

# PISTOL RANGE SAFETY RULES

***YOU are personally responsible for every bullet that you fire;  
where it goes and what it does.***



## **1. ALL GUNS ARE ALWAYS LOADED.**

This rule is intended to instill a mindset that makes you expect that every gun you come in contact with is loaded until you prove otherwise. Be deadly serious about this.

Handle every gun as you would a loaded gun.

DO NOT load any gun on this range until you are on the line and ready to shoot.

## **2. NEVER LET THE MUZZLE POINT AT ANYTHING THAT YOU DON'T WANT TO DESTROY.**

Keep muzzle pointed in the safest possible direction consistent with situation or mission, especially during administrative functions: (loading, unloading, chamber checking and clearing malfunctions). It is a deadly threat to allow a gun to be in your hand while pointed at another human being. Uncase and case with the muzzle pointed downrange and away from all people.

**If a gun is in your hand it must never be pointed at anyone!  
"It isn't loaded" is NOT an excuse – see Rule #1.**

**MUZZLE DOWN** - ON THIS RANGE NEVER LET THE MUZZLE POINT SIDEWAYS OR ABOVE THE BACKSTOP. Exceptions: REVOLVER shooters may use proper reloading techniques for revolvers that work with gravity to eject cases. MUZZLE LOADER shooters may load UNPRIMED muzzle loaders with the muzzle vertical provided that priming is done afterwards with muzzle down and directed downrange. TUBULAR MAGAZINE RIMFIRE RIFLE shooters may use gravity to load magazine with muzzle up, but chamber must not be loaded until muzzle is pointed at the backstop.

## **3. KEEP YOUR FINGER OFF THE TRIGGER UNTIL YOUR SIGHTS ARE ON THE TARGET AND YOU INTEND TO SHOOT**

Keep your finger off the trigger and pressed on something solid above the trigger guard until your sights are on the target and you have decided to shoot. The reverse is also true: your finger goes back to "index position" (pressed against something solid above the trigger guard) the moment you come off target. Nothing touches the trigger unless the sights are on target and you want to hear a loud noise. This is the golden rule.

## **4. BE SURE OF YOUR TARGET.**

Know what it is, what is behind it and what might cross in front of it. Never shoot at anything you have not positively identified. Do not let muzzle point above the target plane.

# PLEASE USE OUR THREE (3) RANGE COMMANDS

COMMUNICATE your intentions. If you want to go downrange, ASK all other shooters if it is OK to CEASE FIRE and go downrange. Be courteous. If everyone agrees, then call "CEASE FIRE". Do not advance downrange until it is announced that "THE RANGE IS SAFE" and all guns are tabled. **"CLEAR" IS NO LONGER A VALID RANGE COMMAND ON THIS RANGE.**

## 1. **"CEASE FIRE."** MEANS:

- ✓ STOP FIRING IMMEDIATELY! DO NOT TAKE ONE MORE SHOT.
- ✓ REMOVE THE MAGAZINE AND AMMUNITION FROM THE GUN. TRIPLE CHECK.
- ✓ LOCK BACK ALL BOLTS AND SLIDES. If an action does not lock open, a "flag" type device such as weed whacker string may be placed in the action to give visible indication.
- ✓ TABLE THE GUNS AND STEP BACK FROM THE BENCH.

**EVERYONE HAS THE AUTHORITY TO CALL AN EMERGENCY "CEASE FIRE".**  
**Do not fire another shot, someone might be downrange.**

## 2. **"THE RANGE IS SAFE - NO ONE TOUCHES ANY GUN."**

- ✓ ALL AMMUNITION HAS BEEN REMOVED FROM ALL FIREARMS.
- ✓ EVERYONE HAS BACKED AWAY FROM FIREARMS AND WILL NOT TOUCH THEM.
- ✓ IT IS SAFE TO PROCEED DOWNRANGE OR PICK UP BRASS.

The first person downrange on each side will place the **ORANGE FLAG** in the flag holder pipe.  
The last person back on each side will recover the **ORANGE FLAG** from his side.

## 3. **"THE RANGE IS HOT - EYES AND EARS."** MEANS:

- ✓ NO ONE IS DOWNRANGE AND FLAGS ARE BACK.
- ✓ EVERYONE, NOT JUST SHOOTERS, IMMEDIATELY PUT ON EYE AND EAR PROTECTION.
- ✓ YOU MAY HANDLE YOUR WEAPONS OR RESUME SHOOTING.
- ✓ YOU MAY PACK YOUR FIREARMS TO LEAVE. Point each firearm safely downrange, verify that it contains no ammunition before moving it or casing it.

**UNCASE AND CASE WITH MUZZLE POINTED DOWNRANGE WHEN RANGE IS HOT.**

Please carry your firearm to and from the firing line in a case or holster or pointed straight down. Do not touch or handle any firearm behind the firing line or when people are downrange.

**5. HOLSTER POLICY - SHOOTERS MAY NOT PRACTICE PRESENTATION AND RECOVERY (DRAWING AND HOLSTERING) UNTIL proof has been provided to the Safety and Training Committee of adequate training in safely working from a holster and a STICKER displayed.** [safety@northsidesportsmen.com](mailto:safety@northsidesportsmen.com) Exceptions:

- Shooting under the supervision of an instructor who has been approved by the NSSA Board.
- Temporary approval by the Pistol Chairman or the Safety and Training Committee Chairman.
- A holstered pistol need not be unloaded or benched during CEASE FIRE or SAFE.

**6. HIGH POWER RIFLES, SHOTGUNS and other very loud guns are permitted only when you are alone or with the consent of all other shooters.** When others are present, even with consent, please keep to the 25 yd. and 50 yd. and avoid more than one shot per 3 seconds.

## **7. NO ALCOHOL OR DRUGS.**

No alcohol on the range. No person may use this range while under the influence of alcoholic beverages, narcotics or if taking any medication that warns against driving or operating machinery.

## **8. EYE AND EAR PROTECTION ARE REQUIRED WHILE THE LINE IS HOT.**

Shooters and spectators must wear eye and ear protection. Polycarbonate or Tri-Vex lenses are best. We advise shirts with tight-fitting necks and baseball-type caps with bills to protect against hot brass.

## **9. WASH HANDS AFTER SHOOTING & TAKE PRECAUTIONS DURING PREGNANCY.**

Shooters should wash hands in cold water or at least wipes, before drinking, eating or smoking to prevent the accidental ingestion of lead compounds from primers. PREGNANT and NURSING LADIES should avoid noise & lead exposure as well as chemical exposure from gun cleaning chemicals.

## **10. SHOOTING HOURS – 8:00 AM TIL SUNSET.** (Chairman makes the exceptions.)

### **11. GUNS & AMMUNITION:**

- ✓ **.50 caliber BMG**, full auto fire, fanning, and bump firing are prohibited.
- ✓ **BIRDSHOT** may only be fired on the PATTERN RACK at far left of the pistol range.
- ✓ **SHOTGUN SLUGS, BULLETS AND BUCKSHOT may NOT be fired at PATTERN RACK.**
- ✓ **SHOTGUN SLUGS** may be fired at 7 yd., 15 yd., 25 yd., and 50 yd. – never at pattern rack.
- ✓ **BUCKSHOT IS PROHIBITED.**
- ✓ **UNCONTROLLED FIRE IS PROHIBITED. RAPID FIRE** is only permitted if every shot hits the target. Slow down - uncontrolled fire will result in banishment.
- ✓ Use ammunition that is correct for your gun and recommended by the manufacturer.

### **12. RELEASE OF ALL CLAIMS**

By staying here to shoot or observe, you agree that you understand and will abide by the rules. You also agree that you and your family will not sue the club, or the people who run the club, or the people who keep up the club, or instructors who teach here or those who make or enforce the rules.

### **IF YOU DO NOT UNDERSTAND AND AGREE, LEAVE NOW!**

Release Of Claims For Accidental Injuries or Death, Assumption Of Risk Agreement, Agreement Not To Sue, and Agreement To Hold Harmless, In Connection With Participation In Shooting Activities. In consideration of their presence at and/or participation in any shooting activities at the North Side Sportsmen's Association (hereinafter "NSSA") all individuals using or present at NSSA ranges and grounds and every shooter and observer agrees on behalf of themselves individually, their heirs, executors, and assigns, and any minor children who accompanies them that they (1) do so at their own risk, and (2) assume responsibility for any injury to persons or property caused by them, and (3) for themselves, their heirs, executors, and assigns, and for any minor children who accompanies them they agree that in the event any claim for damages is or in the future shall be prosecuted against NSSA or its officers, directors, committee chairman or members, instructors, range officers, coaches, agents, or employees as a result of their actions, omissions, or negligence, that they, or their estate, shall indemnify and save harmless NSSA, its officers, directors, committee chairman or members, instructors, agents, or employees from any and all claims or causes of action by whomever and wherever made or prosecuted for damages, including the cost and expense of defending the same. You are personally responsible for all damage that you cause.

### **BY REMAINING ON THESE PREMISES, YOU AGREE TO THE FOREGOING.**

All range shooting is governed by these rules except that special rules may apply during special events or at the discretion of the Board of Directors or Pistol Committee. Rules may be changed by the NSSA Board of Directors or by the NSSA Pistol Committee. *Please promptly report unsafe or discourteous activities to Harry Schneider, Pistol Range Chairman 724-584-8902 [pistol@northsidesportsmen.com](mailto:pistol@northsidesportsmen.com) 02/05/2018*

# "MUZZLE - DOWN"

BY John Farnam <http://www.defense-training.com/>

**"Muzzle-down" is the by-word... All rifle, pistol, and shotgun handling is with the muzzle no higher than horizontal. Elevating muzzles past horizontal during administrative processes, and during reloading and stoppage-reduction, is commonly taught in some quarters, but it is wrong - and dangerous!**

**When NDs occur with the muzzle down and angled toward the berm, the bullet hits the ground between the shooter and the berm and can still subsequently jump over to the other side. However, these ricochets are typically low energy and far less dangerous than direct launches.**

**"Muzzle-up" is bad practice for other reasons too. Handling guns with the muzzle up is an invitation to a disarm, and rifle barrels angled upward will reliably betray an Operator's position and intentions, particularly when he is behind cover.**

**So, our students need to become accustomed to keeping all muzzles continually at a downward angle, coming up to horizontal only when aiming at a target. All administrative processes: loading, unloading, and performing a chamber-check can be (and must be) done with Operator facing in a relatively safe direction and with the muzzle angled downward.**

## **Harry Schneider, NSSA Pistol Chairman comments:**

**On this range it is NEVER permitted to have any firearm pointed at any person and no loaded firearm may be pointed higher than the target.**

**PRONE: Shooting from LOW POSITIONS such as PRONE, KNEELING OR SITTING (on the ground) may ONLY be done (ONLY) if you are shooting at targets on the 50-yard rack.**

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# PISTOL RANGE PROCEDURES

- 1. ONLY MEMBERS AND ESCORTED GUESTS MAY USE RANGE  
MEMBERS MUST DISPLAY CURRENT MEMBERSHIP CARD**
- 2. PRIOR TO SHOOTING – ALL SHOOTERS MUST:**
  - ✓ **SIGN IN AT THE PISTOL RANGE AND PAY DAILY USE DONATION.**
  - ✓ **RIFLE AND PISTOL RANGES HAVE SEPARATE SIGN-IN AND PAY.**
  - ✓ **READ THE RANGE PROCEDURES AND THE PISTOL SAFETY RULES.**
- 3. EVERY MEMBER AND GUEST MUST PERSONALLY SIGN-IN & DONATE.**

**Daily PISTOL RANGE DONATION: Members pay \$1.00; guests \$2.00 each.  
Juniors 16 and under – FREE – but they must be well supervised.**

Every shooter must personally sign-up and pay at the pistol range even if you have already paid at the rifle range. This applies to the shotgun pattern rack as well.

The DONATION BOX and SIGN-IN BOX are at the pistol range. Before shooting, all shooters must read all of the rules, sign-in and prepay posted donations. Signing-in constitutes acceptance and understanding of all listed range safety rules and procedures.

- ✓ YOUR MEMBERSHIP NUMBER is the last 5 digits on your Gate Access card.
- ✓ GUESTS personally sign-in under the member & write "guest" under membership number.
- ✓ Please politely remind other members to SIGN-IN AND PAY BEFORE SHOOTING.

Please report unsafe shooters, trespassers, slobs who leave a mess and cheaters who do not pay. Write down vehicle license number & slip a note in the cash box or call Harry at (724)584-8902.

Your presence on the range constitutes acceptance, at minimum, of all posted RANGE SAFETY RULES and PISTOL RANGE PROCEDURES. Sign-in constitutes documentary evidence of your understanding and acceptance of all listed rules and procedures. Any conduct detrimental to good order, safety and operation of the range will result in expulsion and/or legal action.

### **3. GUEST POLICY – MEMBERS HAVE PREFERENCE OVER GUESTS**

**This is a summary - See full club wide guest policy on the website**

- a. Responsible adult must constantly supervise each child on or behind the firing line
- b. No more than 3 guests per member at any one time unless the Range Chairman has approved more in advance so that a range officer may be assigned. [pistol@northsidesportsmen.com](mailto:pistol@northsidesportsmen.com)
- c. Non-members and spouses and children (under 18) of members will be considered guests.
- d. At any visit with guests, no guest may shoot while the member is shooting, and the member may not shoot while any guest is shooting; instead the member must monitor the guest.
- e. Only one guest at a time may shoot, unless another member is available to monitor the guest.

- f. Spouses and children 16 or 17 may shoot at the same time as the member only if they have attended a New Member Orientation Session, given occasionally by the Membership Committee. Those spouses/children will be given credentials as having attended the course. However the member must be present when they are shooting.
- g. All spouses are encouraged to attend any available New Member Orientation Session, after informing the Membership Chair. [Membership@northsidesportsmen.com](mailto:Membership@northsidesportsmen.com)
- h. Any non-shooting guest inside any shooting pavilion will be treated and counted as a guest toward the maximum of three. Any such person must remove from the area back to a vehicle or the Clubhouse to not be counted as a guest. These persons are not permitted to shoot.

## **5. TARGETS – PAPER TARGETS ONLY.**

No clay birds, cans, or bottles. Remove all targets when the range is SAFE and you are finished shooting. No shooting at targets on the ground or in the air. No mid-range targets. Balloons are permitted but leaving balloon residue will result in banishment. Beware of nails, screws and staples on the ground or boards. Use other types of targets only with the approval of the BOD or Pistol Chairman. If you bring large sheets of plastic or cardboard to shoot at – please take it home with you – please don't be rude and leave it to other members to dispose.

## **NEVER SHOOT WOOD – ATTACH TARGETS TO SNOW FENCE.**

NEVER shoot at objects on the ground or in the air or placed on boards.

UNCONTROLLED FIRE IS PROHIBITED – slow down, learn from each shot.

- ✓ **BIRDSHOT** may only be fired on the PATTERN RACK at far left of range.
- ✓ **BIRDSHOT** may NOT be fired at any snowfence. PICK UP YOUR HULLS.
- ✓ **SHOTGUN SLUGS, BULLETS AND BUCKSHOT may NOT be fired at PATTERN RACK.**
- ✓ **SHOTGUN SLUGS** may be fired at 7 yd., 15 yd., 25 yd. and 50 yd. – never at pattern rack.
- ✓ **BUCKSHOT IS PROHIBITED.**

## **7. PLEASE CLEAN UP AFTER YOURSELF.**

Pick up all targets, boxes, patches and brass. Your BRASS CASES must be picked up and taken home or placed in the brass buckets. Steel cases, aluminum cases, empty shotgun slug hulls, targets and patches go into the rubbish barrels. THIS RANGE IS NOT AN ASHTRAY. YOUR CIGARETTE BUTTS GO INTO YOUR CARS ASHTRAY – NOT ON THE GROUND OR BARRELS. The safest time to pick up brass is when the line is SAFE and no one is shooting or touching guns.

- 8. PLEASE DO YOUR PART.** Range maintenance is done by members like you.  
Protect your investment by reporting unsafe shooters, trespassers, slobes and cheats.

## **9. EMERGENCY PHONES - DIAL 911 – DO NOT SPEAK TO MEDIA.**

Use your cell or the emergency cell phones at the RIFLE RANGE and CLUBHOUSE ENTRANCE airlock. **Ask for Allegheny County 911. Club address is North Side Sportsmen's Association 325 Mount Pleasant Road, Warrendale 15086, Marshall Township. Send someone with a gate access card to open the gate to let the ambulance in and direct them to the injured & remain at gate to let ambulance out.** Report injuries or property damage to NSSA. Please call Harry at (724) 584-8902, Stan at (724) 816-0589, Jeff at (724) 816-9986. *Please suggest rule improvements to Harry Schneider, Pistol Chairman* [pistol@northsidesportsmen.com](mailto:pistol@northsidesportsmen.com)

*Rev 01/24/2018*