



Illinois Department of **Natural Resources**

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<http://dnr.state.il.us>

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Hunters Heading to the Field for Illinois Firearm Deer Season

Seven-Day Season is Nov. 19-21 and Dec. 2-5

SPRINGFIELD, IL – Illinois' most popular hunting season begins on Friday through Sunday, Nov. 19-21 as hunters will head to the field for the opening weekend of the Illinois Firearm Deer Season. The seven-day firearm hunt will conclude on Dec. 2-5.

“Illinois has a great hunting heritage and the firearm deer season is anticipated anxiously by hunters each fall. We want to encourage hunters to make safety a priority and enjoy their time afield,” said Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) Director Marc Miller.

Hunters in Illinois harvested a preliminary total of 99,493 deer during the seven-day firearm deer hunting season in 2009. More than 370,000 permits have been issued for this year's firearm deer season so far. For information on remaining permits, check the IDNR website at this link:
<http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/hunting/Pages/Deer.aspx>

The legal hunting hours for the firearm deer season are one-half hour before sunrise to one-half hour after sunset.

Hunters successful in taking a deer during the firearm season in most counties must register the deer they harvest online through the IDNR website at <http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/hunting/Pages/HarvestReporting.aspx> or by phoning 1-866-IL-CHECK (1-866-452-4325). Hunters using the online or phone-in system must register their harvest by 10 p.m. on the day they take the deer. It is recommended that hunters using cellular phones to register their harvest wait until they are out of the field and have a clear cell phone signal before attempting to make the harvest report phone call.

Firearm deer hunters in Boone, DeKalb, Grundy, Kane, LaSalle, McHenry, Ogle, Stephenson, and Winnebago counties are reminded to bring their deer to mandatory check stations by 8 p.m. on the day they harvest a deer. Biologists will be sampling adult deer for chronic wasting disease (CWD) to determine areas of infection and prevalence rates. The check station locations are listed below (Note: the check station locations are the same as last year):

- Boone: Boone Co. Fairgrounds, located one-half mile north of Rt. 76 and Business Rt. 20, Belvidere
- DeKalb: Shabbona Lake State Recreation Area, 4201 Shabbona Grove Rd., Shabbona
- Grundy: Gebhard Woods State Park; 401 Ottawa St., Morris
- Kane: Shabbona Lake State Recreation Area, 4201 Shabbona Grove Rd., Shabbona
- LaSalle: Buffalo Rock State Park, three miles west of Ottawa on Dee Bennett Rd.
- McHenry: Moraine Hills State Park, McHenry Dam day use area, east of McHenry on River Road, 2.2 miles south of Rt. 120
- Ogle: Castle Rock State Park, Rt. 2, three miles south of Oregon
- Stephenson: Stephenson Co. Fairgrounds, one mile east of Rt. 26 and Fairgrounds Road, Freeport
- Winnebago: Rock Cut State Park (hunters should utilize the Hwy 173 entrance and follow the signs)

Hunters who participate in the CWD sampling can check the status of their deer through the IDNR web site at <http://dnr.state.il.us/cwd/>. Hunters who provide samples from deer that test positive are notified by the IDNR.

While not believed to be contagious to humans or livestock, chronic wasting disease is known to spread from animal to animal among deer and elk. The disease affects the brain of infected animals, causing them to become emaciated, display abnormal behavior, lose coordination and eventually die. Illinois expanded its CWD surveillance effort in 2002 following the discovery of the disease in neighboring Wisconsin.

For more information on Illinois deer hunting regulations, check the IDNR web site at this link:

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

Hunting Safety Facts:

- Illinois law requires that anyone born on or after January 1, 1980, must successfully complete a hunter safety course before a regular Illinois hunting license is issued.
- The number one cause of hunting accidents in Illinois is falling from a tree stand.
- Last year in Illinois, there were 22 reported hunting accidents, and 14 involved tree stands (one fatality).

When using a tree stand, remember the following:

- Check ladder stands before climbing to make sure they are secure.
- Wear a Fall Arrest System/Full Body Safety Harness when leaving the ground until returning to the ground from the tree stand.
- Use a haul line to raise and lower your equipment and unloaded firearm or bow into a tree stand.

When hunting with a firearm, sportsmen should remember three primary rules of firearm safety:

- ✓ Know your target and what is beyond your target.
- ✓ Point the muzzle in a safe direction.
- ✓ Treat every firearm as if it were loaded.