



PRESS RELEASE FOR LOCAL MEDIA

Central Michigan District Health Department
"Promoting Healthy Families, Healthy Communities"

For more information, please call: (989) 773-5921 ext. 8409
2012 E. Preston Avenue, Mt. Pleasant, Michigan 48858, www.cmdhd.org

To: Local Newspaper
From: Central Michigan District Health Department
RE: Hunting Safety and Issues
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Hunting Safety

Hunting is an outdoor activity over one million people enjoy every year in Michigan. Whether you choose to use a bow and arrow, a rifle, or shotgun, every autumn, many men and women slide on their boots, and trek into the woods for a chance to harvest wild game and create lasting memories. Hunters endure all kinds of weather and endure hours of patience for a split second of delight. Unfortunately, as with most things in life, with reward comes risk. Hunting accidents happen every year. The reasons for why these accidents occur are too varied to list, but one thing remains true in most cases; the victim's life will be altered forever because of a split second error in judgment or mechanical failure. According to the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) in Michigan from the years 2000 to 2005, there were a total 18 deaths and 192 injuries sustained from hunting related accidents. While the prevention of all accidents is impossible, all hunters can use precautions to help ensure safety for themselves and their fellow sportsmen.

The following tips from the DNR may help those who are going to be one of the masses entering the woods this coming November for the firearm deer season.

- All hunters during the firearm deer season must wear "hunter orange" (hat, cap, vest, and jacket or rain gear). It must be the outermost garment and be visible from all sides.
- Hunters should treat every firearm as if it were loaded and be careful where they point the muzzle.
- Hunters should be sure of their target and the area beyond it.
- Keep your finger off the trigger until you are ready to shoot.
- Don't take any chances with a loaded firearm.
- Know where your hunting partners are at all times and never assume you are alone in the woods.
- It is illegal to drink alcohol or use intoxicating drugs before or while hunting.
- Hunters using tree-stands or other raised platforms should wear a safety harness at all times when climbing, hunting from and descending from the platform. Hunters using raised platforms should use a haul line to bring gear and unloaded firearms to and from the platform.

While many of the previously mentioned safety tips were for firearm deer season, most of these safety principles apply to most hunting situations.

The bottom line is this: there is no wild game on Earth which is worth risking your life for or the lives of your fellow hunters. Remember, we are all in this together, so use these measures to enable yourself, and those around you, to enjoy safe hunting seasons.

This article was provided to you by the staff at the Central Michigan District Health Department which serves Arenac, Clare, Gladwin, Isabella, Osceola and Roscommon Counties.