



FACT SHEET # 7

HUNTING WITH FIREARMS

The Facts about hunting with firearms in Alberta

The Federal "*Firearms Act*" differentiates between **owners** of firearms and their actual **firearms**.

- A Firearms License enables people to own firearms and ammunition.
- A Firearms Registration Certificate relates directly to the firearm itself and a specific individual.

1. DEFINITIONS:

A FIREARM: Any device or contrivance capable of forcing a projectile at a speed greater than 500 feet per second. There is a difference between restricted and non-restricted firearms. Information about classes of firearms is available by visiting the Canadian Firearms Centre web-site.

POL (Possession Only License): This license authorizes the continued possession of firearms already owned. This license was made available as of January 1, 2001. You may **not** use this license to purchase a firearm, but it can be used when **borrowing** a licensed firearm or purchasing ammunition. This license is no longer available, but can be renewed.

PAL (Possession Acquisition License): This license is required for all who wish to acquire firearms for the first time, or in addition to any firearms already owned. You may also use this license to purchase ammunition for your firearm.

Minors License: Anyone aged 12-17 may possess a minors license. You must be eighteen (18) years of age to obtain a PAL license.

2. **To use a firearm to hunt in Alberta, it must be a non-restricted firearm.**

3. For the purpose of hunting in Alberta, a non-restricted firearm is for hunting or sporting purposes (such as target shooting). Examples of non-restricted firearms include shotguns and rifles.

4. **FIREARMS LICENSES:** If you **own a firearm or wish to purchase ammunition**, you must carry a valid firearms license (POL/PAL). In addition to federal and provincial legislation, you may need to inquire about other restrictions at your local municipal office.

5. In order to acquire a PAL, you must complete the Canadian Firearms Safety Course, which provides the certifications necessary to apply for a PAL. Individuals 18 years and older, have the option to challenge the CFSC exam. In Alberta, the Alberta Hunter Education Instructors' Association (A.H.E.I.A.) coordinates the DELIVERY of the Canadian Firearms Safety Course.

6. **REGISTRATION:** The RCMP and Canadian Firearms Centre coordinate verification, registration and licensing in Canada. In Alberta, the Chief Firearms Officer (located in Edmonton) coordinates the **registration** of firearms. **If you own or use any firearm without the appropriate license after January 1, 2003, you are guilty of a criminal offense.** For more information, contact the Chief Firearms Officer of Alberta.

7. **FIREARMS USE:** You must carry a valid Firearms License (PAL/POL) and due to a current Amnesty (expires May 16, 2009) on registration of non-restricted firearms in Canada it is still encouraged that all hunters carry their registration documents while hunting.

Can I hunt without a valid firearms license? Yes, youth and adults can hunt without a valid firearms license as long as they are under the **immediate and direct** supervision of the individual legally entitled to possess and use that firearm. **Immediate and direct** is defined by the Canadian Firearms Centre (CFC) as **within arms length**.

Contacts for the organizations mentioned are available on the next page

8. **TRANSPORTATION AND STORAGE:** Both restricted and non-restricted firearms must be transported unloaded. However, muzzle-loading firearms may be transported loaded between hunting sites, **as long as the firing cap, primer, or flint is removed.** You may leave a non-restricted firearm in an unattended vehicle if it is unloaded and placed in a locked trunk or similar compartment of the vehicle. If the unattended vehicle does not have a trunk or similar compartment, lock the vehicle or the part of the vehicle that contains the non-restricted firearm, and leave the non-restricted firearm inside, unloaded, and out of sight.

In a remote area where hunting might reasonably occur, you may leave a non-restricted firearm in an unattended vehicle with no trunk or locking compartment (such as a canoe, kamik, or snowmobile). However, the non-restricted firearm **must** be out of sight, and rendered inoperable via a secure locking device – unless you require it for predator control.

If you live in a rural area, and need reasonable access to your firearm for animal control purposes, you may be exempted from some of the storage and transportation requirements. Check with the Chief Firearms Officer to confirm that provincial and municipal laws allow storage on a temporary basis.

The firearms legislation continues to evolve. As a firearms owner and user, you are responsible to ensure that you fall within the legal requirements. In order to ensure that you comply with federal, provincial and municipal legislation, please consult the appropriate authorities.

KEY CONTACTS

Alberta Sustainable Resource Development Fish and Wildlife Division	Dial 310-0000 and ask for the nearest Fish and Wildlife office. Web site: www.mywildalberta.com
Alberta Hunter Education Instructors' Association (A.H.E.I.A.)	<i>Edmonton</i> Phone: 780.466.6682 or 1.866.282.4342 Web site: www.aheia.com <i>Calgary</i> Phone: 403.252.8474 or 1.866.852.4342 Web site: www.aheia.com
Canadian Firearms Centre Federal Firearms Legislation	1.800.731.4000 Web site: www.cfc-cafc.gc.ca
Chief Firearms Officer	<i>Edmonton</i> Phone: 780.495.7779 1-800-731-4000

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