

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES
Range and Target Activities Rifle & Shotgun Ranges
FOR SCOUTS BSA UNIT COORDINATED EVENTS
Buffalo Trace Council

RANGE OPERATIONS GUIDE

1. General

Live firing conducted at approved commercial ranges for units of the Buffalo Trace Council is designed to support authorized users with access to a safe facility where they can become proficient with firearms and/or participate in council approved events.

2. Facilities for Use

Range authorization is at the discretion Buffalo Trace Council. The Council will approve "commercial ranges" that can be used in accordance with the National Scouting America Range and Target Sports Directives. A list of approved facilities will be kept on file at the council office. New locations for consideration must be submitted 90 days prior to the event to allow for a site visit.

3. General Rules and Safety Requirements

The Council Risk Management Chair, in cooperation with the Council Range and Target Activities Committee makes all decisions regarding safety. These decisions are final. The Range Safety Officer (RSO) on duty handles the daily operation of the range and is responsible for all safety and handling practices while on the range.

- a. Always keep the gun pointed in a safe direction.
- b. Always keep your finger off the trigger until you are ready to shoot.
- c. Always keep the gun unloaded until it is ready to use.
- d. Know your target and what is beyond; make sure the downrange area is unoccupied.
- e. Be sure the gun is safe to operate.
- f. Be thoroughly familiar with how the gun operates.
- g. Use only the correct ammunition for your gun.
- h. Use eye and ear protection as appropriate.
- i. Unattended guns should not be accessible to unauthorized people.
- j. Treat all firearms as if they are loaded at all times.
- l. Cooperate with others to cease fires for target placement and obey all range commands.
- m. Shoot only in the appropriate direction from the designated firing lines.
- n. Fire at authorized targets only.
- o. Fire only on designated ranges.
- p. Ensure all projectiles impact within the established range safety limits.
- q. Do not climb on any berm.
- r. Police all brass, paper, and other debris that accumulates on the range. Dispose of trash items in the containers provided.

- s. Call "Cease firing" and make safe all firearms when observing any unsafe condition or when a shooter moves forward of the firing line.
- t. Notify the Range Safety Officer (RSO) or Firearm Instructor of any safety infractions.
- p. Children are to be supervised and under the control of an adult at all times.

Be aware that certain types of guns and many shooting activities require additional safety precautions.

4. Authorized & Prohibited Firearms and Ammunition

- a. No personal firearms are allowed during Scouting America activities or camp programs; firearms used must be owned by, received from, and returned to Buffalo Trace Council.
- b. No caliber larger than .22 LR is allowed on the rifle range.
- c. No armor-piercing or tracer ammunition is permitted on any of the ranges.
- d. No fully automatic firearms are permitted.
- e. Any firearm that malfunctions or becomes damaged is to be removed from the firing line, tagged, and stored safely by the RSO. Such firearms will be repaired by the authorized gunsmith only. No repairs are to be attempted by unauthorized personnel or by on-site personnel.

5. Authorized Targets

- a. Paper and cardboard targets for rifle shooting only (see c & g for exceptions).
- b. Only clay targets maybe used for shotgun shooting.
- c. Metallic targets are not approved for use on the range except for SCOUTING AMERICA COWBOY ACTION SHOOTING program.
- d. No cylindrical or spherical objects that could shatter or cause ricochets
- e. No other materials that shatter except for clay shotgun targets.
- f. Targets must be held on the target stand or wire and never more than halfway up on the target stand (if used).
- g. Cowboy Action Shooting targets may include dueling trees, pop-up plates, gongs, or other resettable metal targets. No human or humanoid targets are permitted.

6. Authorized Personnel

- a. Current registered members of Scouting America.
- b. Immediate family members or invited guests of the above, provided the authorized person is present and assumes full responsibility for the conduct of his or her guest(s), and everyone signs a Hold Harmless Agreement.
- c. Groups or Individuals approved by the Buffalo Trace Council and/or Range and Target Activities Committee Chair on a case-by-case basis.
- d. Non-registered Scout members in the waiting area only, except with approval from the NRA Instructor or RSO

7. Range Personnel

All Range Personnel must be trained & certified in both First Aid and CPR or have direct communication with certified first responders. All certifications must be filed with the council 30 days prior to the unit event. All Illinois residents who will be handling firearm must have a valid FOID card when handling firearms in the state of Illinois.

a. Range Safety Officer

- (1) The RSO must be currently certified by the NRA Training Counselor (CRSO) as an RSO. The RSO must possess proof of current certification.
- (2) The RSO must complete a range orientation conducted at the commercial range with the owner or operator of that range.
- (4) The RSO will conduct the general operation of the range the day of the event.
- (5) The RSO will report all problems to the council upon identification of an issue.
- (6) Notify the Council if an altercation arises. Provide details, license numbers and names. Call the Council Range and Target Sports Staff Advisor if it is a serious safety problem and/or damage to SCOUTING AMERICA property. Do not confront armed individuals.

b. NRA Instructor (separate from the RSO)

- (1) Must be an NRA Certified Instructor (current card) for the discipline
- (2) Must be either an NRA or NMLRA Instructor for Muzzle Loader Rifle (current)
- (3) Assistant Instructors must have current NRA certification for the discipline

c. Range Activity SAFETY trained individual

- (1) Required for a registered adult leader (21+) who is present at the range during shooting activities
- (2) Completion of **Range Activity SAFETY course SCO_822** on my.scouting.org
- (3) Must be retrained every 2 years.

d. Rifle and Shotgun Merit Badge Counselor

- (1) Registered adult with Scouting America
- (2) Approved by the Council Advancement Committee
- (3) Approved by the Council Range and Target Activities Committee
- (4) NRA Instructor for the discipline in which they wish to be a counselor

8. Range Areas

a. All ranges

- (1) Must have a Buffalo Trace Council & NRA certified RSO on duty at all times.
- (2) Comply with all general rules and safety requirements.
- (3) Must be on the approved list of Commercial Ranges with the council office.

b. Member use areas

- (1) General rules
 - i. Range SOP procedures & policies must be followed all times.
 - ii. Always close the entry gate when you enter or exit, and use red flags
 - iii. Check downrange for other shooters or range maintenance personnel. Do not set up downrange or uprange of other shooters.
 - iv. Be prepared to share the range facilities with others. Be cooperative.

- v. red flags indicate use in progress and must be used at all times on ranges.
- (2) Rifle range
 - i. Do not shoot across the range to other than your position target
 - ii. Do not shoot at the ground, at non-approved targets, or above the berm
- (3) Shotgun Area
 - i. Number 7, 7 1/2, or 8 shot or smaller. No slugs!
 - ii. Throw clay targets in the approved direction.
 - iii. No handguns or rifles on the shotgun range.

9. No Alcoholic Beverages and Drugs

Shooters may not consume alcoholic beverages or drugs before or during live firing. The RSO will deny range access to anyone in violation.

10. Emergency Procedures

Emergency phone numbers are in the First Aid Kit on the range. In the event of an accident, the procedures listed below should be strictly followed as well as any special procedures for the range in use:

- i. The Range Safety Officer verbal commands will immediately call Cease Fire. All shooting activity will cease immediately.
- ii. Keep calm and assess the situation.
- iii. Give priority attention to providing all possible care for the injured. Put another adult in charge to move / keep people out of the area.
- iv. In case of a life-threatening emergency, call 911 immediately.
- v. Identify the nature of your emergency and location. Give the numbers and ages of victims, their condition and your exact location.
- vi. Render first aid as appropriate and within your training capabilities.
- vii. Stay with the victims until emergency medical help arrives.
- viii. Either take notes or designate a person to take notes of the incident, persons involved, witnesses, etc.
- ix. Parents or next of kin should be notified after emergency services by the Council.
- x. The RSO must call the Buffalo Trace Council Office. Give the phone number you are calling from and wait by the phone for a return call.
- xi. In the event of a fatality, the Council Scout Executive will notify the police and act as the primary contact. Retain a responsible adult at the scene of the accident. Ensure that no disturbance of the victim or surroundings is permitted until police have assumed authority.
- xii. No statements are made either orally or in writing, which could be interpreted either as assumption or rejection of responsibility for the accident.
- xiii. Refer any media (press, radio, TV) inquiries to the Buffalo Trace Council Scout Executive.
- xiv. A written memo noting the events leading to the accident, the accident itself, what followed it, and those involved should be given to the Scout Executive as soon as possible. Immediately following

the accident, RSO will have every witness write a memo detailing what they saw. Be sure they sign their written statement.

11. Weather Hazards

As per Scouting America Weather Hazard policies & procedures, upon the determination of lightning strike or hearing thunder all shooting activities at an outdoor commercial range will be suspended for 30 minutes from the last strike or thunder. The ranges will be shut down, and all equipment secured. Reopening the range for shooting activity will be determined by the RSO. Operation during storms is very hazardous and shooting activity will be stopped during such storms.

12. RIFLE RANGE OPERATING PROCEDURES

1. Review: Three Safety Rules poster.
 - a. Always keep the gun pointed in a safe direction.
 - b. Always keep your finger off the trigger until ready to shoot.
 - c. Always keep the gun unloaded until ready to shoot.
2. Review: Range Safety Rules & Conduct SCOUTING AMERICA Rifle First Steps Instruction
 - a. Cease Fire! May be shouted by anyone for a safety issue.
 - b. Eye and ear protection is mandatory for everyone on the range.
 - c. Misfires must be flagged and cleared in position on the range.
 - d. Cleaning of hands and face after a shooting session is mandatory.
3. Identify Range Safety Officer & Instructors.
4. The Rifle Range may not be used without an RSO & NRA Instructor on station.
5. Prepare target area (set targets).
6. Prepare firearms for shooting (safe handling protocol).
7. Place firearms at shooting stations (safe handling protocol).
8. Set up an ammunition table with ammo blocks (adult supervised until stored).
9. Begin live fire exercise.
10. All ammunition is gathered and stored upon the completion of event.
11. Firearms are gathered and stored upon completion of the event.
12. Targets and equipment are gathered and stored upon completion of the event.
13. Police the area for brass, water bottles, targets, and trash – pack it out!
14. Return all firearms and associated equipment to the Buffalo Trace Council Office.

13. SHOTGUN RANGE OPERATING PROCEDURES

1. Review: Three Safety Rules poster.
 - a. Always keep the gun pointed in a safe direction.
 - b. Always keep your finger off the trigger until ready to shoot.
 - c. Always keep the gun unloaded until ready to shoot.
2. Review: Range Safety Rules & Conduct SCOUTING AMERICA Shotgun First Steps Instruction
 - a. Cease Fire! May be shouted by anyone for a safety issue.
 - b. Eye and ear protection is mandatory for everyone on the range.
 - c. Misfires must be flagged and cleared in position on the range.
 - d. The cleaning of hands and face after a shooting session is mandatory.
3. Identify Range Safety Officer and Instructor.
4. Shotgun Range may not be used without an RSO and NRA Instructor on station
5. Prepare target area throw sighting clays.
6. Prepare firearms for shooting (safe handling protocol).
7. Place firearms at shooting stations (safe handling protocol).
8. Set up an ammunition table (adult supervised until stored).
9. Begin live fire exercise
10. All ammunition is gathered and stored upon the completion of the event.
11. Firearms are gathered and stored upon completion of the event.
12. Targets and equipment are gathered and stored upon completion of the event.
13. Police the area for hulls, water bottles, targets, and trash – pack it out!
14. Return all firearms and associated equipment to the Buffalo Trace Council Office.

14. MUZZLELOADER RIFLE PROGRAM OPERATING PROCEDURES

1. Review: Three Safety Rules poster.
 - a. Always keep the gun pointed in a safe direction.
 - b. Always keep your finger off the trigger until ready to shoot.
 - c. Always keep the gun unloaded until ready to shoot.
2. Review: Range Safety Rules & NRA/NMLRA Muzzle Loader Procedures
 - a. Cease Fire! May be shouted by anyone for a safety issue.
 - b. Eye and ear protection is mandatory for everyone on the range.
 - c. Misfires must be flagged and cleared in position on the range.
 - d. Cleaning hands and face after a shooting session is mandatory.
3. Identify Range Safety Officer & Instructors.
4. Muzzle Loading Firearms may not be used without a RSO & NRA/NMLRA Instructor on station.
5. Prepare target area (set targets).
6. Prepare firearms for shooting (safe handling protocol).
7. Place firearms at shooting stations (safe handling protocol).
8. Set up the loading table with powder and loading accessories (instructor supervised until stored).
9. Begin live fire exercise.
10. All loading materials are gathered and stored upon completion of the event.
11. Firearms are gathered and stored upon completion of the event.
12. Targets and equipment are gathered and stored upon completion of the event.
13. Police the area for patches, water bottles, targets, and trash – pack it out!

14. Return all firearms and associated equipment to the Buffalo Trace Council Office.

15. COWBOY ACTION SHOOTING PROGRAM

1. Will only be conducted at the council level in accordance with the Scouting America Policies

APPENDIX A NRA Gun Safety Rules

Three Fundamental NRA Rules for Safe Gun Handling

1. Always keep the gun pointed in a safe direction.
2. Always keep your finger off the trigger until ready to shoot.
3. Always keep the gun unloaded until ready to use.

Rules for Safe Use

4. Know your target and what is beyond; make the downrange area unoccupied & safe.
5. Be sure the gun is safe to operate.
6. Know how to use the gun safely.
7. Use only the correct ammunition for your gun.
8. Wear eye and ear protection as appropriate.
9. Never use alcohol or drugs before or while shooting.
10. Know and obey all range commands.
11. Know where others are, at all times.
12. Shoot only at authorized targets.
13. Do not handle a firearm or stand at the firing line where firearms are present while others are downrange.
14. Stop shooting immediately upon the command of "Cease Firing."

NRA Hygiene Guidelines

- No eating, drinking, smoking, applying makeup, or otherwise placing hands in proximity to the mouth or nose while on the range or cleaning a gun.
- Wash your hands and face with cold water after leaving the range or cleaning area before eating or drinking.
- Change and wash clothing after a shooting or gun cleaning session to minimize exposure airborne particulate lead or solvent and cleaning product residues.

APPENDIX B

RIFLE Range Commands

- "Shooters **ON THE FIRING LINE**" means for shooters to take their assigned place at their firing point and prepare to fire, but do not load.
- "**Eye & Ear Protection ON**" all shooters place their safety glasses & ear protection on and adjust for good fit
- "**Adjust the Rest & Your Shooting Position**" allows the shooter to achieve a comfortable & safe shooting position
- "**Pick Up The Rifle and Check Your Aim**" allows the shooter to confirm aiming & their hold with the empty rifle
- "**Instructor Distribute Ammo**" the instructor or assistant instructor distributes the ammunition blocks to each shooter.
- "**LOAD & Make Ready**" means shooters are given permission to load the authorized number of rounds and prepare for the shooting event.
- "**MAGAZINES OUT AFTER FIRING ALL YOUR SHOTS**" This command will be used when Savage Mark II FVT rifles or similar magazine rifles are being used.
- "**IS THE LINE READY?**" allows a shooter with problems to raise an arm and call "**NOT READY**" The range officer will immediately state: "**THE LINE IS NOT READY**".
- "**THE LINE IS READY**" means all shooters are ready to begin.
- "**READY ON THE FIRING LINE!**" means that the rifle chambers are loaded and ready.
- "**COMMENCE FIRING!**" signals shooters to begin shooting. A whistle, or other means may signal this command non-verbally.
- "**CEASE FIRE! CEASE FIRE!**" is called by the range officer if any incident occurs that indicates possible injury to some living thing should firing continue.
- "**CEASE FIRE—ACTIONS OPEN, SAFETIES ON! MAGAZINES OUT (*). PLACE EMPTY CHAMBER INDICATORS (ECI) IN THE CHAMBERS, BENCH THE RIFLE, MAKE THE LINE SAFE**" notifies shooters to stop firing immediately and all rifle chambers and magazines are unloaded, and shooters leave the firing line with the actions of their rifles open.

APPENDIX B (Cont.)
RIFLE Range Commands

(*) The “Magazine Out command will be used when the Savage Mark II FVT rifles or similar magazine fed rifle rifles are being used.

- **“AS YOU WERE”** means to disregard the command just given.
- **“CARRY ON”** means to proceed with whatever was being done before the interruption occurred.

APPENDIX C

SHOTGUN Range Commands

- “**Eye & Ear Protection ON**” all shooters place their safety glasses & ear protection on and adjust for good fit.
- “**Shooter Take Your Position**” means for shooters to take their assigned place at the shotgun shooting cage.
- “**Take Your Shooting Stance**” allows the shooter to achieve a comfortable & safe shooting position in the shooting cage
- “**Pick up the Shotgun and Check Your Aim**” allows the shooter to confirm aiming & their hold with the empty shotgun
- “**Instructor Load**” the instructor or assistant instructor loads one round of shotgun ammunition for the shooter. The shooter may load the ammunition if the instructor determines the shooter is capable of doing this action.
- “**LOAD & Make Ready**” means instructor (or shooter) is given permission to close the action of the shotgun and take the safety off.
- “**IS THE THROWER READY?**” allows a THROWER (or clay target thrower) to confirm the trap is ready to launch a target. The Thrower may call “**NOT READY**” The range officer will immediately state: “**THE THOWER IS NOT READY**”.
- “**THE THROWER IS READY**” means all the clay target is ready to be launched.
- “**IS THE SHOOTER READY?**” allows a shooter with problems to call “**NOT READY**” The range officer will immediately state: “**THE SHOOTER IS NOT READY**”.
- “**READY ON THE FIRING LINE!**” means that the shotgun is loaded and the Thrower are ready.
- “**COMMENCE FIRING!**” signals shooter to call the shot by saying “**PULL**”.
- “**CEASE FIRE! CEASE FIRE!**” is called by the range officer if any incident occurs that indicates possible injury to some living thing should firing continue.
- “**CEASE FIRE—SAFETIES ON! MAKE THE LINE SAFE, REMOVE YOUR PROTECTIVE GEAR, PLACE SHOTGUN IN THE RACK, PICKUP ALL EMPTY SHOTSHELL HULLS**” notifies shooters to stop firing immediately, Shotguns are unloaded, stored, and shooters may leave the firing line after being released by the RSO.
- “**AS YOU WERE**” means to disregard the command just given.
- “**CARRY ON**” means to proceed with whatever was being done before the interruption occurred.

APPENDIX D

MUZZLE LOADING RIFLE Range Commands

- "Shooters **ON THE FIRING LINE**" means for shooters to take their assigned place at their Loading Bench and prepare to load the rifle.
- "**Eye & Ear Protection ON**" all shooters place their safety glasses & ear protection on and adjust for good fit
- "**Load**" allows the shooter & Instructor (or coach) to load the muzzle-loading rifle.
- "**Pick up the Rifle and Go to the Firing Point**" allows the shooter or instructor to take the rifle to the assigned firing point. The shooter will adjust aiming & their hold with the rifle.
- "**CAP & Make Ready**" means the instructor is given permission to cap the rifle with a percussion cap (or 209 primer if required) and prepare for the shooting event.
- "**IS THE LINE READY?**" allows a shooter with problems to raise an arm and call "**NOT READY**" The range officer will immediately state: "**THE LINE IS NOT READY**".
- "**THE LINE IS READY**" means all shooters are ready to begin.
- "**READY ON THE FIRING LINE!**" means that the rifles are loaded, capped, and ready.
- "**COMMENCE FIRING!**" signals shooters to begin shooting. A whistle, or other means may signal this command non-verbally.
- "**CEASE FIRE! CEASE FIRE!**" is called by the range officer if any incident occurs that indicates possible injury to some living thing should firing continue.
- "**CEASE FIRE—MAKE THE LINE SAFE**" notifies shooters to stop firing immediately and all rifles are unloaded, or the caps have been removed, and shooters leave the firing line with the rifle's actions open or hammers at half cocked position.
- "**AS YOU WERE**" means to disregard the command just given.
- "**CARRY ON**" means to proceed with whatever was being done before the interruption occurred.

APPENDIX E
SCOUTING AMERICA REFERENCE DOCUMENTS & RESOURCES

Title	Publication No.
SCOUTING AMERICA Range and Target Activities Manual	
National Camp Accreditation Program	
PD-111	PD-112
PS-214	RP-456
SQ-407	
Guide to Safe Scouting	34416
SCOUTING AMERICA 30-minute Rifle Safety Presentation	
SCOUTING AMERICA 30-minute Shotgun Safety Presentation	

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES APPROVAL
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