

Connecticut Hunting Accident Data, 2000-2019

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Issue

How many hunting accidents have occurred in Connecticut since 2000? What were the most common contributing factors?

This report updates the information in OLR Report [2015-R-0196](#).

Summary

According to the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, there have been 50 hunting accidents in Connecticut, including four fatalities, since 2000. Thirty-two of these accidents involved the discharge of a firearm or pellet gun. The other accidents involved falling from a tree stand or natural causes. Non-hunters were the known accident victim in two cases (both nonfatal).

The most common contributing factors in the hunting accidents were (1) failing to use a safety harness (15 instances), (2) swinging a firearm toward game (eight instances), (3) careless handling of a hunting instrument (six instances), and (4) having the victim out of sight (five instances). Other contributing factors included mistaking the victim for game, failing to identify the target or point the muzzle in a safe direction, some other careless or reckless action, and alcohol use.

Hunting and Trapping Guide

The Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection publishes an annual hunting and trapping guide that provides (1) a summary of relevant laws and regulations and (2) information on hunting and trapping opportunities in the state. The 2019 guide is available [here](#).

Table 1 lists the reported hunting accidents in Connecticut since 2000 and includes the game sought, injury, and contributing factor, among other things.

Table 1: Connecticut Hunting Accidents, 2000-2019*

<i>Year</i>	<i>Game Sought</i>	<i>Injury</i>	<i>Shooter's Age</i>	<i>Contributing Factor</i>	<i>Was victim a non-hunter?</i>	<i>Was it a fatality?</i>
2000	Turkey	.22 caliber wound	50	Failure to identify target	No	No
2000	Pheasant	Pellet wounds	Unknown	Victim out of sight	No	No
2000	Deer	Fall from stand	N/A	No safety harness	No	No
2000	Pheasant	Pellet wounds	Unknown	Victim out of sight	No	No
2000	Deer	Fall from stand	N/A	No safety harness	No	No
2001	Geese	Pellet wounds	61	Victim in line of fire	No	No
2001	Coyote, squirrel	Fall from stand	N/A	Alcohol	No	No
2001	Deer	Fall from stand	N/A	No safety harness	No	No
2001	Deer	Heart attack	N/A	Natural causes	No	No
2002	Pheasant	Pellet wounds	68	Swinging on game	No	No
2002	Deer	Fall from stand	N/A	No safety harness	No	No
2002	Deer	Fall from stand	N/A	No safety harness	No	Yes
2003	Pheasant	Pellet wounds	33	Swinging on game	No	No
2004	Pheasant	Pellet wounds	18	Careless handling	No	No
2004	Deer	Projectile wound	38	Failure to identify target	No	No
2005	Pheasant	Pellet wounds	43	Victim out of sight	No	No
2005	Pheasant	Pellet wounds	Unknown	Victim out of sight	Yes	No
2007	Turkey	Pellet wounds	48	Mistaken for game	No	No
2007	Deer	.12 slug wound	31	Mistaken for game	No	No
2008	Turkey	Pellet wounds	69	Mistaken for game	No	No
2008	Geese	Pellet wounds	35	Careless handling	No	No
2009	Geese	Pellet wounds	64	Careless handling	No	No
2009	Deer	Fall from stand	N/A	No safety harness	No	No
2009	Pheasant	Pellet wounds	65	Careless, reckless	No	No
2010	Deer	Fall from stand	N/A	No safety harness	No	No
2010	Pheasant	Pellet wounds	Unknown	Victim out of sight	No	No
2010	Deer	Projectile wound	45	Failure to point muzzle in safe direction	No	No
2010	Pheasant	Pellet wound	69	Swinging on game	Unknown	No
2011	Deer	Projectile wound	45	Careless handling	No	No
2011	Pheasant	12ga pellet wounds	60	Careless, reckless	No	No
2011	Pheasant	16ga pellet wounds	64	Swinging on game	No	Yes
2011	Pheasant	20ga pellet wounds	60	Swinging on game	No	No

Table 1 (continued)

<i>Year</i>	<i>Game Sought</i>	<i>Injury</i>	<i>Shooter's Age</i>	<i>Contributing Factor</i>	<i>Was victim a non-hunter?</i>	<i>Was it a fatality?</i>
2011	Deer	Fall from stand	47	No safety harness	No	Yes
2012	Squirrel	.22 caliber wound	32	Careless handling	No	No
2012	Deer	Heart attack	43	Natural causes	No	Yes
2012	Duck	12ga pellet wound	Unknown	Victim in line of fire	No	No
2013	Deer	Fall from stand	27	No safety harness	No	No
2013	Deer	Fragmentation	45	Use of Smokeless Powder	No	No
2014	Waterfowl	Fragmentation	21	Failure to point muzzle in safe direction	Yes	No
2014	Pheasant	Pellet wounds	26	Swinging on game	No	No
2014	Deer	Fall from stand	50	No safety harness	No	No
2014	Deer	Projectile wound	65	Careless handling	No	No
2015	Deer	Fall from stand	N/A	No safety harness	No	No
2015	Pheasant	Pellet wound	40	Careless, reckless	No	No
2016	Deer	Fall from stand	N/A	No safety harness	No	No
2017	Pheasant	20ga pellet wound	26	Swinging on game	No	No
2017	Deer	Fall from stand	N/A	No safety harness	No	No
2018	Pheasant	12ga pellet wound	44	Swinging on game	No	No
2018	Deer	Fall from stand	53	No safety harness	No	No
2019	Deer	Fall from stand	37	No safety harness	No	No

*As of the date of this report, the 2019 hunting season is not finished

Source: Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection

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