

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2023 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

Senate Bill 96 (Senator Hester)
Education, Energy, and the Environment

Howard County - Archery Hunting - Safety Zone and Position of Archery
Hunter

This bill decreases the archery hunting “safety zone” in Howard County from 150 yards to 50 yards from a dwelling house, residence, church, or any other building or camp occupied by human beings. An archery hunter in Howard County must be in an elevated position that allows the hunter to shoot in a downward trajectory when hunting within 50 to 100 yards of a dwelling house, residence, church, school, or other building or camp occupied by human beings. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2023.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The bill is not expected to materially affect State operations or finances.

Local Effect: The bill is not expected to materially affect local operations or finances.

Small Business Effect: Minimal or none.

Analysis

Current Law: Generally, a person, other than the owner or occupant, may not shoot or discharge any firearm or other deadly weapon within a specified area within 150 yards, known as the “safety zone,” of a dwelling house, residence, church, or other building or camp occupied by human beings without the specific advance permission of the owner or occupant. Also, a person, other than the owner or occupant, may not shoot at any animal while it is within the safety zone without the specific advance permission of the owner or occupant.

For archery hunters in Allegany, Calvert, Carroll, Cecil, Frederick, Garrett, Harford, Montgomery, St. Mary's, and Washington counties, the safety zone extends for 50 yards from a dwelling house, residence, church, or other building or camp occupied by human beings. For archery hunters in Anne Arundel County, the safety zone extends for 100 yards from a dwelling house, residence, church, or other building or camp occupied by human beings. An archery hunter in Harford County must use a tree stand when hunting within 50 to 100 yards of a dwelling house, residence, church, or any other building or camp occupied by human beings. An archery hunter in Montgomery and Washington counties must be in an elevated position that allows the hunter to shoot in a downward trajectory when hunting within 50 to 100 yards of a dwelling house, residence, church, school, or other building or camp occupied by human beings.

A person, while hunting for any wild bird or mammal, may not shoot or discharge any firearm within 300 yards of a school during school hours or when a school-approved activity is taking place.

During any open hunting season, a person, other than the owner or occupant, may not hunt or chase willfully any wild bird or mammal within the safety zone without the specific advance permission of the owner or occupant.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: Similar legislation has not been introduced within the last three years.

Designated Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Department of Natural Resources; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - January 18, 2023
km/lgc

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