

MEDIA RELEASE

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Don't be an egg, hunt safely this Easter.

With the annual 'Roar' and Easter weekend lining up this year, the Mountain Safety Council (MSC) are urging hunters across New Zealand to refresh themselves on the seven rules of the firearms safety code.

MSC Chief Executive Mike Daisley said that the firearms safety code is the key to making sure that all hunters make it home this Easter.

"More often than not with a firearms incident you can trace it back to one of the seven rules in the firearms safety code not being followed"

Mr Daisley said all hunters must ensure they can identify an animal beyond all doubt.

"If you can't see enough of the animal to clearly make the required observations, such as type of animal or number of points on the antlers for example, then you're guessing and making potentially dangerous assumptions"

"If you don't know what those observations are then you are putting yourself, your hunting party and others in the area in danger "

Along with identifying the target correctly, safe handling of firearms remains a significant contributing factor in almost all recorded incidents.

"A great number of firearms incidents could have been avoided by simply treating every firearm as loaded"

"We'd like to remind hunters and firearms users alike that they have a legal and moral responsibility to look after themselves and their mates while hunting. We are advocating strongly for a safe and enjoyable roar"

Mr Daisley said the message remains clear that despite how exciting the hunting gets returning home is the primary objective.

"We have a passionate community of hunters in New Zealand which is great to see. What we want to ensure is that everyone makes it home this year"

For information on the Firearms Safety Code and other resources, visit www.mountainsafety.org.nz

The Firearms Safety Code:

1. Treat every firearm as loaded

Check every firearm yourself.

Pass or accept only an open or unloaded firearm.

2. Always point firearms in a safe direction

Loaded or unloaded, always point the muzzle in a safe direction.

3. Load a firearm only when ready to fire

Load the magazine only when you reach your shooting area.

Load the chamber only when ready to shoot.

Completely unload before leaving the shooting area.

4. Identify your target beyond all doubt

Movement, colour, sound and shape can all deceive you.

Assume colour, shape, sound, and shape to be human until proven otherwise.

5. Check your firing zone

THINK: What may happen if you miss your target?

What might you hit between you and the target or beyond?

Do not fire when you know others are in your firing zone.

6. Store firearms and ammunition safely

When not in use, lock away the bolt, firearm and ammunition separately.

Never leave firearms in a vehicle that is unattended.

7. Avoid alcohol or drugs when handling firearms

Good judgement is the key to safe use of firearms.

The New Zealand Arms Code

All hunters should know the Arms Code well, and conform with all parts of it at all times.

The Arms Code is available for free download from

<http://www.police.govt.nz/about-us/publication/arms-code>

For information on the Outdoor Safety Code and other resources, visit www.mountainsafety.org.nz.

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