



Illinois Department of Natural Resources

One Natural Resources Way · Springfield, Illinois 62702-1271
www.dnr.illinois.gov

Bruce Rauner, Governor
Wayne Rosenthal, Director

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Nov. 16, 2015

CONTACT: Chris Young
(217) 557-1240
chris.young@illinois.gov

Illinois' Firearm Deer Season Begins November 20-22

IDNR reminds hunters to make it a safe season

SPRINGFIELD, IL – Firearm deer hunters take to the field in Illinois for the start of the state's regular firearm deer season on Nov. 20-22, and the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) is encouraging hunters to keep safety at the top of their priority lists as they prepare for the season.

The seven-day firearm deer season in Illinois this year begins on Friday through Sunday, Nov. 20-22, and will conclude on Thursday through Sunday, Dec. 3-6.

“The firearm deer hunt is a tradition shared by generations of Illinoisans and visitors to our state, and the seven-day season is our busiest hunting season of the year,” said IDNR Director Wayne Rosenthal. “The best way to enjoy time afield during deer season, and anytime in the outdoors in Illinois, is to be aware, be alert, and be safe.”

In 2014, there were 20 hunting incidents, two of which resulted in fatalities, reported in all hunting seasons in Illinois. Among the hunting incidents reported last year, 10 involved tree stand falls. The IDNR Division of Safety Education reminds hunters using tree stands to use a Fall Arrest System (FAS) safety harness.

Safety educators and IDNR Conservation Police also remind everyone hunting with a firearm to:

- Treat every firearm as if it is loaded, and never assume a firearm is unloaded;
- Always point a firearm in a safe direction;
- Be sure of the target, and make sure there are no other hunters, homes, buildings, vehicles or other animals beyond the target;
- Keep their finger out of the trigger guard and off the trigger until they are ready to shoot.

1008**15

The Illinois Firearm Deer Season legal hunting hours are one-half hour before sunrise to one-half hour after sunset.

Hunters who take a deer during the firearm season in most Illinois counties must register the deer they harvest online or by toll-free phone check-in system. The online deer registration is available through this link:

<http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/hunting/Pages/HarvestReporting.aspx>

The toll-free phone deer registration line is 1-866-IL-CHECK (1-866-452-4325). Hunters registering deer through the online or phone systems must do so by 10 p.m. on the day they take the deer.

In a number of northern Illinois counties where chronic wasting disease (CWD) has been detected in deer, hunters are required to register all deer harvested during firearm season by taking them to a check station (listed below) between the hours of 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. Biologists will be present to take CWD samples for testing at the time of registration. Testing is voluntary, but all hunters with adult deer are encouraged to participate. The counties where hunters are required to check-in their deer at check stations are:

Boone: Boone Co. Fairgrounds, 1/2 mi. north of Rt. 76 and Business Rt. 20, Belvidere

DeKalb: Shabbona Lake State Park, 4201 Shabbona Grove Rd., Shabbona

Grundy: Gebhard Woods State Park, 401 Ottawa Street, Morris

Jo Daviess: Elizabeth Community Building, 210 N. West St., Elizabeth, IL, 1/2 mi. west of business district on Hwy. 20, next to the Highland C.C. Elizabeth campus

Kane: Use DeKalb or Boone check station

Kendall: Use DeKalb, LaSalle, or Grundy check station

LaSalle: Buffalo Rock State Park, 3 mi. west of Ottawa on Dee Bennett Road

McHenry: Moraine Hills State Park McHenry Dam Day Use Area, east of McHenry on River Rd., 2.2 mi. south of Rt. 120

Ogle: Castle Rock State Park, Rt. 2, 3 mi. south of Oregon, IL

Stephenson: County Fairgrounds, 1 mi. east of Rt. 26 and Fairgrounds Rd., Freeport

Will: Des Plaines Game Propagation Center, east of I-55 at 30550 S. Boathouse Road, Wilmington

Winnebago: Rock Cut State Park, 6425 Hart Rd., Loves Park, 0.9 mi. east of N. Perryville Rd. on Hart Rd.

Hunters participating in the CWD sampling can check the status of their deer (listed by phone number) through the IDNR website. Hunters who provide samples from deer that test positive are notified by the IDNR. For more information on CWD in Illinois, check the website at www.dnr.illinois.gov/programs/CWD.

In addition to the seven-day Illinois Firearm Deer Season, other upcoming firearm hunting seasons in the state include the three-day Muzzleloader-only Deer Season on Dec. 11-13, and the seven-day split Late-Winter Firearm Antlerless-only Deer Season and Special CWD Deer Season (in select counties) on Dec. 31, 2015-Jan. 3, 2016 and

January 15-17, 2016. For more information on open counties and other details regarding the Late-Winter season, check the IDNR website at:

<http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/hunting/Documents/Late-WinterSHAHuntingPermitInformation.pdf>

Hunters are encouraged to consider those less fortunate and donate to the Illinois Sportsmen Against Hunger program. The program allows hunters to donate whole deer for processing into venison that is provided to food banks and food pantries in local communities throughout the state. For more information on ISAH:

www.dnr.illinois.gov/programs/ISAH.

For more information on Illinois deer hunting regulations:

www.dnr.illinois.gov/hunting/deer.

-30-

Follow the IDNR on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)