

News Release

National Wildlife Refuge System



Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge

**McGregor District
401 Business Highway 18 N
McGregor, IA 52157**

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New Regulation on National Wildlife Refuge

Tim Yager District Manager for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge, McGregor District released information today on compliance with the Refuge's new immediate game retrieval regulations for waterfowl and a reminder of the existing regulation that specifically names spent shotgun shells as litter.

The special regulation that goes in effect this 2009 waterfowl season states that "you must immediately make a reasonable attempt to retrieve downed waterfowl unless the bird lies in plain sight of you, is clearly dead and there is no risk of the bird drifting off due to wind or current".

During this first season of implementation of this new refuge special regulation, education will be the main form of enforcement, though stricter enforcement measures could be taken if a particular situation would warrant it.

As an important reminder, the 2009 waterfowl season marks the start of the third season where the Refuge specifically classifies spent shotgun shells as litter. This special regulation requires hunters to pick up all spent shells prior to leaving their hunt location. Hunters are also responsible for spent shells that could be lost due to winds and water currents during their hunt.

District Manager Yager indicated that full enforcement implementation of this litter regulation will take place this season. Hunters observed failing to pick up all spent shotgun shells prior to leaving their hunt location can be issued a violation notice for "failing to comply with refuge special regulations" which carries a fine of \$175.00.

The Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge is the most visited refuge in the United States. The refuge extends 261 miles along the Upper Mississippi River from Wabasha, Minnesota to Rock Island, Illinois, protecting and preserving habitat for migratory birds, fish, and a variety of other wildlife. This 240,000 acre refuge was established in 1924.