

ELEVATED HUNTING INCIDENTS

2020



Department of
Environmental
Conservation

	2018	2019	2020
Total Incidents	5	7	13
Fatal -no full-body harness	0	0	1
Fatal -w/ harness but not attached to tree	0	0	0
Fatal -w/ harness attached to tree	0	0	0
Non-fatal -no full body harness	5	5	10
Non-fatal -w/ harness but not attached to tree	0	2	2
Non-fatal-w/ harness attached to tree	0	0	0
Type of Stand			
Climbing tree stand	1	2	4
Hang-on tree stand	0	2	2
Ladder stand	1	1	7
Tower/tri-pod stand	0	0	0
Home-made tree stand	3	2	0

2020 figures are completed from preliminary reports. Hunters are not required to report EHIs, so this report may not capture all incidents that occurred statewide in New York. DEC began tracking EHIs in 2017.

New York is among many other states that have drastically reduced deaths during firearms seasons due to a hunter safety curriculum that stresses firearm safety. Recently however, deaths from tree stand and elevated stand falls have begun to increase.

A study completed in Wisconsin found that 84% of firearm hunters and 91% of archery hunters used elevated stands. Of those, only 33% of archery hunters and 23% of firearm hunters used safety harnesses.

Tree stand safety has become a regular part of the hunter education course required of first-time hunters in New York. Elevated hunting incidents are becoming a major cause of hunting related injuries. The proper use of elevated stands, and tree stand safety equipment, will help to prevent these injuries and fatalities.

FOLLOW THE ABC'S OF TREE STAND SAFETY:

Always remove and inspect your tree stand before use

Buckle on your full body harness securely every time

Connect to the tree before your feet leave the ground

Description of elevated hunting incidents:

Thanks to our Environmental Conservation Officers for thorough investigations of each incident.

FORMAT FOR 2020 DESCRIPTIONS:

Date (mm/dd) -followed by County and a brief description based on initial report.

09/4 -Livingston. No harness. Hang-on stand. Ratchet strap broke while setting up stand for the season. Victim sustained lower back injury. Age 65. Hunting experience: 45 yrs.

10/2 -Rensselaer. No harness. Climbing tree stand. Strap on the tree stand broke when victim attempted to shoot a deer. Victim broke his femur, back and ribs. Age 60. Hunting experience: 40 yrs.

10/4 - Erie. Harness. Climbing tree stand. Tree cable released due to a faulty safety latch and safety harness failed, dropping victim 15'. Victim sustained several internal injuries, required a life flight, and was put into a medically induced coma to recover. Age 46. Hunting experience: 25 yrs.

10/13 - Oneida. No harness. Climbing tree stand. Platform strap broke, equipment was in poor shape. Victim broke his pelvis and ribs. Age 54. Hunting experience: unknown.

11/13 - Orleans. No harness. Ladder stand. Fell while removing the stand. No injuries. Age 73. Hunting experience: 60 yrs.

11/15 - Orleans. No harness. Ladder stand. Victim was attempting to remove stand and the stand fell with him in it when he released the ratchet strap. Victim broke his collar bone and knee. Age 75. Hunting experience: 20 yrs.

11/19 - Wayne. No harness. Hang-on stand. Victim fell while installing screw in steps and broke his ankle. Age 43. Hunting experience: 30 years.

11/21 - Cattaraugus. No harness. Ladder stand. Victim fell asleep and fell out of stand, breaking a rib and puncturing a lung. Age 65. Hunting experience: 47 years.

11/23 – Cayuga. No harness. Ladder stand. Tree stand strap broke while victim was ascending. Victim dislocated his hip. Age 50. Hunting experience: 39 years.

11/24 - Orange. Fatal. No harness. Ladder stand. Victim fell 14' while descending and landed on his head, breaking his neck and several vertebrae. Age 50. Hunting experience: 37 years.

11/27 – Genessee. No harness. Ladder stand. Victim fell after unstrapping the stand in order to relocate it. Victim sustained a laceration to his thumb. Age 30. Hunting experience: 15 years.

12/4 – Wayne. Harness. Climbing tree stand. Victim fell while descending, injuring his ankle. Harness was not attached to the tree. Age 33. Hunting experience: 20 years.

12/12 – Hamilton. No harness. Ladder stand. Victim fell out of the stand while taking it down, injuring his back. Age 60. Hunting experience: 50 years.

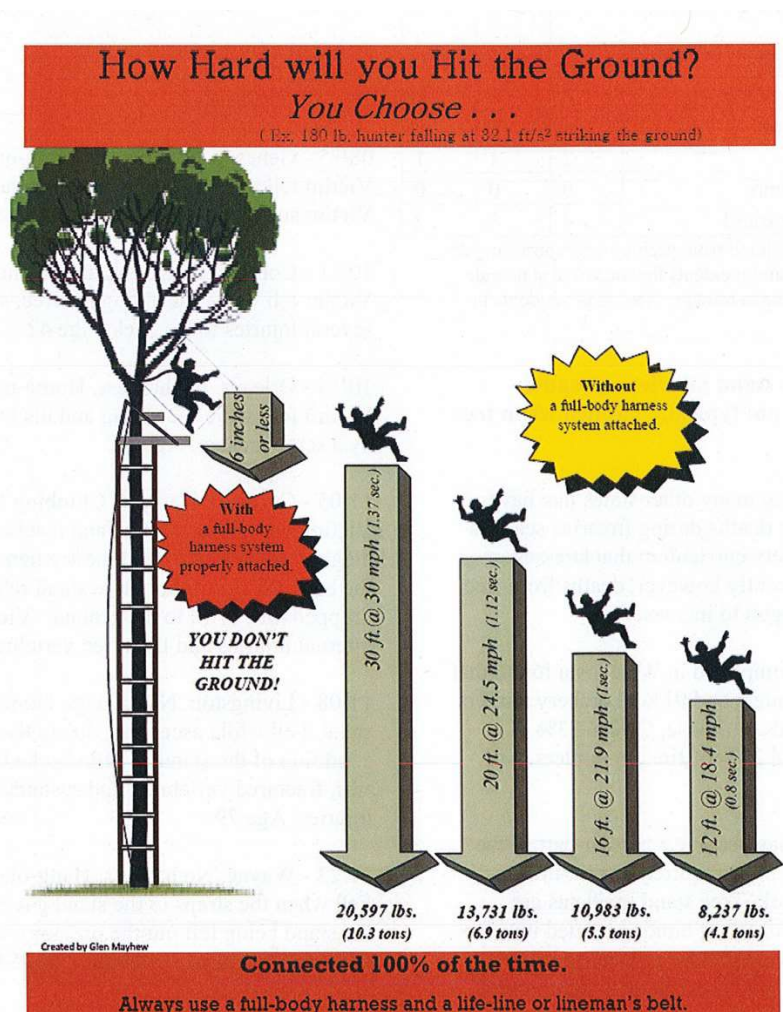


Image created by Glen Mayhew and provided by the Tree Stand Safety Awareness

Join New York's Instructor Team!

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