

NDG&F September 27th Newsletter

Game and Fish Stresses Hunting Safety

More than 100,000 hunters will cross North Dakota's prairie in search of game this fall. With that in mind, the state Game and Fish Department urges hunters to take proper safety measures in the field.

Jon Hanson, hunter education coordinator, said the opening weekends of pheasant and deer are the most anticipated hunting days of the year, and thus can be the most chaotic.

"People just need to relax, slow down a little bit and use common sense," Hanson said. "It's a long hunting season, especially for bird hunters, and there is plenty of game to go around."

Since 2006, shooter swinging on game, careless handling, victim out of sight of shooter, and discharge in/around a vehicle contribute to 86 percent of all incidents in North Dakota.

Accidental discharge of a firearm in or near vehicles or along fences is also a leading statistic that shouldn't be, Hanson said, because a shotgun or rifle should always be unloaded in these situations.

"Unfortunately, there have been a few hunting-related incidents in North Dakota each year, but the seven hunting incidents involving North Dakota hunters in 2009 is half of what has occurred annually over the past decade, and three of the seven were not even hunting-related shooting incidents," Hanson said.

The number of annual incidents is consistently higher for shotgun than those with a rifle, with shooter swinging on game the number one factor. "Everything points to the shooter getting startled when a pheasant flushes, and the shooter swings and doesn't realize where the hunting partner is," Hanson said.

The majority of shotgun-related hunting incidents reported in North Dakota each year involve victims not dressed in orange. While wearing orange clothing is not required for upland hunters, Hanson strongly recommends it. "This is common sense," he added. "If you are visible most accidents can be avoided."

The surprising statistic, according to Hanson, is the age of the involved parties. "Most think it is always the younger hunter, but statistics indicate the average age of the shooter is 34 and the victim 42," he added. "It is not the young kids who are making the majority of the mistakes."

Hanson suggests mapping out the hunt so all members of the hunting party know each other's route, and to let others left behind know your destination.

"And always carry a cell phone," Hanson added. "There are not many places where you will be without reception."

Hunter education courses have wrapped up for this year, but Hanson suggests individuals or parents with children who will need to take a course in 2011, should monitor the Game and Fish website, gf.nd.gov, as classes that begin in January will be added to the [online services link](#) as soon as times and locations are finalized.

Doe Licenses Remain, Landowners Still Seek Hunters

While more than 95 percent of North Dakota's deer licenses have been issued, as of Sept. 27 nearly 5,600 antlerless licenses remain for the 2010 season.

Doe licenses are available in units 2C, 2D, 2F1, 2K2, 2L, 3E1, 3E2, 3F1, 3F2 and 4F. There is no limit to the number of deer licenses a hunter can receive.

These remaining antlerless licenses – and doe licenses that have already been issued and are printed with second, third or additional concurrent season designations – can be used during any open season: bow season with a bow; the deer gun season with a bow, rifle, or muzzleloader; or during the muzzleloader season with a muzzleloader. Hunters must stay in the unit to which the license is assigned.

In addition, some landowners in hunting units 2I, 2K2, 3D1, 3D2, 3E1, 3F1, 4A, 4D and 4E are still looking for doe hunters.

Interested hunters can [apply for a remaining doe license](#), or enter their name on the [hunter contact list for landowners](#), by accessing the North Dakota Game and Fish Department's website at gf.nd.gov. Hunters who do not have Internet access can call the department's main office in Bismarck at (701) 328-6300.

North Dakota's 2010 deer gun season runs from Nov. 5-21. The archery season extends through Jan. 2, 2011, and muzzleloader season is Nov. 26 – Dec. 12. License fees are \$20 for residents and \$55 for nonresidents.

Fall Turkey Licenses Available

Fall turkey hunters still have the opportunity to purchase additional licenses. Remaining turkey licenses are issued on a first-come, first-served basis. Hunters are allowed a maximum of 15 licenses for the fall season.

Resident and nonresident hunters can [apply online](#), or [print out an application](#) to mail, at the North Dakota Game and Fish Department website, gf.nd.gov. Paper applications are available at license vendors.

The fall turkey season runs from Oct. 9 – Jan. 9, 2011.

Licenses remain for the following units: Unit 03, Benson and Ramsey counties and a portion of Pierce County; Unit 13, Dunn County; Unit 45, Stark County; Unit 51, Burke County and portions of Renville, Bottineau and Ward counties; and Unit 99, Mercer and Oliver counties.

Residents Only on PLOTS, State WMAs from Oct. 9-15

Out-of-state hunters are reminded that state law does not allow nonresidents to hunt on North Dakota Game and Fish Department owned or managed lands during the first week of the pheasant season.

Private Land Open to Sportsmen acreage and state wildlife management areas are open to hunting by resident hunters only from Oct. 9-15. Nonresidents, however, can still hunt those days on other state-owned and federal lands, or private land.

The law applies to all small game, waterfowl, furbearer and big game hunting on PLOTS and state wildlife management areas during the first seven days of the pheasant season. Starting Oct. 16 this year, nonresidents may hunt on PLOTS and WMAs as long as the appropriate season is open.