

Maryland Natural Resources Police
MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF
NATURAL RESOURCES

Age (Shooter or responsible person)	Two Party		Self-Inflicted / Tree Stand Fall	
	Fatal	Non-Fatal	Fatal	Non-Fatal
Under 10 Years				
10 – 19 Years				
20 – 29 Years	1			
30 – 39 Years			1	2
40 – 49 Years				2
50 – 59 Years		1	1	5
60+ Years			1	3
Unknown		1		
TOTALS	1	2	3	12

Causes	Two Party		Self-Inflicted	
	Fatal	Non-Fatal	Fatal	Non-Fatal
Careless Handling		1	1	1
Fall From Tree Stand				10
Victim Mistaken for Game				
Victim Covered by Shooter				
Finger on Trigger				
TOTALS		1	1	11

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

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

Weather and/or Lighting Conditions	Two Party		Self-Inflicted / Tree Stand Fall	
	Fatal	Non-Fatal	Fatal	Non-Fatal
Clear		3	2	7
Partly Overcast				
Pre-Dawn/Dusk			1	5
Unknown				
TOTALS		3	3	12

Game Species Hunted	Two Party		Self-Inflicted / Tree Stand Fall	
	Fatal	Non-Fatal	Fatal	Non-Fatal
Deer		3	3	12
Squirrel				
Dove				
Geese/Ducks				
Rabbit				
Turkey				
Unknown				
TOTALS		3	3	12

Hunting Device Used	Two Party		Self-Inflicted / Tree Stand Fall	
	Fatal	Non-Fatal	Fatal	Non-Fatal
Rifle		2	1	3
Muzzleloader			1	
Shotgun		1		1
Bow			1	8
Unknown				
TOTALS		3	3	12

Summary

A 69 year-old Frederick County deer hunter (archery season) fell approximately 20 feet when one of the ratchet straps securing the stand to the tree broke. Victim was wearing a safety harness at the time but had failed to attach it to the tree before the stand gave way. Victim suffered a broken ankle, broken back, internal bruising to the spleen and liver.

**TreeStandAccident

A 60 year-old Baltimore County deer hunter (archery season) fell approximately 18 feet when the victim was exiting his portable tree stand. The victim had placed his foot on a tree branch instead of one of the screw in style tree steps, at this time the branch broke sending the hunter to the ground. The victim suffered a broken wrist and bruising of the back and side. The victim was wearing a safety harness but it was not utilized while ascending/descending.

**TreeStandAccident

A 55 year-old Garrett County deer hunter (archery season) fell approximately 10 feet when she slipped off the ladder while climbing to get onto her stand. The victim was not using a tether while climbing up the ladder. The victim suffered 5 broken ribs, a punctured lung, internal bleeding and a cut finger.

** TreeStandAccident

A 57 year-old Caroline County deer hunter (archery season) was found deceased due to apparent previous medical condition(s) by Maryland State Police Aviation. The victim had shot a deer and contacted a friend to assist him in getting out of the woods where he had apparently become disoriented and was having trouble finding his way out. When the friend lost contact with the victim he contacted the sheriffs department. Trooper 6 located the victim in the wooded area.

***Fatal**

A 30 year-old Montgomery County deer hunter (archery season) fell approximately 15 feet when they slipped off their set of climbing sticks. The victim was attempting to attach a ratchet strap around the tree when the stick slipped and spun around the tree causing the hunter to fall. The victim sustained multiple fractures to the leg, ankle and foot requiring surgery. Victim was not wearing a safety harness.

** TreeStandAccident

A 32 year-old Kent County deer hunter (archery season) had set up his portable stand approximately 20 feet off the ground and was attempting to adjust the safety strap on the stand when one of the pins popped out causing the victim to fall. The victims right foot got caught on the stand causing the hunter to hang inverted from the platform. Nearby hunters were able to hear the victims' calls for help and arrived and assisted getting the victim from the stand. The victim was not wearing a safety harness. The victim was treated at the hospital and released.

** TreeStandAccident

A 46 year-old Baltimore County deer hunter (archery season) fell off his portable tree stand when the upper section broke. The victim fell backwards causing both feet to wedge into the platform section. The hunter was hanging inverted when he started yelling for help. A passer by on a nearby trail heard his calls for help and located the hunter and activated EMS. Once on scene EMS was able to rescue the victim from the tree. Only minor injuries were sustained.

** TreeStandAccident

A 59 year-old Worcester County deer hunter (archery season) fell approximately 6 feet from his portable tree stand that was hung in a dead pine tree. The victim suffered a broken ankle and was treated at a local hospital and released. The victim was not wearing a safety harness.

** TreeStandAccident

A 32 year-old Frederick County deer hunter (Deer F/A's, opening day) accidentally shot himself in the head resulting in death. It appeared to forensic investigators that the victim was in a location with several tripping hazards. The victim was from the west coast and had just recently taken a hunter safety course.

***Fatal**

A 44 year-old Cecil County deer hunter (firearms season) shot himself in the leg. The victim had shot and struck a deer from his tree stand, exited and began tracking the wounded animal. When the victim still tracking the deer began to sink in a marshy area near a stream the victim fell forward at this time his slung rifle slipped from his shoulder and discharged striking the victim in the calf. The victim was able to summons help via cell phone. The victim was airlifted from the marsh by State Police Helicopter and flown to Shock Trauma. The victim's leg was able to be saved.

** TreeStandAccident

A 73 year-old Kent County deer hunter (firearms season) fell approximately 20 feet when he unhooked his safety harness and began to descend from a permanent ladder type stand. The victim "missed" the ladder and subsequently fell all the way to the ground and went unconscious for an undetermined amount of time. The victim came to and was able to summons help via cell phone. The victim was flown to Shock Trauma, and suffered a broken pelvis, broken hip, three fractured vertebrae and a cut on the elbow.

** TreeStandAccident

A 54 year-old Harford County deer hunter (firearms season) fell approximately 12-15 feet from his ladder type stand. The victim had just shot a deer and was attempting to climb from the stand with his shotgun in hand when his foot slipped on the top rung causing the victim to fall to the ground. The victim was able to make it back to his nearby residence and contact EMS. The victim suffered 4 broken ribs along with other internal injuries. The victim was not wearing a safety harness.

** TreeStandAccident

A 59 year-old Washington County deer hunter (firearms season) sustained minor injuries when he stepped into a tree root hole which was covered with pine needles while en-route to his hunting location. The victim's firearm was loaded but no round had been chambered.

A 52 year old Garrett County deer hunter (firearms season) fell to the ground when the nylon webbing attaching the seat to the tree failed. This hunter had borrowed this tree stand from another hunter and had never been up in this particular stand before. Due to the age and condition of the stand (heavily rusted) the investigators were unable to identify a make or model. The victim suffered a broken left arm.

** TreeStandAccident

A 79 year old Dorchester County deer hunter (late muzzleloader season) suffered an cardiac arrest while hunting from a ground blind late in the afternoon. The victim began having severe stomach pains and contacted via cell phone another hunter who was hunting the same property. EMS responded and was able to assist the victim and transport to the nearest hospital facility where they expired.

***Fatal**

Property Damage

A 26 year old Talbot County deer hunter (firearms season) shot at two deer with 12 gauge shotgun slugs. The first deer was struck and ran 40 yards before collapsing, the second deer was shot at but the first slug went over its back, the second shot dropped the deer in the location where it was standing. Apparently the slug that missed struck an occupied residence just to one side of the front door. Upon a 911 call a sheriff's department deputy had searched and located the lone hunter. After an investigation by NRP the hunter was charged with negligent hunting and discharging a firearm within the safety zone.

Property damage only

An unknown Carroll County deer hunter (firearms season) sent a 7mm projectile through the side of a residence, through the bedroom wall, through a wooden dresser, then through a closet wall before coming to rest in a pile of towels in the closet. Two people were in the bedroom at the time but neither was injured. A search of nearby farms was unsuccessful in locating any hunter(s).

Property damage only

A 52 year old Cecil County deer hunter (late firearms season) took two shots at a deer with a 30/30 rifle toward the direction of a neighboring farm. One of the shots (both of which missed the deer) struck a dining room window of the adjacent residence and stopped, being found on the windowsill. During the investigation it was determined that the round that struck the window had ricocheted off of the ground. The distance from the shooter to the house was 398 yards.

Property damage only

This report was prepared by:

MD Hunter Education Program