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MO Conservation Commission Approves Hog-Hunting Ban

AUGUST 24TH 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

MO Conservation Commission Approves Hog-Hunting Ban

Hunting feral hogs will be prohibited on Conservation Department lands effective Sept. 30.

Jefferson City, Missouri - At its meeting on June 24, the Missouri Conservation Commission approved changes to the Wildlife Code of Missouri that would prohibit the hunting of feral hogs on conservation areas and other lands owned, leased, or managed by the Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC). The new regulation prohibiting hog hunting on MDC areas does not apply to private property.

The Commission's decision followed consideration of feedback received during a public comment period on the topic that ended in May. The effective date of the regulation change will be Sept. 30. Potential penalties for illegal hog hunting could include fines and the loss of hunting privileges.

MDC discourages feral hog hunting in Missouri. Research from other states shows that hog hunting increases feral hog numbers and locations because it provides incentives for illegal releases of hogs for future hunting. Releasing hogs to non-enclosed areas or to the wild is illegal in Missouri. MDC encourages the public to report these types of illegal activities to local conservation agents.

Instead of hunting hogs to help reduce their numbers, MDC encourages hunters and

others to report feral-hog sightings to their local conservation agents or MDC offices. Staff can then confirm local numbers and locations, and determine how best to capture and eliminate the entire group of feral hogs.

MDC owns or manages about 1,000 conservation areas around the state with about 30 known to have feral hogs, mostly in southern Missouri. According to MDC Wildlife Division Chief Jason Sumners, hog hunting on conservation areas interferes with efforts by MDC staff to trap and eliminate entire groups of feral hogs, called sounders.

"The regulation change prohibiting hog hunting on conservation lands is a direct result of some misguided individuals disrupting trapping efforts by MDC staff," Sumners explained. "MDC staff set large, corral-type traps on areas where there are known feral hogs. They then bait the area with corn for several days or weeks to attract the targeted group of hogs, get them used to the surroundings, and get them concentrated in the trap before triggering it. This work takes weeks, with the goal being to trap the entire group of hogs. After weeks of work to catch the sounder of hogs, we then get an individual who finds out about the site, shows up at some point, and shoots a hog or two. The rest of the group then scatters and moves to a new location. As a result, weeks of work have been wasted and new areas now have feral hogs."

Feral hogs are an invasive, nuisance species in Missouri and are not wildlife. They cause significant damage to wildlife habitats, compete with native wildlife such as deer and turkey for food, prey upon native wildlife such as turkey and quail, destroy natural areas along with agricultural lands, pollute ponds and streams, and spread diseases to domestic livestock and people. For more information on feral hogs, visit the MDC website at mdc.mo.gov/feralhog

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MO Hwy Patrol Reminds Drivers: Watch for Students!

AUGUST 22ND 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

[MO Hwy Patrol Reminds Drivers: Watch for Students!](#)

Missouri - The Missouri State Highway Patrol reminds drivers to pay attention every time they are behind the wheel, but especially before and after school when children are walking, biking, or driving to school.

Many schools throughout the state have started their 2016-2017 school year. This brings a change in traffic patterns. It is critical for drivers to be alert, especially near school zones, playgrounds, and bicycle paths. School buses and parents taking their children to school will join other motorists on the road and affect the morning and afternoon commute. Whatever route you drive, expect this additional traffic and prepare by allowing extra time to reach your destination.

Afternoons can be especially dangerous. Most traffic crashes involving young drivers (under the age of 21) in 2015 occurred between 3 p.m. and 4 p.m., when school typically lets out. Drivers need to be aware of the increased traffic during this time—not just in areas around school, but all around town.

Remember: Many of these drivers are inexperienced. It is important to encourage those young drivers to remember driving is a full-time job. Using a cell phone, texting, or adjusting the radio can be the distraction that leads to a traffic crash. Texting is against the law for anyone under the age of 22.

When you see a school bus, follow the law. Missouri law states that on a two-lane road, if a school bus is stopped and displaying warning signals while loading or unloading children, drivers must stop when meeting and following the bus. However, it is only necessary to stop on a four-lane highway when following the bus. Drivers, when you see a stopped school bus, stay alert. Children may not be aware of traffic and dart unexpectedly into the roadway.

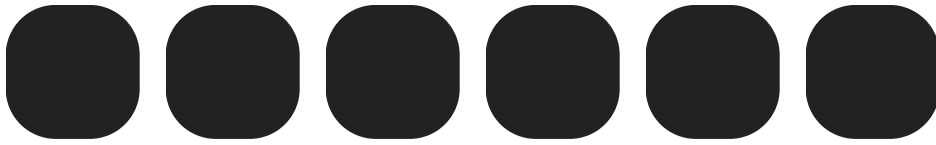
In 2015, one person was killed and 376 people were injured in school bus crashes. Missouri experienced 960 traffic crashes involving school buses last year. Parents are encouraged to talk to their children about riding a bus, walking, or driving to school in a safe manner. If they ride a bike, please make sure they wear a helmet and follow traffic laws. Let's help Missouri students return to school safely.

The only 100 percent survivable crash is the one that never happens. Make sure everyone in the vehicle is properly restrained in a seat belt or child restraint. Every day as we travel on Missouri's roadways, we trust that every driver on the road is going to obey the speed limit, pay attention, and drive sober. "Don't Violate The Trust."

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Busby Attains Master Farm Certification Designation

AUGUST 19TH 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

Busby Attains Master Farm Certification Designation

Malden, Missouri - Agent Devin Busby of Byrum, Culp, Davis & Dell Insurance, Malden, MO has achieved the On Your Side® Master Farm Certification designation from Nationwide Agribusiness Insurance Company, Des Moines, IA. Master Farm Certification is the next step in Nationwide Agribusiness' On Your Side Farm Certification program. Farmers and ranchers can depend on a Master Farm Certified agent to have an in-depth understanding of their farming operations, provide detailed risk assessments, educate them about exposures, match coverages to meet their needs, and provide professional, knowledgeable service.

“We’re excited Devin has become Master Certified,” said Agency Manager Lisa Kirk. “He has made a commitment to help protect farmers and ranchers in our area with the highest levels of professionalism and service. Master certification tells our area farmers that he’ll keep investing in training to be sure he is positioned to help protect them now

and into the future.”

The Master Farm Certified designation is also intended to help farmers and ranchers recognize agents who have made a continuing commitment to understanding the complex risks faced by the agriculture industry. Only agents who successfully complete the program will be awarded the designation, and agents must uphold education and service commitments to retain their Master Certification.

“Nationwide Agribusiness developed this multi-level certification program to provide additional education and resources to insurance agents who have made a commitment to protecting farms and ranches,” said Jerry Hillard, Farm Sales AVP, Nationwide Agribusiness. “We’re proud of the agents who complete the program and are excited about the level of service farmers and ranchers can expect from partnering with Master Farm Certified agents.”

Devin said, “I believe in what I do and I truly want to help better our farmers and ranchers. I’m super flexible so if the best time to talk to you is 8:00 in the evening at your kitchen table or a Sunday afternoon at your shop, you let me know and I’ll make it happen. Tell me what I have to do to write your farm or ranch and I’ll work my tail off to make it happen. I want to earn your business and be your agent. You can call or text me anytime at 573-421-5630 or email me at dbusby@bcddagency.com.”

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AUGUST 19TH 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

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Birch Tree, Missouri - The Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) congratulates Tom Martin of Birch Tree on being named Missouri's State Logger of the Year for 2016! Martin was also named the regional logger of the year for the Ozark Region.

He has been a contract logger for Smith Flooring for almost a quarter century and has worked on private, state, and federal-land timber sales across the Ozarks. Martin works by himself, cutting, skidding and hauling timber.

Martin was nominated by MDC Resource Forester Gary Gognat, who says his work represents the top tier of loggers in Missouri. "There's a trait common to all past logger award winners, and Martin has it," said Gognat. "It's that inherent desire to do the very best job in the woods that he can, each and every day."

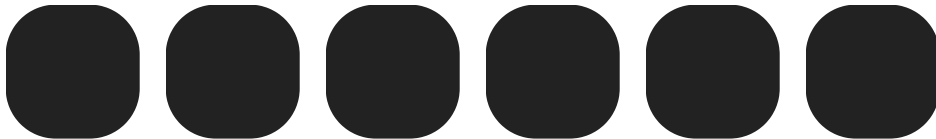
MDC Forest Products Program Supervisor Mike Morris added, "Tom represents exactly what we want from Missouri's professional loggers. He recognizes the value of proper training, safety, and conservation of resources."

In recognition of his award, Martin received a framed certificate from MDC and a STIHL chainsaw donated by long-time partner Crader Distributing of Marble Hill at the Missouri Forest Products Association summer meeting.

The Missouri Department of Conservation partners with Crader Distributing to give annual awards to loggers who have demonstrated outstanding performance and good working relationships with landowners and foresters. The loggers are recognized for minimizing damage to trees and natural resources and using best management techniques that preserve Missouri's forested lands for generations to come.

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Dexter Senior Center Bake Sale

AUGUST 18TH 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

[Dexter Senior Center Bake Sale](#)

Dexter, Missouri - The Dexter Senior Center will have a Bake Sale beginning at 11:00 a.m. on Friday, August 19th. Lunch will also be served.

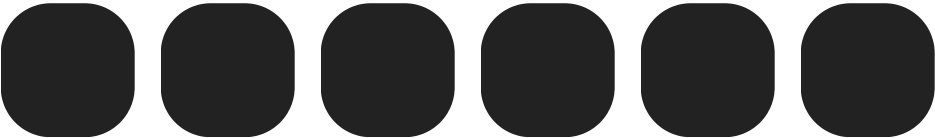
Lunch will be pepper steak, catfish, baked beans, fried okra, bread/hushpuppies, and coconut cake and a drink.

The Dexter Senior Center is located at 23 W. Stoddard St. in historic downtown Dexter. You don't have to be a senior to eat. They serve lunch from 11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m. and the cost is \$3.50 for seniors and \$5.00 for non-seniors.

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