



STATE SAFETY OFFICE
HEADQUARTERS, NEW YORK ARMY NATIONAL GUARD
330 OLD NISKAYUNA ROAD
LATHAM, NEW YORK 12110



SAFETY MESSAGE 22-09

Hunting From Tree Stands Safely

Hunting From Tree Stands

Every year, hunters are seriously injured, paralyzed, or killed falling out of tree stands. Falls from tree stands have become a major cause of hunting-related injuries and fatalities in New York.

In 2020, DEC investigated 13 tree stand incidents. One of the incidents was fatal. All 13 incidents involved a hunter who was not wearing a harness or the harness was not attached to the stand or the tree at the time of their fall. The proper use of tree stands, full-body harnesses, and lifelines will help to prevent these injuries and fatalities.

Tree Stand Safety Tips

- Read the manufacturer's instructions and warnings before you use your tree stand and check your stands (including straps and chains) every season. Replace any worn or missing parts.
- Use a full-body harness with a lifeline and stay connected from the time you leave the ground to the time you get back down.
- Be aware of suspension trauma. Be sure the harness has a foot strap to relieve harness leg pressure.
- Use a "lifeline" or safety rope that is secured at the base of the tree or stand and to the tree just above your head when sitting in the stand. Attach the tether from your full-body harness to the lifeline using a carabiner and prusik knot, which easily slides up and down the lifeline, keeping you connected at all times.
- Once you are safely in your stand, and your tether is attached to the tree, raise your equipment into your stand. Always use a haul line, such as a strong rope, to raise and lower your unloaded gun or cocked crossbow or bow with quiver up the stand. Do not

tie the haul line around the trigger or trigger guard on a firearm. Raise a firearm with the muzzle pointing down.

- Let a reliable person know where you will be hunting and when you will return. A map showing your stand location makes it easier for others to find you if you do not return on time.
- Carry emergency equipment, such as a knife, cell phone, flashlight, and whistle in your pockets at all times (not in your pack hanging in the tree).

(<https://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/7860.html>)

Additional Hunter Safety and Education can be found here: [Hunter Education Program - NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation](#)

To find previously published Safety Messages go to our NYARNG Safety Website:
<http://dmna.ny.gov/safety/>

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