

The National Congress of Old West Shootists, Inc.

Re-enactment Safety Guidelines:

1. No live ammunition will be brought to any reenactment event.

Check your clothing and all equipment (gunbelts, pouches, saddlebags, boxes, etc. including any gear in your vehicle) before you leave home and also when you arrive. Each member is personally responsible for this - don't leave it for the Safety Officer - Be your own Safety Officer! A live round cannot be fired if it is not there.

2) Always maintain complete control of any firearm, knife or other potential weapon. Always handle firearms as if they were loaded. Never point a firearm directly at anyone. Keep all weapons secured in holsters, unless and until required by the script. **Never allow any member of the general public to handle a weapon.**

3) Check with local law enforcement officials well before an event is scheduled. If the event may be covered by multiple agencies or jurisdictions, be sure all parties involved are aware of what the event entails. Do not rely on an event sponsor or organizer to do this - make it your posse's responsibility.

4) NCOWS rules will be followed at all times and as appropriate. Improper language or conduct in public is strongly discouraged, as is the "harming" of women and children unless appropriately scripted.

5) All performances should be well planned and rehearsed. Allow ample safe room for both members and the public when blanks are fired. If room is inadequate, DO NOT FIRE! **Always aim low and to one side when firing at another performer.** Loose sand, gravel and even dirt can be dangerous if a blank is fired directly in front of someone. Always stay alert for anyone approaching you from the side as you fire, or otherwise entering your line of fire. Always remember, the general public believes blanks are harmless and that they cannot be hurt by one.

6) Blanks may be either commercially bought or homemade. In either case, they should be sample tested before the event occurs to check their power and compatibility with the firearms used. Use extra caution when capping loaded percussion firearms on site. One posse member should be designated as Loading Officer and will load or closely supervise the loading of all firearms in use. Load no more blanks than is required by the script.

7) Holsters will be of sufficient fit and ample strength to retain the pistol. While generally historically incorrect, hammer tie downs may be used at the posse's discretion. Knife sheaths should be amply made to both retain the knife securely and prevent injury to the wearer in case of a fall.

8) An experienced posse member should be elected as a Safety Officer. The Safety Officer will be responsible for the overall safety of the event. This includes but is not limited to:

- a) Ensuring no live ammo is present at an event
- b) Ensure that blanks are safe to use.
- c) Supervise the safe use of all firearms, knives and other potential weapons.
- d) Ensure safe distances between members and the general public during all performances.

The Safety Officer and Loading Officer should work together to maintain safety and security for the event at all times. Each should be familiar with both position's responsibilities and may alternate positions after informing pose members of such. An experienced back-up member is strongly advised for each Officer. Safety still remains the sole responsibility of each member.

9) If possible, a firearms safety talk should be scripted and delivered to the audience at an appropriate time. If children are present, it should be scripted to elicit their response and involvement. The NRA has multiple programs that can be utilized or drawn on to script a meaningful message.

This concludes the By-Law section of the Tally Book.

The following articles are reprints from past issues of The Shootist. The 'Three Levels' are not official NCOWS classifications or categories, just a system for explaining the various methods of choosing your gear, clothing etc.