

Texas Hunting Accident Report 2021



TEXAS

PARKS &

WILDLIFE

TEXAS HUNTING ACCIDENT DATA (1966-2021)

* *Voluntary* * Hunter Education Program 1972-1987

Calendar Year	Fatalities	Non-Fatal	Accidents	Hunting Licenses Sold	Accidents/ 100,000 Licenses	Fatalities/ 100,000 Licenses	Students Certified
1966	28	53	81	644,653	12.6	4.3	-
1967	23	70	93	797,846	11.7	2.9	-
1968	37	68	105	854,693	12.3	4.3	-
1969	24	68	92	895,593	10.3	2.7	-
1970	19	53	72	935,793	7.7	2.0	-
1971	24	68	92	978,285	9.4	2.5	-
1972	30	55	85	966,332	8.8	3.1	2,119
1973	22	58	80	1,011,963	7.9	2.2	4,314
1974	16	52	68	1,037,925	6.6	1.5	6,094
1975	11	66	77	1,051,834	7.3	1.0	8,531
1976	11	52	63	1,050,349	6	1.0	10,043
1977	17	64	81	1,080,530	7.5	1.6	11,298
1978	20	63	83	1,091,794	7.6	1.8	10,890
1979	10	43	53	1,093,716	4.8	0.9	10,775
1980	13	56	69	1,160,375	5.9	1.1	12,166
1981	19	53	72	1,174,023	6.1	1.6	13,187
1982	23	74	97	1,216,032	8.0	1.9	13,323
1983	17	63	80	1,325,474	6.0	1.3	14,131
1984	21	39	60	1,140,174	5.3	1.8	13,052
1985	15	57	72	1,100,991	6.5	1.4	11,284
1986	13	55	68	1,162,785	5.8	1.1	11,195
1987	12	69	81	1,189,566	6.8	1.0	8,611
Voluntary	425	1299	1724	22,960,726	7.5	1.85	161,013



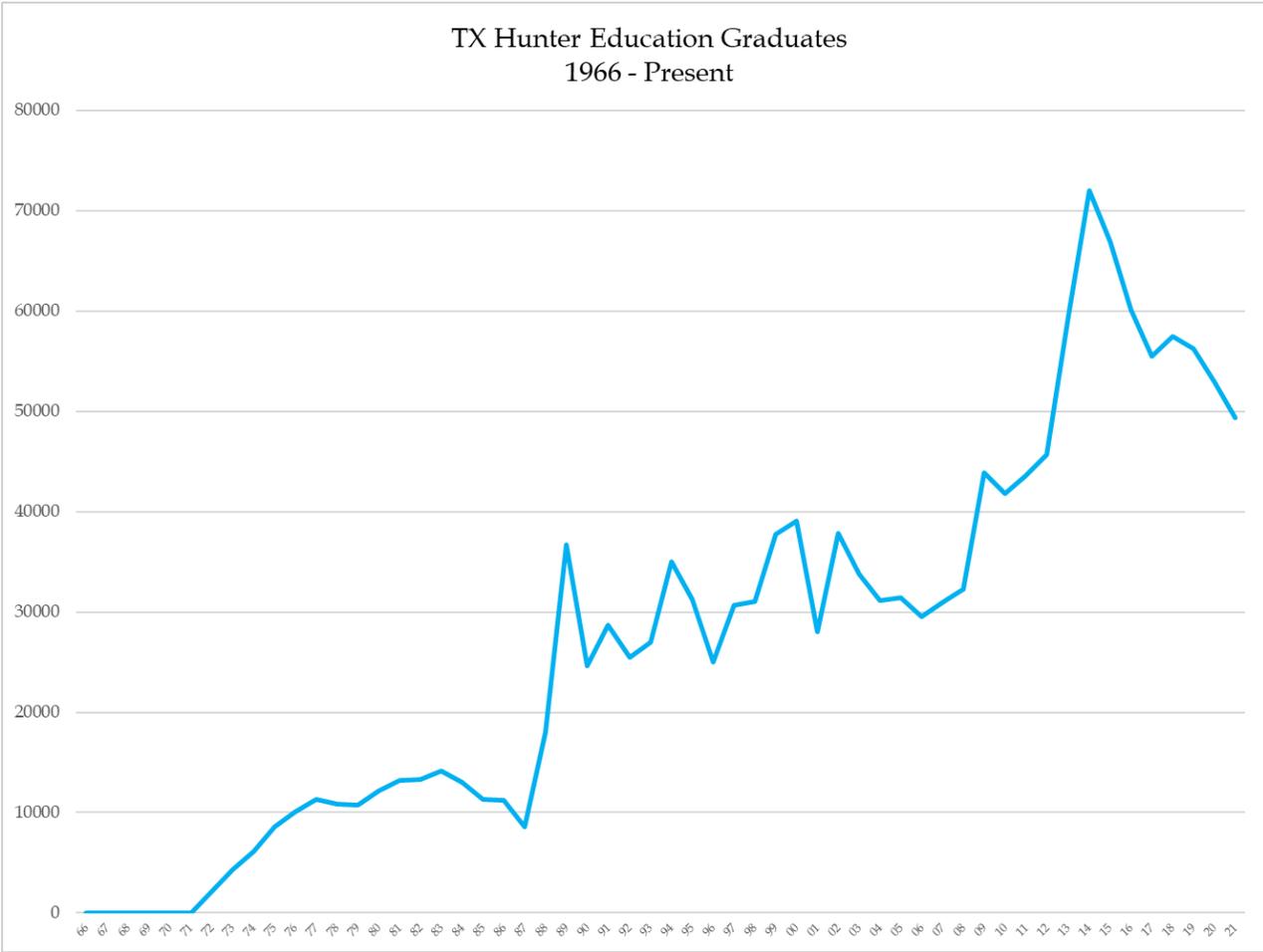
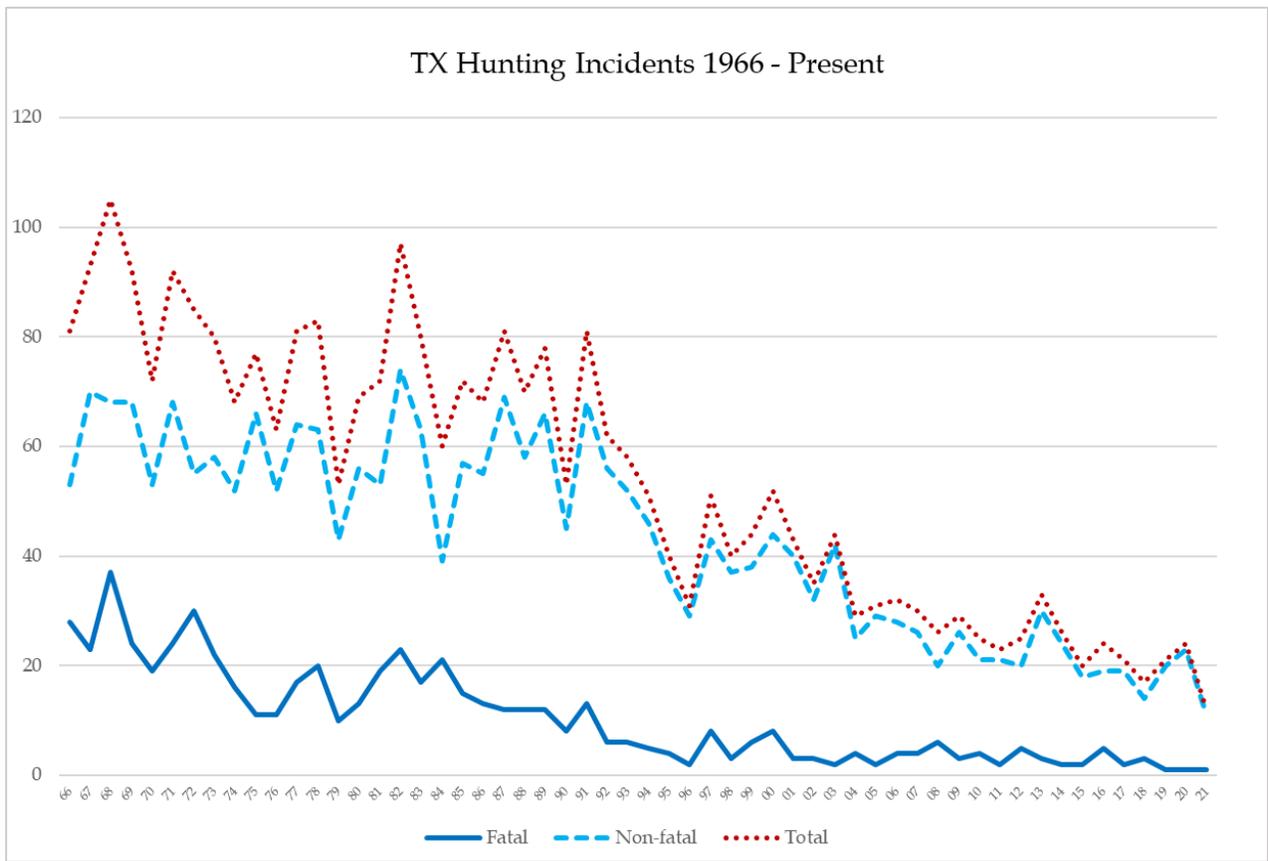
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* *Mandatory* * Hunter Education Program 1988 - Present

Calendar Year	Fatal	Non-Fatal	Accidents	Hunting Licenses Sold	Accidents/ 100,000 Licenses	Fatalities/ 100,000 Licenses	Students Certified	Deferrals Sold
1988	12	58	70	1,189,000	5.9	1.0	18,043	-
1989	12	66	78	1,193,000	6.5	1.0	36,708	-
1990	8	45	53	1,132,917	4.7	0.7	24,590	-
1991	13	68	81	1,103,903	7.3	1.2	28,682	-
1992	6	56	62	1,053,063	5.9	0.6	25,453	-
1993	6	52	58	1,077,055	5.4	0.6	26,942	-
1994	5	46	51	1,083,227	4.7	0.5	34,972	-
1995	4	36	40	1,060,000	3.8	0.4	31,215	-
1996	2	29	31	990,000	3.1	0.2	24,998	-
1997	8	43	51	960,000	5.3	0.8	30,625	-
1998	3	37	40	1,011,500	3.9	0.3	31,052	-
1999	6	38	44	1,010,455	4.3	0.6	37,775	-
2000	8	44	52	1,145,000	4.5	0.7	39,049	-
2001	3	40	43	1,076,159	4.0	0.3	28,062	-
2002	3	32	35	1,024,495	3.4	0.3	37,847	-
2003	2	42	44	1,082,225	4.1	0.2	33,769	-
2004	4	25	29	1,091,178	2.7	0.4	31,171	-
2005	2	29	31	1,082,593	2.9	0.2	31,442	-
2006	4	28	32	1,115,772	2.9	0.4	29,532	-
2007	4	26	30	1,112,099	2.7	0.4	30,960	-
2008	6	20	26	993,533	2.6	0.6	32,308	-
2009	3	26	29	1,011,936	2.9	0.3	43,880	12,545
2010	4	21	25	1,141,924	2.2	0.4	41,785	13,997
2011	2	21	23	1,165,248	2.0	0.2	43,645	15,101
2012	5	20	25	1,155,542	2.2	0.4	45,719	15,438
2013	3	30	33	1,227,025	2.7	0.2	59,597	17,257
2014	2	24	26	1,284,933	2.0	0.2	72,026	11,898
2015	2	18	20	1,259,259	1.6	0.2	66,961	14,025
2016	5	19	24	1,271,368	1.9	0.4	60,115	14,371
2017	2	19	21	1,248,450	1.7	0.2	55,507	12,113
2018	3	14	17	1,235,590	1.4	0.2	57,440	11,004
2019	1	20	21	1,244,526	1.7	0.1	56,209	9,036
2020	1	23	24	1,301,289	1.8	0.1	52,912	8,020
2021	1	11	12	1,239,466	1.0	0.1	49,370	6,754
Mandatory	154	1,127	1,281	38,373,730	3.3	0.40	1,351,896	161,559
TOTAL	579	2,426	3,005	61,334,456	4.90	0.94	1,512,909	161,559

- **HUNTING INCIDENT RATE (AVE.) DURING VOLUNTARY PROGRAM - 7.5 per 100,000 hunting licenses issued.**
- **HUNTING INCIDENT RATE (AVE.) DURING MANDATORY PROGRAM - 3.3 per 100,000 hunting licenses issued.**



Texas Hunting Accidents 2017 - 2021

* TYPE "A" Incidents - resulting from a discharge of a firearm or bow while hunting, which causes the injury or death of any person(s)

INCIDENTS	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Total	21	17	21	24	12
Fatal	2	3	1	1	1
Non-fatal	19	14	20	23	11

SHOOTER'S AGE					
0-9 yrs. of age	0	1	0	0	0
10-19	7	3	5	5	2
20-29	5	4	3	7	0
30-39	3	3	2	2	5
40-49	0	2	2	2	1
50-59	3	2	2	2	1
60 & over	2	1	2	4	2
Unknown	1	1	5	2	1
	21	17	21	24	12

SHOOTER'S EQUIPMENT					
Rifles	5	7	6	8	3
Shotguns	13	7	14	14	8
Handguns	3	3	1	2	1
Muzzleloader	0	0	0	0	0
Bow/Air Gun	0	0	0	0	0
	21	17	21	24	12

ADDITIONAL FACTS					
	Percentage in parenthesis (%)				
Violated Game Law	5 (21)	9 (43)	3 (18)	5 (24)	0 (0)
Self-Inflicted	6 (25)	8 (38)	6 (35)	8 (38)	2 (17)
Alcohol a Factor	2 (8)	1 (5)	2 (12)	2 (10)	0 (0)
Completed Hunt Ed	10 (42)	5 (24)	8(47)	6 (28)	6 (50)
ONLINE-ONLY HE	3 (13)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	2 (17)
Military Exempt	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (4)	0 (0)

Incident profile over time:

- Incidents were highly preventable thru proper training.
- Over half had not completed hunter education training.
- Victims were not wearing hunter orange clothing.
- Most incidents due to hunter judgment errors; carelessness.
- Most shooters had over 10 years of hunting experience.
- Most shooters were *not* under the influence of alcohol.
- If self-inflicted, shooters handled firearms carelessly.
- Distance of muzzle to wound was typically under 15 yards.
- Incident occurred towards dusk; fatigue a possible factor.

Significant factors in 2021

- RECORD LOW YEAR!
- SWINGING ON GAME OUT OF SAFE ZONE led the list of incidents with 9 (75%), #1 'Hunter Judgement' cause
- Hunting incidents with night vision scopes is a relatively new SAFETY issue given the visibility and ocular focus factors combined with swinging rifle towards and firing at running targets.
- SHOTGUNS were used in 8 (67%) of the incidents.
- Six (6) HUNTER EDUCATION graduates were involved in hunting incidents, two (2) who took online-only courses.
- NO LAW VIOLATIONS recorded, a first!
- There were four TYPE B incidents (non-firearm, hunting-related) including falls from elevated stands, the number one hunting incident in North America.
- There was one TYPE C (non-hunting, firearm-related) incidents.)

MAIN CONTRIBUTING FACTORS	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
I. HUNTER JUDGMENT					
Victim out of sight / moved into line of fire	3	4	3	3	0
Victim hit by shooter swinging on game	5	3	7	8	9
Victim mistaken for game	2	0	0	1	0
SUBTOTAL	10	7	10	12	9

II. SKILL/APTITUDE					
Trigger caught on object	0	0	0	0	0
Loading/Unloading gun	1	3	0	0	0
Improper crossing	0	0	0	0	0
Careless handling	7	5	3	6	3
Dropped firearm	1	0	0	0	0
Shooter stumbled/fell	0	1	1	0	0
Careless Bow Handling	0	0	0	0	0
SUBTOTAL	9	9	4	6	3

III. SAFETY					
Removing/placing firearm in vehicle	1	0	0	0	0
Discharge of firearm in/on vehicle/fell from insecure rest	0	1	2	2	0
Running or entering/exiting stand with loaded firearm	0	0	0	0	0
Horseplay	0	0	0	0	0
SUBTOTAL	1	1	2	2	0

IV. OTHER					
Ricochet	0	0	1	1	0
Obstruction in Barrel or Faulty Equipment	0	0	3	3	0
Mixed Ammo/Incorrect Substitution	1	0	1	0	0
SUBTOTAL	1	0	5	4	0
GRAND TOTAL	21	17	21	24	0

ANIMAL HUNTED					
Dove	8	1	13	11	6
Deer	2	2	4	1	1
Rabbit/Hare	1	0	0	2	0
Feral Hog/Peccary	4	8	2	6	2
Quail/Pheasant	2	3	1	0	2
Turkey	0	0	0	1	0
Ducks/Geese	2	1	0	1	0
Coyote/Bobcat	0	0	0	1	0
Squirrel/Prairie Dog	0	1	0	0	0
Nongame birds/Snake	2	0	0	1	0
Furbearers (2021 - Skunk)	0	0	0	0	1
Exotic	0	1	1	0	0
Unknown	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	21	17	21	24	12

2021 FATAL ACCIDENTS - FIREARM/BOW HUNTING RELATED (A)*

* Firearm/Bow & Hunting Related - Accident/incident resulting from the discharge of a firearm or bow while hunting, which causes death to any person(s).

Date	County	Shooter's Age/Gender	Firearm	Animal Hunted	Self-Inflicted?	Hunter Ed? (Shooter)
11-27	Harrison	33/M	Rifle	Deer	No	Yes
<i>Comments:</i>	Careless Handling - While unloading .30-30 lever action rifle with the muzzle pointed towards the victim, shooter let the hammer after "unloading" it. However, there was one more cartridge still in the chamber. (Shooter thought chamber/magazine were empty after unloading a total of four rounds, but there were five total rounds.)					
<i>Prevention:</i>	Always point the muzzle in a safe direction; get familiar with action types, especially on the firearms used; apply what is learned in hunter ed.					

2021 NON-FATAL INCIDENTS - FIREARM/BOW HUNTING RELATED (A)*

* Firearm/Bow & Hunting Related - Accident/incident resulting from the discharge of a firearm or bow while hunting, which causes injury to any person(s).

Date	County	Shooter's Age/Gender	Firearm	Animal Hunted	Self-Inflicted?	Hunter Ed? (Shooter)
1-2	Clay	31/M	Shotgun	Quail	No	Yes
<i>Comments:</i>	Swinging Outside Safe Zone of Fire - Three friends were quail hunting with a guide and two bird dogs. Shooter fired on low-flying quail outside of his safe zone and shot towards the victim from about 30 yards. Five pellets struck victim in eye, face, and shoulder areas.					
<i>Prevention:</i>	Always point the muzzle in a safe direction and maintain a safe zone of fire; communicate with hunting companions; know where others are always positioned; make sure to identify the target clearly; identify what is in front of and behind the target before shooting; apply what is learned in hunter education.					
4-16	Lamar	16/M	Rifle	Hog	No	No
<i>Comments:</i>	Swinging Outside Safe Zone of Fire - Two hunters were hunting hogs with night vision scopes. One hunter shot towards companion, who stood close by, as he swung his .308 caliber rifle on running hogs. Bullet struck victim in his back/shoulder blade and exited triceps muscle.					
<i>Prevention:</i>	Always point the muzzle in a safe direction and maintain a safe zone of fire; communicate with hunting companions; know where others are always positioned, especially at times of low visibility or narrowed ocular vision; make sure to identify the target clearly; identify what is in front of and behind the target before shooting; apply what is learned in hunter education.					
5-2	Coryell	57/M	Rifle	Hog	No	No
<i>Comments:</i>	Swinging Outside Safe Zone of Fire - Three hunters entered a field hunting hogs with night vision scopes. The victim split from the other two hunters, letting them know his approximate field location. Shooter missed a shot at a hog then swung his semi-auto rifle and fired towards a second hog. The bullet struck the victim in lower abdomen and exited the lower back.					
<i>Prevention:</i>	Always point the muzzle in a safe direction and maintain a safe zone of fire; communicate with hunting companions; know where others are always positioned, especially at times of low visibility or narrowed ocular vision; make sure to identify the target clearly; identify what is in front of and behind the target before shooting; apply what is learned in hunter education.					

Date	County	Shooter's Age/Gender	Firearm	Animal Hunted	Self-Inflicted?	Hunter Ed? (Shooter)
9-3	Medina	UNK/M	Shotgun	Dove	No	UNK
<i>Comments:</i>	Swinging Outside Safe Zone of Fire - Multiple shooters were firing at low-flying doves while victim was in sunflower field retrieving a downed bird. Victim, about 50 -yards away from the group of shooters, was struck by 17 pellets to face, arm, and torso. Game warden received account only from victim who did not know who from the group shot in his direction.					
<i>Prevention:</i>	Always point the muzzle in a safe direction and stick to a safe zone of fire; communicate with hunting companions and other hunters in the area; know where others are always positioned; make sure to identify the target clearly; identify what is in front of and behind the target before shooting; complete hunter education, even if not required.					
9-5	Kimble	49/M	Shotgun	Dove	No	Yes
<i>Comments:</i>	Swinging Outside Safe Zone of Fire - Shooter fired at low-flying doves outside of his safe zone and peppered one of his hunting companions who had repositioned himself to another side of a pond about 25-35 yards away. Victim was struck by pellets to head and upper torso.					
<i>Prevention:</i>	Always point the muzzle in a safe direction and stick to a safe zone of fire; communicate with hunting companions and other hunters in the area; know where others are always positioned; make sure to identify the target clearly; identify what is in front of and behind the target before shooting; apply what is learned in hunter education.					
9-25	Zavala	31/M	Shotgun	Dove	Yes	Yes
<i>Comments:</i>	Careless Handling - While changing shot tubes in the muzzle of his shotgun, shooter carelessly discharged his loaded shotgun and sent the blast of pellets through his hand.					
<i>Prevention:</i>	Always point muzzle in a safe direction; unload firearm when not hunting, especially when working on the action or changing choke tubes in the barrel(s); handle firearms carefully; apply what is learned in hunter education.					
10-9	Zavala	36/M	Shotgun	Dove	No	No (LA)
<i>Comments:</i>	Swinging Outside Safe Zone of Fire - Shooter fired on low-flying dove outside of his safe zone and peppered his hunting companion who had left, then returned to the hunting location.					
<i>Prevention:</i>	Always point the muzzle in a safe direction and stick to a safe zone of fire; communicate with hunting companions and other hunters in the area; know where others are always positioned; make sure to identify the target clearly; identify what is in front of and behind the target before shooting; complete hunter education, even if not required.					
10-10	Uvalde	67/M	Shotgun	Dove	No	No
<i>Comments:</i>	Swinging Outside Safe Zone of Fire - Shooter fired on low-flying dove outside of his safe zone and peppered his hunting companion who was 20 yards away and bent over, retrieving a downed bird. Victim was hit by pellets in the back, arm, neck, and head.					
<i>Prevention:</i>	Always point the muzzle in a safe direction and stick to a safe zone of fire; communicate with hunting companions and other hunters in the area; know where others are always positioned; make sure to identify the target clearly; identify what is in front of and behind the target before shooting; complete hunter education, even if not required.					
10-11	Bee	82/M	Shotgun	Dove	No	No
<i>Comments:</i>	Swinging Outside Safe Zone of Fire - Shooter fired at low-flying doves outside of his safe zone and peppered one of his hunting companions who was on the other side of a pond. Victim was struck by pellets to arm, shoulder, hand, and lip.					
<i>Prevention:</i>	Always point the muzzle in a safe direction and stick to a safe zone of fire; communicate with hunting companions and other hunters in the area; know where others are always positioned; make sure to identify the target clearly; identify what is in front of and behind the target before shooting; complete hunter education, even if not required.					

Date	County	Shooter's Age/Gender	Firearm	Animal Hunted	Self-Inflicted?	Hunter Ed? (Shooter)
11-4	Cherokee	16/M	Handgun	Skunk	Yes	Yes
Comments:	Careless Handling – Victim carelessly discharged a handgun while exiting a vehicle to shoot a skunk. The .22 cal. bullet struck victim in right calf near ankle.					
Prevention:	Always point muzzle in a safe direction; carry unloaded, cased firearms in vehicles with actions open, separate from ammo.; take care when loading/unloading a firearm, especially while in close quarters; apply what is learned in hunter education.					
11-13	Freestone	32/M	Shotgun	Quail	No	Yes
Comments:	Swinging Outside Safe Zone of Fire – A group of hunters were quail hunting with a guide and bird dogs. Shooter fired on low-flying quail outside of his safe zone and shot towards a 9-year-old victim who was lagging behind the rest of the group. Pellets struck victim in face, head, neck, and legs.					
Prevention:	Always point the muzzle in a safe direction and maintain a safe zone of fire; communicate with hunting companions; know where others are always positioned; make sure to identify the target clearly; identify what is in front of and behind the target before shooting; apply what is learned in hunter education.					

2021 NON-FIREARM/BOW HUNTING RELATED (B) **

Type	Age/Gender	Fatal?	Comments
ATV Accident and/or Drowning 5-2-21	UNK/M	YES	Turkey hunter departed camp at 5:30 in the morning and never returned. Body was found in river 100 yards downstream from the submerged ATV. There was a swift water event a few days before, causing higher-than-normal water levels.
Elevated Box Blind - Fall 11/18/21	52/M	NO	Victim fell to ground when ladder collapsed. He had shot a deer and was descending from an elevated box blind. He received 13 stitches to his right leg.
Heart Attack 11-25-21	66/M	NO	Victim was bowhunting while sitting in a tree (no stand) about 7 feet from the ground. He fell backwards, causing broken ribs and fractured back; head trauma.
Fire from propane bottles/explosion 12-16-21	79/F 85/M	YES	Victims died from fire/explosion in their elevated 8' X 8' box blind about eight feet off the ground. One body was recovered from stand and the other outside the stand, both burned and face down. Several damaged propane bottles were found -- one 27 yards away and one under the blind.

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

2021 NON-HUNTING/FIREARM RELATED (C) ***

Type	Age/Gender/ Firearm	Fatal?	Comments
Careless Handling 2-24-21	54/M Handgun	NO	The victim was asleep inside hunting cabin and heard noises outside, so he grabbed his 10mm handgun and went to investigate. Heading towards door, he tripped and carelessly pulled the trigger. Bullet entered/exited his left hand.

***** C. 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 (reported to TPWD Game Wardens)