

Beginning with the 2024-25 hunting license year, DEC is transitioning from special license stock (Valeron) to plain paper licenses and tags.

WHY?? - DEC, like other state conservation agencies around the country, has experienced difficulties acquiring Valeron stock due to supply chain issues and increased costs. Over the last few years, many states such as Ohio, Oregon, New Hampshire, and Virginia, have successfully shifted to plain paper and digital licenses and tags, providing a good framework to guide our transition. Additionally, using plain paper rather than Valeron reduces the agency's carbon footprint and modernizes the way sporting licenses are fulfilled and utilized afield. This transition will allow easier and quicker access to recreational activities as hunters, trappers, and anglers will be able to print their licenses and tags at home.

Q: If the new tags are plain paper and not weather resistant, won't they get damaged when afield hunting?

A: It is the hunter's responsibility to protect their license and tags. Carcass tags must still be filled out, dated, signed, and attached to the animal as required by regulation. DEC suggests storing licenses and tags in a waterproof bag or container while hunting and placing the completed carcass tag in a zip-top bag or other reusable waterproof protector and securely fastening it to the deer, bear, or turkey to ensure the tag remains protected and legible. **Tags do not have to be attached to the carcass while it is being dragged or physically carried from the field but must be attached as soon as it is taken to a home, camp, or point where transportation is available.**

Q: What should hunters, trappers, or anglers do if they lose their license or tags or if the paper gets destroyed?

A: Hunters, trappers, and anglers may obtain plain paper replacements of their licenses and tags from an in-person license sales agent, though replacement fees will apply. Alternatively, they may reprint the licenses and tags from their online account or from the PDF included in the email associated with their original license purchase. Also, hunters, trappers, and anglers may use the [HuntFishNY](#) app as an electronic copy of their license. Anglers may also provide their 12-digit DEC ID number.

Q: What can hunters, trappers, and anglers show to an Environmental Conservation Police Officer (ECO) as a proof of licensure when afield?

A: Hunters and trappers will have the option of carrying a plain paper copy of their license, or an electronic copy of their license in the free [HuntFishNY](#) mobile app. In addition to the paper copy of their license and the electronic license in the [HuntFishNY](#) app, anglers can also provide an officer with their 12-digit, DEC ID number. Currently, the only option for backtags and carcass tags is plain paper.

Q: Will backtags be printed on plain white paper?

A: Yes, however, backtags will be printed in grayscale, so will not appear white when displayed in a backtag holder. **In addition, licenses and tags can be printed on colored paper or hunters may use a highlighting marker to change the color of their backtag, though the backtag numbers must still be legible. Hunters should avoid using red- or blue-colored paper or markers.**

*****DON'T SHOOT THE MIDDLE WOMAN! WE KNOW THIS IS A BIG CHANGE AND WE ARE ADJUSTING TOO****