
Wisconsin Legislative Council

ACT MEMO



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2023 Wisconsin Act 116
[2023 Senate Bill 587]

**Muzzle-Loading Firearm
Definition**

BACKGROUND

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) currently provides for a deer hunting season that is open for hunting deer only with a muzzle-loading firearm. For that purpose, DNR’s prior administrative rules had required a muzzle-loading firearm to have a solid breach plug attached with threads to qualify as a muzzle-loading firearm for that season.¹

2023 WISCONSIN ACT 116

For purposes of Wisconsin statutes and rules relating to hunting, 2023 Wisconsin Act 116 defines “muzzle-loading firearm” to mean a firearm that shoots a projectile loaded only from the muzzle. The act does not require that a muzzle-loading firearm have a solid breach plug attached with threads.

Effective date: March 16, 2024

For a full history of the bill, visit the Legislature’s [bill history page](#).

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¹ A [DNR rule change](#), which was finalized earlier this year, removed that requirement. In its analysis for the rule change, DNR explained that “[r]ecent advancements in firearm technology have made this requirement no longer necessary.”