



# DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

## news release

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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### 1988-89 NONTOXIC SHOT REGULATIONS ESTABLISHED

Waterfowl hunters will be required to use nontoxic (steel) shot in zones in 46 states this fall under final regulations published by the Interior Department's U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in the June 28 Federal Register.

"By complying with nontoxic shot regulations, hunters are helping to eliminate the needless loss of waterfowl from lead poisoning," noted Service Director Frank Dunkle. "This is especially important now that our duck populations are being hit so hard by drought."

The regulations continue the schedule announced in 1986 under which nontoxic shot zones are being phased in across the country according to the size of the waterfowl harvest in individual areas. This year, counties having a harvest of 15 or more waterfowl per square mile are being added to the list of areas where nontoxic shot is required.

Nontoxic shot will be required for waterfowl and coot hunting nationwide by the 1991-92 hunting season.

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This coming fall, nontoxic shot regulations will apply in every state except Alaska, Hawaii, New Hampshire, and West Virginia. Nontoxic shot will be required statewide in Connecticut, Iowa, Maine, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, New Mexico, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Dakota, and Wisconsin. It is estimated that between 80 and 90 percent of the Nation's waterfowl harvest will take place in nontoxic shot zones this fall.

The final rules announce that nontoxic shot will be required in Alaska, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands in the 1991-92 waterfowl season. A decision on a proposal requiring nontoxic shot for harvest of captive-reared mallards has been deferred to a separate rulemaking because the comment period on that proposal was extended.

Detailed descriptions of the 1988-89 nontoxic shot zones are contained in the Federal Register notice. Waterfowl hunters should check state hunting regulations carefully before going afield to be sure they know where nontoxic shot is required. Muzzle-loading waterfowlers are reminded that, by Federal regulation, they must also comply with nontoxic shot requirements in nontoxic shot zones beginning September 1, 1988.