

Safety Meeting

Federal guidelines do not allow 4-H clubs to require that youth attend meetings. The rare exception is that a safety meeting for Shooting Sports may be required of participants. The county instructor team should decide if a meeting will be required, who will be required to attend (first time members, members in years 1-3, all Shooting Sports members), who will teach which items, and if a test will be given. You may use the following agenda or adapt it to fit your program and the disciplines that the county offers or create your own agenda. The agenda for the safety meeting must be approved by and on file with the County 4-H Youth Development Extension Educator and the 4-H Shooting Sports Coordinator prior to the meeting. If a safety meeting is required, the meeting should be offered at multiple times (covering the same information) and offered in multiple formats (e.g., face-to-face, recorded video, online resources, printed materials).

Suggested Agenda

- Introductions
- Cardinal Rules of Safe Shooting (3)*
- Eye and Ear Protection*
- Explanation of Range Rules and Range Commands
 - Range Safety Officer's word is law
 - Eye protection is required
 - Ear protection is required with firearms
 - Cease Fire – anyone can call, used for unsafe behavior
- Lead (handling and safety)*
- Behavior Expectations
 - Pay attention to instructors – active listening
 - Zero tolerance of disruptive behavior. Everyone must be able to hear and see the instructors
 - If someone does something that is deemed dangerous, they may have to sit out of shooting for that night. If you repeatedly create a dangerous situation, you will not be able to continue in the program.
- Posture correction (non-threatening, hands-on instruction)
- Other safety information that youth should have (where parents should park, site specific rules and regulations, etc.)
- Dress for: weather, some disciplines will shoot prone, no loose clothing in archery
- Parents – please let the instructors know of anything they might need to know regarding their children (for example: insect bite allergies, ear tubes)

Rationale and Additional Information

Cardinal rules of safe shooting – these rules are the standard for safety when handling firearms and archery equipment. They are:

- Always keep the arrow or muzzle pointed in a safe direction
- Always keep your finger off the trigger until ready to shoot
- Always keep your firearm or bow unloaded until ready to use

Eye and ear protection – eye and ear protection are essential for the safety of all shooters. Eye and ear protection are mandatory for all shooters, coaches, and others on the range. The likelihood of an injury is relatively small, but the impact of such an injury could be serious. Stray or deflected pellets, target chips, gases and powder residue from shotguns and other foreign objects have the potential to damage the eyes. Wearing shooting glasses protects them. Many shooters combine their eye protection with corrective lenses or tinted lenses that increase contrast, reduce light intensity, or enhance vision in other ways.

The sound levels produced by any powder firearm can cause hearing damage. Hearing damage is usually gradual, so the shooter seldom notices the loss until it is serious. The damage is cumulative and permanent. The damage from the prolonged exposure during target shooting is a real and present threat. Inexpensive and comfortable hearing protection (plugs or muffs) are available. Some shooters use both plugs and muffs for added protection. Choose the type of protection that fits your shooting style and budget. Always wear them on the range.

Range rules and commands – give the guidelines and procedures that will be followed by everyone on the range. Range Commands will vary from discipline to discipline and range to range. Range commands give the guidelines and procedures that will be followed by everyone on the range. It is especially important that youth understand the *Cease Fire* command and that anyone can call a *Cease Fire*. The *Cease Fire* is used to stop unsafe behavior immediately. It is important that youth always read, understand, and follow the range commands that pertain to the range they are using.

Lead – information about the toxicity of materials youth may be handling. Avoid eating or drinking on the range. Never eat or drink until after your hands have been washed. Lead from the balls or exposed lead ammunition is of concern. Hands should always be washed after handling the 100% pure lead balls used in muzzleloaders. Lead ball should never be placed in the mouth. Percussion caps and centerfire primers are also a source of lead. The priming compound used in modern caps is lead styphnate. For this reason, care should be taken when handling caps. Lead exposure is cumulative. (Suggestion for coaches and shooters: always have anti-bacterial moist towelettes available on the range so you can wipe your hands carefully once you are through shooting.)

Behavioral expectations – clear guidelines of what is appropriate behavior on the range, what will be expected, and the consequences of inappropriate behavior. Disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Everyone must be able to hear and see the instructors at all times. Youth must use active listening skills throughout the Shooting Sports meetings. If anyone does something that is deemed dangerous, they may have to sit out of shooting for that night. If they repeatedly create a dangerous situation, they will not be able to continue in the program. Consult with the 4-H Extension Educator for additional guidance.

Other safety information – safety guidelines and recommendations based on the particular ranges used. This information includes safety guidelines and recommendations based on the particular ranges used. Examples: where parents should park, stand when watching shooting, when to talk to their child, etc.

Dress – discussion of types of clothing that can pose safety concerns. Discuss the types of clothing that can pose safety concerns (e.g. no loose clothing in archery). This discussion may also include information about appropriate clothing for different weather and shooting situations (e.g., some disciplines will shoot prone).

Name: _____

4-H Shooting Sports Safety Quiz

1. Complete the 3 Cardinal Rules of Safe Shooting:
Always keep the arrow or muzzle pointed _____.
Always keep your finger _____ until ready to shoot.
Always keep your firearm or bow _____ until ready to use.
2. Wearing shooting glasses protects your eyes from _____.
3. Ear plugs and muffs protect your ears from _____.
4. Are Range Rules the same for all ranges? (circle one) YES NO
5. What do you do when someone calls "Cease Fire?"
6. Is lead a concern in the 4-H Shooting Sports discipline that you signed up for? (circle)
Yes NO
7. What must you do after handling lead?
8. Why is active listening especially important for 4-H members taking Shooting Sports?

4-H Shooting Sports Safety Quiz

Note: youth do not need to answer exactly as given below but they should have the general idea.

1. List the 3 Cardinal Rules of Safe Shooting:

Always keep the arrow or muzzle pointed in a safe direction.

Always keep your finger off the trigger until ready to shoot.

Always keep your firearm or bow unloaded until ready to use.

2. Wearing shooting glasses protects your eyes from – There are many correct answers, including: stray or deflected pellets, target chips, gases and powder residue from shotguns and other foreign objects.

3. Ear plugs and muffs protect your ears from loud noises from firearms.

4. Are Range Rules the same for all ranges? (circle one) YES

- the correct answer is NO

NO

5. What do you do when someone calls “Cease Fire?”

Stop whatever you are doing and wait for instructions from the Range Officer.

6. Is lead a concern in the 4-H Shooting Sports discipline that you signed up for? (circle)

Yes

NO

The correct answer will depend on the discipline. Lead is not a concern for archery, but is a concern (to varying degrees) for the other disciplines.

7. What must you do after handling lead?

Wash your hands.

8. Why is active listening especially important for 4-H members taking Shooting Sports?

So that you, other youth, and the adults can stay safe. (They might also say – to hear all the rules, to pay attention, because shooting equipment can be dangerous, etc.)