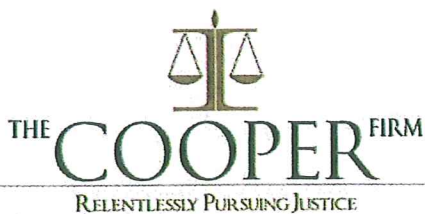




The Cooper Firm September Newsletter



The Cooper Firm's expertise in wrongful death, product defects, personal injury and tractor-trailer collisions have gained the firm a reputation for obtaining justice for its clients.



Camping and Bears



There are an estimated 5,100 bears in the State of Georgia and 75 established campgrounds. With those odds, it is important to be aware and prepared for a bear encounter. The best way to prevent these encounters is to properly store your food and garbage. No drinks, coolers, garbage or food should be left out in the open. Even non-foods with strong odors, such as toothpaste and deodorant, should not be left out. Use bear-proof containers, doubled plastic bags or airtight canisters to seal in odors. Black bears have a keen sense of smell and can detect the strong odors from a mile away. Never store the food in a tent. The best way to secure food is to place it in a knapsack or a heavily lined bag and hoist it at least 10 feet from the ground and 6 feet from the trunk of the tree. Food can also be secured


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in a vehicle or a cabin. Some campsites are now providing bear proof disposal containers to discard trash and other items and prevent further encounters. Those containers are also available for public purchase online.

Tree Stand Safety



One in three hunting accidents are caused by incorrectly or carelessly using a tree stand. Incorrect installation and weakness in the structure could cause a collapse in the stand or the user to fall. Improper use can also lead to other hunting accidents such as a misfire of a gun while climbing the stand. To use this common piece of hunting equipment properly, here are some safety tips:

- Never carry equipment while climbing. Use a haul line to raise or lower your gear. Make sure guns are unloaded before hauling them.
- Use a climbing belt when going up or down the tree.
- Use a safety harness while hunting from elevated tree stands.
- Check permanent tree stands every year before use and replace worn lumber.
- Choose only healthy trees when using climbing devices or a tree stand.
- Climb higher than the stand and then step down on to it. Climbing up onto it can dislodge the stand.
- Wear non skid shoes.
- Tell someone where you are hunting and when you should be returning. If needed, mark the spot on a map so you can be located easier.
- Remove all logs or saplings from below the tree stand as a precautionary measure.
- Carry an emergency kit in a fanny pack or pouch that contains a whistle to alert for help, flashlight, first aid kit and a cell phone