

Texas Hunting Accident Report 2024

TEXAS
PARKS &
WILDLIFE



TEXAS HUNTING ACCIDENT DATA (1966-2024)

* *Voluntary* * Hunter Education Program 1972-1987

Calendar Year	Fatalities	Non-Fatal	Accidents	Hunting Licenses Sold	Accidents/ 100,000 Licenses	Fatalities/ 100,000 Licenses	Students Certified
1966	28	53	81	644,653	12.6	4.3	-
1967	23	70	93	797,846	11.7	2.9	-
1968	37	68	105	854,693	12.3	4.3	-
1969	24	68	92	895,593	10.3	2.7	-
1970	19	53	72	935,793	7.7	2.0	-
1971	24	68	92	978,285	9.4	2.5	-
1972	30	55	85	966,332	8.8	3.1	2,119
1973	22	58	80	1,011,963	7.9	2.2	4,314
1974	16	52	68	1,037,925	6.6	1.5	6,094
1975	11	66	77	1,051,834	7.3	1.0	8,531
1976	11	52	63	1,050,349	6	1.0	10,043
1977	17	64	81	1,080,530	7.5	1.6	11,298
1978	20	63	83	1,091,794	7.6	1.8	10,890
1979	10	43	53	1,093,716	4.8	0.9	10,775
1980	13	56	69	1,160,375	5.9	1.1	12,166
1981	19	53	72	1,174,023	6.1	1.6	13,187
1982	23	74	97	1,216,032	8.0	1.9	13,323
1983	17	63	80	1,325,474	6.0	1.3	14,131
1984	21	39	60	1,140,174	5.3	1.8	13,052
1985	15	57	72	1,100,991	6.5	1.4	11,284
1986	13	55	68	1,162,785	5.8	1.1	11,195
1987	12	69	81	1,189,566	6.8	1.0	8,611
Voluntary	425	1299	1724	22,960,726	7.5	1.85	161,013



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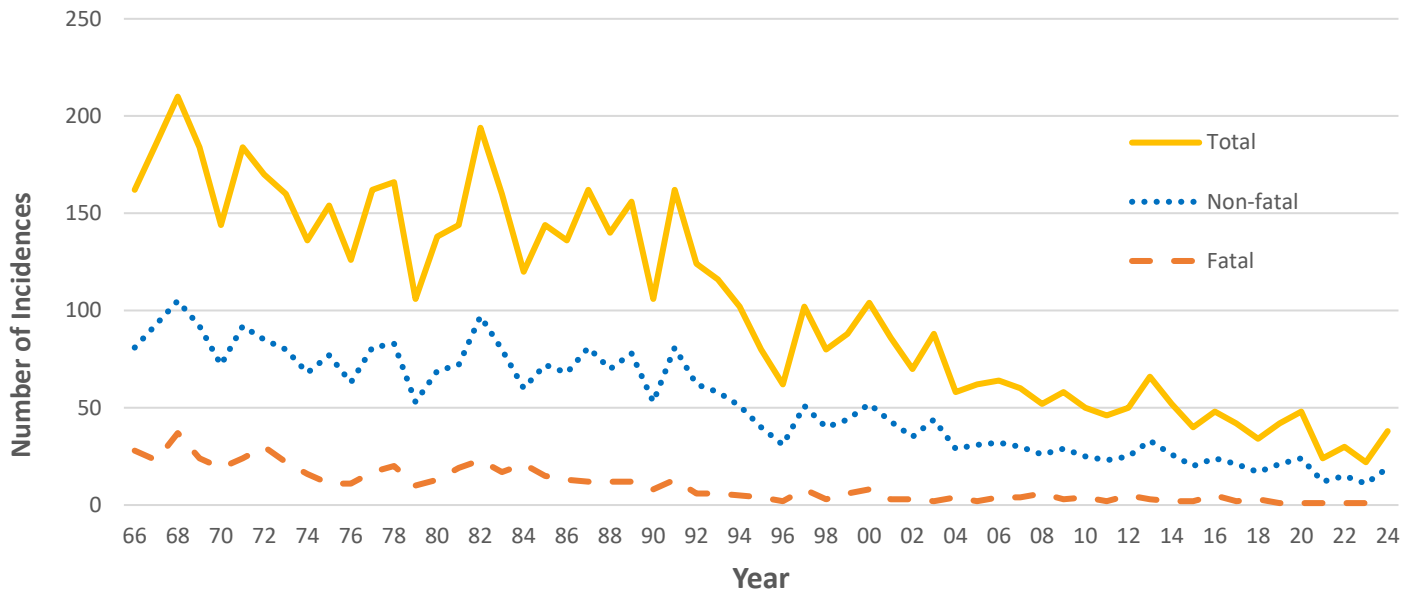
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** Mandatory * Hunter Education Program 1988 - Present*

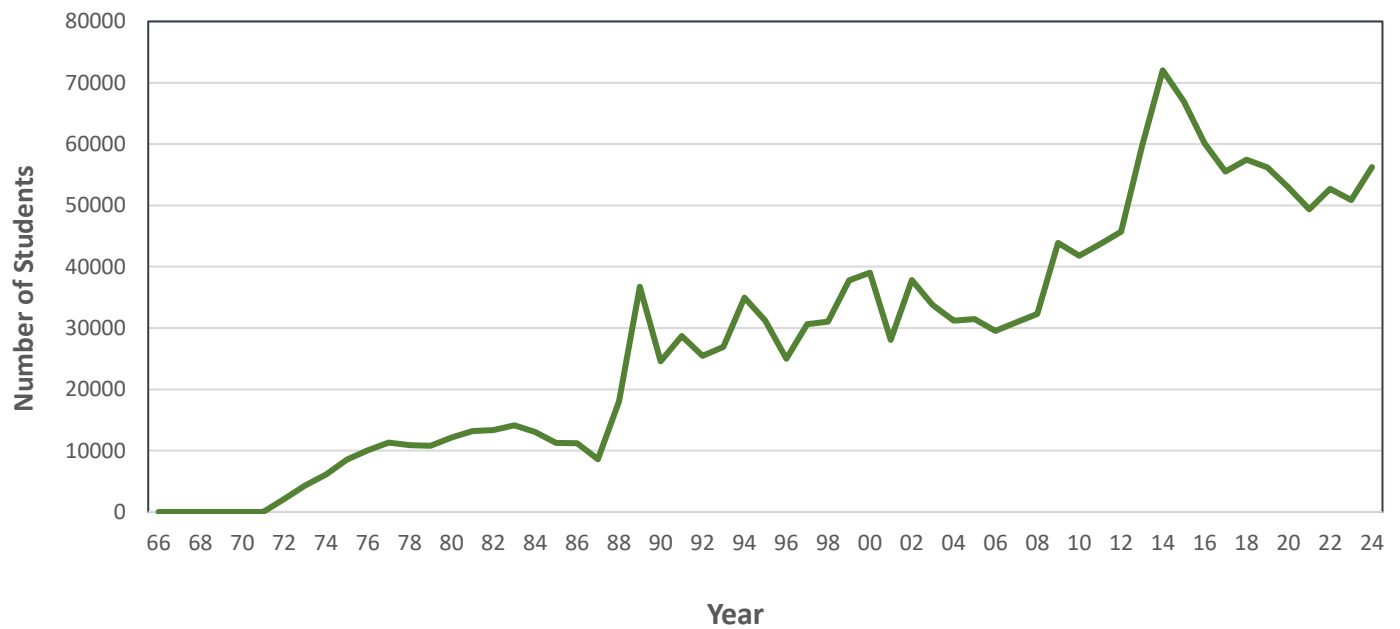
Calendar Year	Fatal	Non-Fatal	Accidents	Hunting Licenses Sold	Accidents/ 100,000 Licenses	Fatalities/ 100,000 Licenses	Students Certified	Deferrals Sold
1988	12	58	70	1,189,000	5.9	1.0	18,043	-
1989	12	66	78	1,193,000	6.5	1.0	36,708	-
1990	8	45	53	1,132,917	4.7	0.7	24,590	-
1991	13	68	81	1,103,903	7.3	1.2	28,682	-
1992	6	56	62	1,053,063	5.9	0.6	25,453	-
1993	6	52	58	1,077,055	5.4	0.6	26,942	-
1994	5	46	51	1,083,227	4.7	0.5	34,972	-
1995	4	36	40	1,060,000	3.8	0.4	31,215	-
1996	2	29	31	990,000	3.1	0.2	24,998	-
1997	8	43	51	960,000	5.3	0.8	30,625	-
1998	3	37	40	1,011,500	3.9	0.3	31,052	-
1999	6	38	44	1,010,455	4.3	0.6	37,775	-
2000	8	44	52	1,145,000	4.5	0.7	39,049	-
2001	3	40	43	1,076,159	4.0	0.3	28,062	-
2002	3	32	35	1,024,495	3.4	0.3	37,847	-
2003	2	42	44	1,082,225	4.1	0.2	33,769	-
2004	4	25	29	1,091,178	2.7	0.4	31,171	-
2005	2	29	31	1,082,593	2.9	0.2	31,442	-
2006	4	28	32	1,115,772	2.9	0.4	29,532	-
2007	4	26	30	1,112,099	2.7	0.4	30,960	-
2008	6	20	26	993,533	2.6	0.6	32,308	-
2009	3	26	29	1,011,936	2.9	0.3	43,880	12,545
2010	4	21	25	1,141,924	2.2	0.4	41,785	13,997
2011	2	21	23	1,165,248	2.0	0.2	43,645	15,101
2012	5	20	25	1,155,542	2.2	0.4	45,719	15,438
2013	3	30	33	1,227,025	2.7	0.2	59,597	17,257
2014	2	24	26	1,284,933	2.0	0.2	72,026	11,898
2015	2	18	20	1,259,259	1.6	0.2	66,961	14,025
2016	5	19	24	1,271,368	1.9	0.4	60,115	14,371
2017	2	19	21	1,248,450	1.7	0.2	55,507	12,113
2018	3	14	17	1,235,590	1.4	0.24	57,440	11,004
2019	1	20	21	1,244,526	1.7	0.08	56,209	9,036
2020	1	23	24	1,301,289	1.8	0.08	52,912	8,020
2021	1	11	12	1,239,466	1.0	0.08	49,370	6,754
2022	1	14	15	1,214,728	1.2	0.08	52,706	6,445
2023	1	10	11	1,236,677	0.8	0.08	50,888	7,088
2024	1	18	19	1,246,797	1.5	0.08	56,241	6,144
Mandatory	157	1,169	1,326	42,071,932	3.1	0.37	1,511,731	181,236
TOTAL	582	2,468	3,050	65,032,658	4.69	0.89	1,672,744	181,236

- **HUNTING INCIDENT RATE (AVE.) DURING VOLUNTARY PROGRAM – 7.5 per 100,000** hunting licenses issued.
- **HUNTING INCIDENT RATE (AVE.) DURING MANDATORY PROGRAM – 3.1 per 100,000** hunting licenses issued.

TX Hunting Incidents 1966 - Present



TX Hunter Education Graduates 1966 - Present



Texas Hunting Accidents 2020 – 2024

* TYPE “A” Incidents - resulting from a *discharge of a firearm or bow while hunting, which causes the injury or death of any person(s)*

INCIDENTS	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Fatal	1	1	1	1	1
Non-fatal	23	11	14	10	18
TOTAL	24	12	15	11	19

SHOOTER'S AGE					
0-9 yrs. of age	0	0	0	0	0
10-19	5	2	3	2	5
20-29	7	0	2	3	3
30-39	2	5	1	1	3
40-49	2	1	2	1	3
50-59	2	1	2	1	2
60 & over	4	2	4	2	2
Unknown	2	1	1	1	1
TOTAL	24	12	15	11	19

SHOOTER'S EQUIPMENT					
Rifles	8	3	4	1	5
Shotguns	14	8	8	9	12
Handguns	2	1	2	0	2
Muzzleloader	0	0	0	0	0
Bow/Air Gun	0	0	1	1	0
TOTAL	24	12	15	11	19

ADDITIONAL FACTS					
	Percentage in parenthesis (%)				
Violated Game Law	3 (18)	5 (18)	0 (0)	2 (13)	4 (21)
Self-Inflicted	6 (35)	8 (38)	2 (17)	7 (47)	6 (32)
Alcohol a Factor	2 (12)	2 (10)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Completed Hunt Ed	6 (28)	11 (46)	6 (50)	9 (60)	12 (63)
ONLINE-ONLY HE	0 (0)	0 (0)	2 (17)	2 (13)	2 (11)
Military Exempt	0 (0)	1 (4)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)

Incident profile over time:

- Incidents were highly preventable through proper training.
- Over half had not completed hunter education training.
- Victims were not wearing hunter orange clothing.
- Most incidents due to hunter judgment errors; carelessness.
- Most shooters had over 10 years of hunting experience.
- Most shooters were not under the influence of alcohol.
- If self-inflicted, shooters handled firearms carelessly.
- Distance of muzzle to wound was typically under 15 yards.
- Many accidents occur at dusk; fatigue being a factor.

Significant factors in 2024

- “Swinging on Game Outside Safe Zone of Fire” led the list of incidents with 7 (37%), #1 cause.
- Doves # 1 animal hunted; six (6) incidents 1st weekend.
- SHOTGUNS were used in 12 of the incidents.
- A total of 12 HUNTER EDUCATION graduates were involved in hunting incidents, two (2) who took online-only courses and four (4) from out-of-state (AR-2, LA, IN).
- Record number (%) of hunter education graduates.
- Six (6) SELF-INFLICTED hunting incidents.
- Four (4) LAW VIOLATIONS recorded.
- No alcohol-related incidents for last 3 years.
- Seven (7) TYPE B incidents – six (6) incidents involving falls from elevated positions/blinds/tree stands and one fall while jumping across a creek; total included six non-fatal injuries and one fatal incident (87-year-old).
- One (1) TYPE C non-fatal incident.

MAIN CONTRIBUTING FACTORS	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
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I. HUNTER JUDGMENT					
Victim out of sight /moved into line of fire	3	0	0	3	3
Victim hit by shooter swinging on game	8	9	5	4	7
Victim mistaken for game	1	0	1	0	0
SUBTOTAL	12	9	6	7	10

II. SKILL/APTITUDE					
Trigger caught on object	0	0	0	0	2
Loading/Unloading gun	0	0	1	0	1
Improper crossing	0	0	0	0	0
Careless handling	6	3	3	1	4
Dropped firearm	0	0	0	0	1
Shooter stumbled/fell	0	0	0	0	1
Careless Bow Handling	0	0	1	1	0
SUBTOTAL	6	3	5	2	9

III. SAFETY					
Removing/placing firearms in vehicle	0	0	1	1	0
Discharge of firearm in/on vehicle or boat/fell from insecure rest	2	0	2	1	0
Running or entering/exiting stand with loaded firearm	0	0	0	0	0
Horseplay	0	0	0	0	0
SUBTOTAL	2	0	3	2	0

IV. OTHER					
Ricochet	1	0	0	0	0
Obstruction in Barrel or Faulty Equipment	3	0	1	0	0
Mixed Ammo/Incorrect Sub.	0	0	0	0	0
SUBTOTAL	4	0	1	0	0
GRAND TOTAL	24	12	15	11	19

ANIMAL HUNTED					
Dove	11	6	4	7	10
Deer	1	1	5	2	3
Rabbit/Hare	2	0	1	0	0
Feral Hog/Peccary	6	2	2	0	1
Quail/Pheasant	0	2	1	0	2
Turkey	1	0	0	0	0
Ducks/Geese	1	0	2	2	1
Coyote/Bobcat	1	0	0	0	0
Squirrel/Prairie Dog	0	0	0	0	0
Nongame birds/Snake	1	0	0	0	1
Furbearers (2021 - Skunk)	0	1	0	0	0
Exotic	0	0	0	0	1
Unknown	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	24	12	15	11	19

2024 FATAL ACCIDENTS - FIREARM/BOW HUNTING RELATED (A)*

* Firearm/Bow & Hunting Related - Accident/incident resulting from the discharge of a firearm or bow while hunting, which causes death to any person(s).

Date	County	Shooter's Age/Gender	Firearm	Animal Hunted	Self-Inflicted?	Hunter Ed? (Shooter)
11-15	Kenedy	52/M	Rifle	Exotics	No	Yes
Comments	Careless Handling – While returning to camp after the evening hunt, shooter was walking in front of victim. The shooter had a loaded rifle slung over his left shoulder with a rifle strap. The rifle safety was in 'fire' position due to the scope mounts interfering with the functionality of the mechanism. While walking up a small hill, the victim dropped an item. The shooter turned around and bent down to pick up the item. The rifle discharged, fatally injuring victim.					
Prevention	Always point the muzzle in a safe direction; always unload when no longer hunting, such as when looking for a lost item; handle firearm carefully and do not alter or destroy a firearm safety, position or restrict its proper use; keep fingers outside of trigger guard; apply what is learned in hunter education.					

Note: Incident still being investigated - headed to TX Grand Jury for final decision/determination (Effective Feb. 13, 2025).

2024 NON-FATAL INCIDENTS - FIREARM/BOW HUNTING RELATED (A)*

* Firearm/Bow & Hunting Related - Accident/incident resulting from the discharge of a firearm or bow while hunting, which causes injury to any person(s).

Date	County	Shooter's Age/Gender	Firearm	Animal Hunted	Self-Inflicted?	Hunter Ed? (Shooter)
1-27	Wichita	42/M	Shotgun	Quail/Pheasant	No	Yes
Comments	Swinging Outside Safe Zone of Fire – Five hunters and a guide were hunting pheasants and quail and were lined up across a field. Dogs were on point on two groups of birds at same time, so there were some position issues. Shooter fired at low-flying bird outside of his safe zone towards a hunting companion to his right. One (1) pellet struck the victim in his face, barely breaking the skin.					
Prevention	Always point the muzzle in a safe direction and stick to a safe zone of fire; communicate with hunting companions and other hunters in the area; know where others are always positioned; make sure to identify the target clearly; identify what is in front of and behind the target before shooting; apply what is learned in hunter education.					
2-8	Rains	31/M	Rifle	Feral Hog	Yes	No
Comments	Careless Handling – Shooter was coyote/hog hunting with a .22LR. He saw a small feral hog in the field which he prepared to shoot. Right then, a larger hog came up from behind him knocking him the ground, and he carelessly discharged his rifle towards his left foot.					
Prevention	Always point the muzzle in a safe direction and maintain control of the firearm with an approved carry; keep fingers outside of trigger guard, protecting the trigger from brush and/or during a fall; obey the law by completing hunter education course prior to hunting.					
2-24	Bowie	47/M	Handgun	Snake	No	No
Comments	Dropped Firearm – Shooter and two others were in a flat-bottom boat, checking trot line (fishing). The passengers spotted a snake when returning to boat ramp, and the shooter grabbed his loaded .22 caliber handgun to shoot the snake and dropped it in the process. The gun discharged, striking the victim sitting in the middle seat. The bullet struck the victim in the right buttocks.					
Prevention	Always point the muzzle in a safe direction and always maintain control of the firearm; keep fingers outside of trigger guard, with firearm 'safety' ON and have a handgun unloaded in chamber until shooting/hunting; avoid shooting snakes unless legal and hunting for meat; obey the law by completing hunter education course prior to hunting, even while boating/ bow fishing and fishing.					

Date	County	Shooter's Age/Gender	Firearm	Animal Hunted	Self-Inflicted?	Hunter Ed? (Shooter)
3-17	Erath	65/M	Shotgun	Quail/Pheasant	No	No
Comments	Swinging Outside Safe Zone of Fire – Four hunters and a guide were hunting quail. They all walked around a juniper bush, and a covey flushed. Shooter fired at low-flying bird outside of his safe zone towards a hunting companion to his right. Eleven (11) pellets struck the victim in his lower leg.					
Prevention	Always point the muzzle in a safe direction and stick to a safe zone of fire; communicate with hunting companions and guide; know where others are always positioned; make sure to identify the target clearly; identify what is in front of and behind target; complete hunter education, even if not required.					
9-1	Guadalupe	12/M	Rifle	Dove	No	No
Comments	Shooter Stumbled and Fell – Young shooter was given an illegal firearm (.22 break action single shot) while hunting doves. He was following victim as they were retrieving a dove, then stumbled and fell, carelessly discharging rifle towards the back, left leg of victim (guardian).					
Prevention	Always point the muzzle in a safe direction and maintain control of the firearm with an approved carry method; keep fingers outside of trigger guard, protecting the trigger from brush and/or during a fall; obey the law by using legal means and methods during a hunt; complete hunter education, even if not required.					
9-1	Bell	17/M	Shotgun	Dove	No	Yes - LA
Comments	Swinging Outside Safe Zone of Fire – Shooter fired at low-flying, wounded dove outside of his safe zone and ‘peppered’ victim. Both were searching for the downed doves about 40 yards apart. A dozen pellets struck the victim from his head to his legs.					
Prevention	Always point the muzzle in a safe direction and stick to a safe zone of fire; communicate with hunting companions and other hunters in the area; know where others are always positioned; make sure to identify the target clearly; identify what is in front of and behind the target before shooting; apply what is learned in hunter education.					
9-1	Young	49/M	Shotgun	Dove	No	Yes
Comments	Victim Out of Sight of Shooter – Shooter was retrieving down dove which flew off. He fired at the low-flying dove outside of his safe zone and ‘peppered’ another hunter who was nearby, out of sight of shooter. Pellets struck the victim in chest, shoulders, arms, face and ears.					
Prevention	Always point the muzzle in a safe direction and stick to a safe zone of fire; communicate with hunting companions and other hunters in the area; know where others are always positioned; position should not be in front of other hunters in the group; make sure to identify the target clearly; identify what is in front of and behind the target before shooting; apply what is learned in hunter education.					
9-1	Bexar	50/M	Shotgun	Dove	No	Yes
Comments	Swinging Outside Safe Zone of Fire – Shooter fired at low-flying dove outside of his safe zone and ‘peppered’ his hunting partner from about 40 yards away. Pellets struck the victim in legs and chin.					
Prevention	Always point the muzzle in a safe direction and stick to a safe zone of fire; communicate with hunting companions and other hunters in the area; know where others are always positioned; make sure to identify the target clearly; identify what is in front of and behind the target before shooting; apply what is learned in hunter education.					
9-1	Sutton	26/M	Shotgun	Dove	No	Yes
Comments	Swinging Outside Safe Zone of Fire – Shooter swung at a low-flying dove outside of his safe zone of fire and ‘peppered’ the victim who was out of position, retrieving a downed dove at the time. Pellets struck the victim in his upper torso and face.					
Prevention	Always point the muzzle in a safe direction and stick to a safe zone of fire; communicate with hunting companions and other hunters in the area; know where others are always positioned; make sure to identify the target clearly; identify what is in front of and behind the target before shooting; apply what is learned in hunter education.					

Date	County	Shooter's Age/Gender	Firearm	Animal Hunted	Self-Inflicted?	Hunter Ed? (Shooter)
9-2	Upshur	18/M	Shotgun	Dove	Yes	Yes
Comments	Unloading Firearm – After shooter shot at dove, his gun jammed. As he tried to unload, he closed the bolt causing the spent shell in the receiver area to jam into the primer of round in the chamber, discharging the firearm. He sustained injuries from the discharge to his hand and shoulder.					
Prevention	Always point the muzzle in a safe direction and be sure to extract spent shell prior to closing the bolt on a chambered round; inspect ammunition prior to use; apply what is learned in hunter education.					
9-7	Starr	UNK/M	Shotgun	Dove	No	UNK
Comments	Victim Out of Sight of Shooter – Victim was struck by several pellets while using a portable restroom in the hunting field. Shooter was unknown, since there were other hunting groups nearby, and, eventually, the victim did not want to pursue investigation further.					
Prevention	Always point the muzzle in a safe direction and stick to a safe zone of fire; communicate with hunting companions and other hunters in the area; know where others are always positioned; make sure to identify the target clearly; identify what is in front of and behind the target before shooting.					
9-7	Wilbarger	31/M	Shotgun	Dove	No	Yes - IN
Comments	Swinging Outside Safe Zone of Fire – Shooter fired at low-flying dove outside of his safe zone and ‘peppered’ his hunting partner from about 60 yards away. Pellets broke skin in face and right arm.					
Prevention	Always point the muzzle in a safe direction and stick to a safe zone of fire; communicate with hunting companions and other hunters in the area; know where others are always positioned; make sure to identify the target clearly; identify what is in front of and behind the target before shooting; apply what is learned in hunter education.					
9-12	Runnels	36/M	Shotgun	Dove	No	Yes
Comments	Swinging Outside Safe Zone of Fire – Shooter fired at low-flying, wounded dove outside of his safe zone and ‘peppered’ his hunting companion who was retrieving a downed dove near tank dam in thick brush. Over 30 pellets struck the victim in his legs.					
Prevention	Always point the muzzle in a safe direction and stick to a safe zone of fire; communicate with hunting companions and other hunters in the area; know where others are always positioned; make sure to identify the target clearly; identify what is in front of and behind the target before shooting; apply what is learned in hunter education.					
9-14	Lampasas	18/M	Shotgun	Dove	Yes	Yes
Comments	Careless Handling – While dove hunting, shooter carelessly discharged his loaded shotgun after resting the muzzle on his foot.					
Prevention	Always point the muzzle in a safe direction; always unload when no longer hunting, such as when taking a break; handle firearm carefully; keep fingers outside of trigger guard and leave ‘safety’ on; apply what is learned in hunter education.					
11-16	Bowie	22/M	Shotgun	Duck/Geese	Yes	Yes - AR
Comments	Trigger Caught on Object – Shooter carelessly hung a loaded shotgun in a dead tree while checking for leaks in his waders. The trigger caught and discharged, sending pellets into his upper thigh. He was checking to see how deep the water was while scouting for ducks. He then felt water inside his waders.					
Prevention	Always point the muzzle in a safe direction; always unload when no longer hunting, such as when scouting; never leave a loaded firearm unattended; handle firearm carefully; keep fingers outside of trigger guard and the ‘safety’ on; apply what is learned in hunter education.					
11-16	Red River	27/M	Handgun	Deer	Yes	Yes- AR
Comments	Trigger Caught on Object - Shooter was heading to his tree stand and his chest holster became loose. As he readjusted it, his 9mm handgun trigger caught on a zipper and discharged, sending a bullet through his hand into his abdomen.					
Prevention	Always point the muzzle in a safe direction; always unload when not hunting, such as when walking to stand; handle firearm carefully; keep fingers outside of trigger guard and ‘safety’ on; apply what is learned in hunter education.					

11-21	Bowie	65/M	Rifle	Deer	No	Yes
<i>Comments</i>	Victim Out of Sight of Shooter – Shooter swung on a deer outside of a safe zone, victim out of sight of shooter. Shooter was waiting for victim to return, prior to seeing the deer and taking a shot.					
<i>Prevention</i>	Always point the muzzle in a safe direction and stick to a safe zone of fire; communicate with hunting companions and other hunters in the area; know where others are always positioned; make sure to identify the target clearly; identify what is in front of and behind the target before shooting; apply what is learned in hunter education.					
12-29	Sterling	19/M	Rifle	Deer	Yes	No
<i>Comments</i>	Careless Handling – Shooter carried loaded, slung rifle, with the hammer cocked. As he shouldered the rifle, he carelessly discharged it towards his lower right leg.					
<i>Prevention</i>	Always point the muzzle in a safe direction; unload when no longer hunting; keep ‘safety’ on while hunting and hammer safe position, handle firearm carefully; use proper carry method keeping muzzle in a safe direction; keep fingers outside of trigger guard; obey the law by completing hunter education.					

2024 NON-FIREARM/BOW HUNTING RELATED (B) **

Type	Age/Gender	Fatal?	Comments
Tree Stand Fall 10/6	56/M	NO	Hog hunter was hanging tree stand (see cover photo of stand) when the foot portion of the stand gave way, sending victim 12 feet to ground, fracturing his ribs, sternum, scapula and spine.
Fall from UHV 10/10	59/M	NO	Deer hunter was filling his feeder while standing on the back of his UHV. He lost his balance and fell, landing on his right hip.
Tree Stand Fall 11/19	58/M	NO	The deer hunter was hanging tree stand while sitting on a branch. The branch snapped, sending victim 14 feet to ground, fracturing his ribs, clavicle and spine.
Fall/Trips & Spills 11/29	31/M	NO	Waterfowl hunter injured his knee (ACL tear) while jumping across a creek when scouting for ducks on public land
Fall from Elevated Stand (Blind) 11/30	62/M	NO	Deer hunter leaned back in his chair and fell backwards out of blind that was atop an elevated platform. He sustained neck injuries as a result of the fall.
Tree Stand Fall 12/1	54/M	NO	Deer hunter climbed to his tree stand and used ‘haul line’ to pull up his backpack and bow. He had not yet put on his safety harness. He slipped off the stand, falling 15 feet to ground, breaking his tibia and fibula.
Fall from Elevated Stand (Blind) 12/7	87/M	YES	Crossbow hunter fatally fell from the top step of an elevated stand while exiting the blind. He fell to the ground about 6 feet and sustained neck and head trauma.

**** B. Non-Firearm/Bow Related** - Accidents/incidents while hunting, not involving the discharge of a firearm or bow, which causes injury or death of any person(s).

2024 NON-HUNTING/FIREARM RELATED (C) ***

Type	Age/Gender Firearm	Fatal?	Comments
Careless Handling 9/14	14/M Shotgun	NO	Teenager exited shooting stand with a loaded shotgun propped under his armpit. He was scratching his nose and dropped the firearm, which discharged a round into his big toe.

***** C. Non-Hunting Related** - Other reported accidents/incidents resulting from the discharge of a firearm/bow, which causes the injury or death of any person(s), other than while hunting (reported to TPWD Game Wardens).