

NEBRASKA
2020
HUNTING INCIDENT REPORT



HUNTER EDUCATION PROGRAMS

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2020 NEBRASKA HUNTING INCIDENTS

During 2020, there were five reported hunting incidents in Nebraska resulting in personal injury. Three of those incidents involved firearms. Two incidents resulted in minor-moderate injuries, one in severe injuries and two were fatal. This compares to three incidents in 2019. There was one fatality in 2019, compared to two in 2020.

Hunting in Nebraska continues to be one of the safest recreational activities in which families may participate. Hunting incident numbers have decreased significantly in the past 30 years, with an average incident rate of approximately one accident for every 25,700 hunters in the field. The Nebraska Game and Parks Commission and the nearly 800 volunteer instructors strive to reduce the number of hunting incidents.

The tables and charts within this report illustrate the historical data collected for hunting incidents in Nebraska.

Contributing Factors to 2020 Incidents: (Individual incidents may have more than one contributing factor, contributing factors can be counted multiple times.)

CONTRIBUTING FACTORS	Factors Reported by Law Enforcement
Victim out of sight of shooter	
Victim covered by shooter swinging on game	
Failure to identify target	
Victim in line of fire	1
Ricochet	1
Defective ammunition	
Firearm fell, insecure rest	
Shooter stumbled and fell	
Trigger caught on object	1
Failure to check beyond target	
Loading firearm	1
Unloading firearm	1
Discharge firearm in/on a vehicle	
Improper crossing of obstacle	
Clubbing game with firearm	
Careless or reckless handling of firearm	1
Place/remove loaded firearm from vehicle	
Drop firearm	
Horse-play while hunting	
Shooting across roadway	
Run with loaded firearm	
Obstruction of barrel	
Careless handling of archery equipment	
Other*	2*

*X – Fall(s) from an elevated position

2020 Individual Incident Summary

Aug. 14 – Pawnee County – Squirrel Hunting: A 24-year-old male was shot in the groin by his 22-year-old male hunting partner as they were unloading their firearms at the end of their hunt. (Class A) **Always keep the muzzle pointed in a safe direction and finger off the trigger.**

Oct. 16 – Knox County – Preparing for Deer Hunting: A 69-year-old male suffered fatal injuries after falling when a step broke while fixing/maintaining his homemade box blind in preparation for deer season. (Class C) **Always use a fall-arrest system while in an elevated position.**

Oct. 25 – Lancaster County – Pheasant Hunting: A 9-year-old male suffered a fatal, accidental self-inflicted gunshot while reloading after shooting at a pheasant while hunting with his father. The firearm, a single shot .410 bolt-action, was later found to be defective and would fire without the trigger being pulled. (Class A) **Always keep the muzzle pointed in a safe direction. Check with a gunsmith if you are unsure of the functionality of an older/unfamiliar firearm.**

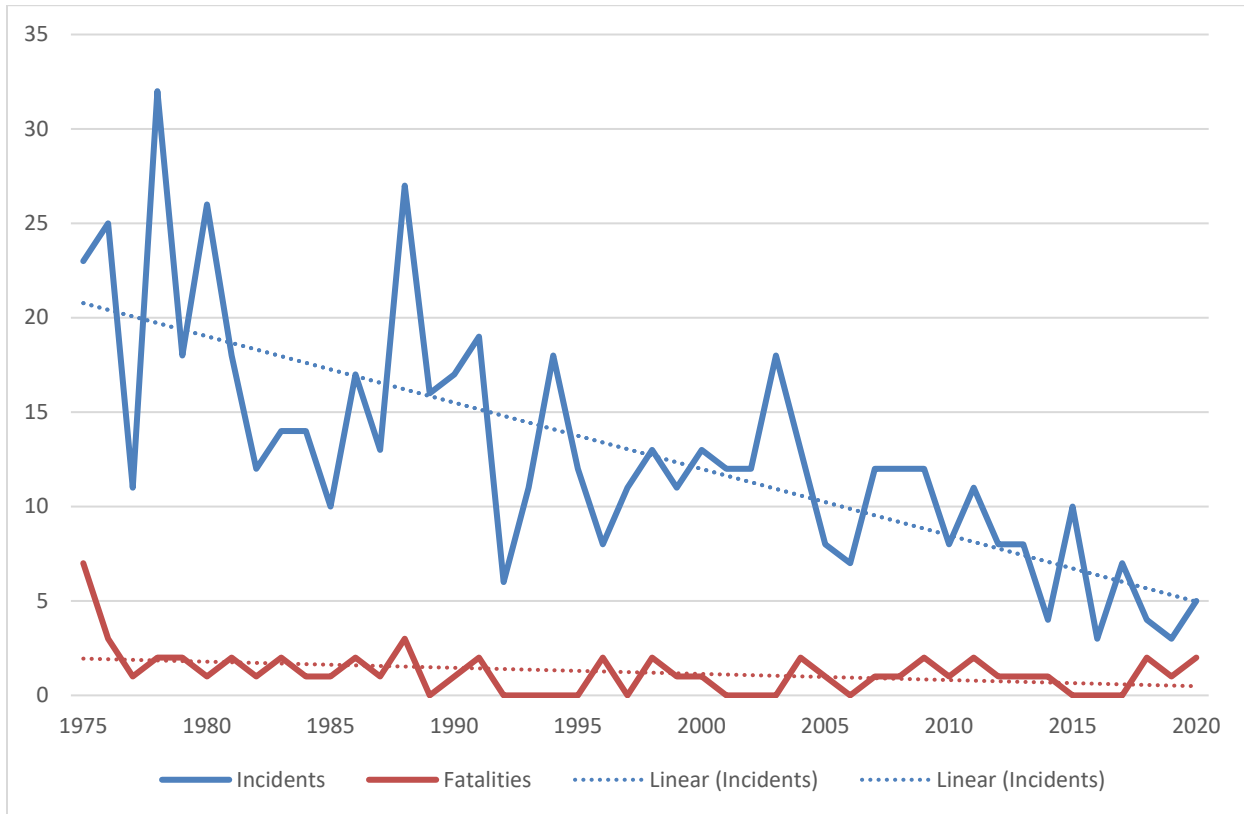
Nov. 19 – Cuming County – Deer Hunting: A 65-year-old male suffered severe/life threatening injuries resulting from a fall from his tree stand after the strap securing the ladder brace broke and the stand collapsed after he reached the seat of the stand. The victim was not wearing a fall-arrest system (safety harness) or using a life line. (Class C) **Always wear a fall arrest system/harness when hunting from an elevated position. Check your tree stand and straps before climbing.**

Dec. 5 – Cherry County – Pheasant Hunting: A 22-year-old male suffered minor injuries to his neck and face from a ricochet/accidental discharge when his partner's shotgun fired while reloading. The shooter claims that the firearm, an old shotgun, may have been defective as he had to "slam" the action forward and the gun fired upon doing so. (Class A) **Always keep your muzzle pointed in a safe direction. Check with a gun smith if you are unsure of the functionality of an older/unfamiliar firearm.**

International Hunter Education Association Hunting Accident Report Guidelines:

- Class A - when a hunter discharged a hunting implement while legally involved in hunting
- Class B - when a hunter discharged a hunting implement while illegally involved in hunting
- Class C - when a hunter fell from an elevated stand
- Non-classified – when a hunter sustains an injury by a means other than Class A, B or C

Nebraska Hunter Numbers vs. Hunting Incidents 1975-2020

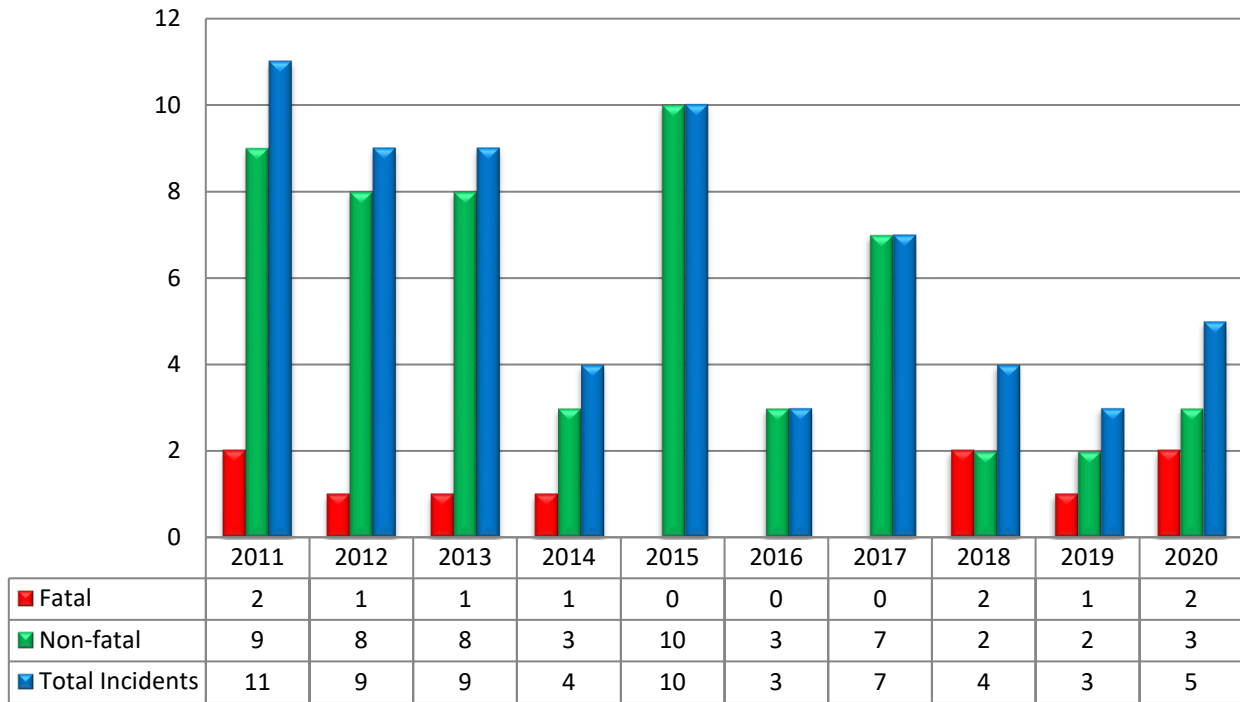


5-Year Interval	Average # of Hunters Per Year	Average # of Hunting Incidents Per Year	Average # of Fatalities Per Year
1975-79	176,880	22	3
1980-84	178,864	17	1.5
1985-89	158,412	17	1.5
1990-94	169,683	14	0.6
1995-99	186,567	11	1
2000-04	177,002	14	0.6
2005-09	173,859	10	1
2010-14	177,056	8.2	1.2
2015-19	175,530	5.4	.6
*2020	183,516	5	2

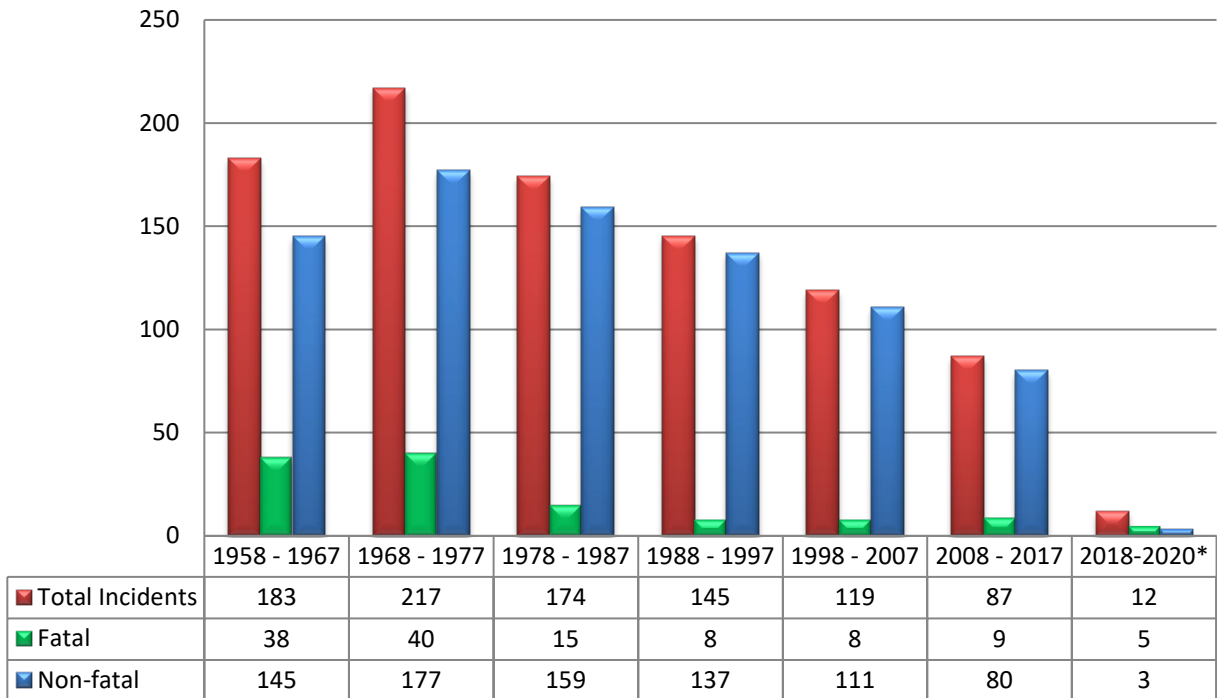
*only one year of data for this five-year period

Although the collected data indicates some fluctuation in annual hunter numbers, the average annual number of hunters has remained relatively stable for the past 18 years, while incident numbers have steadily declined during the same period, and dramatically declined since the inception of hunter education in the mid-1970s.

10-Year History of Nebraska Hunting Incidents



Hunting Incidents in Nebraska Historical Summary 1958 through 2020

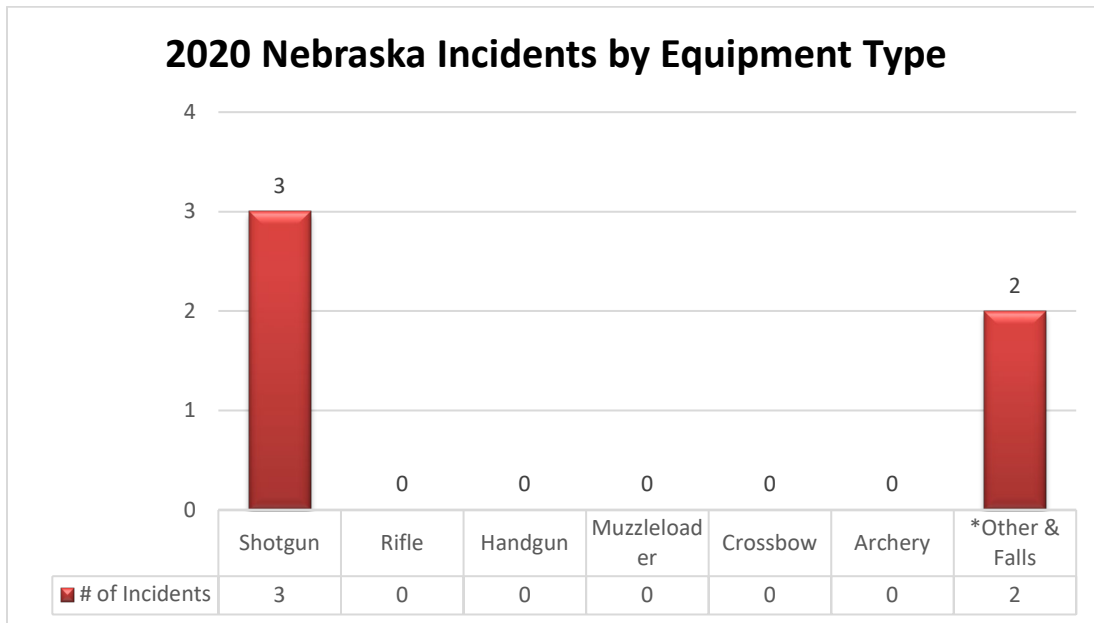


*only three years of data for this column

2020 Nebraska Hunting Incidents Categorized by Equipment Type

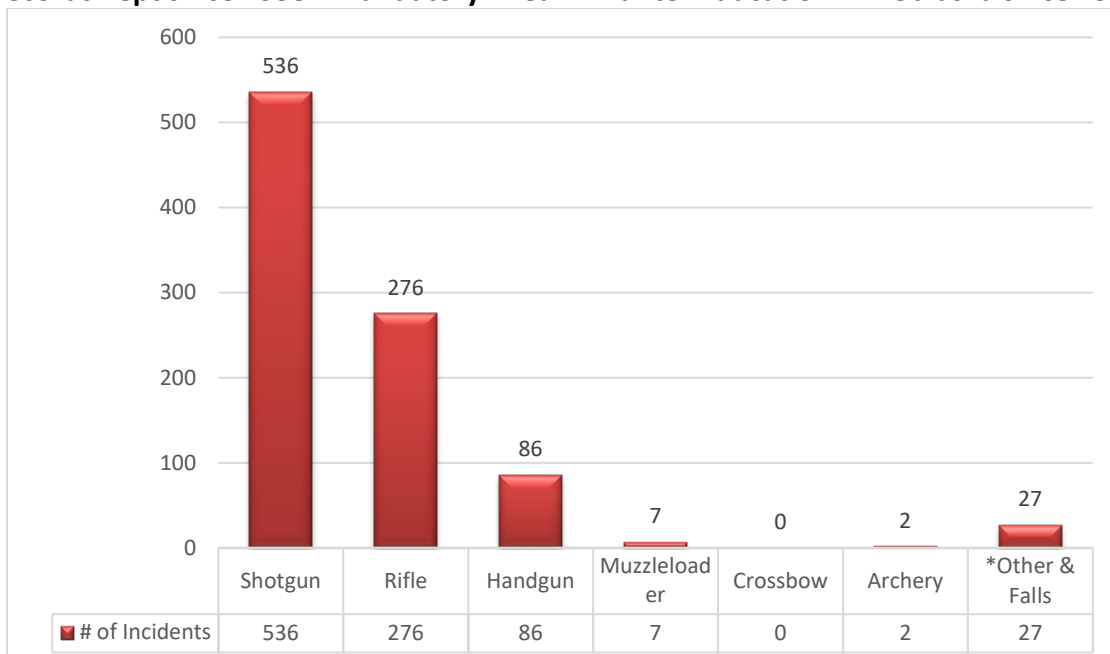
CATEGORY	# OF INCIDENTS
Discharge of a shotgun	3
Discharge of a rifle	0
Discharge of a handgun	0
Bow and arrow	0
Crossbow	0
Fall from elevated platform	2
Other	0

*Injuries were self-inflicted in one incident, not including falls



Type of Equipment Involved in Nebraska Hunting Incidents 1958 through 2020

(Records kept since 1958 - Mandatory Firearm Hunter Education in Nebraska since 1976)



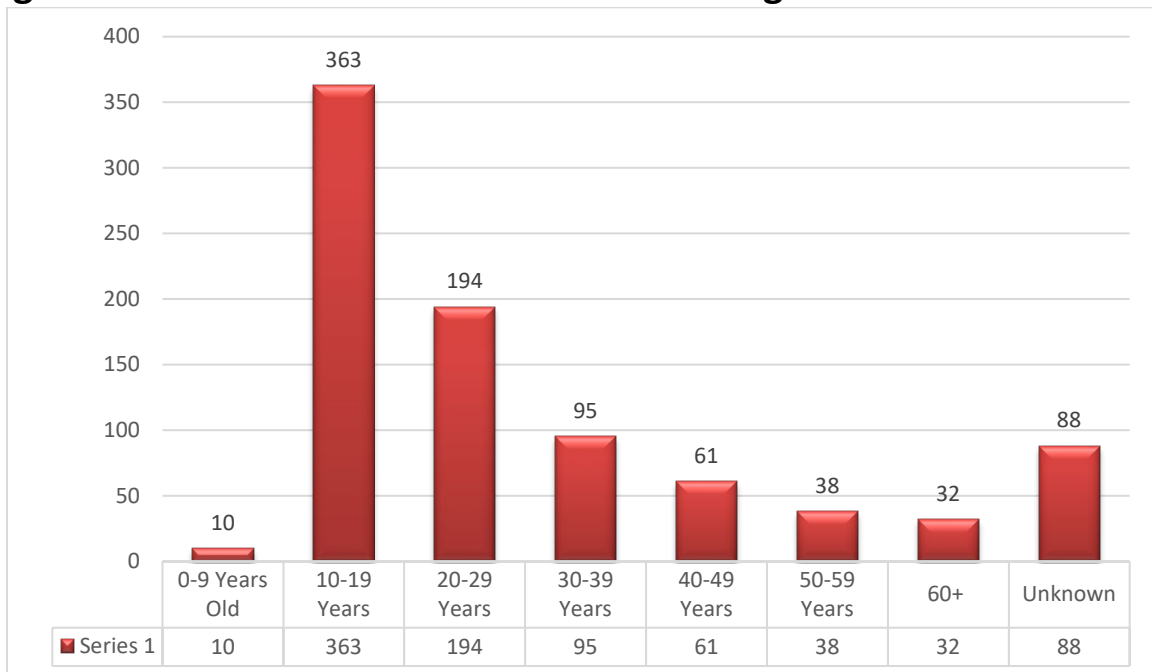
Age and Gender of Individuals Involved in 2020 Nebraska Hunting Incidents

(♂ = male; ♀ = female)

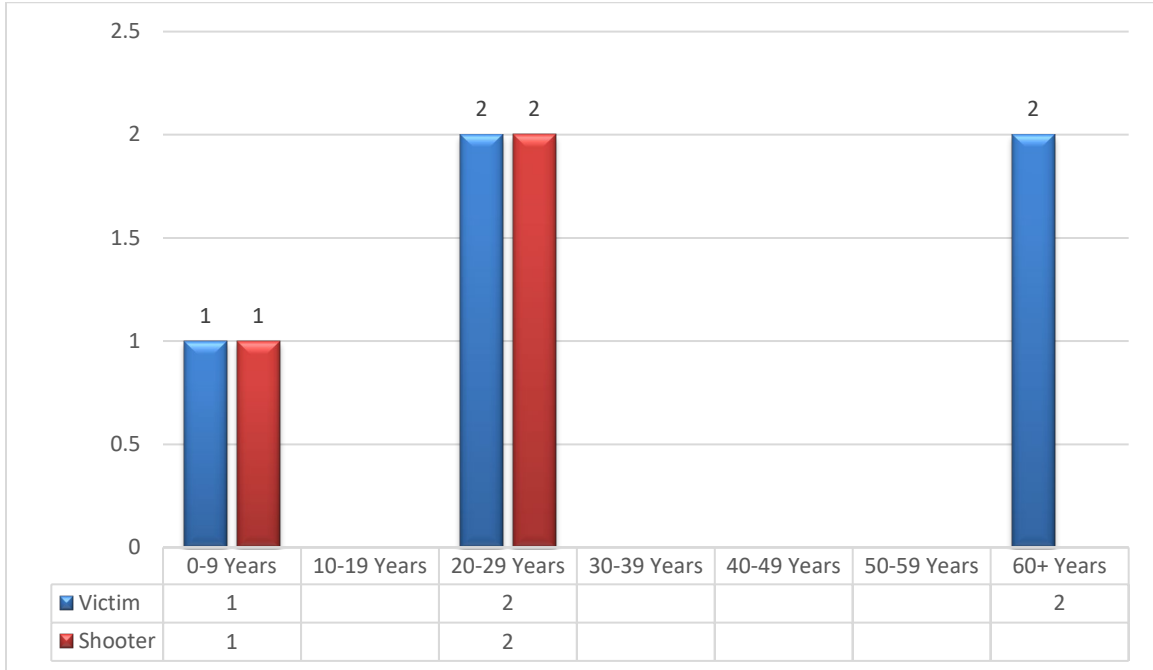
AGE	SHOOTER	VICTIM	SELF-INFLICTED	FALL/OTHER
0-9	1♂	1♂	1♂	
10-19				
20-29	2♂	2♂		
30-39				
40-49				
50-59				
60 and older				2♂
Unknown				

NOTE: One self-inflicted gunshot

Age of Shooter Involved in Nebraska Hunting Incidents 1958 – 2020

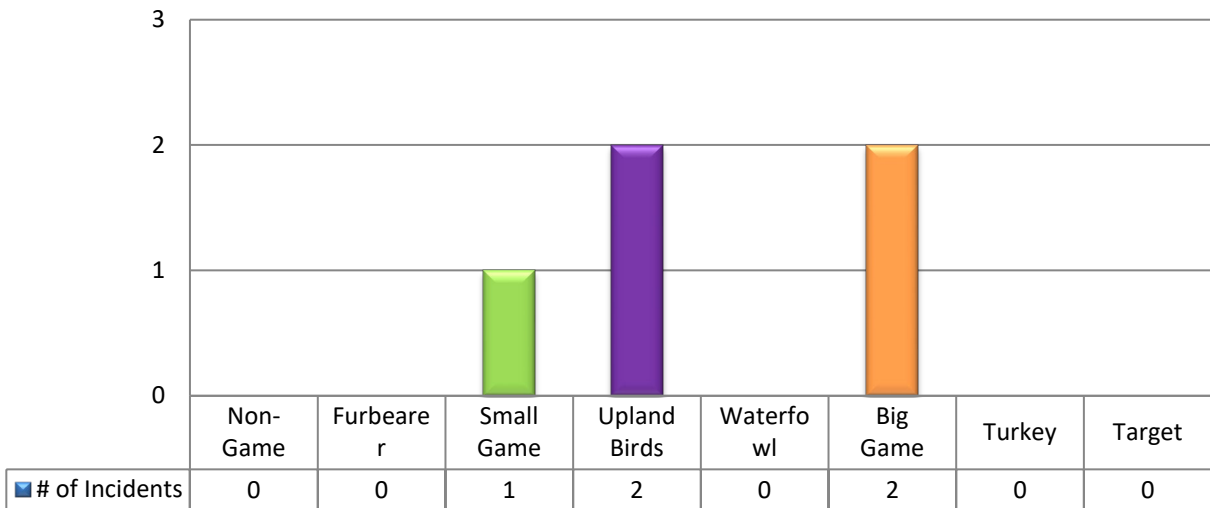


Age of Shooters and Victims Involved in 2020 Nebraska Hunting Incidents

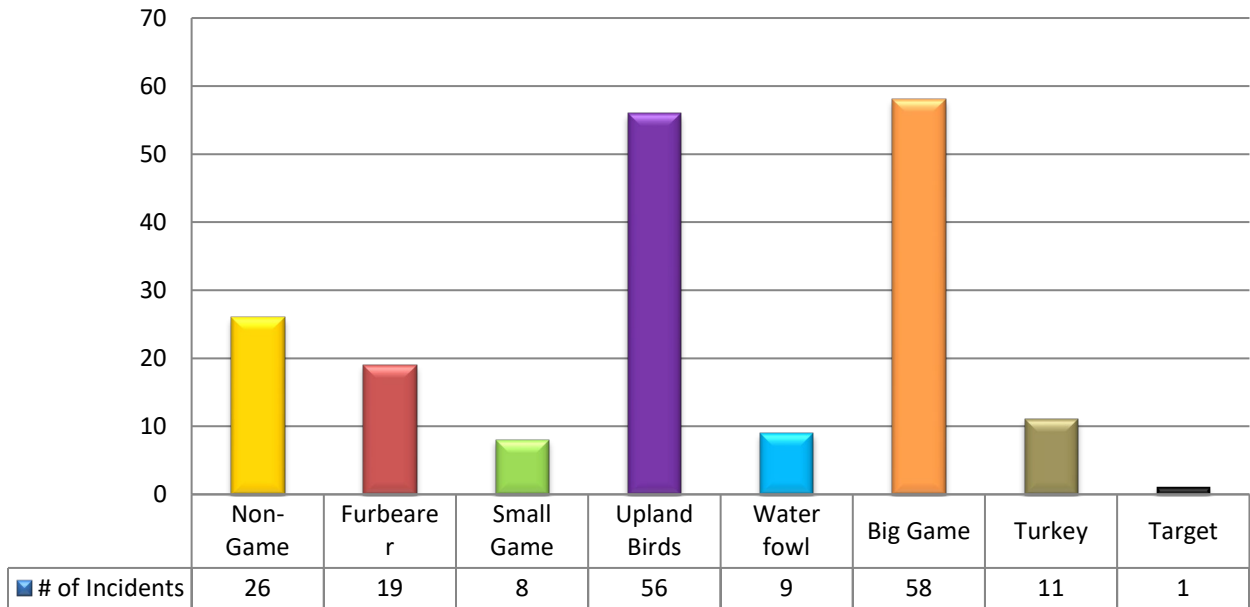


NOTE: The one youth victim/shooter are the same from a self-inflicted injury, the two 60+ are tree stand falls.

Type of Game Hunted During 2020 Nebraska Hunting Incidents



Type of Game Hunted During Incidents 2000 – 2020



Non-game includes all mammals and birds not listed in the hunting guide (coyote, prairie dog, porcupine, woodchuck, common pigeon, European starling, English sparrow, etc.)

Furbearer includes all animals listed as fur bearers in the hunting guide (bobcat, mink, raccoon, badger, red fox, gray fox, Virginia opossum, long-tailed weasel, striped skunk, etc.)

Small Game includes rabbits and squirrels

Upland Birds includes pheasant, quail, dove, snipe, woodcock, partridge, rail and grouse

Waterfowl includes ducks, geese and coot

Big Game includes deer, antelope, elk, mountain (bighorn) sheep and mountain lion

Turkey includes all species of wild turkey

Target includes all types of target practice and sighting in equipment

Nebraska Hunting Incident Statistical Summary

Includes all hunting incidents resulting in injury or death which meet IHEA reporting criteria –
 Compiled by the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission
 1958 through 2020

NEBRASKA HUNTING INCIDENTS	1958 - 2020	2020 Only
Fatal injury	123	2
Non-fatal injury	812	3
TOTAL	935	5

Self-inflicted (includes fatal and non-fatal)	365	2
Caused by someone else (includes fatal and non-fatal)	563	0
TOTAL	928	2

PRIMARY CAUSES OF INCIDENTS	1958 - 2020	2020 Only
Victim covered by shooter swinging on game	176	0
Victim out of sight of shooter	88	0
Shooter stumbled and fell	65	0
Removing or placing a firearm in to vehicle	59	0
Riding in vehicle with loaded firearm	57	0
Victim moved into line of fire	55	0
Trigger caught on an object	41	0
Victim mistaken for game	36	0
Improper crossing of fence	27	0
Defective firearm	30	2
Unloading firearm	29	1
Firearm fell from insecure rest	22	0
Loading firearm	23	1
Careless or reckless handling of firearm	24	3
Horse play with loaded firearm	22	0
Ricochet	17	1
Fall from tree stand	16	2
Using firearm as rest or brace	6	0
Other	7	0

TOTAL INCIDENTS BY AGE

	1958 – 2020 Combined		2020 Calendar Year Only	
	Shooter	Victim	Shooter	Victim
0-9 years old	10	12	1	1
10-19 years old	363	358	0	0
20-29 years old	193	187	2	2
30-39 years old	95	134	0	0
40-49 years old	61	101	0	0
50-59 years old	38	63	0	0
Over 60 years old	32	42	0	2
Age unknown	88	21	0	0