

# ILLINOIS TROPHY BOWHUNTERS, INC.

## WHY HUNTERS FALL

A hunter in a hurry is an accident waiting to happen. Organize your gear and pack the night before, not in the morning. IF you climb with no fear of falling, then you will eventually fall. A broken back, paralysis, or death is one step away. In 18 years, we have had 5 hunters fall and this is why:

1. USE TREE STEPS OR A LADDER STICK ONLY- NEVER STEP ON A LIMB, THEY WILL BREAK WHEN YOU LEAST EXPECT IT. DO NOT USE LIMBS AS HAND HOLDS, THEY WILL BREAK WHEN YOU HAVE A FALSE SENSE OF SECURITY. DO NOT USE CLOTH GLOVES, THEY SLIP, CLIMB BARE HANDED TO GET A GOOD FEEL OF THE STEP.
2. YOU MUST CLIMB WITH A LIGHT IN THE DARK TO SEE THE STEPS. IF YOU JUST FEEL YOUR WAY WITH A LARGE RUBBER BOOT, YOU WILL EVENTUALLY FALL. IN THE DARK, A KNOT ON A TREE FEELS LIKE A STEP.
3. CLIMB WITH A DEATH GRIP ON THE TREE STEP YOU ARE HOLDING. AS YOU MOVE YOUR FEET, EXPECT A STEP TO BREAK, AND HOLD THE STEPS AS THOUGH THEY ARE A LIFELINE - **BECAUSE THEY ARE!** TOO MANY HUNTERS CLIMB IN A LASIDASICAL MANNER AND ARE NOT PREPARED FOR THE DISASTER OF A FALL. CLIMB AS THOUGH YOU ARE ABOUT TO FALL, SLOWLY AND WITH CARE.
4. THE LAST TREE STEP WILL BE AT THE SAME LEVEL OR PLANE AS THE PLATFORM OF THE TREE STAND. IF YOU ARE STEPPING UP ONTO THE STAND, THEN YOU MISSED A STEP. IF YOU STEP DOWN 1.5-2 feet FOR THE FIRST STEP, THEN YOU ALSO MISSED A STEP AND ARE NOW CROSS-FOOTED WHICH IS VERY DANGEROUS. GET BACK ON THE STAND AND FIND THE STEP THAT YOU MISSED. Take care that you step into the middle of the stand, not on the edge, because that could make it kick away from the tree. Take care not to get your foot caught in the support cables because that can loosen the chain or strap, and do not bump the stand from below as you climb up because that will also loosen the chain and can cause the stand to fall. If a stand moves on the tree, tell us immediately and we will fix it or move you to another stand. If you are not feeling safe, **TELL US**, and we will also move you to another stand, or set up your stand.
5. IF A TREE STAND IS GOING TO FALL FROM THE TREE, IT WILL MOST LIKELY FALL WHEN YOU FIRST TRANSFER YOUR WEIGHT TO IT. AT THE LAST STEP, WE USE A **TRANSITION STEP WHICH IS AT CHEST HEIGHT** AND IT IS YOUR LIFELINE AS YOU TRANSFER YOUR WEIGHT TO THE STAND. THE FIRST THING YOU SHOULD DO IS AFFIX YOUR SAFETY HARNESS TO THE TREE AND YOU, (this saved one of our hunters when the stand fell out of the tree) AND WITH A 3 POINT STANCE FOR BALANCE. YOUR SHOULDER SHOULD BE AGAINST THE TREE TO SUPPORT YOUR BALANCE. SOME HUNTERS KILL A LOT OF TIME WITH BUSY WORK LIKE ATTACHING BOW HOOKS AND HAVE NOT ATTACHED THEIR SAFETY HARNESSES YET - WHICH IS JUST CARELESS.
6. IF YOU USE A CLIMBER, THE SAFETY HARNESS SHOULD **ALWAYS** BE ATTACHED TO THE TREE AND YOU, AS YOU CLIMB. IF YOU DO NOT DO THIS, IT IS AN UNNECCESARY RISK. TWO HUNTERS IN 2007 CARELESSLY **UNHOOKED** THERE SAFETY BELT TO TURN FOR THE SHOT, LEARN HOW TO ADJUST YOUR HARNESS SO YOU CAN PIVOT AS NEEDED BEFORE THE SHOT.
7. AN IL BOW HUNTER FELL IN 2007 AT 5:30am AND LAID THERE UNTIL 8:00pm.WITH A BROKEN LEG, ARM, AND FACE WOUNDS. HIS CELL PHONE WAS IN HIS PACK 16 FEET UP THE TREE. YOUR CELL PHONE MUST BE **ON YOUR PERSON**, IN A POCKET OR BELT CASE, (A ZIP LOCK BAG WILL WATER PROOF IT) SO THAT IF YOU FALL WE CAN BE THERE FAST. THIS COULD SAVE YOUR LIFE.