

ELEVATED HUNTING INCIDENTS

2021



Department of
Environmental
Conservation

	2018	2019	2020	2021
Total Incidents	5	7	13	10
Fatal - no full-body harness	0	0	1	1
Fatal w/ harness but not attached to tree	0	0	0	0
Fatal w/ harness attached to tree	0	0	0	0
Non-fatal - no full body harness	5	5	10	8
Non-fatal w/ harness but not attached to tree	0	2	2	1
Non-fatal w/ harness attached to tree	0	0	0	0
Type of Stand				
Climbing tree stand	1	2	4	1
Hang-on tree stand	0	2	2	2
Ladder stand	1	1	7	6
Tower/tri-pod stand	0	0	0	0
Homemade tree stand	3	2	0	1
Saddle tree stand	0	0	0	0

2021 figures are completed from preliminary reports and do not capture all elevated hunting incidents occurring statewide in New York. DEC began tracking these incidents in 2017. It is important to note that not all elevated hunting incidents are reported to DEC.

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. Tree stand incidents are a major cause of hunting-related injuries. The proper use of tree stands, and tree stand safety equipment, will help to prevent injuries and fatalities.

Stay connected from the time you leave the ground until the time you get back down!

FOLLOW THE ABC'S OF TREE STAND SAFETY:

Always inspect your tree stand before every 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:

FORMAT FOR 2021 DESCRIPTIONS:

Date (mm/dd) - County - If the hunter was wearing a harness - Type of stand - A brief description of the incident - Age of the hunter - Years of hunting experience

Fatalities are listed in red.

9/28 - Warren. Harness: No. Stand: Hang-on. Victim went into cardiac arrest, fell from his stand, and died of his injuries. Age: 58. Hunting experience: 44 yrs.

10/1 - Allegany. Harness: No. Stand: Climbing. Cable broke on lower platform causing victim to fall while ascending. Age: 22. Hunting experience: 9 yrs.

10/24 - Greene. Harness: No. Stand: Ladder. Victim fell from the stand suffering broken ribs and vertebrae. Age: 43. Hunting experience: 8 yrs.

11/07 - Franklin. Harness: No. Stand: Ladder. Victim suffered a broken ankle after falling from the unsecured stand. Age: 24. Hunting experience: 16 yrs.

11/11 - Sullivan. Harness: No. Stand: Homemade. Victim fell while constructing a roof on a wood-framed tree stand. Victim sustained a broken clavicle, broken hip, and bruised ribs. Age: 73. Hunting experience: 50 yrs.

11/13 - Ontario. Harness: No. Stand: Ladder. Victim fell from ladder while descending sustaining a neck injury. Age: 88. Hunting experience: 28 yrs.

11/15 - Cayuga. Harness: Yes, but not attached to tree. Stand: Hang-on. Victim fell after getting into the stand but before hooking up his safety harness. Age: 47. Hunting experience: 30 years.

11/17 - Monroe. Harness: No. Stand: Ladder. Victim fell from ladder while descending sustaining a shoulder injury. Age: 67. Hunting experience: 50 years.

12/4 - Cayuga. Harness: No. Stand: Ladder. Victim fell asleep while in a ladder stand and fell 15' to the ground. Age: 32. Hunting experience: 16 years.

12/10 - Erie. Harness: No. Stand: Ladder. Victim fell while exiting stand, fracturing his wrist. Age: 85. Hunting experience: 50 years.

Tree Stand "Best Practices"

Read the manufacturer's instructions and warnings before you use your stand.

Check your stand (including straps and chains) every season and replace worn or missing parts.

Do not leave your stand up all year.

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 someone 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).

Join New York's Instructor Team!

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation | Hunter Education

625 Broadway, Albany, NY 12233-4800

Phone Toll-Free: 1-888-HUNT-ED2 | Law Enforcement Toll-free 24-hour ECO Dispatch: 1-877-457-5680

www.dec.ny.gov | <http://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/7860.html>

How Hard will you Hit the Ground?

You Choose . . .

(Ex: 180 lb. hunter falling at 32.1 ft/s² striking the ground)

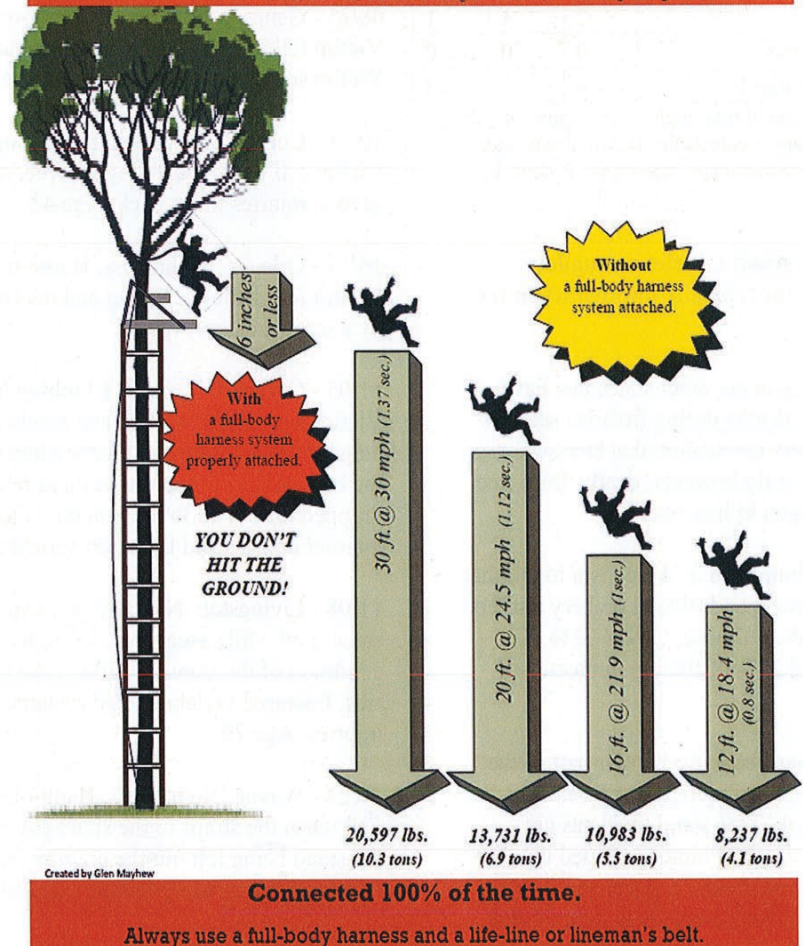


Image created by Glen Mayhew and provided by the Tree Stand Safety Awareness Foundation

