



## WISCONSIN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ACT MEMO

**2011 Wisconsin Act 252**  
[2011 Assembly Bill 384]

**Types of Weapons  
Used for Hunting**

Under Wisconsin law, the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) issues hunting licenses that authorize the hunting of specified animals, such as deer, bear, and small game. Those licenses also specify the type of weapon that may be used when hunting under those licenses. 2011 Wisconsin Act 252 expands the types of weapons that may be used under certain hunting licenses.

The Act provides that under a deer, elk, wild turkey, small game, and Class A bear hunting license, a person may hunt with a firearm, bow and arrow, or a crossbow. The Act removes the requirement that a person must be at least 65-years old or be disabled and hold a crossbow permit in order to hunt with a crossbow under any of those licenses. A crossbow used for hunting must meet the specifications provided under current law.

The Act specifies that when the DNR establishes an open season for hunting deer, elk, small game, wild turkey, or bear with a firearm, the season must also be open for hunting that animal with a crossbow and a bow and arrow. The Act further specifies that if the DNR establishes an open season for hunting any of those animals with a bow and arrow, but not with a firearm, then the DNR may not allow hunting with a crossbow except for persons who are authorized under current law to use a crossbow because of age or disability.

Finally, the Act changes the general prohibition on people under 12-years old from hunting to specify that no person under the age of 12 may hunt with a crossbow. Therefore, a person under the age of 12 may not hunt with a crossbow unless the person is hunting with a mentor in the hunting mentorship program.

**Effective date:** Act 252 takes effect on April 20, 2012.

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This memo provides a brief description of the Act. For more detailed information, consult the text of the law and related legislative documents at the Legislature's Web site at: <http://www.legis.state.wi.us/>.