

**2002
TEXAS HUNTING ACCIDENTS
ANALYSIS**



Federal Aid Project
W-104-S



For more information about hunting accidents
or the hunter education program in Texas, call (512) 389-8142

TEXAS HUNTING ACCIDENT PROFILE

- Violated a cardinal rule of hunter safety
- Anglo male; 27 years of age (average)
- Hunted deer with rifle or dove with shotgun
- Was typically **not** under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- Did not attend a hunter education (safety) course or program
- Did not wear any type of hunter orange clothing
- Was situated in or around vehicle or stand
- Sustained a non-fatal injury
- If not self-inflicted – swung shotgun on game outside of safe zone of fire
- Had over 10 years of hunting experience
- If self-inflicted – handled firearm carelessly and/or carried loaded firearm in or around vehicle
- Distance of muzzle to wound was within 50 yards, mostly within 10 yards
- Victim was in light to open cover with clear visibility (weather)
- Accident occurred towards dusk; fatigue a factor
- Accident occurred on weekend during September or November



2002 Significant Factors

- Not as many violations for “failure to take hunter education course “ in 2002
- The wearing of blaze orange would reduce many accidents in Texas
- Swinging on game outside of a safe zone of fire is still the primary accident type (dove hunting)
- Careless handling, especially in and around vehicles, is a big problem in Texas
- Quail and turkey hunting accidents up in 2002.
- Violations of law common among accident scenarios
- Several accidents were highly questionable relative to the intent to hunt, but not proved otherwise

**HUNTING ACCIDENT DATA (1966-2002)
ACCIDENT VERSUS LICENSES SOLD IN TEXAS**

CALENDAR YEAR	HUNTER ACCIDENTS	HUNTING LICENSES SOLD	ACCIDENTS PER 100,000 LICENSES	STUDENTS CERTIFIED
1966	81	644,653	12.6	-
1967	93	797,846	11.7	-
1968	105	854,693	12.3	-
1969	92	895,593	10.3	-
1970	72	935,793	7.7	-
1971	92	978,285	9.4	-
1972	85	966,332	8.8	2,119
1973	80	1,011,963	7.9	4,314
1974	68	1,037,925	6.6	6,094
1975	77	1,051,834	7.3	8,531
1976	63	1,050,349	6.0	10,043
1977	81	1,080,530	7.5	11,298
1978	83	1,091,794	7.6	10,890
1979	53	1,093,716	4.8	10,775
1980	69	1,160,375	5.9	12,166
1981	72	1,174,023	6.1	13,187
1982	97	1,216,032	8.0	13,323
1983	80	1,325,474	6.0	14,131
1984	60	1,140,174	5.3	13,052
1985	72	1,100,991	6.5	11,284
1986	68	1,162,785	5.8	11,195
1987	81	1,189,566	6.8	8,611
1988	70	1,189,000	5.9	18,043
1989	78	1,193,000	6.5	36,708
1990	53	1,132,917	4.7	24,590
1991	81	1,103,903	7.3	28,682
1992	62	1,053,063	5.9	25,453
1993	58	1,077,055	5.4	26,942
1994	51	1,083,227	4.7	34,972
1995	40	1,060,000	3.8	31,215
1996	31*	990,000	3.1	24,998
1997	51	960,000	5.3	30,625
1998	40	1,011,500	3.9	31,052
1999	44	1,010,455	4.3	37,775
2000	52	1,145,000	4.5	39,049
2001	43	1,076,159	4.0	28,062
2002	35	1,024,495	3.4	37,804
TOTALS	2,513	39,070,500	6.4	579,427

- First ten-year average of hunter education program (CY 1966 - CY 1975) - One hunting accident/**10,858** hunting licenses sold.
- Second ten-year average of hunter education program (CY 1976 - CY 1985) - One hunting accident/**15,662** hunting licenses sold.
- Third ten-year average of hunter education program (CY 1986 - CY 1995) - One hunting

- accident/**17,515** hunting licenses sold.
- Thirty-seven year average (CY 1966 - CY 2002) - One hunting accident/**15,547** hunting licenses sold.

TEXAS HUNTING ACCIDENTS 1966-2002

CALENDAR YEAR	FATAL	NON-FATAL	TOTAL
1966	28	53	81
1967	23	70	93
1968	37	68	105
1969	24	68	92
1970	19	53	72
1971	24	68	92
1972	30	55	85
1973	22	58	80
1974	16	52	68
1975	11	66	77
1976	11	52	63
1977	17	64	81
1978	20	63	83
1979	10	43	53
1980	13	56	69
1981	19	53	72
1982	23	74	97
1983	17	63	80
1984	21	39	60
1985	15	57	72
1986	13	55	68
1987	12	69	81
MANDATORY HUNTER EDUCATION			
1988	12	58	70
1989	12	66	78
1990	8	45	53
1991	13	68	81
1992	6	56	62
1993	6	52	58
1994	5	46	51
1995	4	36	40
1996	2	29	31
1997	8	43	51
1998	3	37	40
1999	6	38	44

2000	8	44	52
2001	3	40	43
2002	3	32	35
TOTALS	524	1,989	2,513

TEXAS HUNTING ACCIDENT TOTALS 2002

HUNTING ACCIDENT: An accident/incident resulting from a discharge of a firearm or bow while hunting, which causes the injury or death of any person(s).

	2000	2001	2002		2000	2001	2002
ACCIDENTS				VIOLATED GAME LAW	16 (31%)	14 (33%)	8 (22%)
Total Accidents	52	43	35				
Fatal	8	3	3	EQUIPMENT TYPE			
Non-fatal	44	40	32	Rifles	17 (33%)	15 (35%)	13 (37%)
				Shotguns	28 (54%)	23 (53%)	19 (54%)
ANIMAL HUNTED				Handguns	6 (11%)	5 (12%)	3 (09%)
Dove	15 (29%)	13 (30%)	11 (31%)	Muzzleloader	1 (02%)	0	
White-tailed Deer	8 (15%)	9 (21%)	8 (22%)	Bow	0	0	
Rabbit/Hare	7 (13%)	4 (10%)	2 (06%)	TOTAL	52 (100%)	43(100%)	35(100%)
Feral Hog	4 (08%)	6 (14%)	2 (06%)	SHOOTER'S AGE			
Quail/Pheas/ Chukar	7 (13%)	1 (02%)	3 (09%)	0-9		1 (02%)	1 (03%)
Turkey	2 (04%)	2 (05%)	4 (11%)	10-19 (0-19 in 1999, 2000)	18 (35%)	16 (38%)	8 (22%)
Ducks/Geese	3 (06%)	0	1 (03%)	20-29	9 (17%)	6 (14%)	8 (22%)
Coyote	3 (06%)	1 (02%)	0	30-39	7 (13%)	3 (07%)	1 (03%)
Squirrel	1 (02%)	1 (02%)	1 (03%)	40-49	8 (15%)	4 (10%)	10 (29%)
Miscellaneous	2 (04%)	6 (14%)	3 (09%)	50-59	5 (10%)	5 (11%)	2 (06%)
TOTAL	52(100%)	43(100%)	35 (100%)	60 & over	3 (06%)	3 (07%)	2 (06%)
HUNTER JUDGMENT				Unknown	2 (04%)	5 (11%)	3 (09%)
Victim out of sight of shooter/moved into line of fire	6	8	5	TOTAL	52 (100%)	43(100%)	35(100%)
Victim covered by shooter swinging on game	16	8	11	MISCELLANEOUS			
Victim mistaken for game	2	3	3	Obstruction in Barrel	1	0	1
TOTAL	24	19	20	Ricochet	1	0	1
SAFETY & LAW VIOLATION				TOTAL	2	0	2
Removing/placing firearm in vehicle or stand	0	1	2	SKILL AND APTITUDE			
Discharge of firearm in vehicle	2	8	3	Trigger caught on object	0	1	1
Running/walking with a loaded firearm	0	0	0	Loading/unloading firearm	2	0	0
Firearm fell from insecure rest/Using firearm as a club	0	0	1	Careless handling	18	9	6
TOTAL	2	9	5	Dropped firearm	3	4	0
SHOOTERS HAD HUNTER ED.				Shooter stumbled and fell	1	1	1
	11(22%)	10 (23%)	12 (34%)	TOTAL	24	15	8
				SELF-INFLICTED	22 (42%)	15 (35%)	11 (31%)

ALCOHOL A FACTOR

1 (02%)

1 (02%)

1 (03%)

Hunting Accident Report Non-Firearm Related

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

Type	Total	Fatal?	Comments
Drowning	1	Yes	Hunter was hunting hogs using dogs and slipped off a 10-ft. embankment into a river and drowned

Shooting Accidents 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.

Type	Total	Fatal?	Comments
Target practice/plinking	1	No	Careless handling of shotgun while target practicing and plinking; slipped and fell down an embankment
Holstering handgun	1	No	Careless handling; improper holstering of handgun; loaded handgun while playing with hammer/trigger.
Loaded handgun in vehicle/domicile	2	No	Careless handling of a handgun while inside a vehicle; improper handling of a concealed carry handgun while undressing.

FATAL ACCIDENTS

Date	County	Shooter's Age/Gender	Firearm	Animal Hunted	Self-Inflicted	Hunter Ed. Graduate? (Shooter)
7-19	Baylor	20/M	Handgun	Rabbit	No	Yes
<i>Comments:</i>	Driver of vehicle carelessly passed loaded handgun across front seat of vehicle to person holding a spotlight and discharged the .22 cal. Handgun. Bullet killed person sitting in middle of the front seat.					
<i>Prevention:</i>	Never carry a loaded firearm in a vehicle and/or hunt from a vehicle; always point muzzle in a safe direction; use proper transporting techniques.					
11-30	Shelby	24/M	Rifle	Deer	No	Yes
<i>Comments:</i>	Shooter carelessly mistook victim and his son for a deer. It was past sunset in dim light.					
<i>Prevention:</i>	Always point muzzle in safe direction; always be absolutely sure of target before raising the firearm; always carry binoculars; hunt only during times where it is well enough to see.					
12-29	Coleman	48/M	Rifle	Deer	Yes	No
<i>Comments:</i>	Shooter was found dead outside of his blind from a bullet wound to the chest. Investigation showed that shooter carelessly discharged the rifle while exiting from the blind.					
<i>Prevention:</i>	Always point muzzle in a safe direction; always unload prior to entering/exiting a blind; use proper carry techniques; hunt with a companion and/or tell a responsible adult where and when the hunt is planned					

NON-FATAL ACCIDENTS

Date	County	Shooter's Age/Gender	Firearm	Animal Hunted	Self-Inflicted	Hunter Ed. Graduate? (Shooter)
1-5	Comanche	54/M	Shotgun	Dove	No	No
<i>Comments:</i>	Victim covered by shooter swinging on game.					
<i>Prevention:</i>	Always stay within a safe zone of fire; communicate with hunting companions; know where others are positioned at all times.					
1-12	Fort Bend	18/M	Shotgun	Waterfowl	No	Yes
<i>Comments:</i>	Shooter rose up to shoot at geese, but did not fire. He then carelessly discharged the shotgun as he laid it down with the muzzle pointed towards the victim. The firearm's trigger guard had been removed leaving the trigger exposed. Against the landowner's wishes, one of the hunters knowingly invited too many people on the hunt.					
<i>Prevention:</i>	Always point the firearm in a safe direction; always control the direction of the firearm and never lay it in dirt or unstable surface; try to use a two-handed carry when sitting in a dirt pit; always follow directions of the landowner.					
1-25	Hood	25/F	Handgun	Opossum	Yes	No
<i>Comments:</i>	Shooter was going to shoot a 'nuisance' opossum in her back yard and carelessly shot herself in the thigh. She claims to have tripped and fell causing the gun to discharge.					
<i>Prevention:</i>	Always point the firearm in a safe direction; use proper carry techniques; keep fingers outside the trigger guard until ready to fire; do not practice shooting/plinking at wildlife; obey all hunting laws.					

Date	County	Shooter's Age/Gender	Firearm	Animal Hunted	Self-Inflicted	Hunter Ed. Graduate? (Shooter)
2-16	La Salle	44/M	Shotgun	Quail	No	Yes
<i>Comments:</i>	Victim covered by shooter swinging on game. Pellets struck victim in torso and both legs. Victim was wearing a hunter orange cap.					
<i>Prevention:</i>	Always stay within a safe zone of fire; communicate with hunting companions; know where others are positioned at all times; wear blaze orange vests and caps to be seen while hunting upland birds.					
3-6	Llano	70/M	Shotgun	Quail	No	No
<i>Comments:</i>	Victim covered by shooter swinging on game.					
<i>Prevention:</i>	Always stay within a safe zone of fire; communicate with hunting companions; know where others are positioned at all times; wear blaze orange vests and caps to be seen while hunting upland birds.					
3-16	Coryell	17/M	Rifle	Non-game bird	Yes	No
<i>Comments:</i>	Shooter was chasing bird with loaded .22cal rifle and carelessly shot himself in the tip of his left index finger. He claims to have tripped and fell causing the gun to discharge.					
<i>Prevention:</i>	Always point firearm in a safe direction; use proper carry techniques; keep fingers outside trigger guard until ready to fire; do not practice shooting/plinking at wildlife; obey all hunting laws and take only those species that are legal and that will be eaten or used responsibly.					
4-14	Comanche	15/M	Rifle	Turkey	No	No
<i>Comments:</i>	Shooter illegally and carelessly shot his .22 cal. rifle at turkeys near a hunter's blind across a fence line. Second shot sent shrapnel from the bullet into face of the hunter sitting in the blind.					
<i>Prevention:</i>	Always point muzzle in safe direction; always be absolutely sure of target before raising the firearm; obey all 'no trespassing' and hunting laws.					
4-14	Potter	16/M	Rifle	Turkey	No	Yes
<i>Comments:</i>	Shooter carelessly mistook victim for a calling turkey at 100 yards and fired his 6 mm rifle, striking the victim in the abdomen.					
<i>Prevention:</i>	Always point muzzle in safe direction; always be absolutely sure of target before raising the firearm; always carry binoculars; if hunting turkeys from a stand or blind, place blaze orange nearby to be seen.					
8-1	Reagan	17/M	Rifle	Rabbit	Yes	No
<i>Comments:</i>	Shooter carelessly discharged rifle from within a vehicle. Bullet struck him in his calf. Shooter did not have a hunting license nor complete hunter education.					
<i>Prevention:</i>	Never carry a loaded firearm in a vehicle and/or hunt from a vehicle; always point muzzle in a safe direction; use proper transporting techniques; obey hunting laws; attend a hunter education course to learn about safe, legal and responsible hunting practices.					
9-1	McCulloch	48/M	Shotgun	Dove	No	Yes
<i>Comments:</i>	Victim covered by shooter swinging on game.					
<i>Prevention:</i>	Always stay within a safe zone of fire; communicate with hunting companions; know where others are positioned at all times.					
9-1	Jack	UNK	Shotgun	Dove	No	UNK

Comments: Victim covered by multiple shooters swinging on game and was struck by pellets in arm/nose.
Prevention: Always stay within a safe zone of fire; communicate with hunting companions; know where others are positioned at all times; spread out to one dove hunter every 300 yards if possible.

Date	County	Shooter's Age/Gender	Firearm	Animal Hunted	Self-Inflicted	Hunter Ed. Graduate? (Shooter)
9-1	Throckmorton	UNK	Shotgun	Dove	No	UNK
<i>Comments:</i>	Victim covered by multiple shooters swinging on game and was struck by one pellet in the eye.					
<i>Prevention:</i>	Always stay within a safe zone of fire; communicate with hunting companions; know where others are positioned at all times; spread out to one dove hunter every 300 yards if possible.					
9-1	Coleman	42/M	Shotgun	Dove	No	Yes
<i>Comments:</i>	Victim was struck by one pellet from a shooter swinging on game. Shooter was hunting within 300 yards of a nursing home and the victim was an employee out of the building taking a break.					
<i>Prevention:</i>	Always stay within a safe zone of fire; know where others are positioned at all times; never hunt within 300 yards of a building or stick to a safe zone of fire that is pointed away from domiciles.					
9-1	Shackelford	54/M	Shotgun	Dove	No	No
<i>Comments:</i>	Victim covered by shooter swinging on game.					
<i>Prevention:</i>	Always stay within a safe zone of fire; communicate with hunting companions; know where others are positioned at all times.					
9-2	Dickens	46/M	Shotgun	Dove	No	Yes
<i>Comments:</i>	Victim was on the other side of a dam from a shooter swinging on game.					
<i>Prevention:</i>	Always stay within a safe zone of fire; communicate with hunting companions; know where others are positioned at all times.					
9-6	Brown	17/M	Shotgun	Dove	Yes	No
<i>Comments:</i>	Victim carelessly discharged a loaded shotgun while pointing it towards his feet.					
<i>Prevention:</i>	Always point firearm in a safe direction; use proper carry methods and keep finger out of trigger guard/off the trigger until you are ready to fire; attend a hunter education course, as prescribed by law, to learn about safe, legal and responsible hunting practices.					
9-20	Kinney	UNK	Shotgun	Dove	No	UNK
<i>Comments:</i>	Victim covered by multiple shooters swinging on game and was struck by one pellet in the eye.					
<i>Prevention:</i>	Always stay within a safe zone of fire; communicate with hunting companions; know where others are positioned at all times; spread out to one dove hunter every 300 yards if possible.					
9-22	La Salle	48/M	Shotgun	Dove	No	No
<i>Comments:</i>	Victim was hiding in some cactus and was covered by shooter swinging on game.					
<i>Prevention:</i>	Always stay within a safe zone of fire; communicate with hunting companions; know where others are positioned at all times.					
9-22	Gillespie	15/M	Shotgun	Dove	No	No
<i>Comments:</i>	Shooter careless discharged shotgun as he was picking up gear getting ready to leave. Pellets struck fellow hunter in the arm.					
<i>Prevention:</i>	Always point firearm in a safe direction; use proper carry methods and keep finger out of trigger guard/off the trigger until you are ready to fire; attend a hunter education course, as prescribed by law, to learn about safe, legal and responsible hunting practices.					
10-19	Dickens	27/M	Rifle	Hog	No	Yes – NM

Comments: Shooter had a loaded firearm in a vehicle and was getting out from the back seat when he carelessly discharged his .25-06 rifle. The bullet ricocheted and struck the victim who was the driver. Shooter and victim were hunting without licenses.

Prevention: Never carry a loaded firearm in a vehicle and/or hunt from a vehicle; always point muzzle in a safe direction; use proper transporting techniques; obey all hunting laws.

Date	County	Shooter's Age/Gender	Firearm	Animal Hunted	Self-Inflicted	Hunter Ed. Graduate? (Shooter)
11-9	Austin	23/M	Shotgun	Quail/Chukar	No	Yes
<i>Comments:</i>	Victim covered by shooter swinging on game.					
<i>Prevention:</i>	Always stay within a safe zone of fire; communicate with hunting companions; know where others are positioned at all times.					
11-16	Concho	49/M	Rifle	Turkey	No	No
<i>Comments:</i>	Victim was out of sight of shooter who was shooting his .270 caliber rifle at a turkey. Victim was recovering a downed bird and was out of his location/blind about 200 yards from shooter.					
<i>Prevention:</i>	Always stay within your safe zone of fire; communicate with your hunting companions and know where they are located at all times; set up hunting blinds to prevent shots from outside a safe zone of fire; use appropriate firearm/ammunition size for the type of game hunted.					
11-16	Lavaca	27/M	Shotgun	Armadillo	Yes	No
<i>Comments:</i>	Shooter careless discharged shotgun while checking the safety mechanism. An obstruction in the barrel caused a small piece of the muzzle to lodge in the shooter's ankle. Shooter was apparently intoxicated, did not have a hunting license nor completed hunter education.					
<i>Prevention:</i>	Always point firearm in a safe direction; use proper carry techniques; keep fingers outside trigger guard until ready to fire; do not practice shooting/plinking at wildlife; obey all hunting laws and take only those species that are legal and that will be eaten or used responsibly; avoid alcohol before and during hunting; attend a hunter education course to learn about safe, legal and responsible hunting practices; attend a hunter education course to learn about safe, legal and responsible hunting practices..					
11-23	Harrison	23/M	Rifle	Deer	Yes	No
<i>Comments:</i>	Victim carelessly discharged his loaded .30-06 rifle while pointing it towards his feet. Shooter had not completed hunter education as required.					
<i>Prevention:</i>	Always point firearm in a safe direction; use proper carry methods and keep finger out of trigger guard/off the trigger until you are ready to fire; attend a hunter education course, as prescribed by law, to learn about safe, legal and responsible hunting practices.					
11-24	Hill	28/M	Shotgun	Deer	No	Yes
<i>Comments:</i>	Victim and another hunter were crossing a field and were mistaken for game by the shooter who thought he was seeing a buck and doe. Shotgun slug struck victim in shoulder.					
<i>Prevention:</i>	Always point muzzle in safe direction; always be absolutely sure of target before raising the firearm; always carry binoculars; hunt only during times where it is well enough to see.					
11-24	Tyler	6/M	Shotgun	Squirrel	No	No
<i>Comments:</i>	Ten-year old victim laid the .410 shotgun next to six-year old who consequently pretended to be a hunter and pulled the trigger. The shot hit the victim in the arm.					
<i>Prevention:</i>	Always point the muzzle in a safe direction; never allow children to hunt or shoot in an unsupervised setting; firearms should be unloaded as soon as the hunt ends; attend a hunter education course to learn about safe, legal and responsible hunting practices.					

11-28	Cottle	45/M	Rifle	Hog	Yes/No	No
<i>Comments:</i>	Shooter laid his loaded rifle down in a group of seven hunters wrestling to dispatch a hog; in the melee, the gun discharged sending a bullet through shooter's leg and through the ankle of a second victim.					
<i>Prevention:</i>	Always point the muzzle in a safe direction; always maintain control of a firearm and carry it in a proper position, never use a firearm as a club or try to handle other duties while handling firearms; unload a firearm when not in use; attend a hunter education course to learn about safe, legal and responsible hunting practices.					

Date	County	Shooter's Age/Gender	Firearm	Animal Hunted	Self-Inflicted	Hunter Ed. Graduate? (Shooter)
12-8	Guadalupe	16/M	Shotgun	Turkey	No	No
<i>Comments:</i>	Shooter swung shotgun out of his safe zone of fire and shot just as victim stood up in front of the gun. The two were on the ground next to each other.					
<i>Prevention:</i>	Always point the muzzle in a safe direction; always be absolutely sure of the target and what is in front/behind before raising the firearm; always stay within a safe zone of fire; communicate with hunting companions; know where others are positioned at all times.					
12-8	Sabine	40/M	Rifle	Deer	Yes	No
<i>Comments:</i>	Victim carelessly discharged a loaded firearm while climbing into a stand.					
<i>Prevention:</i>	Always unload before entering/exiting a stand or blind; Use a hauling line; always point the muzzle in a safe direction; properly anchor and/or carry a firearm; attend hunter education and use it as a tool to learn/teach safe handling skills					
12-27	Grayson	45/M	Handgun	Deer	Yes	No
<i>Comments:</i>	Victim was illegally hunting in an archery-only county with a shotgun and handgun. He carelessly discharged his handgun while in heavy cover. The bullet went through his foot.					
<i>Prevention:</i>	Always point the muzzle in a safe direction; carry handgun in a proper holster, unloaded over the chamber; obey all hunting laws; ; attend hunter education and use it as a tool to learn/teach safe handling skills.					
12-27	Kerr	68/M	Rifle	Deer	Yes	Yes-FL
<i>Comments:</i>	Victim exited a deer blind carrying a rifle and a loaded handgun in his holster. He carelessly discharged his handgun, and the bullet entered his thigh, exited above the ankle.					
<i>Prevention:</i>	Always point the muzzle in a safe direction; carry handgun in a proper holster, unloaded over the chamber; actively practice safety principles that are learned in hunter education					
12-29	Duval	30/M	Rifle	Deer	No	No
<i>Comments:</i>	Victim was in a stand about 60 yards from shooter who fired at hogs in the same direction as the victim's stand. The bullet entered the victim's thigh. The victim had not purchased a hunting license nor completed hunter education.					
<i>Prevention:</i>	Always stay within your safe zone of fire; communicate with your hunting companions and know where they are located at all times; set up hunting blinds to prevent shots from outside a safe zone of fire; know what is beyond your line of sight; obey all hunting laws including the hunter education requirement (<i>all those born on or after 9-2-71</i>).					