

IOWA DNR

HUNTER EDUCATION PROGRAM

INSTRUCTOR UPDATE GUIDE



Photo Credit: R3 Clearing House

Iowa Department of Natural Resources
Hunter Education Program
Training Materials Spring 2026



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES



INSTRUCTOR CODE OF CONDUCT

All certified instructors must adhere to the twelve items listed below in addition to the rules, policies, and procedures that have been established for the Iowa Hunter Education Program. A violation of the Instructor Code of Conduct or any of the rules, policies, or procedures governing the program could result in a suspension of instructor privileges or decertification.

1. Be neat and clean in dress and appearance. When provided by DNR, wear Iowa Hunter Education Program approved apparel which includes orange vest, camouflage or orange instructor hat, instructor polo, or hunter education t-shirt.
2. Be organized and prepared for classes, clinics, or workshops.
3. Speak clearly and audibly, avoiding offensive language, off color humor, references and expressions. This includes political opinions. Be polite and courteous to any and all people.
4. Teach material outlined in the manual as a minimum, adding and enhancing as needed. Present material in a clear and interesting, manner, using a variety of teaching techniques (i.e., not just constantly lecturing or reading from a book). Use personal stories only when needed to make an appropriate and specific point.
5. Present the Iowa Department of Natural Resources and its programs in a positive and straightforward manner. Negative comments about the Department, its programs or staff will not be tolerated.
6. Set the students at ease, respond to their needs, encourage them to participate and show respect for other viewpoints.
7. Control the class and limit inappropriate discussions and activities.
8. Be precise, accurate and as complete as possible when answering questions and offer to find unknown answers. It is ok to say you don't know but will get back to them with the answer.
9. Stress legal and ethical actions throughout the class, regardless of personal point-of-view.
10. Handle problems promptly and fairly (i.e., late students, disruptive students, horseplay, etc.).
11. The safety and welfare of all students are the instructor's responsibility from the time the first student arrives until the last student leaves, including lunch and/or breaks. At no time should students or facilities be left unattended.
12. All state-owned and/or approved equipment used for classes, workshops, or other Department approved events must be handled in a safe and responsible manner. Instructors are responsible for the equipment from the time they acquire it until they return it. All equipment should be returned in the same condition if not better than when it was received. If damage or loss occurs to the equipment while in the instructor's possession they must notify their Outdoor Skill Specialist, Conservation Officer, or the Hunter Education Coordinator within twenty-four (24) hours of when the damage or loss occurred.
13. Complete all forms and reports required by the DNR for the accurate input and upkeep of the DNR online registration and instructor time tracking systems.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Iowa Hunter Education Instructor Association (IHEIA)	1
Hunter Education and Shooting Sports Program Staff	2
Iowa DNR Law Enforcement Officer Map	4
FY25 Hunter Education Program Details.....	5
2026 Camps and Workshops	6
2026 Shooting Sports State Tournaments	6
Course Administration Updates & Reminders	7
Hunter Education Standard Teaching Notes.....	9
New Online Course Providers	11
Hunter Education Next Steps.....	12
Non Agency Firearms Use Agreement Form.....	16
Firearms Maintenance / Inspection Record	17
2025 Hunting Incident Recap.....	18
Instructor Incentives	22
Who does a great job wearing this patch?	25

IAOWA HUNTER EDUCATION INSTRUCTOR ASSOCIATION (IHEIA)

www.iheia.com

IHEIA Mission: To promote and support Hunter Education in the State of Iowa.

The Iowa Hunter Education Instructor Association is the organized body of Iowa Hunter Education Instructors who, with close working relationship with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources is a body that can be used by hunters and by the state to increase the reputation of the sport of hunting. This can be accomplished by educating hunters so that they can become safer, knowledgeable and informed in an effort to reduce the number of hunting incidents which take place in the state and to help conserve the environment and natural resources. If the goals of the association are met, then hunting will enjoy a positive reputation and the sport will grow.



WHY SHOULD YOU SUPPORT THE IHEIA?

The IHEIA partners with the DNR on all advance hunter education courses that introduce both youth and adults to hunting. These programs go beyond the basics of hunter education and include opportunities for mentorship and the development of social support which are critical to creating life-long supporters of hunting.

OFFICERS	NAME	E-MAIL
President	Chris Bartee	bluecreekhunter@gmail.com
Pres. Elect	Bonny Olerich	bonnyks34@gmail.com
Secretary	Amy Buckendahl	amy.buckendahl@gmail.com
Treasurer	Rick Cerwick	iheiatreasurer@gmail.com
Western Directors	Vacant Dakota Popp	naturalistpopp@gmail.com
Northeast Directors	Marc Bartee	marcbardee66@gmail.com
Southeast Directors	Chelsea Rowcliffe	chelseaewan325@gmail.com
	Bruce Bindewald	bindewald79@gmail.com
	Aaron Ohlsen	aohlsen43@gmail.com

MEMBERSHIP LEVELS

Annual IHEIA Membership: \$15.00

Biannual IHEIA Membership: \$25.00

Lifetime IHEIA Membership: \$300.00

Senior Lifetime Membership (55+): \$120.00

For every new or renewal membership sold at a workshop, those names will be put in a drawing for an Outdoor Edge Le Duck Compact Hunting Knife. A winner will be drawn at each workshop.



IHEIA MEMBERSHIP CHALLENGE

Every renewal, lifetime (past lifetime members will be added in to the drawing), or new membership paid for by April 30 of each year will be entered into a drawing for a chance at one of the following prizes:

- Henry Mini Bolt .22 Rifle (Donated by Henry)
- \$50 Gift Card to Bass Pro Shops (Donated by IHEIA)

HUNTER EDUCATION AND SHOOTING SPORTS PROGRAM STAFF

Megan Wisecup

Education, Outreach and Marketing Section Supervisor
Communications, Outreach & Marketing Bureau
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E-mail: Megan.Wisecup@dnr.iowa.gov



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Zach Benttine

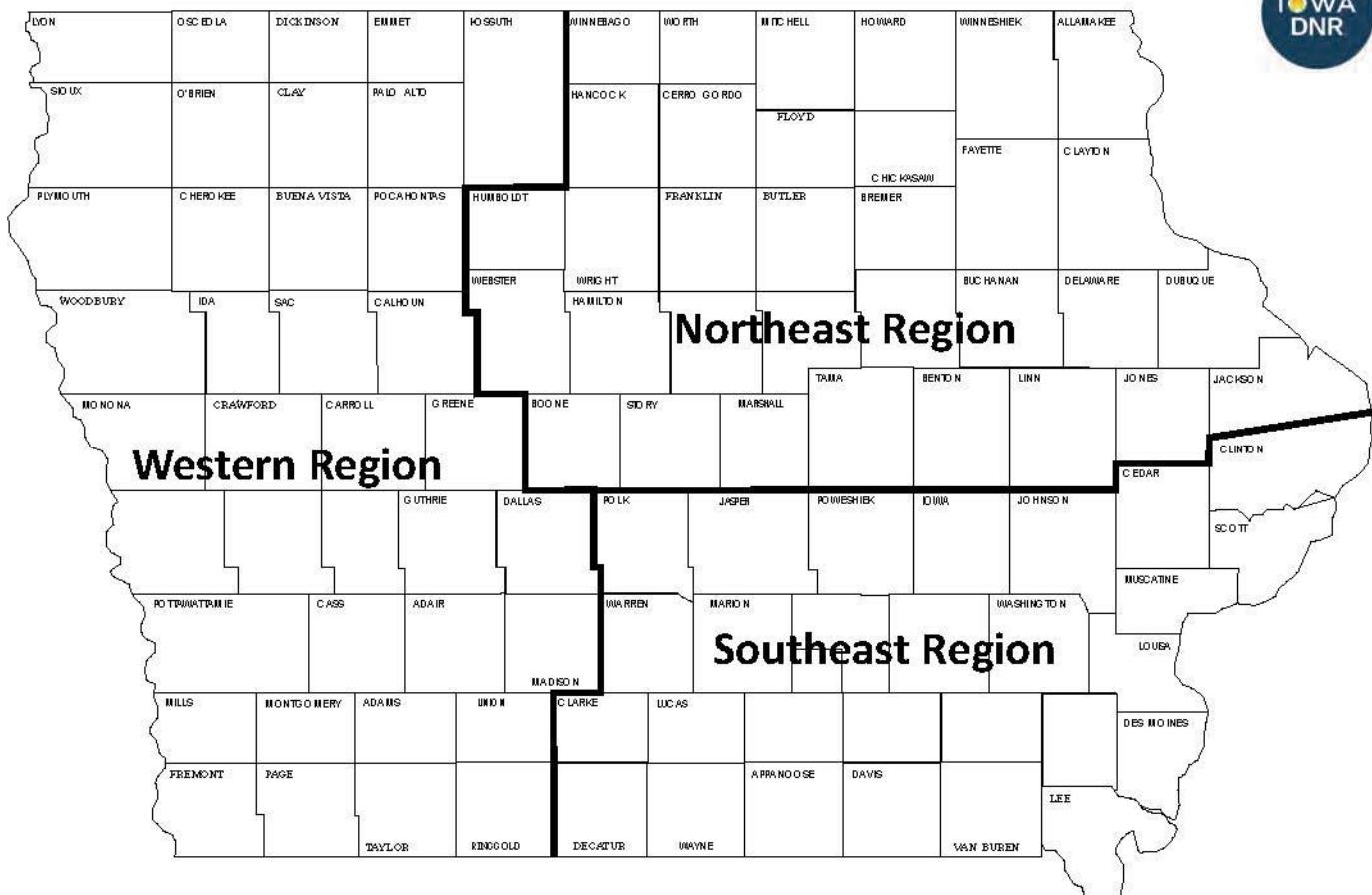
Archery Education and Outreach Coordinator
Communications, Outreach & Marketing Bureau
Phone: 515-205-8709
E-mail: Zachary.Benttine@dnr.iowa.gov

Vacant

Olofson and Banner Shooting Ranges Asst. Manager
Communications, Outreach & Marketing Bureau
Phone: 515-330-7170
E-mail:



Outdoor Skills Specialist Map



WESTERN REGION

Ajay Winter

Ajay.Winter@dnr.iowa.gov
(515) 669-7201



SOUTH EAST REGION

Rose Danaher

Rose.Danaher@dnr.iowa.gov
(515) 238-4955



NORTH EAST REGION

Holly Schulte

Holly.Schulte@dnr.iowa.gov
(319) 530-9318

IOWA DNR LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER MAP



LAW ENFORCEMENT BUREAU

Colonel Craig Gitts, Chief

515-971-8136



Dest/kt1
Caron in Geog. Watson C-31
712-336-1840 [D]
712-260-1040 [E]

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Dist/Act 2
Carrollton EMC Johnson C-32
[REDACTED]

Investigator (Stationwide)
C-50 Main Run
(E) 641-308-7042

Training Coordinator (Statewide)
CS1 Sgt. Tyson Brown
(c)S1S-250-2527

License & Residency Schedules
Jackie McLean
101-519-669-1409

District 3
Canton Glen Gelly, C-33
[REDACTED]

Dist/Act 5
Contain Ded Vht to C-35
EIS 15-313-3700

10/10/25

FY25 HUNTER EDUCATION PROGRAM DETAILS

(JULY 1, 2024–JUNE 30, 2025)

Total Classes Held: 244

Total Students Certified: 11,617

New Instructor Workshops Held: 5

Certified Instructor Workshops Held: 20

New Instructors Certified: 74

Total Instructors Certified: 1,525

In FY 2025, we certified 11,617 students in Hunter Education. Of those students, 2,618 (22%) completed the Online/Field Day Course, 2,561 (22%) completed the Traditional Classroom Course, 5,203 (45%) completed the Adult (18+) Online Only Course, and 1,235 (11%) completed the Dual Online Only (21+/Residents only) Hunter Education and Handgun Safety Course. The average age of our online only student increased from 30 to 36.

We held 244 Hunter Education Classes across the state in 92 of the 99 counties. While this number of counties is similar to the previous two years, it is still lower than our goal of having at least one class and/or field day in each of our 99 counties. Of the in-person offerings for FY 2025, 125 (52%) were the Traditional Classroom Course and 119 (48%) were the Online/Field Day Course. Out of our total classes (Classroom and Field Day) we had 88 (36%) that offered live fire.

FUR HARVESTER EDUCATION

In FY 2025, the DNR partnered with the Iowa Trappers Association to host Learn to Furharvest Workshops across the state. These workshops are designed for people of all ages and introduces them to the basics. In total, there were nine Fur Harvester Education Workshops held that served approximately 161 participants and two advance courses designed to advance skills in pelt preparation.

ADVANCED HUNTER EDUCATION PROGRAMS

The DNR's Learn to Hunt programs included upland bird, virtual upland bird, rabbit, waterfowl, and turkey specific courses that reached 69 adults who had little to no hunting experience. In addition, the Field to Fork program introduced 38 adults to bowhunting by beginning archery practice in July and bolstering their confidence to hunt on their own by mid-October. Aside from weekly archery practice, a proficiency field day and butchering day were required for participants who were also provided season-long access to hunting locations provided by partners on both public and private land. A total of 164 adults have participated since 2018.



2026 CAMPS AND WORKSHOPS

OUTDOOR JOURNEY FOR GIRLS (OJ)

July 14–16, 2026 (Hickory Hills, Black Hawk County, IA)
August 3–5, 2026 (Wildwood Hills Ranch, St. Charles, IA)

OJ is a 3-day, 2-night workshop aimed at introducing outdoor skills to girls ages 12 to 15 years old in a supportive, learning environment where they have opportunities to try things “hands-on.” The outdoor skills include: canoeing and water safety, basic orienteering, fish and wildlife identification, archery, firearm safety and basic shooting, camping and outdoor survival, game care, furbearers and fur harvesting, fishing and preparing the catch, and Hunter Education Certification.

For more information visit: www.iwinr.com

BECOMING AN OUTDOORS WOMAN (BOW)

April 24–26, 2025 (Wesley Woods, Indianola, IA)

BOW is an international program aimed primarily at women, but is an opportunity for anyone 18 years or older to learn outdoor skills usually associated with hunting and fishing, but useful for many outdoor pursuits.

For more information visit: www.iowadnr.gov/bow

YOUTH HUNTER EDUCATION CHALLENGE (YHEC)

June 6, 2026 (Clinton County, IA)

Iowa YHEC—the Youth Hunter Education Challenge—is a day-long event that takes place each June. Youth from all over Iowa come to compete in 8 events, learn about the outdoors, and have fun with other youth and adults that have similar interests. The events include four shooting events (archery, muzzleloading rifle, shotgun, and small-bore rifle) and four non-shooting events (wildlife identification, orienteering, hunter safety trail, and written exam). Most youth compete as part of a team of five from their area, but youth can register as individuals, as well. There are two age categories, Junior (ages 12–14) and Senior (ages 15–18).

For more information contact Jill Schmidt with Clinton County Conservation 563-847-7202.

2026 SHOOTING SPORTS STATE TOURNAMENTS

IOWA ARCHERY IN THE SCHOOLS

March 27-29, 2026 Varied Industries Bldg (State Fairgrounds)

STATE JUNIOR OLYMPIC INTERNATIONAL TRAP

May 16–17, 2026 AVAD Hunt Club (Coon Rapids)

SCHOLASTIC CLAY TARGET PROGRAM

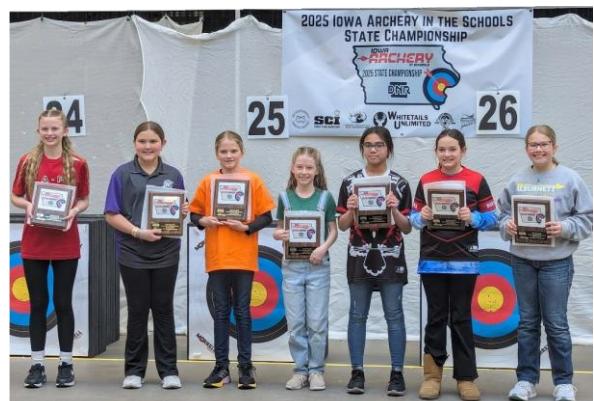
June 8–14, 2026 TRAP ISTA Homegrounds (Cedar Falls)

June 18–20, 2026 SPORTING CLAYS Location: TBD

June 23–26, 2026 SKEET Location: TBD

SCHOLASTIC ACTION SHOOTING PROGRAM

Date and Location: TBD



COURSE ADMINISTRATION UPDATES & REMINDERS

Everyone is welcome to attend a hunter education course, but only persons **11 and older may obtain a certificate** immediately upon completion of the course. Eleven-year-olds may take the course for certification, but their certificate will not become valid until their 12th birthday.

Minimum class size shall be 10 students, unless prior approval is given by the DNR. Instructors need to teach with at least one additional adult 18 years of age or older present in the classroom whom is not participating as a student in the class. **It is recommended that all classes have a minimum instructor/student ratio of 1:10**. More instructors will be needed per 10 students for some field day activities and all live fire activities.

Instructors are expected to keep students informed of their progress in the course. Students experiencing difficulty in grasping program concepts or problems relating to gun handling skills, developing responsible attitudes towards firearms or instructor authority, and classroom rules should be counseled with their parent or guardian present. Efforts should be made to resolve these problems prior to denying a hunter education certificate. Difficulty of this nature should be documented and recorded in the student's respective notes section within the online class report via the Go Outdoors Iowa Event Management System. Student knowledge will be evaluated on the written examination provided by the DNR. **Minimum passing grade for the exam is 75%** (no more than 12 questions out of the 50 may be answered incorrectly). If a student does not score at least 75%, please go over the questions missed with the student to make sure he/she understands the questions or determine if they may have a reading disability. **Each student must also demonstrate safe firearm handling techniques**. Evaluation through field activities or gun handling demonstrations is mandatory. Previous experience or training cannot be substituted for attendance in the course. Only individuals who satisfactorily complete the entire course are eligible for certification.

Iowa accepts all Hunter Education Certificates issued by another state or by a foreign nation and vice versa as long as the International Hunter Education Association—USA content and delivery standards are met. All resident and non-resident hunters born after January 1, 1972, must have a valid hunter education certificate to buy a license in Iowa.

USE OF LIVE AMMUNITION

Due to safety concerns, the use of live ammunition, primers or gun powder is not permitted during indoor classroom training activities. Dummy ammunition must be used for all firearm/ammunition related activities, including field courses except for live-firing activities conducted at a controlled shooting range or approved area. Live ammunition and gun powder may be used for shooting demonstration purposes only under closely supervised conditions outdoors or at an indoor shooting range. Students must be supervised while handling any firearm or ammunition. **Students must not be allowed to handle firearms and live ammunition together except during supervised shooting range activities**. All live-firing activities must strictly adhere to DNR shooting range safety procedures as outlined in this booklet. Air-Gun or BB Gun shooting is considered a live-firing activity.

ANTI-HUNTING PROTEST/PUBLICITY

Please notify the OSS and local Conservation Officer immediately in the event of an anti-hunting protest, rally, or publicity involving a DNR-sponsored course. Don't overreact, remember that the hunter education class is open to the public and everyone is welcome as long as they are not disruptive.

HUNTER ED STUDENT MANUALS

Due to an increased printing costs, all student manuals are not to be given away. The DNR is working on a take home pamphlet that should be available later in 2026.

NEW EXAMS

The new exams made it to each county last July. If you have not received the new exam please contact your local conservation officer for assistance. Please destroy the old exam once you have received the new version. There are currently no extra copies available at this time.

COURSE SET UP AND APPROVAL

Officers must be contacted 60 days in advance of the course starting date to ensure dates are available AND to make

any necessary arrangements for equipment and supplies. Once a date has been agreed upon, contact your regional OSS or local Conservation Officer to create the class in our registration system.

COUSE CLOSE OUT / STUDENT CERTIFICATION

Instructors enter final reports including student attendance and passing status, notes, email certificates and instructor hours. If there are students who had registration issues or you are unable to issue a certification, please collect their name and phone number and provide it to your OSS. They will follow up with the participants early the following week. Conservation Officers will confirm the list of instructors is complete and hours are entered during or immediately after class. CO's and instructors cannot enter hours for anyone other than themselves. Instructors hours are complete and reasonable (14 hours or less per day).

Classes should be closed out by 72 hours of course completion.

IOWA HUNTER ED REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL INSTRUCTORS

Iowa Hunter Ed Instructors who have not completed the student course in Iowa must do so in order to be compliant with Iowa Code. This is for all instructors even if they were born before January 1 1972. Instructors can simply take the exam while conducting a course and send their final score to their local OSS to complete this requirement.

2025 INACTIVE INSTRUCTOR REMOVAL

Instructors must teach a minimum of one course every two years. In addition, instructors must attend one continuing workshop every two years. Instructors who have not met these requirements by May 1 will be removed. If you or another instructor have questions, please speak to your OSS.

IHEA STANDARD CHANGES

The establishment of uniform hunter education standards is crucial for ensuring teaching consistency in safety protocols and ethical practices across all jurisdictions. This standardization is the foundation for reciprocity, allowing a hunter certification from one state to be recognized and valid in any of the other 49 states. Resources for these changes are listed in subsequent pages as well as on our instructor resources at iowadnr.gov Muzzleloading and Archery are required sections again. Although they were not required to be covered since 2013, Iowa continued to cover them. Additional teaching points were added to those topics as well as Non-Lead Ammunition. A section will be added to educate on Air Gun safety. IHEA has added a course for instructors at learnhunting.org.

HANDS ON HUNTER ED ACITIVITIES

Countless educational research studies have shown the incredible impact of hands-on learning versus solely lecture based learning environments. Hands-on opportunities significantly improves student understanding, engagement, and most importantly retention of important details. Having an active approach when working with students connects topics covered during reading and conversation. The goal is to make all students in the Hunter Education program become active participants in the class through valuable experiences, rich content, and open communication. We'd like to know more about what you're doing to make your classes memorable, engaging and hands on. Please visit this link to let us know!



HUNTER EDUCATION STANDARD TEACHING NOTES

CONSIDERATIONS FOR NON-LEAD AMMUNITION

Some jurisdictions regulate certain calibers/gauges and ammunition materials in specific locations or when hunting specific game species. Lead ammunition is not allowed everywhere, and alternatives exist such as copper, steel, and tungsten ammunition. **Using lead-free ammunition or best management practices that reduce the risk of unintended ingestion of lead by non-target wildlife is encouraged. When not required by law, use of lead free ammunition or actions to reduce unintended ingestion of lead is voluntary.** Hunters that desire to reduce lead residue ingestion while using lead ammunition can take the following voluntary actions:

- Select appropriate ammunition
- Recover spent materials
- Practice with your chosen ammunition (lead or lead-free) to understand how it performs.
- Use all legal means to recover the game
- Remove entire animal as permitted by local jurisdictions

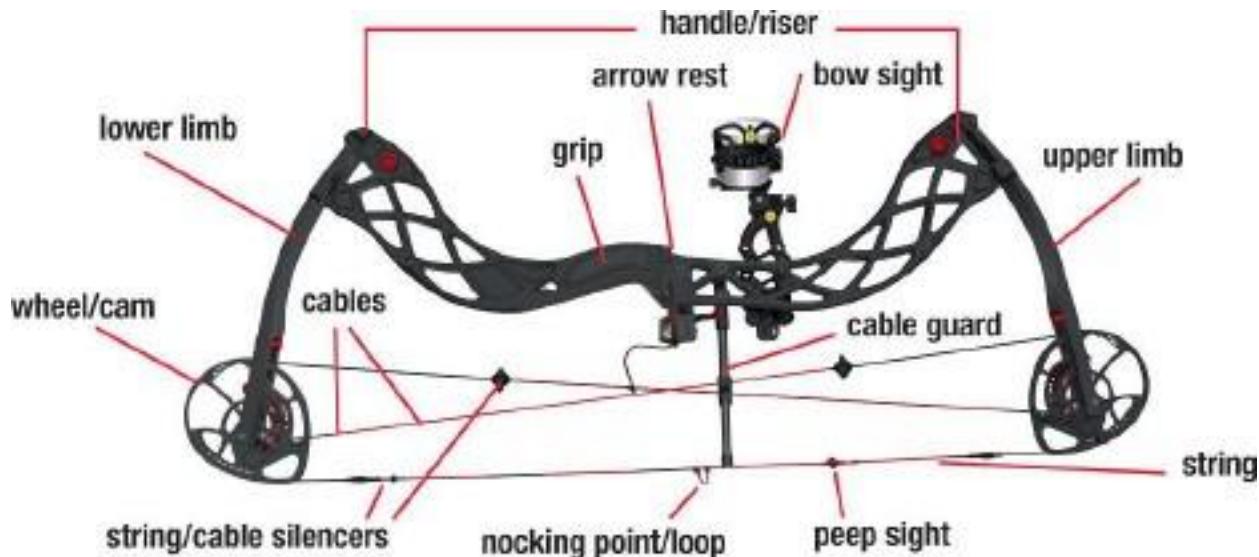
The highlighted text represents required language to be used within the course. This text is directly representative of the guidelines created by the Midwest Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies. A significant number of industry partners contributed to the creation of these guidelines and the specific language in this standard is working to support the standardized dialogue around this topic.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR AIRGUN

- Read and understand manufacturer instructions for loading, unloading, and use.
- All firearm safety rules remain applicable for airguns.
- Practice caution with air cylinders and always have them filled at a reputable filling station.

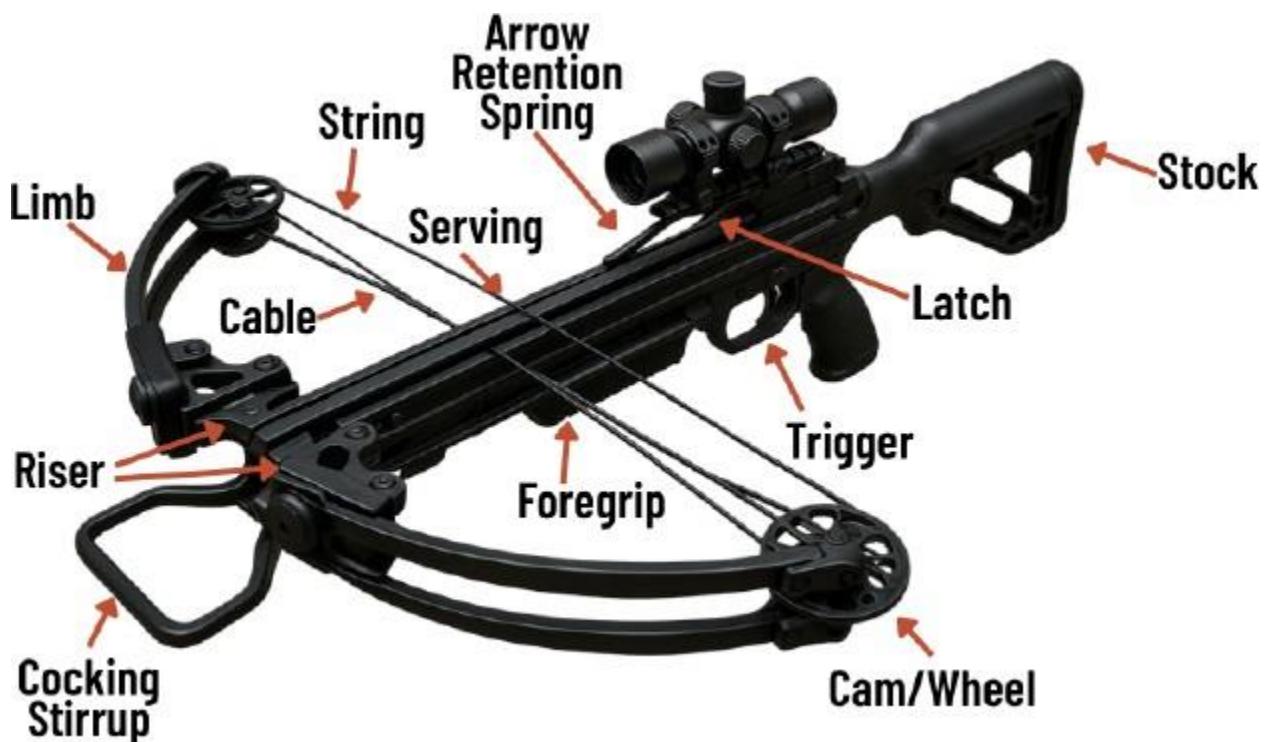
CONSIDERATIONS FOR COMPOUND BOW

- Release arrow when the path to target is clear.
- Have a proper backstop.
- Do not shoot in the general direction of other people.
- Never shoot straight up.
- Use finger and arm protection.
- Do not travel, walk, or ride with a nocked arrow.
- Carry arrows in a quiver with a solid cover to protect arrow points.
- Check your equipment before each use.
- Follow manufacturer's instructions.
- Do not dry-fire.



CONSIDERATIONS FOR CROSSBOW

- Do not dry-fire a crossbow.
- Inspect bowstrings regularly.
- Adhere to manufacturers instructions.
- Ensure fingers are outside of the path that the string travels.
- Do not walk, transport, or carry a loaded crossbow.
- Keep finger off trigger and outside trigger guard until ready to shoot.
- Keep arrows and broadheads in quiver when not in use.
- When using a tree stand, raise and lower a cocked but unloaded crossbow using a haul line with the front of the crossbow pointed toward the ground.



CONSIDERATIONS FOR MUZZLELOADER

- Always point the muzzle in a safe direction.
- Never use modern, smokeless powder - only use black powder or a safe synthetic substitute.
- Do not cock the hammer of a muzzleloader until ready to fire. Utilize the half-cock position as a safety when the pan is primed or the nipple is capped.
- Always use eye and ear protection.
- Never smoke or use an open flame when near black powder.
- Load powder from a calibrated powder measure.
- Use only brass loading equipment.
- Load only one charge at a time.
- Never blow down the barrel when loading.
- Unload before transporting the muzzleloader.
- Be attentive to a charged muzzleloader at all times.
- Follow manufacturer's instructions for loading and unloading at all times.

NEW ONLINE COURSE PROVIDERS

After many years of having a single online course provider for hunter ed, our state is now joining most others in providing additional course providers for hunter ed students. Previously, Iowa has had two course options for hunter education students of all ages provided by a single vendor, Kalkomey. Last fall, Recademics and the National Rifle Association were both added as additional online course providers. Just as before, students under 17 will be issued a Course Completion Voucher to be taken to any Field Day course in the state. For students 18 and older a Hunter Education Certificate will be issued upon completion which will also be added to their profile in gooutdoorsiowa.com. This pattern identically follows our current protocols with Kalkomey.



Iowa Online Course Completion Voucher

The person named below has successfully completed the online coursework for the "Internet + Mandatory Field Day Training" portion of the Hunter Education Requirements for the Iowa Department of Natural Resources.

*This proof of completion is valid for 365 days from date of issuance.
This is not a valid hunter education certificate.*



—
Student Signature

\${firstName} \${lastName}

DOB: \${birthdate}MM-DD-YYYY|Z

\${address.streetAddress}

Completion Date: \${createdAt}YYYY-MM-DD|Z

\${address.locality}, \${address.region}

Voucher ID: \${certificate.id}

To complete the hunter education program and receive a hunter education certificate the student must attend an in-person, mandatory field day.

HUNTER EDUCATION NEXT STEPS

This section contains crucial information for you, our students so that you can continue participating in hunting related activities after completing their hunter education course.

PURCHASING A LICENSE

All Iowa hunting and fishing licenses can be purchased at gooutdoorsiowa.com and obtain proper tags and licenses is the next step after taking hunter education. By clicking on the QR code you can:

- Purchase Your Hunting License
- Purchase Your Hunter Ed Hard Card



PLACES TO SHOOT

Iowa is full of great places to shoot so chances are there is a shooting range not far from you. Some ranges have full time staff available during hours of operation and others are not staffed at all. To find ranges near you, scan the QR Code below.



The Iowa DNR operates four public shooting ranges across Iowa. These are great places to attend classes to further your knowledge, skills and confidence as a target shooter.

- Olosfon Shooting Range, Polk City
- Banner Shooting Range, Indianola
- Cody Shooting Range, Long Grove

CONTINUING EDUCATION FOR YOUTH

Many County Conservation Boards and local Non- Government Agencies offer a variety of programming for students to gain more knowledge and skills regarding outdoor recreation. We would encourage new hunters to reach out to these organizations in your area and see how you can get involved.

Groups such as:

- Delta Waterfowl
- National Wild Turkey Federation

- Pheasants Forever
- Izaak Walton League of Iowa

The DNR's learn to hunt web page www.iowadnr.gov/learntohunt as well as many Non-Government Organization's website offers a variety of helpful tips, videos, handouts, etc. for the new hunter.

As a graduate of Hunter Education know you will begin receiving e-mails with additional information about hunting from the DNR.

The DNR also lists a variety of Advanced Hunter Education Opportunities on the Go Outdoors Iowa Events at: www.events.gooutdoorsiowa.com. Check back to this site often as mentored hunt opportunities, species specific seminars, wingshooting clinics, etc. will be posted on this site throughout the year.



Both the Learn To Hunt and Find an Event Pages can be found by scanning the QR Code above.

MENTORSHIP & SOCIAL SUPPORT FOR ADULTS

Mentorship and social support as adults begin their journey as a new hunter is vital to long term success. Having a friend and/or family member to hunt with is key to continued participation and also so you can continue to grow and practice the skills and objectives to become a lifelong hunter. DNR offers the following programs designed to help adults take their next steps.

Learnhunting.org connects new hunters with experienced instructors. Scan the QR Code below to visit the site.



The **Field to Fork** program teaches the basics of archery deer hunting to adults. To find out more, contact the hunter education coordinator at 515-725-8200.



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

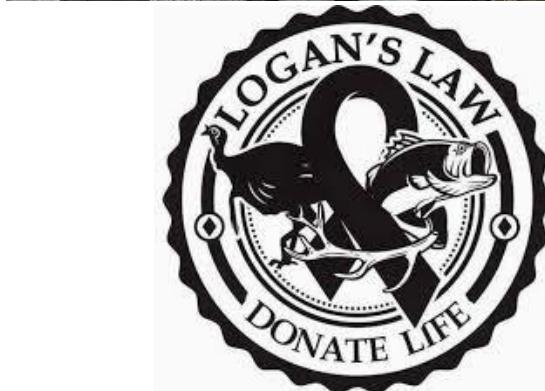
Have a wildlife, boating, fishing or hunting regulation question? Iowa has dedicated Conservation Officers across Iowa who can help! **Find your Local Conservation Officer** by scanning the QR Code.



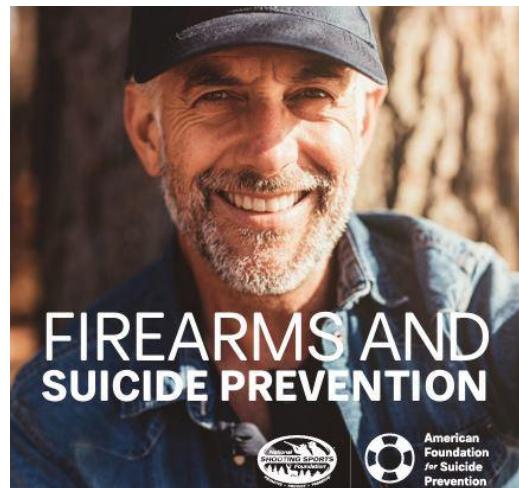
Wondering about the rules and regulation for hunting before heading out? Not sure about your bag limit, shooting hours or specific zones? Find the regulation answers you need by scanning the QR Code.



Did you know that Iowa has a law allowing hunting, fishing, trapping license buyers to declare as an organ, eye and tissue donor when they purchase a license? To find out more about Logan's Law, scan the QR code.



Did you know that firearms are used in 50% of all suicides in the United States? Reaching out can save a life. The National Shooting Sports Foundation has resources. Scan the QR Code to find out more.



To our partners or volunteers,

This letter will serve as an agreement between your organization or you individually and the Department of Natural Resources regarding utilizing your own firearms for the DNR's Hunter Education Program. All firearms used for live-fire activity must be inspected by a gunsmith every three years and reported on a Non-Agency Firearm Use Form. The form must be completed and received by the DNR prior to any non-DNR firearm to be used in any hunter education course.

Personally owned firearms can be used in courses for two purposes: non-live fire (display/action function only) and instructor demonstrated live-fire. Handguns are not to be used for live fire, but can be used for display or demonstration of action function ONLY. Personally owned firearms are not to be fired by students. Firearms owned by partner organizations can be fired by students during the supervised range activities.

A receipt of the gunsmith's inspection of each firearm must be mailed to your Outdoor Skills Specialist. If a receipt is not available or the inspection was donated, fill out the firearm inspection form attached to this agreement. A new agreement must be completed and returned after each tri-annual inspection. Please see additional pages for further information.

The Non Agency Owned Firearms Use form can also be completed online by using the QR Code Below.

If you have any questions concerning this agreement contract, you may contact me at 515-350-8091, e-mail at Jamie.Cook@dnr.iowa.gov.

Sincerely,

Jamie Cook
Hunter Education Coordinator
Education, Outreach and Marketing Bureau



 SCAN ME

NON AGENCY FIREARMS USE AGREEMENT FORM

If you agree to the above terms please check the appropriate box and sign the agreement below and return to me. I will send you a signed copy.

Personally Owned Firearms (for display or demonstration of action function ONLY)

Your Name: _____

Teaching Location: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Personally Owned Firearms (for instructor demonstrated live-fire use)

Your Name: _____

Teaching Location: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Firearms Purchased or Donated by Your Organization (For general live fire use)

Your Name: _____

Teaching Location: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

****Please use the attached sheets for inspection records.

FIREARMS MAINTENANCE / INSPECTION RECORD

(Required for Live Fire Use)

Note: Please feel free to copy and attach additional pages as needed.

Date: _____ Inspected By: _____

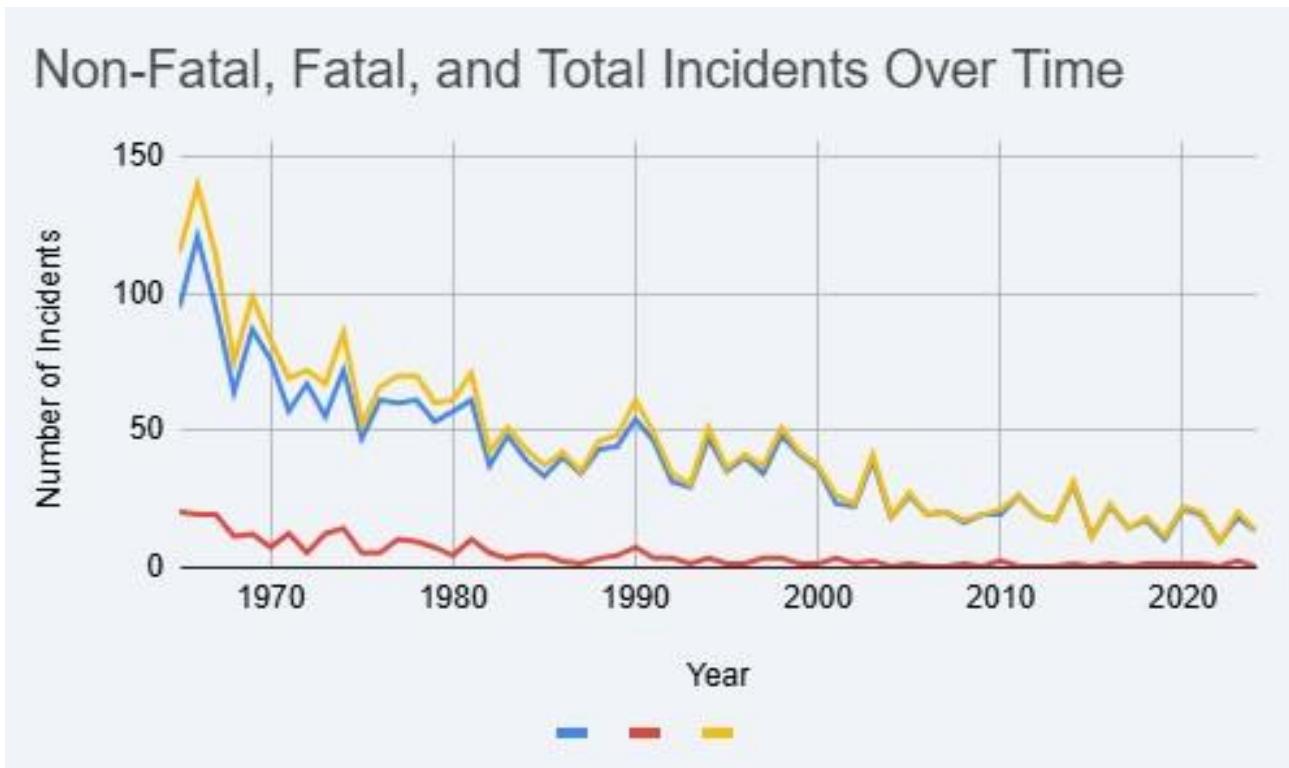
I, _____, have inspected and cleaned the above listed firearms

2025 HUNTING INCIDENT RECAP

A “Hunting Incident” is described as an incident in which a person is injured or there is damage to property exceeding one hundred dollars (\$100) by a hunting firearm or bow outside of the home arising from the activity of hunting including travel to and from the hunting field.

After reviewing the individual hunting incident reports, we continue to see an increase in the number of property damage incidents across the state. Most of the personal injury incidents involved target fixation, which is the failure to check in front of or beyond the target. Ensuring that hunters are properly identifying their target and what is beyond it before discharging their firearm should be stressed in all 2026 courses. We also need to continue to stress in the classroom the importance of zones of fire, having a safe backstop and knowing the location of other hunters.

In addition, our staff found no evidence establishing a relationship between incident rates and the number of licenses sold over the past 20 years. (Red = Fatal Blue = Non-Fatal Yellow = Total)



2025 HUNTING INCIDENTS

Personal Injuries: 5

Property Damage: 6

Fatalities: 1

Total Incidents: 13

Elevated Incidents: 1

The following incidents were selected from the larger group of 2025 incidents. The full list and narratives are available to instructors by accessing iowadnr.gov

JANUARY 8, 2025, BREMER, WHITE-TAILED DEER - PROPERTY DAMAGE

On January 8, 2025, a Bremer County officer responded to a report from homeowners in Janesville, IA of a bullet striking their house. Their neighbor admitted to shooting at a deer with a .50 caliber muzzleloader just minutes before the incident. Further investigation, including a scene analysis by a Conservation Officer, concluded that the bullet, consistent with the type the neighbor was shooting, came from his direction. The timing and elevation also matched, leading the officer to conclude the neighbor was the shooter. The homeowners were informed of the findings and did not wish to press charges, having already ordered a replacement window costing around \$660.00. The shooter was a hunter education graduate and this incident appears to be the result of target fixation where there is a failure to be aware of what was in front of or beyond the target.

JULY 7, 2025, LINN, GROUNDHOG - PERSONAL INJURY

An investigation was initiated on July 7, 2025, into a hunting incident at a Cedar River cabin in rural Linn County, where the shooter was interviewed by an investigator and State Park Ranger. The shooter admitted to accidentally shooting a 9-year-old boy fishing on the riverbank with a .410 shotgun while attempting to shoot a groundhog, having mistaken moving leaves for the animal. Upon arriving at the scene on July 10, 2025, the investigator noted multiple residences were within 200 yards of the shooting location. The victim, who initially thought he was stung by a bee, was treated by EMS, taken to the University of Iowa Hospitals, and later released, though he has pellet marks and his mother was advised he would require monitoring for lead levels. The Linn County Sheriff's Office secured the evidence, and State Park Ranger Wagner issued the shooter with seven citations, prohibited him from possessing firearms, and was coordinating with the Linn County Attorney's Office regarding additional charges. The shooter was not a hunter education graduate and this incident appears to be the result of target fixation where there is a failure to be aware of what was in front of or beyond the target.

SEPTEMBER 21, 2025, CHEROKEE, SQUIRREL - PERSONAL INJURY

On September 21, 2025, at 11:20 AM, two hunters were hunting at Martin's Access County Park in Cherokee County. The victim entered the woods with a .22 rifle while the shooter stayed near the edge. A few moments later they shot their 20-gauge shotgun after hearing rustling and claiming to see a "turkey face," striking the victim in the abdomen, face, and leg. Due to a dead cell phone, the shooter drove the injured victim to his Storm Lake residence, as requested by the victim, before calling an ambulance. The victim was transported to Buena Vista Regional Medical Center and then Lifeflighted to Omaha Hospital, where they underwent surgery to remove pellets from their liver, spleen, and colon. Pellets remain in their head and right leg. The victim was later released in stable condition. The shooter was a hunter education graduate and this incident appears to be the result of not positively identifying the target.

SEPTEMBER 27, 2024, WASHINGTON, SQUIRREL - FATALITY

On September 27, 2025, a conservation officer was notified of a hunting incident near Brighton and responded to the property, where they met a hunter, who was directing emergency personnel. The hunter had been squirrel hunting with the shooter and victim, and reported hearing a shot followed by yelling that the victim had been shot. They were approximately 80 yards west of the victim, and had heard two shots in total that day. Shortly after, the conservation officer spoke with the shooter near the victim, where they admitted to shooting once mistaking the victim's head for a squirrel, hearing a "thud" and seeing the victim fall. The bullet struck the victim in the back of the head near the base of the skull, killing them. The shooter was a hunter education graduate and this incident appears to be the result of not positively identifying the target.

OCTOBER 25, 2025, PALO ALTO, UPLAND BIRD - PROPERTY DAMAGE

On October 25, 2025, a Conservation Officer was dispatched to a report of hunters shooting too close to a building near Ayrshire, IA. Upon arrival, the officer found a bullet hole in a horse barn and a slug inside. The property owner had already left to find the pheasant hunters, whom the officer located shortly thereafter. The shooter admitted he believed he hit the building, explaining they shot twice at a pheasant and the second shot "didn't sound right." The hunters showed the officer their position, and the scene was documented with photographs and GPS. Later, the officer confirmed the projectile was a 12-gauge slug, not birdshot, and the shooter was cited the next day for shooting a slug

over a roadway. The shooter was a hunter education graduate and this incident appears to be the result of target fixation where there is a failure to be aware of what was in front of or beyond the target and not using the correct ammunition for quarried game.

OCTOBER 25, 2025, BUTLER, WHITE-TAILED DEER - ELEVATED STAND

On Saturday, October 25, 2025, a Conservation Officer responded to a hunting-related incident after a radio call for an individual who had fallen from a tree. Upon being notified that the incident was hunting-related, Officers proceeded to the location where they found the injured individual, with his wife and son. The victim was transported to Mercy North Iowa with multiple serious injuries, including several broken ribs, air leakage outside of the lungs, internal bleeding, and a broken lumbar vertebra, but was expected to recover fully after surgery. It was reported that the victim called his wife after falling from the tree stand, stating he felt something wasn't right while climbing in and fell while attempting to exit. The son, who had set up the stand, confirmed that his father, Lyle, was not wearing a safety harness, and the officers observed that the tree stand, which was secured with two ratchet straps, had a detached top strap. The victim was a hunter education graduate and this incident appears to be the result of improper treestand installation and the lack of wearing a safety harness.

NOVEMBER 22, 2025, BUTLER, UPLAND BIRD - PROPERTY DAMAGE

On November 22, 2025, a pheasant hunter fired two shots at a rooster pheasant flying east while hunting along the north-south fence line on the west edge of his farmed field. Based on the recovered shotgun shells, the shooter was approximately 86 yards from a nearby residence at the time of the shots, with a clear line of sight to a window. Evidence suggests that one of the two rounds of #4 shot fired likely struck the home, causing the observed damage. The shooter was not a hunter education graduate and this incident appears to be the result of target fixation where there is a failure to be aware of what was in front of or beyond the target.

DECEMBER 2, 2025, BUTLER, UPLAND BIRD, PERSONAL INJURY

On December 2, 2025, an investigator was notified of a potential hunting injury in Butler County. The shooter was instructed to remain at Cedar Falls Hospital for an interview while the victim was transported to Mercy One Hospital in Waterloo for treatment of a gunshot wound to the right thigh. The shooter stated that his firearm, a Winchester Super X3, discharged while he was exiting the vehicle striking the victim whose statement was consistent with this, suggesting the gun discharged upon hitting the car door. The shooter was a hunter education graduate and this incident appears to be the result of careless handling of a firearm while removing it from a vehicle.

DECEMBER 6, 2025, RINGGOLD, WHITE-TAILED DEER - PROPERTY DAMAGE

On December 6, 2025, a Conservation Officer and a Ringgold County Deputy investigated a report of a cow shot by a deer hunter near Clearfield, Iowa. The property was being used by hunters with the landowner's permission. The cattle owner reported the hunters called him after shooting the cow and agreed to pay him \$4,000 for it. He allowed them to butcher the cow and leave. The shooter admitted to shooting the cow. He stated he heard a noise he thought was a deer while walking into a snowy field at dawn and shot into the wooded draw from approximately 30 ft. The animal ran into a harvested bean field, where they shot it a second time, realizing it was a cow after it went down. The shooter was a hunter education graduate and this incident appears to be the result of not positively identifying the target.

NOTES

INSTRUCTOR INCENTIVES

Years of Service Pins



5-Year Award



Filet Knife

10-Year Award



Thermacell

15-Year Award



Swing Blaze

20-Year Award



Butcher Lite Kit

25-Year Award



Blind Bag

30-Year Award



Soft Gun Case

35-Year Award



3.5" RAZORLITE™ EDC

40-Year Award

Browning Cross Country Windcutter Jacket

45-Year Award

Grizzly 12 Can Insulated Cooler

50-Year Award

.22 Henry Lever Action Octagon Rifle

50 Years of Service Award Recipients

Instructor Name	County	Year Awarded
James Hoffman	Polk	2012
Michael Runyan	Monroe	2012
Dwight Moats	Cherokee	2012
Gerald Pallesen	Cherokee	2012
Roger Will	Emmet	2012
Arthur Ades	Cerro Gordo	2012
Bill Ogan	Clinton	2013
Jim Haring	Clinton	2013
Dave Junker	Chickasaw	2014
Sam Rodgers	Wapello	2014
Mike Hoing	Lyon	2017
Roger Klopp	Plymouth	2017
William Hardisty	Pottawattamie	2019
Thomas Hanesworth	Clinton	2022
James Johnston	Clinton	2022
Darrel Batterson	Jasper	2022
Ace Hendricks	Warren	2023
Dennis Noack	Obrien	2023
Garry Brandenburg	Marshall	2024
George Morgan	Lee	2024
Dennis Frisch	Cedar	2025
Kevin Blazek	Adair	2026
Gene Olsen	Decatur	2026

Instructor Name	County	Year Awarded
Craig Fish	Tama	2026
Larry Stott	Allamakee	2026
Mike Griffin	Jackson	2026

INSTRUCTOR DISCOUNTS AT IHEA-USA

As active hunter education instructors with the Iowa DNR, you are automatically provided a membership to the International Hunter Education Association (IHEA-USA) as an instructor member for attending this workshop. Memberships are activated by July 1 each year.

Membership is exclusive to state agency hunter education teams and the education volunteers representing these agencies. The IHEA-USA's mission is to serve educators such as yourself with tools and research to help deliver hunter education.

As an IHEA-USA member, you are invited to attend our annual International Education Conference as an online participant for free. It is a multi-day event that travels around the country. All presentations will be recorded and available live and made available on the IHEA-USA website if you are not available during the Conference days.

You will also be automatically entered into all our contests during the year and receive login credentials to our website as a member. After you login into the site <https://www.ihea-usa.org/>, you can navigate to our Instructor Member Industry Discount section to take advantage of the dozens of industry discounts that IHEA-USA brokers on your behalf. This includes deals on new firearms, bows, camo, optics, and more. Each year these partner deals can change, but many larger manufacturers remain available or several years. These discounts are only available to members of IHEA-USA.

As a member of IHEA-USA, you also receive a digital Instructor Member card on our website that you can use to prove your status as an instructor when applying for other industry opportunities including ExpertVoice which has deals on dozens of additional products for the outdoors.

Every instructor can sign up for the exclusive deals from 300 + brands with Guidefitter! IHEA (International Hunter Education Association) and Guidefitter have partnered to offer an exclusive rewards program to IHEA Instructors who are shaping the future of hunting. This partnership provides several significant perks through the Guidefitter Outdoor Educator Program. Instructors receive Exclusive Deals with special pricing, including up to 60% off products from over 300 top brands like Vortex, Garmin, Weatherby, and Swarovski. Additionally, upon signing up, instructors get a \$10 Store Credit from Guidefitter, which also donates to IHEA to support their mission. The program grants Continued Access to these benefits as long as the IHEA membership remains active, and it includes membership in the Outdoor Pro Community, a vibrant network where instructors can share tips, gear advice, and connect with fellow outdoor professionals. To activate the account and access these specific perks, instructors are directed to visit the provided website or scan the QR code.



Sign up by scanning the QR Code below



WHO DOES A GREAT JOB WEARING THIS PATCH?

Each of you does a great job! The Iowa Hunter Education Instructor Association (IHEIA) Board of Directors commends you for your dedication to helping the youth of Iowa and the many hours you devote to the safe hunting experience.



We would like to present a certificate of recognition to one individual in each county who best exemplifies the spirit of volunteerism and dedication to hunter education. Additional awards will be given for each RSO district and for statewide. The IHEIA Activities Committee would like your assistance identifying these individuals. Please take a few minutes to nominate a fellow instructor for recognition. Members of the Board of Directors are not eligible for these awards.

I would like to Nominate:

Address: _____ Phone: _____

County: _____ District: _____ Years as instructor: _____

Innovative Attitude Knowledge to teach any aspect of program

Skills:

□ Presentable Appearance □ Good Student Rapport □ Class Preparedness

Helpful Mentors to New Instructors

Additional Accomplishments/Comments for Consideration:

Nominated by: **Instructor Number:**

Instructor Number:

Award Presentations will be made at the IHEIA Annual Banquet.

This nomination form must be received by: April 30 of each year at the PO Box below.

IHEIA, Awards
PO Box 854
Des Moines, IA 50304



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