

## **Carcass tags for bear, deer, turkey and sharp-tailed grouse**

**Note:** For 2016, the following FAQ applies to carcass tagging of [bear](#), deer, [turkey](#), and [sharp-tailed grouse](#).

For information regarding furbearer tagging (bobcat, fisher, otter), consult the [2016 Small Game](#) and 2016 Trapping regulation pamphlets. For information regarding sturgeon tagging, consult the 2016 General Fishing or the 2016 Sturgeon Spearing regulation pamphlets. For Canada geese, there is no tagging requirement, but the date of harvest must be validated on the harvest permit.

- With the 2016 transition to the department's new licensing system (Go WILD), the requirement to immediately attach a carcass tag has been modified to better accommodate the use of plain paper tags in the field.
- The purpose of these changes is to prevent accidental in-field tag destruction or loss; the legal requirements to validate your tag immediately upon harvesting an animal and to register game with the department by 5 p.m. on the day after kill remain unchanged from prior years.
- Under prior law, the validated carcass tag was required to be immediately attached to the carcass after harvest. Under the new law, a validated carcass tag must be attached **only if you leave the carcass**. There is no longer an automatic requirement to immediately attach the carcass tag. Instead, what determines when a tag needs to be attached to a carcass is whether **you are leaving the carcass**, and not keeping it with you.

### **Why the change to the attachment requirements?**

- The department recognized maintaining the requirement to immediately attach what is now a plain paper carcass tag likely would result in many tags becoming illegible, torn, destroyed or lost during field handling activities like dragging a deer carcass out of the woods. The law change gives many hunters the flexibility to keep the validated tag protected in their pocket while removing the carcass from the field.

### **How will carcass tags be validated with the new plain paper tags?**

- Since the new plain paper carcass tags are less durable, hunters will validate their tag by writing the date and time of harvest in the space provided on the tag. This is a change from prior years when carcass tags were slit or punched to validate. The department encourages hunters to make sure they have a writing utensil immediately available while hunting.

**What is considered “leaving the carcass”?**

- The department utilizes a common sense approach to interpretation of this phrase. If the carcass isn't with you, then you have left it, and a tag needs to be attached to it - if you leave it, tag it. Common examples where a hunter may leave a carcass include:
  - Leaving the carcass afield while traveling back to a vehicle to retrieve supplies;
  - Leaving the carcass in/on a vehicle while entering a business establishment;
  - Leaving the carcass outside or in a garage when entering a cabin or home; and
  - Leaving the carcass with a meat processor or taxidermist.

**I'm not sure if I'm “leaving the carcass.” Am I allowed to attach the validated carcass tag before I leave it?**

- Yes. There is no restriction on attaching the validated carcass tag “too early.” When in doubt, simply attach the carcass tag.

**Do I need to attach the tag before field dressing the animal or moving it?**

- No, the carcass tag only needs to be attached if you leave the carcass. However, you still are required to validate your carcass tag immediately upon harvesting the animal and before field dressing it or moving it.

**Am I required to attach the tag prior to or immediately after registration?**

- No, the validated carcass tag only needs to be attached if you leave the carcass.

**Can I just attach the tag immediately after harvest, like I did last year?**

- Yes.

**What if I leave the carcass with a friend; can I just give them the carcass tag?**

- No. The validated carcass tag needs to be attached. The legal requirement is based on whether you, as the person providing the validated tag, have left the animal. Leaving the carcass with other people does not change the requirement to attach a validated tag to your animal when you leave it.
- Remember that while afield, no person may possess or transport another hunter's deer, even after it has been registered, unless accompanied by the person whose carcass tag was used to harvest the deer. Anyone may transport another person's *registered* deer on a public road or possess it at a residence, camp or business.

**What if I can still see the carcass but I'm a long distance away from it?**

- The validated carcass tag needs to be attached. In this example, it would not be reasonable to say that you have brought the carcass along *with you*, meaning *you have left it*, and a validated tag needs to be attached. When in doubt, attach a carcass tag.

**Where do I need to attach the tag on the animal?**

- There is no specific carcass location where the tag needs to be attached, so long as the tag is attached to a spot that is reasonably accessible for DNR staff to see and inspect.

**Do I need to protect the tag?**

- You are required to keep the validated carcass tag intact and in good, legible condition for DNR staff to inspect.

**How am I supposed to protect and attach the tag?**

- There is no specific process required so long as the methods you have chosen actually keep the validated tag protected and attached. The department suggests placing the validated tag in a clear plastic sandwich bag and securing the tag to the carcass using string, plastic ties or wire.

**When can I remove the tag?**

- A validated carcass tag that has been attached can only be removed from the carcass at the time of butchering or when prepared by a taxidermist. The person who killed or obtained the animal shall retain the tag until the meat is consumed.

**If a tag is not attached to the animal, how will a conservation warden know if it was legally harvested?**

- As in the past, you still are required to show the validated carcass tag to DNR staff upon their request.