

**MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF
NATURAL RESOURCES**

**Maryland Hunting Accident Report
FY20**

Age (Shooter or responsible person)	Two Party		Self-Inflicted / Tree Stand Fall	
	Fatal	Non-Fatal	Fatal	Non-Fatal
Under 10 Years				
10 – 19 Years		1		1
20 – 29 Years		1		
30 – 39 Years			1	2
40 – 49 Years	1			4
50 – 59 Years			1	1
60+ Years				1
Unknown				
TOTALS	1	2	2	9

Causes	Two Party		Self-Inflicted	
	Fatal	Non-Fatal	Fatal	Non-Fatal
Careless Handling	1	1		1
Fall From Tree Stand			2	8
Victim Mistaken for Game				
Victim Covered by Shooter		1		
Finger on Trigger				
TOTALS	1	2	2	9

Distance From Shooter To Victim	Two Party	
	Fatal	Non-Fatal
00 – 10 Yards	1	
11 – 50 Yards		
51 Yards & Over		2
TOTALS	1	2

Victim Wearing Hunter Orange	Two Party	
	Fatal	Non-Fatal
Yes		
No		
Not Applicable		
Unknown	1	2
TOTALS	1	2

Weather and/or Lighting Conditions	Two Party		Self-Inflicted / Tree Stand Fall	
	Fatal	Non-Fatal	Fatal	Non-Fatal
Clear		1	1	5
Partly Overcast		1		
Pre-Dawn/Dusk	1		1	4
Unknown				
TOTALS	1	2	2	9

Game Species Hunted	Two Party		Self-Inflicted / Tree Stand Fall	
	Fatal	Non-Fatal	Fatal	Non-Fatal
Deer	1		2	9
Squirrel				
Dove				
Geese/Ducks		1		
Rabbit				
Turkey		1		
Woodchuck				
TOTALS	1	2	2	9

Hunting Device Used	Two Party		Self-Inflicted / Tree Stand Fall	
	Fatal	Non-Fatal	Fatal	Non-Fatal
Rifle			1	2
Muzzleloader	1		1	1
Shotgun		2		1
Bow				5
Unknown				
TOTALS	1	2	2	9

Reportable Hunting Incident / Accident Summary

+ A 38-year-old Carroll County Deer Hunter (Archery Season) was ascending a tree with a hang-on stand. Upon the subject positioning on the platform and attempting to connect their safety harness, two of the platform's supporting cables broke, causing the subject to fall approximately 15 feet. Subject sustained non-life threatening injuries.

****Fall From Tree Stand****

+ A 40-year-old Dorchester County Deer Hunter (Archery Season) was in the process of walking back to their vehicle after engaging in hunting activity. The subject subsequently lost their footing and had taken a fall. As a result of the fall, the broadhead from a crossbow bolt had made contact with the subject's lower back. Subject sustained non-life threatening injuries. The subject was not using a quiver at the time of the incident (bolts were loosely contained within a backpack).

****Careless Handling****

+ A 49-year-old Saint Mary's County Deer Hunter (Archery Season) was hunting from a climbing tree stand when the stand's supporting cable had failed, causing the subject to fall approximately 18 feet. The subject sustained non-life threatening injuries. The subject was not wearing a safety harness. Investigation revealed that the stand's supporting cable had completely rusted through.

****Fall From Tree Stand****

+ A 39-year-old Charles County Deer Hunter (Archery Season) was hunting from a hang-on tree stand. Upon attempting to reposition themselves, the subject had fallen approximately 17 feet due to the stand's supporting cable failing. The subject was not wearing a safety harness. The subject sustained non-life threatening injuries.

****Fall From Tree Stand****

+ A 14-year-old Worcester County Deer Hunter (Firearms - Junior Hunt Days) was hunting from an elevated, wooden platform with a positioned ground blind when a folding chair the subject was sitting in had collapsed, causing the subject to fall approximately 8 feet to the ground. A safety harness device was not in use. The subject sustained non-life threatening injuries.

****Fall From Tree Stand****

+ A 48-year-old Carroll County Deer Hunter (Archery Season) was hunting from a homemade, wooden ladder stand when they had fallen asleep and subsequently fell approximately 9 feet to the ground. The subject sustained non-life threatening injuries. A safety harness device was not in use.

****Fall From Tree Stand****

+ A 72-year-old Dorchester County Deer Hunter (Firearms Season) was descending a ladder stand when the ladder portion of the stand failed, causing the subject to fall approximately 8 feet to the ground. The subject sustained non-life threatening injuries. A safety harness device was not in use.

****Fall From Tree Stand****

+ A 66-year-old Allegany County Deer Hunter (Muzzleloader Season) and their 45-year-old offspring were allegedly engaged in illegal hunting activities from a motor vehicle. During the course of handling the loaded muzzleloader within the motor vehicle, the offspring had discharged one round, striking their parent in the leg. The parent / victim ultimately succumbed to their injuries approximately 1 month later. Natural resources / criminal charges were filed against the suspect / offspring in this incident.

****FATAL - Careless Handling****

+ A 50-year-old Washington County Deer Hunter (Muzzleloader season) was descending a ladder stand when they missed a step, causing the subject to fall approximately 6 feet to the ground. The subject sustained non-life threatening injuries. A safety harness device was not in use.

****Fall From Tree Stand****

+ A 30-year-old Allegany County Deer Hunter (Muzzleloader Season) was hunting from a portable tree stand approximately 12-15 feet off the ground when for unknown reasons, they had fallen to the ground. The subject sustained life-threatening injuries and had succumbed to said injuries at the scene. A safety harness device was not in use. Alcohol use is believed to have been a factor in the incident.

****FATAL - Fall From Tree Stand****

+ A 58 year-old Caroline County Deer Hunter (Firearms Season) was believed to be either ascending or descending a ladder stand when the ladder portion had collapsed, causing the hunter to become entangled and hanging upside down on the ladder. The hunter was later found by their hunting partner and had succumbed to their medical injuries. A safety harness device was not in use. Improper maintenance of the tree stand was believed to be a factor in this incident.

****FATAL - Fall From Tree Stand****

+ A 41 year-old Kent County Deer Hunter (Firearms Season) was ascending a portable tree stand and was attempting to connect a safety harness when one of the supporting straps for the stand had failed, causing the hunter to fall approximately 14 feet to the ground. The hunter sustained non-life threatening injuries.

****Fall From Tree Stand****

+ A 17 year-old Wicomico County Waterfowl Hunter was underway in a vessel with other hunters when they were struck with shotgun pellets. Investigation revealed that other members of the victim's hunting party were on shore and approximately 50-60 yards away when a 20 year-old fired a shot towards the victim's vessel in an alleged attempt to scare him and his hunting party. The victim sustained non-life threatening injuries. Natural resources / criminal charges were filed against the shooter in this incident.

****Careless Handling****

+ A 14 year-old Somerset County Turkey Hunter (Firearms - Junior Hunt Days) was on foot and stalking turkeys with other juvenile hunters and under adult supervision. As the juveniles were walking 50-70 yards apart, under thick tree cover and out of sight from one another, a 14-year old shooter observed a turkey and fired their shotgun twice at said game. As a result, shotgun pellets ultimately struck the victim. The shooter was not aware that the victim was in the background. The victim sustained non-life threatening injuries.

****Victim Covered by Shooter****

Non-Reportable Hunting Incident / Accident Summary

+ A 53-year-old Montgomery County visitor was checking on their tree stands on private property (Deer Archery Season). The subject was in the process of hanging another tree stand when the top securing strap broke. Subject fell approximately 20 feet and suffered non-life threatening injuries. Subject was not wearing a safety harness. Subject was not actively engaged in hunting at the time of the incident.

+ A 59-year-old Wicomico County visitor was attempting to hang a tree stand (Deer Archery Season) when they lost their footing on climbing sticks and fell approximately 15 feet. Subject suffered non-life threatening injuries. Subject was wearing a safety harness at the time of the incident, however, the harness safety line did not function properly. Subject was not actively engaged in hunting at the time of the incident.

+ A 65-year-old Dorchester County visitor was checking on their tree stand on private property (Deer Archery Season). The subject was in the process of descending the ladder stand when they fell. Subject fell approximately 10 feet and suffered non-life threatening injuries. Subject was not wearing a safety harness. Investigation revealed improper footwear may have been a factor in the incident. Subject was not actively engaged in hunting at the time of the incident.

+ A 55 year-old Dorchester County visitor was in the process of removing a ladder stand from a public hunting area when they had fallen approximately 14 feet to the ground. The subject sustained non-life threatening injuries. A safety harness device was not in use. Subject was not actively engaged in hunting at the time of the incident.

Non-Reportable Property Damage Incident Summary

+ A Kent County resident observed damage to their vehicle's windshield, which was consistent with that of pellet strikes from a shotgun. Nearby waterfowl hunters were interviewed and denied any involvement, which was confirmed through an on-scene investigation. The area in question is known for waterfowl hunting and there were reports of numerous shots leading up to the incident. No further suspect / hunter information was developed throughout the investigation.

+ A Kent County waterfowl hunter, returning from a hunt, observed damage to their parked vehicle's tailgate, which consisted of a rifle round lodged into the plastic molding of said tailgate. Nearby waterfowl hunters were interviewed and denied any involvement, which was confirmed through an on-scene investigation. The area in question is known for waterfowl hunting. No further suspect / hunter information was developed throughout the investigation.

+ A Frederick County resident observed damage to the exterior of their residence, which was consistent with that of pellet strikes from a shotgun. While investigating officers located no hunting activity in the area, the incident did occur during the end of spring turkey season. No further suspect / hunter information was developed throughout the investigation.

This report was prepared by:

MD Hunter Education Program

