



SAGA SNIPPETS

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A Festive Season Message from SAGA

Owning and Carrying a Gun is an Awesome Responsibility

By awesome, we mean awesome in the biblical, not the teenage sense. The point of this message is to stop and spare a moment to sharpen our focus on the responsibility that comes with a gun.

It is our constitutional right to defend ourselves and others against criminal attack. Fact. It is also fact that a legal gun, in the hands of a competent person provides the opportunity for persons who would otherwise face serious injury or death, to level the playing field. A gun provides an opportunity for the alert and competent shooter to deter a criminal attack and even – as a last resort – to stop an attack by using a firearm.

As the country winds down (or up) depending on your perspective, for the festive season, many South Africans will be heading off across the country to beaches, family and other holiday destinations.

Here are some points for you to consider:

Leaving your gun at home?

Is it properly secured in a safe that complies with the requirements of the Firearms Control Act? Have trusted neighbours, family and armed response been notified when you are leaving and when you are due back?

Taking your gun along?

Have you worked out how and where you are going to secure it when in a strange place? You may



not put your gun in your host's safe to which he holds the key. If you do this, you have effectively given another person access to your firearm. Only a specifically designed safe in a hotel security area, or a properly secured safe in another location, to which you have the only access, is lawful. What about on the beach? You cannot manage a gun on a beach unless you're not going swimming and are going to keep it right on you or in a properly designed carry bag with you at all times.

You may not leave your gun in your room at a guest house, or in your car, or have it out of your direct control for even an instant unless it is locked away in a safe. If you're concerned about the security of your home while you're away, consider taking the gun to your local gun shop and asking them to book the firearm in for storage.

Going to a braai or a party?

Having something to drink? Consider the consequences of being placed in a situation after a few drinks where you have to use your gun. Consider being tested for alcohol afterward and having your judgement in using your gun being thrown into doubt because someone smells alcohol on you.

Know that feeling of indignation, perhaps anger or more,

that comes over you when another motorist carelessly or willfully cuts you off, pushes in, or places you in danger? Squash it. If you're carrying a gun, and ever in the situation that you have to use it to defend yourself against someone else's road rage you want to be able to say that you did everything possible to avoid the confrontation. Pull off at a public place, turn down a side street, avoid eye contact, don't respond to threatening gestures and rude signs – you've probably never seen the other driver before, and will probably never see him again. Just move on and give yourself a pat on the back for avoiding possible court, hospital, jail and a whole bunch of tragedy.

Asked to declare your firearm at a roadblock?

How will you react when the law enforcement Official asks to see your firearm so that it can be verified against the licence? Declare your firearm and present your licence. If the Official wishes to read the licence details against the firearm you may choose to proceed as follows:

“Officer I am completely willing to cooperate with you. I have been trained that I may never hand a loaded firearm to anyone, nor receive a loaded firearm, and that I must always point a firearm



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(even if it is unloaded) in an identified safe direction before handling it. Therefore, may I please exit my vehicle with the firearm so that you and I can identify a safe area for me to unload the firearm and show it to you?"

Note:

Pointing anywhere in your car at your own legs, the dashboard, your passengers, through a side window or through the wind-screen is not a safe direction. This safety standard is enshrined in the Unit Standards on which the SAPS competency training is based and is under the mantle of the Firearms Control Act. You not only have a right to insist on this course of action – you are obliged by law to do so.

In the event that the Official insists on personally handling your firearm, you are justified in requesting to see his/her competency certificate for the handling of that firearm. In other words, if the Official cannot produce a valid competency for a manually operated rifle, etc. he/she may not handle your firearm but must be satisfied with having the gun so displayed that he/she can read the serial number.

If, at any point in this exchange, things get heated, you are entitled to politely request that the Officer in charge of the roadblock be summoned. Finally, if the Official, despite your polite and lawful requests insists on taking possession of your firearm, it would be best not to resist or to refuse to cooperate. There will be time enough after the event to address the Official's actions in a formal manner.

Using the threat of your firearm to defuse a potential attack?

Do not draw your gun and wave it about or point it. If you draw your gun, you should already have made the decision to use it. Be absolutely certain that if you aim your firearm at another person and then do not have to use it, that whatever the threat was, it was sufficient that you would have been justified in shooting that person had the attack not been halted. Remember a gun may be used in very specific circumstances to save a life and not to protect property.

Whatever you do and wherever you go with a gun, be safe, be responsible, be law abiding. Your continued ownership of a gun depends on it.

SAGA Office

Please note that the SAGA Office will be closed from Thursday 22 December and will re-open on Wednesday 4 January 2017.

The SAGA Trustees and staff wish you and your family all the best for the festive season and the new year.



Watch this space ...for more interesting firearm snippets

The Year of the Gun: Carry Permit, Sales Figures Explode in 2016

Friday, December 9, 2016

The number of persons in the United States with concealed carry permits has reached an all-time high of close to 15 million. John R. Lott, Jr. of the Crime Prevention Research Center explains:

As of the beginning of this year, there were over 14.5 million concealed carry permits in the US. That represents a 215% increase in the number of permits since 2007. Since then there has been an increase of about 100,000 permits in just Florida alone, so the total is probably near to 15 million now.

Yet, those numbers are clearly an underestimate of the number of people who can legally carry because there are 12 states now where you don't need a permit to be able to carry, and while some people in those states still get a permit to be able to carry outside their state, the number of permits in these Constitutional Carry states does tend to fall.

The biggest increases in permit have been for women and for minorities. The number of women with permits has increased twice as quickly as the number of men with permits. Some evidence suggests that permit-holding is increasing about 75% more quickly among minorities than among whites.

As Dr. Lott mentions, this escalation is particularly compelling given the rising number of states that have adopted "permitless" concealed carry laws, with such laws passed recently in Missouri, West Virginia, Mississippi and Idaho.

More than six percent of adults in the United States have a permit to carry a concealed weapon; in ten states, more than ten percent of the adult population are concealed carry permit-holders.

This year is also on track as record-setting for firearm sales. National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS) figures from the FBI show that to date, the figures for each month this year have eclipsed monthly totals of a year ago, often by significant margins. This November has been no exception, with an increase of over 14 percent compared to the previous November, and November 25, "Black Friday," is now the highest ranking day for NICS checks since the NICS system was established.

Although NICS checks data doesn't correlate exactly with the number of firearms acquired in a given timeframe (there are other reasons why NICS checks may be performed, and the same person may buy several guns in a single transaction subject to one background check), NICS checks are required before a firearm may be acquired legally from a licensed firearm dealer and are a fairly reliable indicator of sales.

Yet, contrary to the apprehension and alarm expressed by gun-control groups, this expansion in gun ownership, permit-holders and permitless carry laws doesn't correlate with an increase in violent crime. Permit holders, as a class, tend to be substantially more law-abiding than the general population. The Crime Prevention Research Center notes that the crime rate for the general population is 37 time higher than the rate for police officers, yet concealed carry permit holders

"are convicted of felonies and misdemeanors at less than a sixth the rate for police officers."

Another source indicates that "more people were murdered by fists and kicks in 2015 alone than were murdered by firearm-wielding concealed-carry permit holders in the last ten years." Overall, gun crime victimization is lower than it was 20 years ago.

This may explain why gun-control efforts keep failing – most Americans understand that criminals are unlikely to bother obtaining a carry permit or indeed, to follow any other law. An August poll found that 58 percent of Americans believe gun ownership does more to protect people from becoming victims of crime than it puts people's safety at risk.

The next milestone? Legislation that would respect the rights of individuals who possess concealed carry permits in their home state, or who are not prohibited from carrying concealed in their home state, to exercise those rights in any other state. The concept of national reciprocity of carry permits has been formally endorsed by President-Elect Trump, and U.S. Rep. Richard Hudson, a Republican from North Carolina, has already announced plans to push forward a Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act of 2017 when the new Congress meets next year.

<https://www.nraila.org/articles/20161209/the-year-of-the-gun-carry-permit-sales-figures-explode-in-2016>

Crime-Proof Your Kids

by Brad Fitzpatrick
Wednesday, December 7, 2016

Like so many other people I believe that the world was a safer place when I was a child. Statistically, I know that isn't true; data shows that there were higher murder and assault rates in the 1980s than there are today, but at that time I felt insulated. And I enjoyed that aspect of my childhood. Social media and the internet hadn't yet begun bombarding us with steady updates on human suffering. Ignorance was bliss. The world, at least back then, seemed like a friendly place full of friendly people.

But violence against children existed then and it exists now. According to a paper published by the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, children and young adults ages 12-19 were twice as likely to be the victims of violence as the population as a whole. In 2015 the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children assisted in more than 13,700 cases of missing children. Of that number, 11 percent were abducted either by family members or strangers. What's more, the internet has removed barriers and allowed strangers into our homes. The Department of Justice has initiated an Internet Crimes Against Children task force aimed specifically at identifying online threats to children.

Those are sobering statistics, more so now that I have two children of my own. Like other parents, I want my kids to have the skills required to stay safe without spending every waking minute in fear for their life (that's my job, after all). My children need to know that not everyone is

good, but that there are defenses that will help them protect them from danger. I want my children to have the tools to help safeguard themselves against crime.

It's our responsibility to protect our kids as much as we can, but as they mature they will be exposed of more and more of the outside world, a key to development, growth and eventual self-sufficiency. We, as parents, need to teach our skills survival skills for a modern world. Here's are some guidelines for helping crime-proof your child from the National Crime Prevention Council:

1. Make Them Aware:

Don't allow your children to be ignorant to the fact that others could potentially pose a threat. The old adage that they shouldn't talk to strangers is true, but they should also recognize the warning signs from known individuals. If an adult who is not you or your spouse asks them to break the rules that you have set for them, they should be aware that this is a warning sign of an adult who is not to be trusted. Adults they can trust will not try to undermine your authority as their parents by telling them that it's OK to deviate from your agreed-upon route home, get in their car or stay out late. They should also know that any adult who asks them to keep secrets from you is giving them a red flag that says "danger."

2. Make Them Assertive:

None of us want to be embarrassed by our children, and of course it's an important part of our job to teach them manners. However, they should know that they shouldn't let manners stand in the way of their own personal safety. Help them understand that if an unknown adult asks your child to do something that makes them uncomfortable, they need to feel free to say no, to yell for help

or to escape the area and then to tell you as soon as possible. They should understand that if a stranger knocks on the door, they don't need to answer, even if the person knows they are inside. Children should know that you will always listen to them, and that they should learn to trust their instincts with regard to personal safety.

3. Help Them Communicate:

Kids need to have open lines of communications with a safe adult, and they need to be encouraged to let you know when something bothers them. On the flip side, know where your kids are and help them identify safe places and travel routes when they are old enough to be on their own. Cell phones are for more than texting with friends and playing Minecraft, too. A phone can be a dangerous distraction, drawing a kid's attention away from their surroundings and leaving them vulnerable, or a tool that helps them stay safe by instantly connecting them with adults they can trust.

4. Identify Safe Places & People:

Kids need safe spots—the home, school, a nearby fire or police station—where they can expect to find help and security. Assist them in identifying those places by pointing them out as you go along a route they need to walk or bike. Also, teach your kids to recognize trustworthy adults like police, teachers and firefighters. If your children feel threatened, they need to vocalize it and must be able to rely on those people for assistance.

<https://www.nrafamily.org/articles/2016/12/7/crime-proof-your-kids/>