



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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IDNR reminds hunters to be mindful of use technology in the field

Know the rules before using drones, artificial intelligence, and e-bikes

SPRINGFIELD – As technological innovation continues to advance, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources cautions hunters to be mindful of rules and best practices surrounding the use of technology in the field. This includes the use of drones for recovering wildlife, artificial intelligence for reviewing hunting laws, and e-bikes to access hunting sites.

Drones

The use of unmanned aircraft, or drones, for any aspect of hunting or recovery of wildlife is unlawful in Illinois.

“Not only is drone use for hunting unlawful in Illinois, it goes against the spirit of fair chase and widely accepted hunting ethics,” said **Jed Whitchurch, director of the IDNR Office of Law Enforcement**. “Illinois Conservation Police officers are monitoring for drone use during the fall and winter hunting seasons. We encourage all hunters to familiarize themselves with the Wildlife Code and abide by the law.”

The unlawful use of drones for hunting could result in enforcement action, including but not limited to the seizure and forfeiture of unlawfully used equipment. Hunters are advised to review all requirements of the [Illinois Wildlife Code](#), which regulates the taking of wildlife and the use of unmanned aircraft in these situations (520 ILCS 5/2.33(i) and 520 ILCS 5/1.2o).

Artificial intelligence

Artificial intelligence, or AI, is gaining popularity as a resource for answers about hunting regulations. But a review of AI-generated answers to common hunting questions in Illinois shows this underdeveloped tool frequently provides flawed, conflicting, or incorrect answers.

“AI-generated information can pose a real problem when it comes to hunting laws, which can be very specific and nuanced based on the season, site, or situation,” said **Phil Borsdorf with IDNR’s Hunter Heritage Program**. “Our advice is to rely on primary sources for hunting information, such as the [Digest of Hunting and Trapping Regulations](#), IDNR’s [Hunt Illinois](#) website, and the [state wildlife code](#).”

E-bikes

As electric bikes, or e-bikes, have become more popular, some hunters have found them to be convenient, affordable vehicles for reaching remote hunting sites. However, these bikes are prohibited on IDNR-owned and

operated lands for any reason, including hunting and trapping access, except on public access roads or designated bike trails.

Hunters can visit individual [state park websites](#) or contact park site offices for more information about bike trail accessibility.

As recently as last week, Illinois Conservation Police received a complaint about a hunter using an e-bike in the woods at the Peabody-River King State Fish and Wildlife Area in St. Clair County. Upon further investigation, the hunter was cited for having an expired e-bike permit, transporting an uncased bow, and other offenses.

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