



2009 HUNTING SAFETY STATISTICS[^] (Updated January 25, 2010)

Compared to the average of the previous five years Each "*" represents one fatality in 2009



	2009	5-yr. Avg
TOTAL INCIDENTS	26	30.8
Fatal	1	3.2
Non-fatal	25	27.6
Self-Inflicted	* 10	11.2
Two-Party	16	19.6
SPECIES HUNTED		
Big Game:		
Bear	0	0.0
Deer	*14	15.0
Turkey:		
Spring	8	4.4
Fall	0	0.8
Upland/Furbearer:		
Rabbits	0	1.8
Squirrels	0	1.2
Upland Birds	0	1.8
Raccoon	0	0.2
Fox & Coyote	0	1.2
Waterfowl	1	1.8
Other:		
Woodchuck	2	0.8
Other (nongame)	1	1.0
Unknown (general upland game)	0	0.8
TYPE OF IMPLEMENT		
Shotgun	* 13	18.2
Rifle	11	9.8
Handgun	1	1.2
Muzzleloader	1	1.6
Bow & Arrow	0	0.0
Pellet Gun	0	0.0

2009 - 60th Anniversary of Hunter Education and the Safest Year in New York History

Hunter Education began in New York State in 1949. Today, New York has an extremely safety-conscious generation of hunters. Thanks largely to 60 years of hunter education and the dedicated efforts of over 3,000 volunteer Sportsman Education instructors.

Reports of hunting related shooting incidents received to date by DEC indicate that 2009 was the safest year in the history of hunting in New York. There were 26 hunting related shooting incidents, including one fatality. This year's total of 26 compares to an average of 66 incidents per year from the 1990s, and 137 incidents per year during the 1960s.

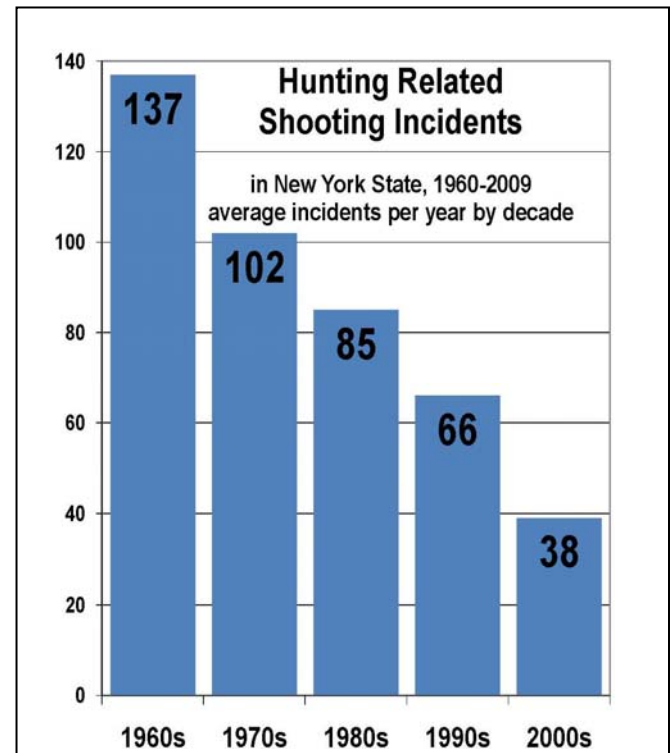
A single hunting fatality has occurred only three other times in NY history and is well below the five year average of 3.2. This single fatality was self inflicted when a deer hunter climbed a tree with a loaded shotgun.

Big game hunting incidents continue to be very low compared to previous decades, despite the increase in rifle zones and the passage of the youth mentoring law in 2008 which now allows 14 & 15 year olds to hunt big game.

This year's total of 26 brings the average for the 2000s down to 38 incidents per year making the past decade the safest ever, continuing a 50-year trend of increasing safety.

The number of hunters is declining, but the hunting incident RATE (incidents per 100,000 hunters) is falling MUCH faster than the number of hunters. During the 1960s, the incident rate was 19 incidents per 100,000 hunters. Since 2000, the incident rate is one-third of that, averaging 6.4 per 100,000.

Hunting is safer than ever, but we cannot become complacent, as virtually every hunting related shooting incident is preventable.



[^]2009 figures are compiled from preliminary reports and are NOT final. Final investigation reports may take months in some cases. Please note that in some of the incidents reported; the shooter was participating in an illegal and/or unlawful act.

Hunting Related Shooting Incidents, 2000 – 2009 including both big game and small game hunting as of 1/4/10

YEAR	BIG GAME	OTHER	TOTAL
2000	29	14	43
2001	30	27	57
2002	37	24	61
2003	20	12	32
2004	18	16	34
2005	15	14	29
2006	20	15	35
2007	14	23	37
2008	12	15	27
2009	13	12	26

The Stories Behind the Statistics: Hunting Related Shooting Incidents 2009

Draft descriptions of incidents as of 1/4/10. Many of the incidents reported here are still under investigation by NYS DEC Division of Law Enforcement. **Please note that in some of the incidents reported; the shooter was participating in an illegal and/or unlawful act.** More details may appear in final reports after hearings are completed late in 2010.

The most common story: Remember that 99.994% of the people who hunt have safe and enjoyable experiences. Over half a million people hunted in New York this year, and for every incident listed, there are thousands of other hunting stories of people who safely and responsibly took game. Just as important, even more passed up shots for the sake of safety, conservation, and respect for wildlife.

Many, if not all of these incidents could have been prevented, if only the shooter and/or victim had followed the primary rules of Hunter Safety.

Assume every gun is loaded

Control the muzzle

Finger off the trigger until ready to fire

Be sure of the target and beyond

Wear hunter orange

Thanks to our Environmental Conservation Officers for professional investigations of each incident.

FORMAT FOR 2009 DESCRIPTIONS:

Date (mm/dd) - followed by County and a brief description based on initial report.

SPRING TURKEY HUNTING

5/3 - Montgomery. Shooter shot one shot at a turkey striking his friend who was sitting in a hedgerow 50' away. Victim received multiple shot penetrations to his lungs, buttock and thigh.

5/16 - Albany. Shooter discharged one round striking two victims on the left side of their bodies resulting in multiple wounds.

5/18 - Onondaga. Victim sustained injuries to the head with one pellet becoming embedded near his eyes. The shooter is unknown.

5/22 - Sullivan. Shooter shot at a decoy placed near victim's position, striking his friend in the arm and leg.

5/24 - Dutchess. Victim was hunting in a blind when he turned his head and received a shotgun wound to face.

5/24 - Broome. Victim was setting up his decoys when the shooter walking in the same area saw the decoys and shot, striking victim with 13 pellets.

5/26 - Livingston. A live turkey landed between two parties. The shooter shot the turkey and the victim who was behind a bush. Victim was hit by a pellet in left eye.

5/29 - Oneida. Shooter shot through some small trees at black object which was his friend. The victim was hit by pellets in the chest and left thigh.

SMALL GAME & NONGAME

1/3 - Nassau. Three waterfowl hunters were hunting in the same boat. Victim was struck by pellets in his elbow and hand that were shot by his friend who was in the middle of the boat.

4/14 - Cattaraugus. Self-inflicted - A minor, hunting woodchucks discharged his firearm through his foot while attempting to kneel down.

7/25 - Steuben. Self-inflicted - After the victim had taken a shot at a woodchuck, he lowered the muzzle of rifle discharging it again hitting the little toe on right foot.

11/11 - Delaware. Self-inflicted - While hunting rats the victim bumped into a gate with his finger on the trigger and fired one round into his boot striking his foot.

DEER HUNTING

10/18 - St. Lawrence. Self-inflicted - Victim was hunting alone when the .50 caliber muzzleloading pistol in his fanny pack discharged. The bullet entered his thigh and exited his calf.

10/22 - St. Lawrence. Two parties were muzzleloader hunting in the same area while visibility was limited due to fog. Victim's rifle was struck by a round in buttstock area, the round careened into victim entering right side of abdomen and exiting through sternum. Victim and shooter were neighbors.

11/6 - Jefferson. Two friends were hunting in treestands. Shooter's round struck victim's forearm and the bullet ricocheted into his shoulder/neck area.

11/15 - Clinton. Victim was driving deer in heavily wooded area to the shooter. Shooter fired one round from 88' away hitting his friend. Victim was hit in lower portion of the left leg, which had to be amputated.

11/21 - Steuben. Victim was shot through the lower abdomen by hunting partner who was his brother.

11/22 - Monroe. Self-inflicted - Victim's shotgun misfired, he pumped the shotgun and pulled the trigger again. The gun exploded in his hand causing injury to his left hand and middle finger.

11/24 - Otsego. Shooter was hunting on his property and shot at what he thought was a deer, striking a second hunter. Victim was transported to local hospital.

11/24 - Sullivan. Shooter viewed brown moving in his scope and fired. Victim was transported to local hospital.

11/27 - Sullivan. Self-inflicted - Victim was hunting with father. Not sure what happened but rifle discharged hitting himself in right foot, big toe.

12/6 - Rensselaer. Shooter was in process of ejecting a round when the firearm discharged thru roof of vehicle, ricocheted off roof rack and hit his friend 25' away below his right elbow.

12/6 - Onondaga. Self-inflicted - Victim was cinching rope to his firearm prior to climbing a treestand when he accidentally pulled the trigger, shooting himself in the left knee.

12/6 - Columbia. Self-inflicted - Victim was found lying under his treestand. It appears his shotgun discharged while victim was climbing into his stand. He suffered a single gunshot wound to the chest. - **FATAL**

12/7 - Saratoga. Self-inflicted - Victim was in his treestand when his sling broke. The gun fell to the ground and discharged, the bullet striking his right arm.

12/13 - Niagara. Self-inflicted - Victim was climbing down from his treestand when his gun discharged and the slug struck his left foot.

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(find Sportsman Education in the subject index)