



TENNESSEE WILDLIFE RESOURCES AGENCY

ELLINGTON AGRICULTURAL CENTER
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Hunter Education Instructors:

The following incident statistics, graphs and narratives represent the hunting incident information for the 2009 hunting season. The information was obtained through reports prepared and submitted by investigating wildlife officers in the counties where the incidents occurred.

While most incidents are known within the county of occurrence, we also rely on a statewide clipping service to alert us to hunting related incidents. For your information, copies of the forms used to report accidents are contained in the document.

In 2009, firearm related hunting incidents decreased from the previous year by two. In 2009 we experienced one fatal firearm related hunting incident; this was a decrease from two fatal firearm related hunting incidents in 2008. The number of tree stand injuries for 2009 was eleven, an increase from seven treestand incidents in 2008. One tree stand incident was fatal in 2009; this remained stable from 2008 when one tree stand incident was fatal also. We need to emphasize the fact that the proper use of a fall arrest system, full body harness will save your life. In all but one of the 2009 tree stand incidents, no fall arrest system was used. The simple act of using a fall arrest system, full body harness, will save lives.

Please use the accident information as an educational tool in your classroom to initiate discussions on how incidents could be prevented.

Additional copies of this report are available on request from the TWRA Hunter Education Office in Nashville.

Randy Huskey
Hunter Education Administrator

The State of Tennessee

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2009 Hunting Incident Summary

	09 Fatal	09 Non-Fatal	2009 Total	2008 Total	2007 Total	2006 Total
Shooter Status						
Self-Inflicted	1	5	6	1	3	4
Shot by Hunting Partner	0	2	2	4	6	3
Shot Outside Hunting Party	0	1	1	2	2	0
Total	1	8	9	7	11	7
Hunting Implement						
Rifle	0	1	1	6	2	3
Shotgun	1	4	5	1	8	3
Muzzleloader	0	1	1	2	0	1
Handgun	0	1	1	0	1	0
Bow	0	1	1	2	0	0
Tree Stand	1	10	11	7	10	9
Total	2	18	20	18	21	16
Cause of Accident						
Unknown	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ricochet	0	0	0	0	1	0
Loading/Unloading	0	0	0	1	1	0
Careless Handling	0	6	6	0	3	5
Victim Mistaken for Game	0	1	1	3	4	1
Covered by Shooter's Swing	0	0	0	0	0	0
Trigger Caught on Object	0	0	0	2	1	0
Shooter Stumbled and Fell	1	1	2	3	0	0
Victim in Line of Fire	0	0	0	1	1	1
Defective Firearm	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tree Stand Accident	1	10	11	7	10	9
Total	2	18	20	17	21	16
Species Pursued						
Deer	1	13	14	10	12	12
Dove	0	1	1	0	1	1
Waterfowl	0	0	0	0	1	0
Turkey	0	1	1	0	3	2
Quail	0	0	0	0	1	0
Squirrel	0	1	1	1	0	0
Rabbit	0	1	1	0	2	0
Boar	0	0	0	0	0	1
Bear	0	0	0	0	1	0
Beaver	1	0	1	0	0	0
Coyote	0	0	0	2	0	0
Raccoon	0	1	1	1	0	0
Total	2	18	20	14	21	16

2009 Fatal Firearm Related Hunting Incidents

Shooter Information

Age	39
Hunting Implement	Shotgun
Game Hunted	Beaver
Hunter Education Graduate	Yes
Shooter and Victim in Same Party	Self-inflicted
County of Accident	Gibson

Victim Information

Age	Same
Type Accident	Fatal
Wearing Blaze Orange	No
Hunter Education Graduate	Yes
Distance Muzzle to Wound	0-1 yard
Date of Accident	12/21/2009
Law Violation	No action taken

Narrative: Victim was beaver hunting in an attempt to alleviate some beaver damage. Victim was crossing a log when he slipped and fell from log, losing control of firearm. Firearm was discharged and struck victim in head. The firearms safety was off.

Cause: Unload firearm before crossing hazardous terrain. Keep safety on until you are ready to fire.

2009 Non-Fatal Firearm Related Hunting Incidents

Shooter Information

Age	64
Hunting Implement	Shotgun
Game Hunted	Turkey
Hunter Education Graduate	Yes
Shooter and Victim in Same Party	No
County of Accident	Meigs

Victim Information

Age	34
Type Accident	Non-fatal
Wearing Blaze Orange	No
Hunter Education Graduate	Yes
Distance Muzzle to Wound	21-50 Yards
Date of Accident	3/28/2009
Law Violation	Hunting w/o permission

Narrative: Shooter was stalking a turkey that had walked through a field. The shooter followed the path the turkey had taken and entered the woods on his hands and knees in an attempt to stalk the turkey. Shooter saw what he mistakenly identified as a turkeys white head and fired upon the victim.

Cause: Victim was mistaken for game, positively identify your target.

Shooter Information

Age	60
Hunting Implement	Handgun
Game Hunted	Squirrel
Hunter Education Graduate	No
Shooter and Victim in Same Party	Self-inflicted
County of Accident	Bledsoe

Victim Information

Age	Same
Type Accident	Non-fatal
Wearing Blaze Orange	No
Hunter Education Graduate	No
Distance Muzzle to Wound	0-1 Yard
Date of Accident	9/1/2009
Law Violation	None

Narrative: Shooter was squirrel hunting when he saw a squirrel in a beech tree. The shooter raised his handgun to fire, the squirrel ran off. The shooter lowered his handgun to his side and the firearm discharged and the bullet struck the shooter in the leg.

Cause: Keep your finger outside of the trigger guard. Keep the safety on. Control your muzzle!

2009 Non-Fatal Firearm Related Hunting Incidents

Shooter Information

Age	55
Hunting Implement	Shotgun
Game Hunted	Dove
Hunter Education Graduate	No
Shooter and Victim in Same Party	Self-inflicted
County of Accident	Bedford

Victim Information

Age	Same
Type Accident	Non-fatal
Wearing Blaze Orange	No
Hunter Education Graduate	No
Distance Muzzle to Wound	0-1 yard
Date of Accident	9/5/2009
Law Violation	None

Narrative: Shooter had shot a dove and was attempting to retrieve the dove. When the shooter bent over to pick up the dove the firearm discharged and struck the shooter in his right foot. The shooter was walking toward the dove with his finger in the trigger guard and the safety off.

Cause: Watch that muzzle! Keep your finger outside the trigger guard until you are ready to shoot. Keep the safety on.

Shooter Information

Age	35
Hunting Implement	Bow
Game Hunted	Deer
Hunter Education Graduate	Yes
Shooter and Victim in Same Party	Self-inflicted
County of Accident	Marion

Victims Information

Age	Same
Type Accident	Non-fatal
Wearing Blaze Orange	No
Hunter Education Graduate	Yes
Distance Muzzle to Wound	0-1 yard
Date of Accident	9/21/2009
Law Violation	None

Narrative: Victim was traversing a thick stand of pines when he stepped upon loose pine needles that caused him to lose his footing. The victim was carrying his bow over his shoulder with an arrow nocked. The arrow fell from the rest and landed in an upright position. As the victim was falling back the arrow entered his leg.

Cause: Never walk through difficult terrain with an arrow nocked on the bowstring.

2009 Non-Fatal Firearm Related Hunting Incidents

Shooter Information

Age	29
Hunting Implement	Muzzleloader
Game Hunted	Deer
Hunter Education Graduate	Yes
Shooter and Victim in Same Party	Self-inflicted
County of Accident	Roane

Victim Information

Age	Same
Type Accident	Non-fatal
Wearing Blaze Orange	Yes
Hunter Education Graduate	Yes
Distance Muzzle to Wound	0-1 yard
Date of Accident	11/7/2009
Law Violation	None

Narrative: Shooter was climbing into a treestand with a loaded muzzleloader slung over his shoulder. The manual thumb safety was on and hammer was in the fired position. The hammer ignited the primer when the shooter was approximately 10 feet off the ground. The bullet struck the shooter in the leg, the shooter fell from the tree.

Cause: Always use a haul line to pull equipment up to you when using a treestand.

Shooter Information

Age	18
Hunting Implement	Shotgun
Game Hunted	Rabbit
Hunter Education Graduate	Yes
Shooter and Victim in Same Party	Yes
County of Accident	Johnson

Victims Information

Age	18
Type Accident	Non-fatal
Wearing Blaze Orange	No
Hunter Education Graduate	Yes
Distance Muzzle to Wound	0-1 yard
Date of Accident	11/21/2009
Law Violation	None

Narrative: Shooter was rabbit hunting and was walking up a grassy hill. He stopped for a moment to rest. The shooter was leaning on the firearm to rest, and as he prepared to walk again he pushed the safety off and hit the trigger causing the firearm to fire.

Cause: Keep the safety on until you are ready to shoot. Do not use a firearm as a prop.

2009 Non-Fatal Firearm Related Hunting Incidents

Shooter Information

Age	35
Hunting Implement	Shotgun
Game Hunted	Deer
Hunter Education Graduate	No
Shooter and Victim in Same Party	Self-inflicted
County of Accident	Lincoln

Victim Information

Age	Same
Type Accident	Non-fatal
Wearing Blaze Orange	Yes
Hunter Education Graduate	No
Distance Muzzle to Wound	0-1 yard
Date of Accident	11/30/2009
Law Violation	No hunter education

Narrative: Shooter was hunting from a treestand when his firearm slipped between boards in his treestand. Shooter grabbed the firearm by the muzzle, the hammer struck a board and fired striking him in the hand. Shooter lost balance and fell from his treestand.

Cause: Always maintain control of your firearm. Control your muzzle!

Shooter Information

Age	16
Hunting Implement	Rifle
Game Hunted	Rabbit
Hunter Education Graduate	Yes
Shooter and Victim in Same Party	Yes
County of Accident	Unicoi

Victims Information

Age	16
Type Accident	Non-fatal
Wearing Blaze Orange	No
Hunter Education Graduate	Yes
Distance Muzzle to Wound	6-10 yards
Date of Accident	12/3/2009
Law Violation	None

Narrative: Shooter and victim were raccoon hunting, upon returning to the vehicle the shooter placed his firearm on the ground. The victim was loading the dogs into the dog box, the firearm discharged and struck the victim in the leg.

Cause: Unload firearm when not in use. Unload, place firearm in case and keep action open when not in use.

2009 Fatal Tree Stand Incidents

Victim Information

Age	59
Season	Gun
Hunter Education Graduate	No
Bowhunter Education Graduate	No
Type of Stand	Climbing
Safety Belt Used	Yes
County of Accident	Madison
Date of Accident	1/2/2009
Type of Injury	Fatal

Narrative: Victim was climbing tree with a climbing stand. The bottom portion of the stand fell to the bottom of the tree. The victim was unable to pull himself up to relieve pressure from the belt that was around his chest.

Cause: Failure to wear a full body harness. Use a piece of rope to connect the bottom section of a climbing stand to the top section of the climbing stand.

2009 Non-Fatal Tree Stand Incidents

Victim Information

Age	35
Season	Rifle
Hunter Education Graduate	Yes
Bowhunter Education Graduate	No
Type of Stand	Fixed/Hang-on
Safety Belt Used	No
County of Accident	Scott
Date of Accident	1/4/2009
Type of Injury	Broken ribs, vertebrae

Narrative: Victim was hanging a fixed position stand on a tree when he fell. Victim was not wearing a fall restraint device.

Cause: Failure to wear a fall arrest system, full body harness. Always attach yourself the tree while ascending and descending the tree and while attaching a tree stand.

Victim Information

Age	58
Season	None
Hunter Education Graduate	No
Bowhunter Education Graduate	No
Type of Stand	Fixed/Hang-on
Safety Belt Used	Yes
County of Accident	Hickman
Date of Accident	4/5/2009
Type of Injury	Back trauma

Narrative: Victim was attempting to relocate stand to another location during the off season. Victim lost balance and began to fall, safety belt broke and victim fell approximately 20-25 feet.

Cause: Be aware of safety belt expiration dates and weight limits.

2009 Non-Fatal Tree Stand Incidents

Victim Information

Age	38
Season	Archery
Hunter Education Graduate	Yes
Bowhunter Education Graduate	No
Type of Stand	Homemade
Safety Belt Used	No
County of Accident	Rutherford
Date of Accident	9/26/2009
Type of Injury	Broken ribs, broken wrist

Narrative: Victim was using a homemade treestand and had placed a plastic lawn chair on the homemade stand. Victim was setting in the plastic chair when the leg of the chair broke and the victim fell out of the stand.

Cause: Failure to wear a fall arrest system, full body harness. Never use a homemade treestand.

Victim Information

Age	33
Season	Archery
Hunter Education Graduate	Yes
Bowhunter Education Graduate	No
Type of Stand	Climbing
Safety Belt Used	Yes
County of Accident	Stewart
Date of Accident	9/27/2009
Type of Injury	Fractured skull, vertebra

Narrative: Victim was in a treestand and was using a safety harness. A tree fell into the victims stand and knocked the victim from the stand ripping his harness off and causing him to fall to the ground. Treestand was damaged from hit by the surrounding tree.

Cause: Check area around treestand for decaying trees that may pose a hazard.

2009 Non-Fatal Tree Stand Incidents

Victim Information

Age	39
Season	Archery
Hunter Education Graduate	No
Bowhunter Education Graduate	No
Type of Stand	Fixed/Hang-on
Safety Belt Used	No
County of Accident	White
Date of Accident	10/3/2009
Type of Injury	Broken neck, vertebrae, ribs

Narrative: Victim had been hunting out of the stand for approximately two hours when he fell. Victim possibly went to sleep and fell from stand.

Cause: Failure to wear a fall arrest system, full body harness.

Victim Information

Age	37
Season	Archery
Hunter Education Graduate	Yes
Bowhunter Education Graduate	No
Type of Stand	Climbing
Safety Belt Used	No
County of Accident	Sumner
Date of Accident	11/3/2009
Type of Injury	Broken vertebra

Narrative: Victim was attempting to descend the tree that he had been hunting in. Victims leg became entangled in the gun rest and he fell to the ground.

Cause: Failure to wear a fall arrest system, full body harness. Always remain attached to the tree from the time you leave the ground until you are back on the ground.

2009 Non-Fatal Tree Stand Incidents

Victim Information

Age	15
Season	Gun
Hunter Education Graduate	Yes
Bowhunter Education Graduate	No
Type of Stand	Ladder
Safety Belt Used	No
County of Accident	Morgan
Date of Accident	11/26/2009
Type of Injury	Mild concussion

Narrative: Victim had shot a deer and was beginning to descend the ladder. Victim lost balance and fell to the ground.

Cause: Failure to wear a fall arrest system, full body harness.

Victim Information

Age	35
Season	Gun
Hunter Education Graduate	No
Bowhunter Education Graduate	No
Type of Stand	Homemade
Safety Belt Used	No
County of Accident	Lincoln
Date of Accident	11/30/2009
Type of Injury	Broken ribs

Narrative: Victim was pulling firearm toward him by the muzzle when it discharged striking him in the hand. Victim then lost his balance and fell from stand.

Cause: Failure to wear a fall arrest system, full body harness. Always remain attached to the tree from the time you leave the ground until you are back on the ground.

2009 Non-Fatal Tree Stand Incidents

Victim Information

Age	47
Season	Gun
Hunter Education Graduate	No
Bowhunter Education Graduate	No
Type of Stand	Ladder
Safety Belt Used	No
County of Accident	Jefferson
Date of Accident	12/19/2006
Type of Injury	Broken vertebra, pelvis

Narrative: Victim had consumed several alcoholic beverages and subsequently fell from the treestand. Victim could not remember anything about the fall.

Cause: Failure to wear a fall arrest system, full body harness. Avoid alcoholic beverages before and during hunting.

Victim Information

Age	24
Season	Gun
Hunter Education Graduate	Yes
Bowhunter Education Graduate	No
Type of Stand	Fixed/Hang-on
Safety Belt Used	No
County of Accident	Benton
Date of Accident	12/31/2009
Type of Injury	Broken ribs, punctured lung

Narrative: Victim was climbing into stand, when victim put weight onto stand the stand shifted causing the victim to lose balance and fall from the stand.

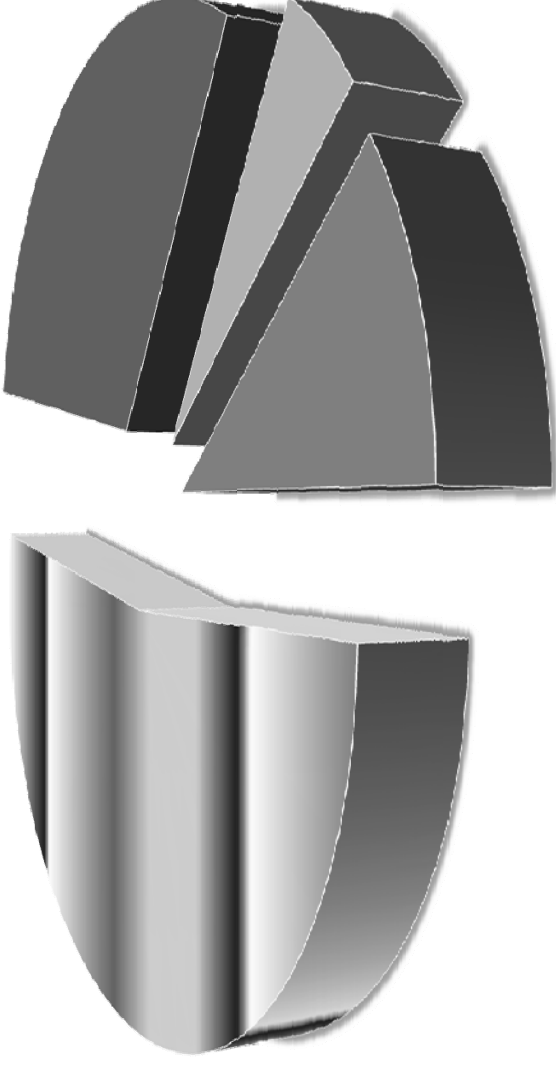
Cause: Failure to wear a fall arrest system, full body harness. Always remain attached to the tree from the time you leave the ground until you are back on the ground. Position your climbing steps in such a way that it allows you to step down into your stand allowing you to displace your weight evenly.

2009 Firearm Related Hunting Incidents

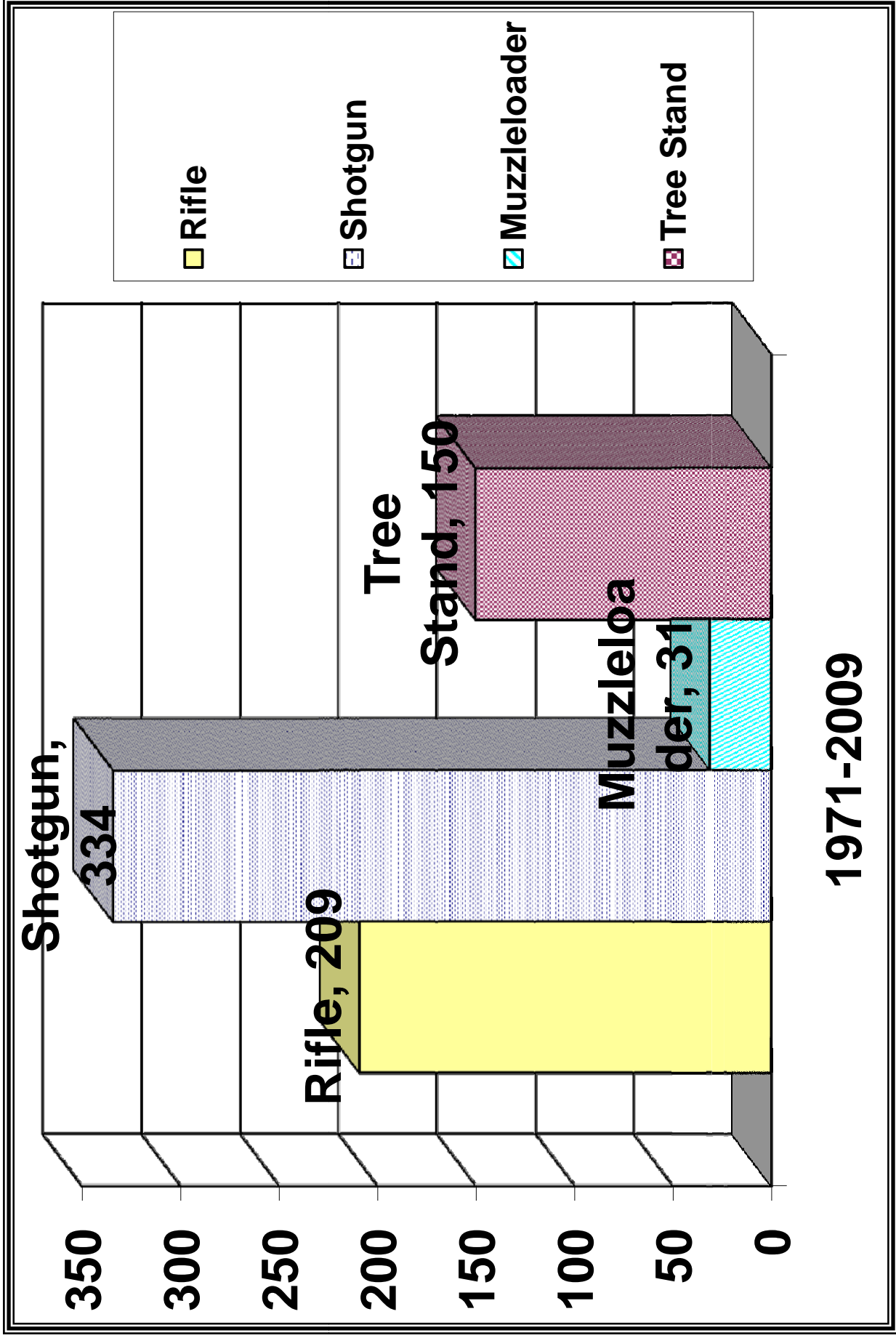
Incidents

Cause of Accident

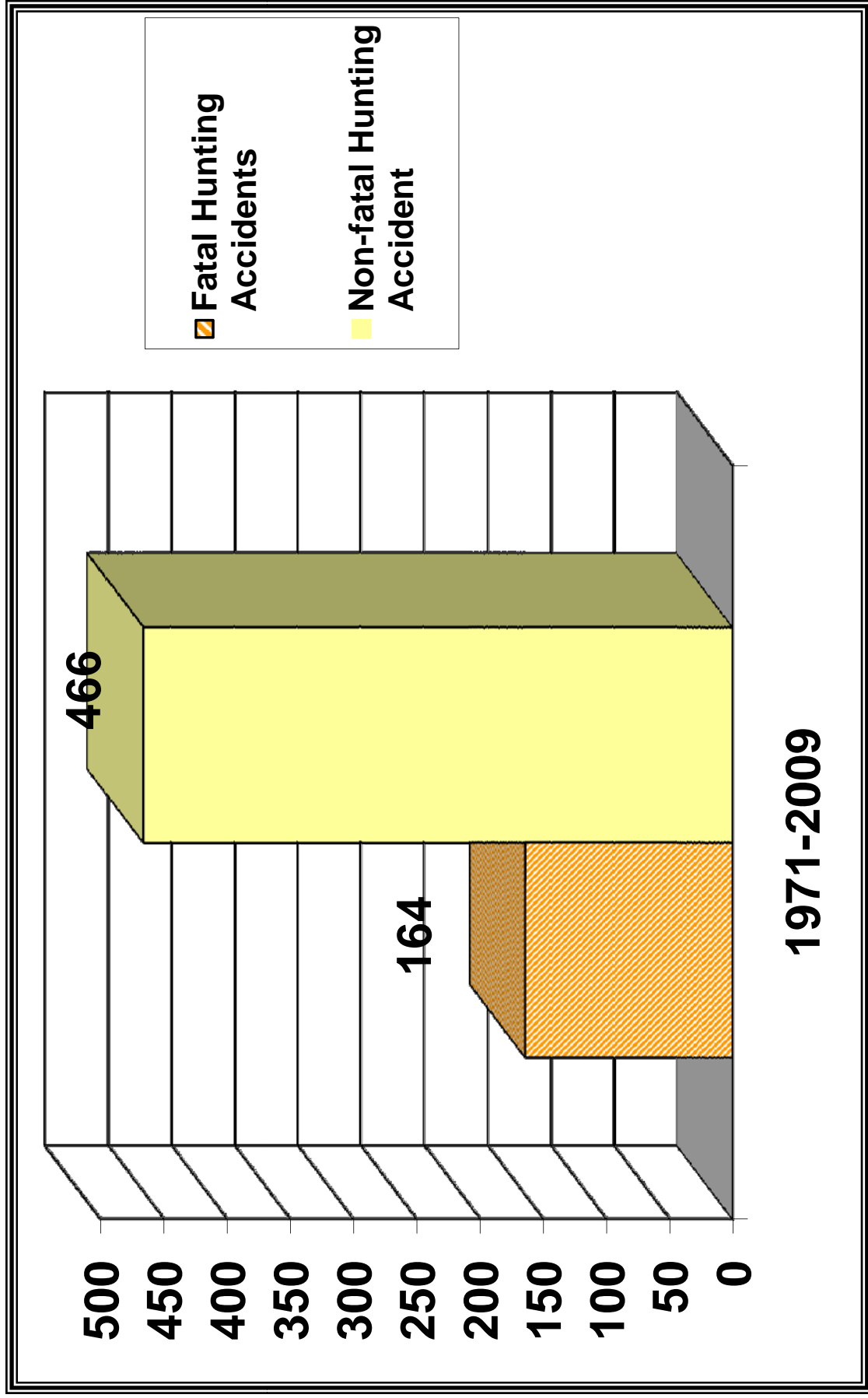
- Careless Handling
- Mistaken for Game
- Stumbled and fell
- ≡ Treestand



Hunting Incidents 1971-2009



Fatal and Non-fatal Hunting Incidents 1971-2009



Fatal and Non-fatal Hunting Incidents 2009

