



MEDIA RELEASE

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Mountain Safety Council Urges Hunters To Refresh Themselves On Firearms Safety Rules

The events in the Central Otago region this week are an unfortunate example of firearms safety rules not being followed.

Mountain Safety Council (MSC) Chief Executive Mike Daisley says this tragedy is a heart-breaking reminder to hunters of the importance of keeping the seven basic rules of firearms safety front of mind at all times.

"Even the most experienced hunters can become complacent, and unfortunately a moment's complacency can have fatal consequences."

Reports to date suggest that this incident related to a loaded firearm being placed into a vehicle. Regardless of the type of game being hunted, the seven rules of the firearms safety code apply says Mr Daisley.

"What we see repeatedly is that in the vast majority of firearms incidents, chances are that one or more of the seven basic rules have not been followed."

"It's imperative that hunters keep safety in mind at all times. The rules are there to guide the behaviour of hunters and to make sure everyone makes it home"

In particular reference to the unfortunate events this week, Mr Daisley urges hunters to remember to treat every firearm as loaded.

"Load your firearm only when you're ready to fire and always point your firearm in a safe direction."

"With the 'roar' just around the corner for deer hunters this is a timely reminder to keep yourself safe. We urge hunters to look after themselves and their hunting partners."

For more information about firearms safety, including the Firearms Safety Code, tips, advice and resources, visit www.mountainsafety.org.nz.

The Firearms Safety Code: Seven Basic Rules of Firearms Safety

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 after 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. Page 2 of 2
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 if 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 AND DRUGS WHEN HANDLING FIREARMS - Good judgement is the key to safe use of firearms.

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For more information or to arrange an interview, please contact:

Mike Daisley Chief Executive

Cell: 027 443 7557

Email: mike.daisley@mountainsafety.org.nz

Nick Kingstone – Communications Manager

Cell: 0211902930

Email: nick.kingstone@mountainsafety.org.nz