

PRESS RELEASE

Date:

April 4, 2023

Media Contacts:

Rebekah Epstein, rebekah.epstein@steeladvertising.com, (210) 315-9664

Glenda Beasley, info@safegunstoragetexas.com, (512) 750-5199

TPWD, DPS Advise Gun Storage Safety for Spring Hunting

AUSTIN — Now that spring turkey hunting season has begun, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) and Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) want to remind gun owners that safe gun storage saves lives. Proper storage protects those you love and keeps firearms out of the hands of criminals.

The Pew Research Center estimates more than 45 percent of Texans own a gun. One-third of homes with children have a firearm, and many of these may be unlocked and loaded, according to DPS.

The *Keep 'Em Safe Texas* program was created three years ago to inform and educate gun owners about the importance of safely storing firearms when not in use.

“Education about home firearm storage and safety is paramount to keeping guns out of the wrong hands,” said Assistant Chief Jason Hester of DPS Regulatory Services. “We appreciate the efforts of our partners statewide, as they are diligently and consistently

helping us to communicate this lifesaving message to protect Texas families and prevent accidents.”

As the state’s hunting authority, TPWD developed a Hunter Education program more than 50 years ago, teaching 1.5 million Texans how to safely handle and store guns.

Hunting-related accidents in Texas are at an all-time low since the course became mandatory in 1988.

“We spend a lot of time teaching about safety in the field — it is equally as important to safely store your gun before and after the hunt,” said TPWD Hunter Education Coordinator Steve Hall.

Three Simple Rules for Gun Safety

1. **Store Firearms Properly.** Store guns unloaded and secured by a trigger lock, biometric lock, gun case, strong box, gun cabinet or gun safe.
2. **Lock Up Ammunition.** Store ammunition safely, always locked away separately from firearms.
3. **Restrict Access.** Keep others from access to stored firearms 24/7; this includes family, friends, children or other visitors.

Partner participation is key in educating the public about safe gun storage and reducing the risks of gun-related incidents. *Keep ‘Em Safe Texas* provides a [partner toolkit](#) that includes training presentations, informative videos, posters, coloring pages, infographics and other resources. The associated [social media resources page](#) includes turnkey posts for partner use. Contact info@safegunstoragetexas.com with questions.

About the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and Hunter Education

TPWD manages and conserves the natural and cultural resources of Texas and provides hunting, fishing and outdoor recreation opportunities for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations. Every hunter in Texas (including out-of-state hunters) born on or after Sept. 2, 1971, must successfully complete hunter education. The minimum age for certification is 9 years old; cost is \$15. Mandatory hunter education became law in 1988. Since 1972, TPWD has offered hunter education courses which have certified nearly 1.5 million students.

About the Keep 'Em Safe Texas Campaign

DPS cares deeply about protecting and serving the citizens of Texas. In 2019, at least 3,683 deaths in Texas were due to firearms, higher than the national rate. This number has risen every year since 2011. In 2021, the Texas Legislature appropriated \$500,000 to DPS over the next two fiscal years (2022–23) to establish and promote a statewide safe gun storage campaign. By educating the public about safe gun storage, we can reduce the risks and better protect the citizens of Texas. So far, more than 50 partners, including more than two dozen local law enforcement agencies throughout the state of Texas, have united to help spread this crucial message.

- Academy Sports + Outdoors
- American Shooting Centers
- Bass Pro Shops and Cabela's
- Bullet Trap
- CLEAT (Combined Law Enforcement Agencies of Texas)
- Defense Solutions of Texas
- Family and Protective Services
- GT Distributors
- Handgun Safety Training Corporation
- Lock Arms for Life
- Memorial Hermann Hospital System

- My Guns Warehouse
- Ranger Firearms
- Shoot Point Blank
- Side Arm Training
- Texas Commission on Law Enforcement
- Texas Department of Public Safety Officers Association
- Texas Gun Academy
- Texas Gun Owners for Safety
- Texas Gun Sense
- Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
- Texas School Safety Center
- Texas Trophy Hunters Association
- Texas Wildlife Association
- Texas Youth Hunting Program
- 27 city and county police departments and sheriff offices throughout Texas
- Uncle Dan's Pawn Shops
- Valor Defense Academy

All the best,

Glenda Beasley

Safe Gun Storage Partner Coordinator on behalf of the

Texas Department of Public Safety

www.safegunstoragetexas.com

512.750.5199

