/Victim was getting ready to leave the field after hunting deer. Shooter/victim was unloading handgun when the hammer of the firearm went forward causing slide to go forward and discharge.								
15.	12/01/2018 8:30am	Y	Douglas Private	Bullet entered front left chest and exited in the same general area	No	SI – Self Inflicted	65yr M No	Same as Shooter	.50 Caliber Muzzle Loader Rifle
Synopsis:	Shooter/Victim was hunting deer. Shooter/victim lost grip of their muzzle loader rifle causing it to fire when it hit the ground.								
16.	12/05/2018 8:56am	Y	Shawano Private	Gunshot wound to the right kneecap	No	SP – Same Party	Dog	n/a	12 Gauge Semi-Auto Action Shotgun
Synopsis:	Shooter/Victim was hunting pheasants. Shooter/victim flushed and wounded pheasant which dogs started fighting over. Shotgun was set on ground to attempt to secure the bird from the dogs when dog stepped on firearm causing it to discharge.								
17.	12/12/2018 8:30am	Y	La Crosse Private	One BB lodged in the eye	No	Neither	24yr M Yes	29yr M No	12 Gauge Semi-Auto Action Shotgun
Synopsis:	Shooter was hunting pigeons in barn yard. Shooter shot twice at pigeons, second shot ricocheted in the direction of victim hitting victim in the eye.								