Tagging Big Game and Furbearers

Immediately after killing a deer, bear, elk or turkey, you must validate your kill tag and fasten it to the antler, lower jaw or lower leg in such a manner that the tag remains securely attached to the animal. Make sure the kill tag is completely legible and visible for inspection. It is unlawful to tag an animal you did not legally kill. The kill tag must remain attached until you process or butcher the animal, or the animal is accepted for processing and recorded by a commercial processor or taxidermist.

Note: If the antlers or head are returned to the person submitting the animal to the commercial processor, the kill tag shall accompany the head or antlers.

Immediately after taking a bobcat, otter, fisher or marten, you must validate your kill tag and fasten it in such a manner that the tag remains securely attached to the animal. For details on furbearer kill tags and proper placement, see page 38. Make sure the kill tag is completely legible and visible for inspection. It is unlawful to tag an animal you did not legally kill.

Transportation of Game

You may transport your own and another person's lawfully taken game. You cannot destroy the identity or evidence of the sex of any bird or animal, except for processed or butchered deer, bear and elk as noted below. If you are transporting migratory birds, one fully feathered wing must be left on the bird. If transporting another person's migratory birds, they must be tagged with the person's name, signature and home address, and the number of birds by species, dates of kill and small game license number.

If you butcher your deer, elk or bear, or have the animal butchered by a commercial processor before going home, the head of the animal along with the kill tag or seal must accompany the butchered animal during transport.

Exception: If you submit the head for TB or CWD testing, you must have the kill tag and disease tag receipt in your possession. Nonresidents may need to comply with restrictions in other states for importing game taken in Michigan.

Information for Hunters with Disabilities

Information and applications for all of the following are available at DNR Operations Service Centers (see back cover).

Legally blind hunters may use laser sighting devices to take game, subject to all other regulations, with a firearm, bow or crossbow if all the following conditions are met:

- The person is accompanied by a sighted person who is at least 18 years of age;
- The sighted person possesses proof of a current or previous hunting license (other than an apprentice license) or proof of successful completion of a hunter safety class;
- The legally blind person possesses the appropriate hunting license and proof of impairment in the form of a Secretary of State ID card.

No permit is necessary for this accommodation.

Resident Veterans who are Disabled

A resident of Michigan who has been determined by the **U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs** to be permanently and totally disabled (for a disability other than blindness) is eligible to purchase senior hunting and trapping licenses from any license agent. A letter from the Veterans Administration stating the person is totally and permanently disabled and eligible for veterans benefits at the 100 percent rate is required.

Permits for Disabled Hunters

A person with a permanent minimum 80 percent disability, in combination or individual impairment, of a hand, elbow or shoulder, may apply for a **crossbow permit**.

A person with a permanent disability who has the full use of only one arm may apply for a **modified bow permit**. This permit allows modifications to a compound bow, including the addition of an overdraw lock device. This modification may not convert a compound bow into a crossbow. For more information, go to www.pcba-inc.org/.

A person who, due to injury, disease, amputation or paralysis, is permanently disabled and unable to walk and unable to enter and exit a vehicle, may apply for a permit to hunt from a standing vehicle. This permit allows a person to hunt, and shoot from, a parked motor vehicle or ORV. Subject to all other regulations, this permit also entitles the holder to take a deer of either sex under any valid deer license.

Persons issued permits to hunt from a standing vehicle may hunt deer on private lands with proper permission in a special season from Oct. 20-21, 2007.

Hunters with other permanent disabilities may apply for a permit to use a laser sighting device with a firearm, bow or crossbow to take game. Subject to all other regulations, a permittee may take game with the use of a laser sighting device only if accompanied by a person who is at least 18 years of age who is licensed to hunt the same game (other than an apprentice license).

Use of Ground Blinds on Public Land by Hunters with Disabilities

Any person who has been issued a permit to hunt from a standing vehicle, or who has been issued a disabled person parking permit by the Secretary of State, or who meets the disability standards set forth in the Michigan Off-Road Recreational Vehicle Law, may use a constructed ground blind on public land. If the constructed ground blind is left overnight on public land, the following conditions must be met:

- The blind is placed on public land no earlier then 10 days prior to the hunting season for which it is used and is removed at the end of the season for which it is used.
- The disabled person has attached, etched, engraved or painted their name and address on the blind.
- Fasteners, if used to anchor or attach the blind, cannot penetrate the bark of a tree and must be removed with the blind.
- A non-disabled person can assist a disabled person in constructing a legal blind on public land.

See note on page 34 for removal exemption on local public agency lands.

Wildlife Diseases

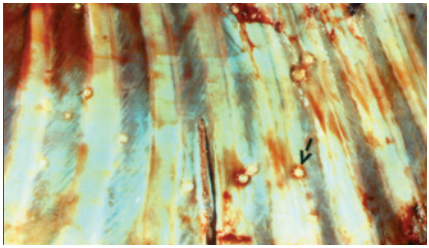
For additional information on wildlife diseases, contact the DNR Wildlife Disease Lab at 517-336-5030, or visit www.michigan.gov/emergingdiseases. Hunters may check their deer's or elk's CWD and TB lab results at this Web site or at www.michigan.gov/dnr (under "Hunting").

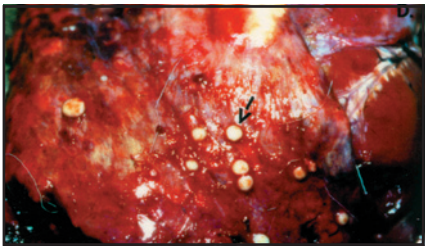
Bovine Tuberculosis

In 2006, bovine TB was found in 41 white-tailed deer from four counties in Michigan: Alcona, Alpena, Montmorency, and Oscoda. Statewide, 7,925 deer were tested. Since 1995, a total of 568 white-tailed deer have been found positive from 153,741 deer sampled.

The DNR is again urging hunters to submit their deer for free TB testing this fall if it was taken in Alcona, Alpena, Antrim, Charlevoix, Cheboygan, Crawford, Emmet, Iosco, Montmorency, Ogemaw, Oscoda, Otsego, Presque Isle and Roscommon counties. The list of deer check stations is available on the DNR Web site. A hunter can receive a replacement hunting license if their deer is positive for TB.

As a part of Michigan's strategy to eliminate tuberculosis in deer and elk, hunting regulations in a seven-county area, which includes Alcona, Alpena, Crawford, Montmorency, Oscoda, Otsego and Presque Isle counties, have been designed to reduce the deer population, which will help decrease possible transmission of the disease. Feeding and baiting is illegal in these counties.





Tuberculosis-infected deer may have multiple pea-sized tan or yellow lumps on the inside of the ribcage (left) or inside or on the lungs (right). The lesions may be different shapes and sizes than shown.

What Hunters Should Look for When Field Dressing Deer

Deer with severe TB may have tan or yellow lumps lining the chest wall and in the lung tissue. If you see a deer with this type of infection, contact the DNR so the carcass and viscera, in addition to the head, can be examined.

Hunters taking deer in any of the counties listed above should turn in the deer's head for testing whether these signs of infection are present or not. Only 40 percent of the TB positive deer had lesions in the chest cavity or lungs. (See photos above.)

Chronic Wasting Disease

Chronic wasting disease (CWD) is a disease of the nervous system that was first diagnosed at a research facility in Colorado in 1967. CWD has been diagnosed in captive and wild mule deer, white-tailed deer and elk. CWD in deer and elk is characterized by emaciation, drooling, behavioral abnormalities and death. Currently, there is no reliable live animal testing available for diagnosing CWD, nor is there a treatment available. According to public health officials, there is no evidence that CWD can be naturally transmitted to humans, or to animals other than deer and elk.

For more information, the CWD Alliance and its partner organizations have established a Web site for hunters to obtain scientifically accurate information regarding CWD, its impact on wildlife and recommendations for its control. See www.cwd-info.org.

Michigan is taking several steps to prevent the occurrence of CWD in the state:

- The importation of captive cervids has been banned.
- A contingency plan to manage CWD in the event of its discovery in Michigan has been developed by veterinarians and biologists.
- Hunters harvesting deer and elk in CWD states are restricted as to what game parts can be imported into Michigan.
- Michigan has been conducting CWD testing of deer and elk since 1998.

MI CWD Surveillance

A total of 21,205 deer, elk and moose have been tested for CWD in Michigan and all have tested negative.

The DNR conducts two types of surveillance:

- Targeted surveillance involves identifying and test free-ranging cervids statewide that have been observed as showing symptoms consistent with CWD. If a deer or elk is observed exhibiting signs of CWD, particularly behavioral changes such as incoordination and loss of fear, contact the DNR Wildlife Disease Lab at 517-336-5030 or the nearest DNR Operations Service Center. After hours, reports should be made to the DNR RAP line at 800-292-7800.
- Active surveillance is the testing of outwardly healthy cervids harvested by hunters. Deer heads will be tested from all 83 counties, with 10 per county tested from the Lower Peninsula and 20 per county tested from the Upper Peninsula.

Hunters Importing Deer or Elk

Hunters importing harvested free-ranging deer or elk from Colorado, Illinois, Kansas, Nebraska, New Mexico, New York, South Dakota, Utah, West Virginia, Wisconsin, Wyoming, Alberta or Saskatchewan are restricted to bringing into Michigan only deboned meat, antlers, antlers attached to a skull cap cleaned of all brain and muscle tissue, hides cleaned of excess tissue or blood, upper canine teeth or a finished taxidermic mount.

If you are notified by another state or province that a deer or elk you brought into Michigan tested positive for CWD, you must contact the DNR Wildlife Disease Lab within two business days (8 a.m. to 5 p.m.) at 517-336-5030 and provide details.

Any changes to importation regulations will be posted at www.michigan.gov/chronicwastingdisease. In addition, the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture may have regulations on importation from Canada. Contact them at 301-734-3277.

Although there is no evidence that CWD affects humans, the DNR advises hunters who take deer originating from states or provinces where CWD has been found, to take these safety precautions in addition to those listed on pages 18-19:

- ❑ Minimize handling brain or spinal cord tissues.
- ❑ Avoid consuming brain, spinal cord, eyes, spleen and lymph nodes of harvested animals.

Avian Influenza

What is avian influenza?

Birds carry many kinds of flu viruses, but recently a more serious type of influenza has developed. The technical name for this specific flu strain is Asian H5N1, but is commonly referred to as avian influenza (AI). This also is referred to as bird flu, avian flu, or highly pathogenic H5N1. Avian influenza began in Southeast Asia where wild birds and people acquired the disease from infected chickens. It also has spread to birds in other countries, but has not been found in North America.

How serious is avian influenza?

Most types of AI do not cause serious harm. However, the Asian H5N1 type of AI is deadly to poultry and some wild birds – but it rarely infects people. Health officials are concerned about the disease because flu viruses frequently change. Currently, birds and people can only get AI from infected birds. If AI or some other flu virus mutates (or changes) so that people could pass the disease between each other, it would be possible for it to spread to millions of people around the world, which is a pandemic. This mutation has not occurred and would be very unlikely; however, government officials want us to be prepared just in case.

Are bird hunters at risk?

The risk to bird hunters is very low, but scientists are not sure of the risk completely. Avian influenza has rarely infected humans. Those infected have generally contracted the virus from domestically raised birds, such as chickens. Transmission from wild birds has been an extremely rare occurrence. However, wild birds carry viruses that spread mainly through their droppings, so avoid contact with fresh bird droppings, handle birds cleanly, and thoroughly cook your birds. If you observe a die-off of six or more waterfowl, gulls, or shorebirds please contact your local DNR field office.

Precautions When Processing Wild Game

- ❑ Hunters should not handle or consume wild animals that appear sick or act abnormally, regardless of the cause.
- ❑ Always wear heavy rubber or latex gloves when field dressing wild game.
- ❑ If intestinal contents contact meat, consider the meat contaminated; cut off and discard affected area.
- ❑ Proper carcass care in the field is vital to preserving wild game. Big game animals should be field dressed immediately to cool the carcass and then hung by the head to allow the body cavity to drain thoroughly. In warm weather carcass cooling can be hastened and maintained with bags of ice. For big game animals, ice bags can be placed directly into the body cavity. Unlike venison, bear are marbled with fat and can spoil quickly at temperatures above 40 degrees. Venison can survive for several days at temperatures as high as 50 degrees as long as the carcass is kept out of the sun and protected from flies. Placing the carcass into a cheesecloth game bag or applying a liberal application of black pepper to the body cavity will discourage fly contamination.
- ❑ Wash hands with soap and water before and after handling meat. Sanitize equipment and work surfaces thoroughly.

Safety Practices When Cooking Wild Game

The Michigan Department of Community Health recommends proper food safety practices when cooking venison, as well as any other meat or poultry. Thoroughly cooking meat is important to reduce the likelihood of any bacterial disease. All meat, including venison, should be cooked until the meat is no longer pink and the juices run clear. If cooked according to the guidelines below, the likelihood of any disease transmission to individuals consuming this meat is extremely small.

- ❑ Use a meat thermometer to cook meat to proper internal temperatures (see chart), which helps ensure harmful bacteria are killed and meat is not overcooked. The color of meat is an unreliable indicator of doneness.
- ❑ For jerky, steam, boil or roast meat to 165°F using a meat thermometer prior to dehydrating. Dry at 130°-140°F until thoroughly dry. Jerky is properly dried when it cracks on bending but doesn't break.

For more information on venison field dressing, meat preparation and recipes, see the Michigan State University Extension publication, *Michigan Venison*.

Recommended Minimum Internal Cooking Temperature for Venison and Game Birds	
Type of meat	Temperature (°F)
Ground venison, sausage, bologna	165°
Fresh venison (chops, steaks, roasts)	165°
Game Birds/Waterfowl	
Breast	170°
Whole bird	180°