



Game Animal Council
NEW ZEALAND



OUTDOOR SAFETY
NEW ZEALAND MOUNTAIN
SAFETY COUNCIL



**NZ Game Animal Council, Mountain Safety Council, NZ
Deerstalkers Association
Media Statement**

13 May 2020

Safety the priority for hunters under level 2

The Game Animal Council, Mountain Safety Council and New Zealand Deerstalkers Association are urging hunters to 'play it safe' when hunting resumes on public conservation land under COVID-19 Alert Level 2.

"It's really exciting to be able to go hunting again, especially for the majority of hunters that hunt on public land, however it is super-important that we do so as safely as possible," says Game Animal Council General Manager Tim Gale.

"Because hunters have been cooped up for so long it is likely that there will be an initial rush into the hills. This makes being aware of where others may be, positively identifying your target, storing firearms responsibly at huts and general gun safety measures absolutely critical."

"The fact is the vast majority of hunting accidents aren't firearms-related so don't disregard the risk of falls and slips, take river crossings extremely seriously and generally play it safe by hunting within your capabilities especially as we come into winter."

Mountain Safety Council Chief Executive Mike Daisley emphasises the importance of good trip planning.

"Weather can be extremely changeable at this time of year; expect it to be cold and the days to be short. It is important that hunters study the weather forecast before they go and remain flexible with their dates and plans to avoid being caught out in bad weather," says Daisley.

"This is not the time for the old 'she'll be right' attitude. Being exposed to a winter storm can be deadly."

"Make sure to leave detailed intentions with a family member or friend. Include where you are going and when you expect to get out, and as we must maintain vigilance around COVID-19, it is a good idea to carry hand

sanitiser, maintain good hygiene practices and keep a record of who you come into contact with in case contact tracing is needed.”

New Zealand Deerstalkers Association President Trevor Chappell reiterates the need to be extra vigilant during what could be a busy time.

“Recreational hunters showed admirable patience to stay home during the peak of the roar and are now eager to get out there and enjoy their hunting again,” says Chappell. “We know that this could mean an increase of hunting parties in the hills so it is vital that we all take the necessary precautions to keep ourselves, those we are hunting with and other users of the conservation estate safe.”

More information and safety tips, including how to prepare and plan for your hunt are available at

<https://www.mountainsafety.org.nz/activities/hunting/>.

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