

Deer Management Program

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About Montgomery's Deer Management Program

Managing the deer population is important for public health, public safety, and protection of the natural environment. In the 1980s and 1990s, as the character of Montgomery changed from farms and forested land, to residential land, deer found an ideal habitat, an abundant food source (your landscaping) and their population increased greatly. Montgomery's Deer Management Program began in 2001, after a Township-wide infrared survey was conducted and found the deer population to be approximately 88 deer per square mile (10 deer per square mile is considered sustainable – see "Ecology" below).

Public Health:

White-tailed deer serve as hosts to deer ticks, which carry several diseases that can impact humans including Lyme Disease, Babesiosis, and Ehrlichiosis. These diseases can have lasting health impacts, and can even require hospitalization. Over the past 10 years (2010-2020), the State averages about 3500 cases of Lyme Disease per year, with Montgomery averaging about 40 cases per year over the same timeframe.

Public Safety:

Over the past 15 years, there has been an average of 105 automobile collisions per year in the Township that involve deer. These numbers are only those accidents that are reported; many "minor" incidents go unreported. Vehicle passengers can have serious injuries, or loss of life.

Ecology:

Scientists consider about 10 deer per square mile to be “sustainable”, meaning that trees in the forest can regenerate at a rate greater or equal to the rate trees are lost to disease or damage. Deer eat small saplings in the forest, and bucks rub their antlers (young trees are more pliable to get the fuzz from their antlers), resulting in the eventual death of the tree. This means there is no “next generation” in our forests to replace the older trees, which are subject to the pressures of disease and invasive insects. Deer also prefer to eat native plants, which allows for the proliferation of invasive and non-native plants in our environment.

Program Safety:

The Township’s program utilizes State-mandated safety zones of 150’ from a habitable structure for bow hunting, and 450’ feet for firearms. Each hunter attends an annual safety training by NJDEP Fish & Wildlife staff, as well as Township staff & Police Department staff to provide a review of Township procedures. Hunters are subject to a background check by the Police Department, and must provide proof of insurance in order to participate in the program. To date, there have been **no accidents** in the history of Montgomery’s program.

Program Results:

As the Township has added properties to the hunting program, we have seen a reduction in reported car accidents in the past few years.

The Township provides a freezer and pays for butchering services for any deer that are culled by hunters that they cannot personally use. The venison is donated to a food bank in Union County. Montgomery’s program hunters donated almost 10% of the Statewide total in 2019/2020 to Hunters Helping the Hungry.

2023-24 Montgomery Township Deer Management Program

The 2023-2024 hunting season begins September 9th with fall bow hunting and ends February 17th after winter bow. Six-day firearm season runs from December 4 to December 9, 2023.

For further information on the process of applying or to have an application emailed or mailed to you, contact the Office of the Township Clerk at 908-359-8211 or see **Notice to Hunters**.

Hunters must report their presence to the Montgomery Police Dept. prior to each hunting session by leaving a message on the following number: **908-533-9297**

2023-24 Deer Management Program Location Maps

Deer Management Property Maps found on our GIS Server

Supporting Documents

Montgomery Wildlife TC Meeting 2023 Final 2.38 MB