

The Gun Doctor: Should You Be Armed?

By Wolfgang Rotbart

This article may be somewhat more controversial than previous ones as it will deal with the question: *Should you as an individual be armed?*

At the extremes, there are those who feel that virtually everybody should be armed and those who believe that only law enforcement & the military should be. I think the answer lies in between and is very much dependent on the individual and the circumstances.

We have a tenuous Constitutional right to the right to keep and bear arms, but just because an individual can arm himself, it doesn't necessarily follow that they should.

With every right comes responsibility and every firearm owner should know his legal responsibilities under the law.

For the individual, several questions should be asked and honestly answered regarding firearm ownership:

Are you legally entitled to own a firearm? In general, you cannot purchase, own or sometimes even be in possession of a firearm if you have a felony conviction, are under a restraining order, some misdemeanor convictions or any

within four years, been dishonorably discharged from the military or been adjudicated as mentally ill or incompetent along with a few other cases.

Are you willing to accept the tremendous responsibility that comes with possessing a firearm? You literally have the power of life and death in your hands. There should be nothing flippant or casual about firearm ownership.

Are you willing to live with the fact that you might be forced to take a life in order to save your own or those you love? I know one woman is extremely hoplophobic (i.e. having an irrational fear of weapons themselves as opposed to the natural anxiety regarding the damage they can inflict). By her own admission, she would not be able to use a firearm to stop an attack even if her own family were being killed one by one in front of her. This woman should not possess a firearm for obvious reasons.

Are you quick-tempered, over-indulge in alcohol, drugs or just very impulsive? Once you pull the trigger, it cannot be undone. Some people seem to think that using a firearm to settle a dispute or make a dramatic point is acceptable. Of course, these folks also should not own a firearm.

consequences of using a firearm in self-defense? No matter what the circumstances, no matter how justified you may be in using a firearm for self-defense, you will almost certainly be sued by someone if you do. Many homeowner "umbrella" or general liability insurance policies specifically do NOT cover firearm related incidents. It would be wise to check your policy and consider getting protection specifically for this, especially if you also carry a firearm on a regular basis.

Do you have children living in your home or visiting on a regular basis? When and where I grew up, there were readily available, loaded firearms in virtually every home, but all the children were quite aware of the (usually painful consequences) of even getting near a firearm without Mom or Dad's permission and there weren't any problems. Of course, today, even if your children are well disciplined in this matter, you certainly can't assume that the neighbors' children, and many adults for that matter, are and therefore stringent care must always be taken to ensure that firearms are properly secured. I intend to discuss this in detail in my next article.

Do you have an occupation or pastime that presents greater than average risks for assault? I recall reading about incidents in *The Oregonian* for

scenarios as diverse as pizza delivery to auto repossession to home invasion.

Do you transit high crime areas regularly or live in such an area? Almost every community has relatively safe areas and others that are quite dangerous. However, no place should ever be considered absolutely safe.

Are you in an especially vulnerable group? Violent crime is overwhelmingly committed by relatively young males physically in their prime and much of their crime is directed against those who are generally badly mismatched in a direct physical confrontation – women, disabled & the elderly. There is a saying that God made men, but Samuel Colt (inventor of the revolver) made them equal.

I welcome ideas for topics for these articles. Please email them to: Wolfgang@WolfgangTheGunDoctor.com or call me at 503-429-7342 10:00 – 5:00 M – F

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Columbia County Circuit Court Notice

As you are aware, the State of Oregon is in the midst of significant budget cuts which severely affect the court's ability to meet its public mandate to uphold the law and constitution and to safeguard the state's justice system. We can no longer provide all of the services we have traditionally provided. Service to our community and to its access to the court system will be curtailed.

The Oregon Judicial Department has lost 201 permanent FTE since the 2007-09 biennium 12 % reduction. As of May 1, 2012 we will be losing an additional 51.61 FTE. This will affect the Columbia County Circuit Court as follows:

- The Columbia County Circuit Court will lose two additional employees. This comes in spite of the employee furloughs and wage freeze.
- The three circuit court judges will cut their support staff from two to one with their judicial assistant taking on the courtroom clerk duties and the docketing function being combined into one docketing clerk.
- Traffic citations will be scheduled for only two days a week: Wednesday and Thursday from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM. Defendants coming to the court for traffic arraignments at any other times may or may not be able to take care of their citations.
- The court phones will be open from 8:30 to 3:00 PM Monday through Thursday. Closed on Fridays.
- The court will be closed on Friday except for pre-scheduled restraining order appearances, stalking order appearances, in custody arraignments, and immediate danger appearances in the morning. In addition the judges will only hear pre-arranged special appearances in their chambers in the morning. On Friday afternoons staff will be working behind closed doors trying to catch up on data entry and filing.

Because the court is closed for filings on Friday, under ORCP 10A, "if the period so computed relates to serving a public officer or filing a document at a public office when that particular office is closed before the end of or for all of the normal work day...the period runs until the close of office hours on the next day the office is open for business."

- Copy requests may take up to one month to process.
- Entry of judgments may take up to one month to enter.

We are very sorry we have to implement these changes which cause delay to accessing justice and threaten public safety.

Are you prepared for the financial and legal

Public Certification Test and Drop Sites for the Primary Election to be held Tuesday, May 15, 2012

The Public Certification Test of the counting equipment for the Primary Election to be held on Tuesday, May 8, 2012. The testing will begin at 11:00 AM in the County Elections Department. The public is welcome to attend.

Drop sites for the election will be as follows:

VERNONIA LIBRARY

701 Weed Ave.
Apr. 27 – May 14 During Library Hours
May 15, 12:00 PM - 8:00 PM

RAINIER CITY HALL

106 B St. West
Apr. 27 – May 14 During Office Hours
May 15, 12:00 PM - 8:00 PM

CLATSKANIE LIBRARY

11 Lillich St.

Apr. 27 – May 14 During Library Hours
May 15, 12:00 PM - 8:00 PM

SCAPPOOSE CITY HALL

33568 E. Columbia Ave.
Apr. 27 – May 14 During Office Hours
May 15 12:00 PM - 8:00 PM

MIST BIRKENFELD RFPD


12525 Highway 292
Apr. 27 – May 14 During Office Hours
May 15, 12:00 PM - 8:00 PM

COUNTY COURTHOUSE ELECTIONS DEPT.

230 Strand St.
St. Helens, OR 97051
8:30 AM - 5:00 PM Mon. – Thu.
Election Day - May 15, 7:00 AM - 8:00 PM
A drive-by drop box is located in the lower parking lot.

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