



HUNTING SEASON IS HERE

As your club prepares for the upcoming hunting season now is a good time to review your club's safety procedures and examine areas that cause the most frequent injuries.

Tree Stands

- Check and repair tree stands and make sure they are properly secure and stable.
- Provide a safety harness for each tree stand.
- Attach new ropes to raise and lower tree stand items.

Gun Safety

Shooting accidents continue to be the most costly type of injury. Most incidences can be avoided by practicing basic gun safety commandments:

- Treat every gun as if it is loaded.
- Do not transport a loaded weapon. Always unload weapons before transporting on ATV, golf cart or other vehicle.
- Be absolutely sure of your target.
- Know what is behind your target.
- Watch muzzle direction at all times.

Gates

- Clear the vegetation around gates.
- Mark gates with reflective material that is visible from the outside and inside of the gate.
- Mark gate post with reflective tape.

Hunting Club Check-in box

The use of a hunting club check in board is a common practice for many hunting clubs. This check in system can provides a focal point for hunting club safety. A Check-in box can be used to:

- Identify stand location and occupied stands,
- Display a site map that shows major features, gates, and other potential hazards.
- Identify homes and other structures on adjacent property.
- List emergency numbers for the local fire department, sheriff's office, emergency dispatchers and lease coordinator.
- Map directions to the site that can be used to direct emergency response.
- Outline specific requirements of the hunting lease and hunting club rules.

Turkey Hunting Safety



Each spring thousands of hunters enter the woods in pursuit of the eastern wild turkey. Turkey hunting is considered one of the most challenging hunts. The typical hunter will use concealment and imitation to lure the majestic gobbler into shooting range; sometimes the concealment and calling, results in tragic shooting accidents.

The primary cause of turkey hunting accidents is a mistake in identifying the target. The hunter sees movement, hears sound, or sees a flash of color and shoots. This poor judgment often causes severe injuries and sometimes even death to another hunter. Here are some common sense rules that are keys to a safe turkey hunting experience:

Target Identification—Being 99.9 percent sure isn't good enough. Make absolutely sure you see your target and that it is a turkey with a beard. Make sure that you have a good shot before you pull that trigger.

Calling— Be particularly careful when using a gobbler call. The sound and motion may attract other hunters.

Dress Defensively— Wear full camouflage from the top of your head to the tip of your toes. Wearing partial camouflage may leave just enough exposed to look like parts of a turkey. Eliminate the colors red, white and blue from your turkey hunting outfit. Red is the color most hunters use to identify a gobbler's head from the hen's blue-colored head.

Calling Position— When selecting your calling position, don't try to hide so well that you cannot see what is happening around you. Remember, eliminating movement is your key to success, not total concealment. Select a calling position that provides a background as wide as your shoulder and one that will completely protect you from the top of your head down, such as a tree with a trunk wider than your body to protect your back. Small trees will not hide slight movement of your hands and/or shoulder which might look like a turkey to another hunter who could be unwisely stalking your calls, make sure that you can see 180 degrees in front of you.

Signaling an Approaching Hunter—Never wave, move or make turkey sounds to alert another hunter to your presence. Remain still and call out in a loud, clear voice to alert oncoming hunters of your presence.

Using a Decoy— When using a decoy, always place it so you are out of the direct line of fire should another hunter mistake it for legal game. When moving through the woods, totally conceal your decoy with camouflage or fluorescent orange, so it won't be mistaken for a live turkey.

Hunting Strategy— **Never stalk a wild turkey. The chances of getting close enough for a shot are slim, but the chances of becoming involved in an accident are increased. The less you move, the safer and more effective you will be in hunting a turkey.**

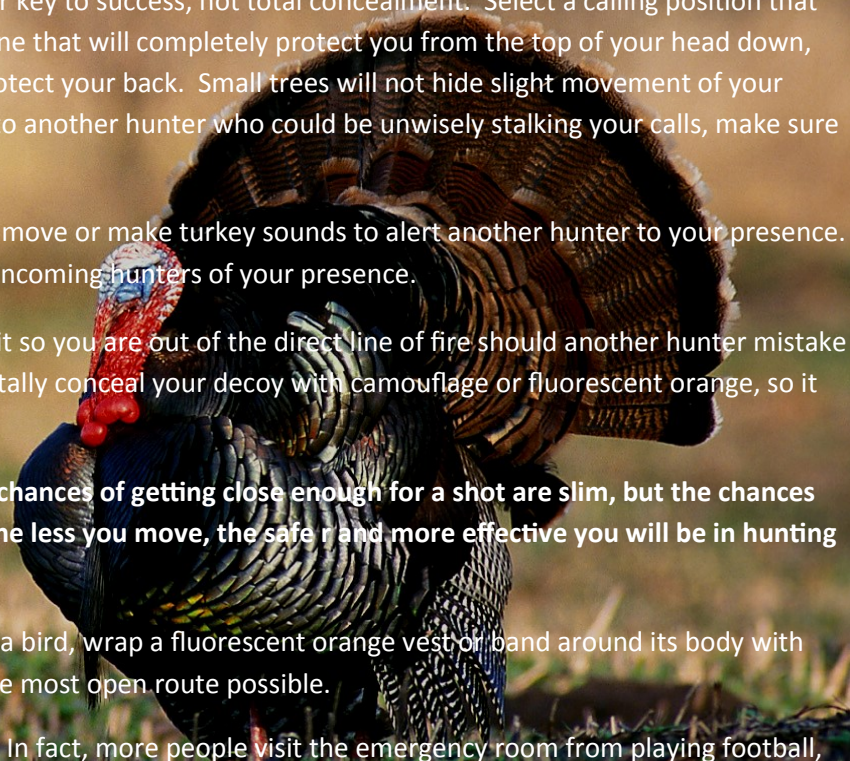
Bringing Home the Bacon— Once you have killed a bird, wrap a fluorescent orange vest or band around its body with wings folded in before moving. Leave the woods via the most open route possible.

Turkey hunting is one of the safest sports in the world. In fact, more people visit the emergency room from playing football, baseball and basketball each year than from hunting. Using a little common sense keeps you and other hunters enjoying this great sport for life.

Be smart, consider your options, and have a safe hunt!

For additional information concerning hunt club coverage's such as; Member-To-Member Coverage, Guest Liability Coverage, Fire Damage Liability and Medical Expense, please visit our website at www.nwtf.outdoorund.com or contact us at 866-961-4101.

Please reference Marcus Kilburn (Arkansas Game & Fish Commission) , National Wild Turkey Federation "Fall Turkey Safety Tips" and Ed Wilson (Outdoor Underwriters, Inc.)



ATV SAFETY

TYPE OF ACCIDENTS



All terrain vehicles are a common sight at most hunting clubs. Transporting hunters, installing food plots, road maintenance and general trail riding make them a popular equipment choice. However, severe accidents are becoming more common and increasingly due to improper use.

Over 76% of ATV accidents were operator related.

During the last five years, over 46% of ATV related accidents reported to Outdoor Underwriters were due to operator error, traveling too fast, turning sharply, underage drivers, and exceeding the passenger capacity.

The next highest incident category was associated with site related issues such as: poor road and trail maintenance, ditches, gates and fallen trees. Of the 30% of accidents reported were site related, the majority of these accidents were a combination of both operator error and site conditions.

Approximately 11% of the reported accidents involved highway use and auto collisions. Forest fires associated with ATV use were infrequent, but this type of incident often caused significant property damage.

SAFETY TIPS

Operator training and education is critical to the safety of hunting clubs. Machines should be operated within the manufacturers specification. *Supervision of youth and ATVs should be one of the most important components for any hunting club or timberland owner.*

Frequently used trails and areas should be well marked and maintained. To help mitigate your liability the location of gates, ditches, bridges, and other site hazards should be known by all operators and identified on a site map.

THE CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION OFFERS THE FOLLOWING TIPS FOR A SAFER ATV RIDE:

- ➔ **Stay off paved roads.**
- ➔ **Never allow children to operate an ATV designed for adults.**
- ➔ **Do not allow more people on the vehicle than it was designed to carry.**
- ➔ **Always wear a helmet.**
- ➔ **Get hands on training.**
- ➔ **Avoid alcohol use while operating an ATV.**



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Tree Stand Injuries

One of the most common deer hunting practices is the use of an elevated hunting stand. The days of walking in the woods and sitting against a tree along a well traveled deer trail, has become much less common due to the use of elevated tree stands. From basic ladder stands to elaborate “condo” stands the use of tree stands is likely the choice of most deer hunters.

While tree stands do provide a distinct advantage for deer hunters, there are many hazards that accompany this type of hunting. Of the numerous tree stand occurrences reported to Outdoor Underwriters, 27 of the most serious tree stand incidents were analyzed. (The liability basis was not reviewed, just the injuries that occur from the use of tree stands and raised platforms).

Not surprisingly, 25 of the 27 hunters were not utilizing a safety harness. The two hunters that were wearing a safety harness were injured before they had secured themselves to the tree. The fall injuries that were recorded ranged from as little as 6 feet and as high as 30 feet. Serious injuries can occur from falls of only 6-8 feet.

Ten of the 27 incidents reported occurred while securing a stand to a tree. Thus, one of the highest risk activities is not just hunting, it is the act of moving, maintaining or installing the stand.

Types Of Tree Stands

Box and/or shooting houses - 10 box/shooting house incidents occurred. 4 of the 10 injuries occurred while entering & exiting the stand at or near the entranceway door.

Ladder stands - 9 ladder stand incidents occurred. 5 of these instances occurred while securing the stand to the tree or loosening the nylon strap that holds the stand to the tree.

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Nylon or rope secured sitting platforms - 7 injuries occurred from the use of stands and seats that use cables/ropes/nylon to secure the seat to the tree. 5 of the 7 injuries occurred due to a strap breaking, age, or being improperly secured.

Portable climber - One portable stand collapsed.

Out of the 27 incidents reviewed, 17 of these incidents occurred while hunting.

Hunting incidents included:

- 7 - Mechanical issues with the stand
- 3 - While shooting
- 4 - While exiting and entering the stand
- 3 - Other

Safety

When using box stands & ladder stands the most crucial point is entering or exiting the stand. Handrails, door swing, and ladder incline should all be taken into consideration when constructing a stand.

Moving a box stand is extremely dangerous. Top heavy weight, rough terrain, and faulty construction /design can cause serious injuries. Before moving a stand, the area should be cleared and the move should be planned with proper support ropes.

While using a portable stand a safety harness should be used at all times (climbing, hunting, and descending).

Any stand secured to the tree with ropes or nylon straps should have an additional safety strap secured to the tree. When changing out a security strap the stand should be secured with an additional temporary rope. A safety harness should always be secured to the tree while undoing and/or replacing ropes.



Project Justification: Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) is transmitted directly through animal-to-animal contact and indirectly through contact with objects or environment contaminated with infectious material. CWD is contagious and can be transmitted freely within and among cervid populations. No treatments or vaccines are currently available, the disease is 100% fatal. No methods currently exist that can remove CWD from the landscape. CWD has expanded its footprint at an alarming annual rate. Continued expansion of CWD would negatively impact economic, environmental, and cultural values associated with cervids. To do everything possible for the cervid resource to be sustainable for our future generations, we need to take every precaution necessary to slow the expansion of CWD. Private landowner involvement will be critical for success.

Project Objective: Develop a coalition of private landowners to develop a list of non-regulatory, voluntary guidelines for CWD Best Management Practices that will assist state agencies and landowners to discover, manage, and mitigate the negative impacts of CWD as well as educating recreational users.

Prevention of CWD, Introduction & Establishment

1. Live Animal Movement

- a. Strongly discourage all human-assisted live cervid movements onto member organization lands.

2. Carcass Movement

- a. Support and/or advocate for State/Provincial efforts restricting the movement of high-risk cervid carcass parts.
- b. Importation and exportation of intact cervid carcasses or carcass parts except boned out meat, clean hide with no head attached, clean skull plate with antlers attached, clean antlers, finished taxidermy specimens, and clean upper canine teeth and jawbones, from all states should not occur. Member organizations should educate recreational users about the risks of moving potentially infected high-risk cervid parts. Further, in CWD positive areas, member organizations should consider educating recreational users about recommended carcass disposal methods and/or local disposal options.

Member organizations should prohibit all human-assisted movement of cervid carcasses, or carcass parts of concern, from outside lands onto member organization lands. Similarly, member organizations should advise recreational users against moving whole carcasses or high-risk parts from member organization lands to other lands. When possible, on-site processing and disposal is preferred.

3. Reproductive Products of Cervid Origin

- a. Strongly discourage the importation of reproductive products of cervid origin like reproductive tissues, semen, embryos, germplasm.



4. Unnatural Concentration of Cervids

- a. Member organizations should strive to discourage:
 - i. baiting and feeding of wild cervids
 - ii. placement of minerals, granules, blocks, or other supplements for wild cervids
 - iii. provide hay and other feed for domestic animals in a manner that does not congregate wild cervids
 - iv. use of other cervid attractants such as scent lures, foods, flavors, scents, pour-on's, sprays, etc.
- b. In those states where baiting/feeding is a strong part of the culture, member organizations could consider a stepped approach targeted at reducing baiting/feeding practices over a period of time.

Surveillance of CWD

Surveillance for initial detection of CWD is an ongoing activity. Early detection is critical to managing CWD effectively and for eliminating it when/if possible.

- 1. Support and promote recreational user education on the importance of CWD sampling and the value of early detection.**
- 2. Encouraging recreational user participation in state agency organized CWD sampling efforts and proactively reporting any suspect animals.**
- 3. Encourage state agencies to be aggressive in CWD sampling efforts to facilitate early detection.**
- 4. Educate recreational users on the current inter- and intra-state carcass transport controls.**
- 5. Proactively educate recreational users and provide them current CWD educational materials.**

6. Support and promote research that will improve CWD testing and/or management.

7. Surveillance to "monitor" CWD in an affected population.

8. Support state agencies that are implementing their CWD response plans.

9. A communications strategy should be designed to build support for CWD response actions.

Management of CWD

1. CWD Response Plans

- a. CWD coalition member organizations should be familiar with state agency response plans for the geography of their ownership and identify ways to participate in and support state agency efforts in the event of detection of CWD. Member organizations should also have an internal plan in place prior to detection of CWD. Essential elements of the internal plan should include, but not limited to pre-appointed contacts/spokespersons, pre-prepared communication materials (templates) for outreach to recreational users, surveillance, disease management, and plans to supplement and assist state agencies. Immediately following CWD detection, it is the role of member organizations to participate (where needed) and advocate support for state agency provisions and plans. Coordination with state agencies is imperative. Recreational licenses should include provision to allow for the implementation of the actions in the plan along with response and management items below.

2. Initial Response to the First CWD Detection Should Include:

- a. A communications strategy to recreational users should be designed to build support for and require participation with state agency



response plans and actions, noting that such actions may be necessary on a long-term basis.

- b. Support and participate with state agencies in surveillance/monitoring activities, including granting access to member organizations' property for surveillance and testing and communication to recreational users regarding the surveillance and testing activities.
- c. Assist state agencies in establishing testing sites and or sample drop off points.
- d. Require all recreational users to comply with all state agency CWD plans and regulations, including but not limited to surveillance, testing, baiting, and carcass disposal. Educational materials should be provided to recreational users regarding CWD, state agency plans and requirements, testing, processing, and carcass disposal.

3. Managing CWD Prevalence

- a. Continued communications with and education of recreational users.
- b. Continued support of state agency efforts for surveillance, testing, and elimination of CWD, including property access.
- c. Continued requirement for recreational users to comply with all state agency CWD plans and regulations, including but not limited to surveillance, testing, baiting, and carcass disposal.
- d. Encourage recreational users to harvest cervids at levels needed to maintain a healthy herd and work with state agencies to develop support and implement a cervid harvest strategy within CWD-positive areas.
- e. Allow property access to state agencies for targeting the portion of the population most

likely to have CWD and targeting animals in known CWD hotspots. Prioritize recreational user involvement where feasible.

Supporting Activities

1. Communications are critical to prevention and minimization of CWD and its impacts. Communications build support within CWD Coalition member organizations and their staff. Effective communications with recreational users of the landowning members of the Coalition are critical to prevention, surveillance, and implementation of agreed BMPs and management policies.

- a. Commit to open communications between landowners, their staff, and recreational users.
- b. Landowners are encouraged to provide web links on their public-facing recreational webpages to accurate websites that contain general information about CWD, state-specific CWD information, surveillance and response activities, relevant regulations, public health concerns, recommendations for hunters and information indicating how they can help, reporting procedures for sick or dead cervids, and testing for harvested cervids.
- c. Encourage recreational users to actively participate in state testing programs and provide incentives to participate.
- d. Support surveys of recreational users and the public to collect meaningful, actionable data to increase positive stakeholder engagement.
- e. Support communications that inform the recreational users of the future impacts of CWD on cervid hunting and game management (lower cervid densities, lower age buck harvest, higher bag limits, doe hunting, no feeding/baiting).



2. Support Research through advocacy or other means to identify:

- a. The most effective techniques for prevention, surveillance, and management; prion detection and diagnostics; and disease epidemiology.
- b. Human dimensions issues such as the impact of CWD on hunting practices, hunter retention and participations rates, and on hunting-related expenditures.
- c. The cost of CWD to state and provincial economies.
- d. The costs of CWD to landowners, recreational users, and other stakeholders.
- e. Sources of funding for CWD prevention, surveillance, and management.

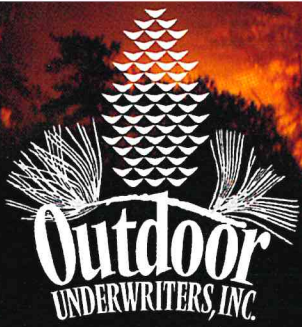
3. Landowner Policy, Public Policy, and Regulations:

- a. Work closely with state agencies to have input on management responses, regulations and provide outreach to recreational users to implement CWD Coalition BMPs and regulations.
- b. Develop policies and approaches for implementation of the BMPs developed by the CWD Coalition.
- c. Where feasible, implement Coalition BMPs through recreational leases/licenses, permits and public access agreements.
- d. Advocate for sensible legislation that would increase the CWD knowledge base and help manage and mitigate negative impacts of the disease. This could include general funding for CWD research and/or promoting policies developed by the Coalition.

4. CWD and Public Health. Promote the following practices to all recreational users:

- a. Wear protective gloves and wash hands when handling cervids.
- b. Disinfect field equipment when handling cervids or any other wildlife or carcasses.
- c. Minimize sawing through the bone and cutting through the brain and spinal cord.
- d. Do not consume meat from animals that appear sick or are found dead of unknown causes.
- e. Do not consume meat or other tissues from CWD-positive animals.
- f. Follow best practices and state regulations for carcass disposal, and do not transport carcasses across state lines.
- g. Follow guidance from wildlife and public health agencies.





FIRE AT HUNTING CLUB

BACKGROUND

Consider the following: It's a dry, windy, fall day in the south. A hunt club's 3-acre food plot had been sprayed with herbicide. The center of the food plot had also been bush-hogged and disked. A 20-foot strip of dead/dry brush, approximately 3-feet tall, encircled food plot.

UNSAFE ACT OR CONDITIONS

A member of the hunt club wanted a trail to the shooting house, which was located on the edge of the food plot. He used a residential, gas push-mower to cut the trail through the dead brush. The club member stopped to rest and walked 100 feet towards his truck. He then noticed smoke coming from the general area of the lawnmower only to realize the brush had caught fire. While not exactly known, the suspected cause of fire was from the lawnmower blade or muffler.

ACCIDENT

Due to prime conditions (dry, windy day and 3-feet tall, dead brush), the fire quickly spread to the adjoining land and 15 acres of timber burned prior to control of the accident.

CORRECTION

Extra care should be used when working in the woods, especially during drought conditions. Equipment should be specifically designed for agricultural/forestry work and have spark arrestors installed. Although the club member immediately notified the club president, who in turn notified the forestry commission, some time lapse could have been avoided. Response time may be quicker if emergency response numbers are prominently posted at the hunting site.



Heart Attacks

During the 2016 hunting season we noticed an increased incidence of heart attacks. While these are not liability type occurrences, the subject is worthy of discussion.

According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, “The national hunting base is aging, with fewer young hunters filling the gaps that older hunters create when they no longer hunt. The participation rate among older hunters also climbs. Thus, hunters are getting older, and with higher participation rates among the older age classes there may be more hunters in the woods with health issues associated with those older age groups. Today the average hunter is 42 years old (mostly male) and approximately half of all hunters are 45 and older.”

According to the American Heart Association, “the prevalence of coronary heart disease increases substantially with age. For example, the increase in heart disease is from less than 1% of the population at age 20-39, to 6% for the age group 40-59, to almost 20% for the age group 60-79.”

Many hunters increase their normal physical activity to get ready for hunting season; Preparation such as clearing stands, planting food plots, trimming trees, and lifting fertilizer and seed bags may be outside their normal activity level. Increased age, coupled with strenuous above normal physical activity, may contribute to the increased incidences of heart attacks that were reported in 2016.

According to the American Heart Association, “1 out of 7 deaths are caused by coronary heart diseases and many of these deaths can be prevented..**by acting fast.**“

ADVANCE PLANNING ACTION: Hunting clubs should have a plan of action for any medical emergency. This is particularly important when speed and action are critical (as in the case of a heart attack). Since many hunters are on rural property and may not be familiar with nearby hospitals, a site map with emergency response numbers and procedures can be crucial for helping someone survive a heart attack. At minimum, the club members should know how to contact local emergency response services, the hospital closest to the hunting site, and the best directions to your hunting land. EMS can begin life-saving treatment as soon as they arrive. Time is of the essence in a heart attack situation. The faster they can find you the sooner treatment can begin.

KNOW THE SIGNS AND ACT: According to the American Heart Association. “recognizable signs of a potential heart attack can include: **chest discomfort, discomfort in other areas of the upper body, shortness of breath, cold sweat, nausea, and/or lightheadedness.**”

DO NOT DELAY: If you have the signs of a heart attack, seek immediate assistance. Many people wait 2 hours before seeking help. Delaying the response for heart attack symptoms is often caused by embarrassment that it might be a false alarm, or denial that it may be a heart attack. **Acting fast can substantially reduce further damage to the heart.**

