

Deer hunt is now underway

The controlled deer hunt is underway in Halton Hills and Milton.

The annual controlled shotgun deer hunt began Monday (Nov. 1) and runs through Friday (Nov. 5). Hunting is allowed a half-hour before sunrise until a half-hour after sunset.

Halton Regional Police Service along with enforcement officers from, the Ministry of Natural Resources, Conservation Halton, and municipal bylaw officers from Milton and Halton Hills will be staffing the areas involved.

The agencies have planned a co-ordinated response to ensure the safety of hunters, property owners and enforcement officers during the hunt.

The shotgun hunt covers only five designated days, however, other species are "in season" throughout the region at various times. Unauthorized hunting or abuse of natural resources can always be reported to a 24-hour tip line at 1-877-TPS-MNR.

Residents are also reminded that it isn't uncommon for bears to be seen in Halton Hills. Bear sightings should be reported to the Bearwise Hotline at 1-866-514-2327, if the situation is dangerous police should be contacted immediately.

Anyone who wants to report infractions or illegal activity involving the controlled deer hunt is asked to call police at (905) 878-5511 or Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-TIPS (8477).

Hunters can help monitor for the presence of a fatal disease that affects members

of the deer family.

Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) is a brain disease that affects deer, moose, elk and potentially caribou. The disease has never been found in wild animals in Ontario.

"Protecting Ontario's wildlife is important to Ontarians whether for recreation, tourism or to conserve our biodiversity, said Chris Davies, manager of wildlife research and development for the Ministry of Natural Resources. "Chronic Wasting Disease has the potential to devastate wildlife populations. We want to keep it out of Ontario."

Since 2002 the ministry has tested more than 7,000 deer from throughout their range in the province. All tests were negative for the disease.

Hunters are asked to bring the heads of yearling or older deer to one of the depots as soon as possible, preferably within a few days of being harvested.

The closest depot is in Rockwood at White's Tanning, 5153 Eramosa/Erin Townline, Monday to Saturday from 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Depots will accept deer heads from Oct. 1 through Dec. 31. Please call ahead if dropping off a deer head in December as depots will close early if quotas are reached before the end of the month.

Research crews will remove a small amount of tissue from the deer's head on the spot. They also set up central freezer depots to collect tissue.

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