

Police concerned about safety this hunting season

Hunting season is here and there isn't a day that goes by without OPP officers responding to hunting-related calls for service. Caledon OPP reports there were two hunting accidents within the Central Region of the force earlier this month, resulting in three people being shot. Neither of these incidents resulted in death or life-threatening injuries, but when it comes to firearms, the outcome can be fatal.

In many cases, hunters are very cautious and responsible individuals, but there are a few people who are giving this sport a bad name and the manner in which they hunt, can only be described as dangerous.

Police report they will often receive calls for people hunting on private property. When investigated, some hunters actually have the expressed permission of the landowner, but there are some who will enter upon a property without permission, causing a property owner to call police. The result could be charges being laid under the Trespass to Property Act or removal from the property with a caution issued for the individual or individuals not to return.

Anyone who discharges a firearm is responsible for any projectile coming from their weapon and they must be sure of their target. Therefore, hunting near or where any homes or roads are located is strongly discouraged. Police warn this can be very dangerous for anyone who may be outside enjoying their property or travelling down the road.

Firearms must be unloaded and safely secured (in a locked cabinet with a lock on the trigger) when not being used and ammunition must also be safely secured and stored. Failing to do is against the law.

Police add that during hunting, firearms must always be pointed in a safe direction and hunters should be wearing bright orange clothing that readily identifies themselves to others who might be hunting in the same area. It is also strongly recommended that anyone who may be in an area where hunting is permitted to also wear orange coloured clothing so that they too can be seen. Police stress that hunters need to not only exercise safety when it comes to the handling of their weapons, but if they exercise personal safety and take into account the safety of others, hunting can be an enjoyable past time. When carelessness enters the realm of hunting, people can be needlessly injured and this is something that need not take place.