

ELECTRONIC GAME CHECK

How to check game

Hunters and trappers, you may check game by one of the following three methods:

1. Going online to wvhunt.com.
2. By calling 1-844-982-4325 (1-844-WVCheck). You must be registered in the system and know your unique DNR ID number to use the telephone check option. To obtain your DNR ID number, please see the information below.
3. Stopping at a hunting and fishing license agent. For a current list of license agents, visit www.wvdnr.gov. Note: you are not required to bring the animal to the license agent.

If you are not required to buy a license (e.g., landowner, underage, etc.), you may log onto wvhunt.com or visit a license agent to obtain your DNR ID number.

If you are a lifetime license holder (e.g., AB-L, A-L, XS, etc.), you will already be assigned a number in the system. To obtain your DNR ID number, visit wvhunt.com or a license agent.

If you buy your base license each year, your DNR ID number will be printed on the upper left hand corner of the license.

No matter what classification of hunter or trapper you are, your DNR ID number will be valid for your lifetime and will be used in all future game checking transactions with the DNR. If you are a landowner who checks game both as a landowner and on a license, you will have only one DNR ID number.

Upon finishing the electronic game check process, you will be given a 13-digit game check confirmation number that will serve as verification that you have completed the game checking process.

This unique number must be written down on a sheet of paper with your name and address, or on your completed field tag, and attached to the animal. This number shall be affixed to the animal or parts thereof and remain affixed until it is dressed for consumption or processed into commercial fur. It will let the Natural Resources Police Officers know that the animal has been officially checked.

You may view your game checking history at wvhunt.com.

Why now?

Faced with an antiquated mix of electronic and paper hunting and fishing license systems, the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources has been working the last few years to come up with a state-of-the-art system that will be more efficient and convenient for both the public and DNR. Also, for the first time, hunters can check-in their game from their phone or computer.

The goWILD licensing system was developed in-house by the DNR in 2002. Obviously, computer software has improved by leaps and bounds since that time, and old programs are no longer sustainable.

The new electronic licensing system has been in effect since January 1, 2015. Most hunters have adapted pretty well to the system. The big change for hunters, and for trappers of beaver, bobcat, fisher and river otter, is the ability to check in game by phone or computer.

Those who still like to talk directly to someone about their hunting experiences will be able to stop by one of the approximately 180 official license agents to check in their game. However, unlike past years, they won't have to bring the animal in with them for checking purposes. Hunters and trappers will still have to follow the time and transportation restrictions as listed in the regulations.

Electronic game check provides several benefits. Hunters can hunt later into the day without worrying about driving around to find an open check station after dark. This will also save hunters time, gas and wear-and-tear on their vehicle. If a hunter has cell phone coverage in the woods, he or she can check the game in over the phone and immediately quarter and chill the deer, helping to preserve the freshness of the meat.

A benefit of the new system for license buyers is that once they have an account, they will be able to make and review purchases, check in game, enter lotteries for limited hunting seasons, and review their history of checking game. The DNR will benefit by having all license purchases recorded on the same system, allowing the agency to more easily account for purchases and making the system more efficient. In the past, the records of online purchases, paper license purchases and Point-of-Sale agent purchases were separate, which made compiling license purchase records difficult, to say the least. It will also make the collection of license fees by the DNR more efficient.

Although the main reason for the change in the system was to help hunters, electronic game check will also benefit DNR personnel. Biologists will be able to monitor big game kills each day, instead of waiting until they visited more than 600 check stations throughout the state to pick up check tags. Not having to visit the check stations a minimum of three times a year will save the DNR hundreds of hours of personnel time and thousands of dollars in gasoline.

Electronic game check also means DNR personnel won't have to spend hundreds of hours sorting and entering check tags into the agency's computer system for analysis. From a law enforcement perspective, Natural Resources Police Officers will be able to see if the person they are talking with in the field has checked in their game.

Few people embrace change, especially when the current system has been in effect since game checking was required. The Electronic Game Check System, however, is designed to be more efficient than the hand-written check tag system and more convenient for all concerned. Similar systems have proven successful and popular in other states.