

PROGRESS IN SAFETY

There were **410 gun-related deaths in Minnesota in 2015**, ranking 30th nationally. While we are doing well, we know that we can do better.

The first step is to follow the 11 commandments of gun safety. The newest rule addresses suicide prevention. Suicides far outnumber homicides in Minnesota (730 suicides vs. 147 homicides in 2015). Firearms are the leading suicide method in our state (about half of all suicides).

If a family member is going through a difficult period (like depression, a relationship break-up, or drug problem), make sure they can't get to your guns. To learn ways to get help for them, call the **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-TALK [8255]**.

**Find a firearm safety instructor
in your area**

The Minnesota Department of Public Safety has a directory of certified firearms instructors on their website: <https://dps.mn.gov/divisions/bca>

ABOUT NAMI MINNESOTA

NAMI Minnesota is a statewide organization dedicated to improving the lives of children and adults with mental illnesses and their families.

The organization provides free education classes to families who have an adult family member or a child with a mental illness. The classes provide current information on mental illnesses, treatment options, and the mental health system. NAMI Minnesota provides training to educators, mental and medical health providers, older adult workers, jail and correctional staff, and faith communities.

In addition, NAMI Minnesota offers public awareness presentations, Mental Health First Aid Training, and several suicide prevention classes. Peer led support groups are available in many communities across the state.

NAMI Minnesota has recently begun working with gun shop and range owners, their employees, and their customers on preventing suicide, the number one type of firearm death in the U.S.

For more information, visit our website www.namihelps.org



GUN SAFETY RULES

11 ~~10~~ COMMANDMENTS
OF GUN SAFETY

Look inside
to see
what's new!

11 COMMANDMENTS OF GUN SAFETY

1. Treat every firearm as if it were loaded.

It might be, even if you think it isn't.

2. Always point the muzzle in a safe direction.

Keep control of the direction of the muzzle at all times. Whether you are shooting or simply handling your gun, never point the muzzle at yourself or at others. Common sense should dictate which direction is safest depending on your location and various other conditions. Generally speaking, it is safest to have the gun pointed upward or towards the ground.

3. Be sure of your target—and what's beyond.

Be absolutely sure you have identified your target without any doubt. Equally important, be aware of the area beyond your target. This means observing your prospective area of fire before you shoot. Never fire in a direction where there are people or any other potential for mishap. It's simple: *think first, shoot second*.

4. Keep your finger outside of the trigger guard until you are ready to shoot.

There's a natural tendency to place your finger on the trigger when holding a gun. Avoid it! Your trigger finger should be extended, pointing forward, pressed against the side of the firearm, above the trigger area.

This is the best way to prevent an accidental discharge.

5. Check your barrel and ammunition.

Make sure the barrel and action are clear of obstructions, and carry only the proper ammunition for your firearm.

6. Unload firearm when it is not in use.

Leave action open; carry firearm in a case and unloaded to and from the shooting area. Whenever you pick up any gun, immediately check the action and check to see that the chamber is unloaded. If the gun has a magazine, make sure it is empty. Even if the magazine is empty or removed, a cartridge may still remain in the firing chamber. If you do not know how to open the gun's action, leave it alone or get help from someone who is knowledgeable.

7. Point a firearm only at something you intend to shoot.

Avoid all horseplay with a gun.

8. Don't run, jump, or climb with a loaded firearm.

Unload a firearm before you climb a fence or tree, or jump a ditch. Pull a firearm to you by the butt, not the muzzle.

9. Store firearms and ammunition separately and safely.

Store each in secured locations beyond the reach of children and careless adults. Always store your guns unloaded and locked in a case or gun safe when not in use, with ammunition locked and stored in a separate location.

10. Don't drink alcoholic beverages before or during shooting.

Also do not use mind- or behavior-altering medicines or drugs. Alcohol, as well as any other substance likely to impair mental or physical functions of the body, should not be used before or while handling firearms.

11. Consider additional safety precautions if a family member may be suicidal.

When an emotional crisis (such as a breakup, job loss, legal trouble) or a major change in someone's behavior (depression, violence or heavy drinking) causes concern, storing guns outside the home for a while may save a life. Friends as well as some shooting clubs, police departments or gun shops may be able to store them until the situation improves.