FIREARMS

1. Whether used for hunting, target practice, skeet shooting, household defenses, or as a collector's hobby, firearms exist in many homes.

2. Rifles, shotguns and pistols by themselves are harmless. The behavior of those handling them, however, can make them absolutely lethal. Even highly trained military personnel that have been well trained in weapon safety have been killed or seriously injured from the accidental discharge of their individual weapons.

3. Accidents with firearms are preventable. Certainly a great many if not all of them, can be eliminated through conscientious adherence to the following cardinal rules:

a. Treat every firearm as if it were a loaded lethal weapon.

b. Wear proper clothing to include the recommended hunting apparel.

c. Use the "buddy system".

d. Always keep firearms pointed in a safe direction, especially when carrying them while negotiating obstacles (i.e., ditches or climbing over logs).

e. Never climb a fence and carry a firearm in your hands.

f. Remain within communication distance of those in your hunting party.

g. Avoid horseplay in the presence of firearms.

h. Always make sure that the firearm is empty prior to handling or cleaning.

i. Do not trust the safety mechanisms of any firearm.

j. Make certain that the barrel of any firearm is kept free of all foreign matter.

4. Safety and security also need to be taken into consideration when firearms are stored in the home. The following rules should be followed particularly if children are in the home.

a. Never store a firearm loaded with ammunition.

b. Use trigger locks for each gun.

c. Keep all firearms locked up and out of a child's reach.

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