

Produced by NSSF Research & Information Services

Firearm-related Accidents at an All-time Low

Data released by the National Safety Council demonstrates that unintentional firearm-related fatalities are at the lowest level in the council's history of recordkeeping. In fact, in the last decade the number of unintentional firearm-related fatalities has declined by 54 percent – from 1,521 accidental deaths in 1993 to 700 in 2003.

Firearms are involved in fewer than 1 percent of all accidental fatalities in the United States. In a side-by-side comparison with other forms of injury, firearms have one of the lowest accident rates per 100,000 population.

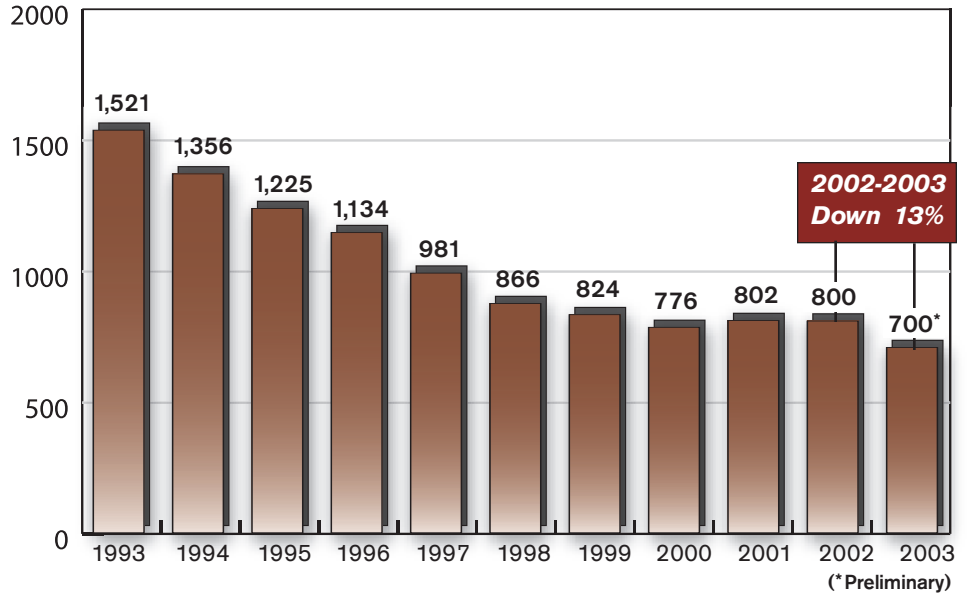
KEY FINDINGS

- *Firearm-related fatalities in the U.S. have been decreasing consistently since recordkeeping began in 1903, and dramatically in the last 10 years.*
- *Over the last seven years, the number of unintentional firearm-related fatalities for children (under the age of 14) has decreased by 60 percent.*
- *Accidental firearm-related deaths are substantially lower compared to the number of accidental deaths caused by other injury types.*
- *Firearms are involved in fewer than 2 percent of accidental fatalities among children under the age of 14.*
- *Hunting is one of the safest forms of recreation in the United States.*
- *Firearms are involved in fewer than 1 percent (0.7%) of all accidental fatalities in the United States.*
- *Over the last decade the rate of firearm-related injuries per 100,000 people has declined by 67 percent (from 0.6% in 1993 to 0.2% in 2003).*

Firearm-related Fatalities Down 54%

Over the last decade, the number of accidental fatalities involving firearms (excluding homicide and suicide) has dropped more than half (54%).

This decline is attributed to a number of factors including improved gun designs, free firearm locking devices shipped with new firearms, industry-supported firearm safety education programs like Project ChildSafe,[®] and educational efforts by groups like the National Rifle Association and state-affiliated hunter education programs.



Firearm-accident Fatality Rates At All-time Low

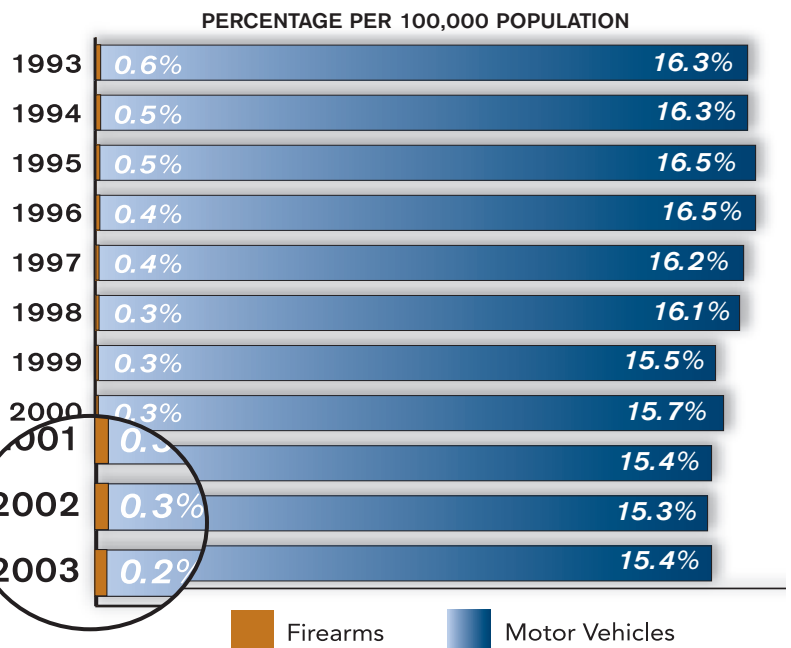
Compared to other principle types of unintentional fatalities in the United States, firearms has had the largest percentage decrease in the past decade.

TYPE	1993	2003	% CHANGE
Firearms	1,521	700	down 54%
Motor Vehicles	41,893	44,800	up 7%
Fires, Flames, Smoke	3,900	2,600	down 33%
Ingestion of Food/Object	3,160	4,300	up 36%

Other injury type comparisons are not available because of changes in year-to-year classifications.

Accidental Fatalities

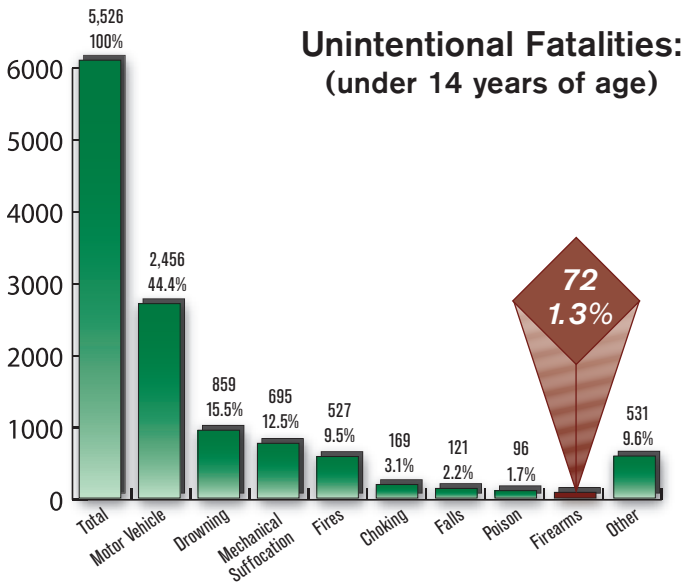
- ❖ Accidental fatalities involving firearms are at the lowest levels in history – 0.2 percent per 100,000 population.
- ❖ Over the past 10 years, the rate has declined by 67 percent; and since the beginning of recordkeeping in 1903, the rate has declined by 94 percent!
- ❖ Firearm accidents are substantially lower compared to the largest category of accident occurrences (motor vehicle).



FACTS & FIGURES

Firearms are Involved in Less Than 2 Percent of Accidental Fatalities Among Children

For children and youth under the age of 14, unintentional injuries are the leading cause of fatality. **Firearms are involved in less than 2 percent.**

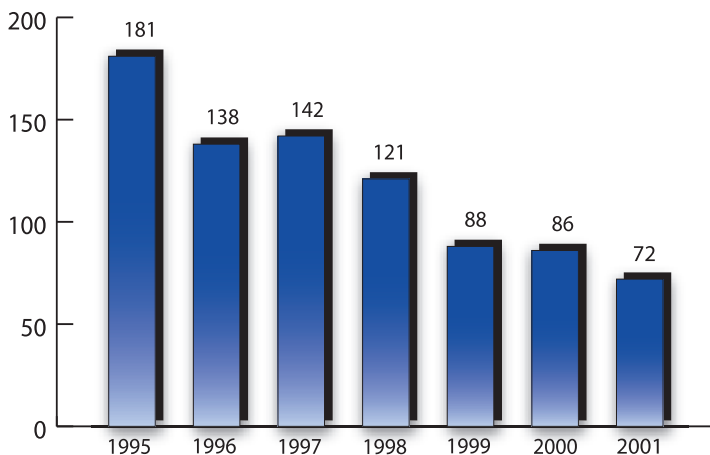


Firearms Involved in Fewer Than 1 Percent of all Accidental Fatalities:

TOTAL U.S. POPULATION 285,094,000		
Unintentional Fatalities	101,537	%
Motor Vehicle	43,788	43%
Falls	15,019	15%
Poisoning	14,078	14%
Choking	4,185	4%
Fires, Flames & Smoke	3,309	3%
Drowning	3,281	3%
Mechanical Suffocation	1,370	1%
Air Transport	918	.9%
Natural Heat/Cold	899	.9%
Struck By/Against Object	853	.8%
Firearms	700	.7%
Machinery	648	.6%
Water Transport	591	.6%
Rail Transport	491	.5%
Electric Current	409	.4%
All Other Accidents	10,998	11%

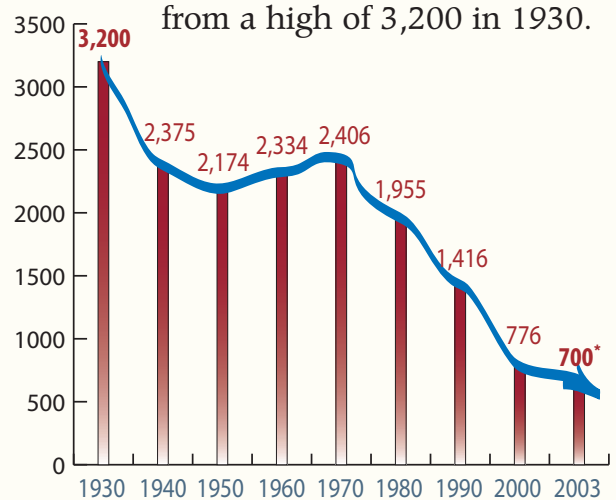
60 Percent Decrease in Firearm-related Injuries Among Youth

Over the last seven years the number of unintentional firearm-related fatalities for individuals 14 years of age and under has **decreased by 60 percent.**



Historical Flashback

Today, the annual number of firearm-related accidents is **down 78 percent** from a high of 3,200 in 1930.



(*Preliminary)

HUNTING

One of the Safest Forms of Recreation in America

The National Sporting Goods Association (NSGA) estimates that there are 17.9 million active hunters in the United States. An active hunter is defined as having hunted more than once in the past year (age 7 and older).

Activity (A-Z)	Participants	Injuries
Archery	4,200,000	4,306
Baseball	15,600,000	178,668
Basketball	28,900,000	615,546
Bicycle Riding	41,400,000	521,328
Bowling	43,900,000	21,133
Boxing	1,700,000	11,811
Fishing	44,200,000	68,743
Football	17,700,000	387,948
Golf	28,300,000	39,470

HUNTING STATISTICS

Ice Hockey	2,100,000	16,435
Martial Arts	4,200,000	28,607
Mountain Climbing	3,400,000	4,056
Racquetball	3,400,000	8,948
Roller Skating	26,900,000	106,531
Skateboarding	9,700,000	113,192
Snowmobiling	4,600,000	12,862
Soccer	14,500,000	173,519
Softball	13,600,000	125,875
Swimming	54,700,000	168,529
Tennis	11,000,000	19,633
Volleyball	11,500,000	59,225
Weight Lifting	21,200,000	71,699
Wrestling	3,500,000	36,702

For illustrative purposes only, the chart above shows estimations of injuries in various forms of recreation sorted alphabetically. The statistics to the right illustrate hunting-related injuries.

Hunting-related Incidents

The latest annual data from the International Hunter Education Association indicates 89 fatal and 761 non-fatal hunting injuries were recorded in the U.S. The charts below highlight several findings from the 2002 Hunter Incident Clearinghouse.

TOTAL INCIDENTS: 850

NON-FATAL: 761

FATAL: 89

TWO-PARTY INCIDENTS: 514

SELF INFLICTED INCIDENTS: 333

UNKNOWN: 3

Equipment Involved

Type	#	%
Shotgun	459	54.0
Rifle	261	30.7
Bow	37	4.4
Handgun	33	3.9
N/A	10	1.2
Other	7	0.8
Crossbow	5	0.6
Air/Gas Gun	3	0.4
Unknown	35	4.1

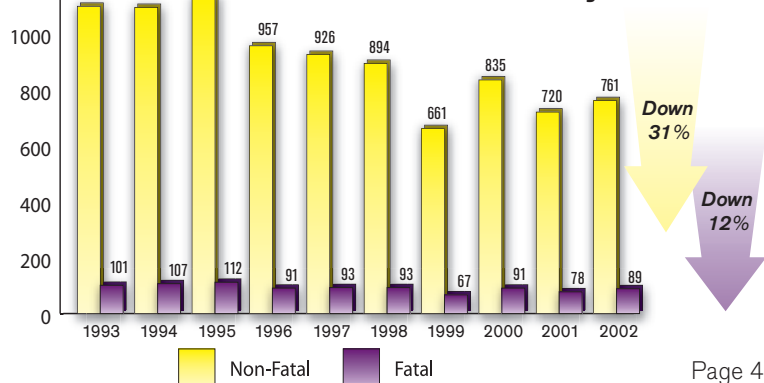
Game Involved

Type	#	%
Deer	394	46.4
Turkey	90	10.6
Pheasant	62	7.3
Squirrel	43	5.1
Cottontail	42	4.9
Dove/Pigeon	38	4.5
Duck/Geese	36	4.2
Quail	26	3.1
Unknown	25	2.9
Coyote	15	1.8
Grouse	10	1.2
Elk	6	0.7
Bear	1	0.1
Other	62	7.3

FACTOR	#	%
Failure to identify Target	128	15.1
Shooter swinging on game	110	12.9
Careless handling of firearm	101	11.9
Victim out of sight of shooter	72	8.5
Fall while climbing into/out of position	66	7.8
Victim moved into line of fire	49	5.8
Shooter stumbled and fell	47	5.5
Failure to check beyond target	29	3.4
Unknown factor	25	2.9
Trigger caught on object	22	2.6
Ricochet	21	2.5
Unloading firearm	16	1.9
Firearm fell from insecure rest	14	1.6
Loading a firearm	14	1.6
Failure to use a safety belt	13	1.5
Remove/place firearm in vehicle	12	1.4
Run/walk with loaded firearm	10	1.2
Faulty equipment	10	1.2
Improper crossing of obstacle	9	1.1
Discharge firearm in/on vehicle	8	0.9
Obstruction in barrel	4	0.5
Dropped firearm	3	0.4
Failure to use haul line	2	0.2
Mixed ammo/incorrect substitution	2	0.2
Improper powder substitution	1	0.1
Shooting across roadway	1	0.1
Other	61	7.5
Total:	850	100

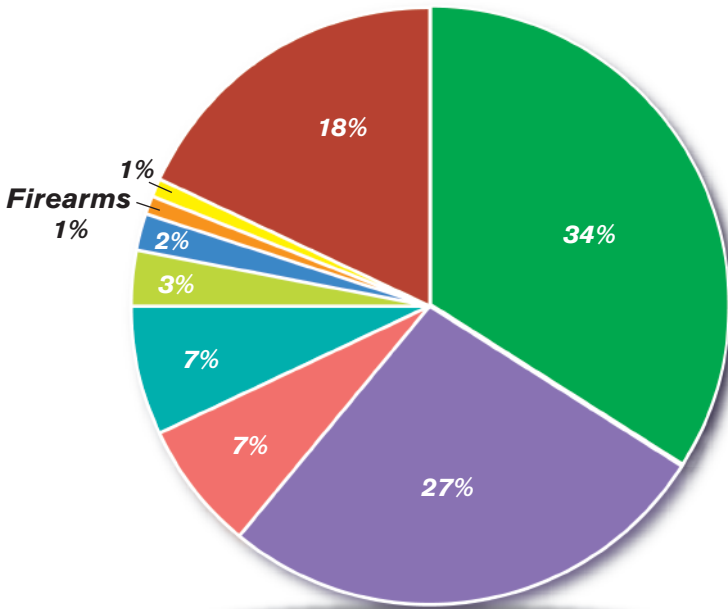
CONTRIBUTING FACTORS

10 Year Trend Analysis



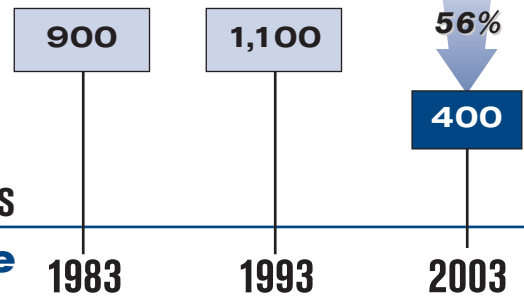
Source: Participants - National Sporting Goods Association, 2002.
 Injuries - Consumer Product Safety Commission. Injuries treated in hospital emergency departments.
 Note: The National Safety Council warns against using participation figures to calculate injury comparisons as frequency and number of participants will vary in each activity.
 Hunting Injuries: International Hunter Education Association, Hunting Incident Report, 2002.
 For more information visit www.thea.com.

2003 Types of Unintentional Fatalities in the Home:



TOTAL HOME	33,100*	%
Poisoning	11,200	34%
Falls	9,000	27%
Fires/Burns	2,300	7%
Suffocation, Ingested Object	2,200	7%
Suffocation, Mechanical	1,000	3%
Drowning	700	2%
Firearms	400	1%
Natural Heat / Cold	300	1%
Other	6,000	18%

(* Preliminary)



FIREARM-RELATED HOME ACCIDENTAL FATALITIES 20 Year Trends: **56 Percent Decline**

ABOUT THIS REPORT

This issue of Industry Intelligence Reports contains statistical figures from a variety of reliable sources including: 1) The National Safety Council, 2) NRA & the Institute for Legislative Action – Firearm Safety in America 2003, 3) International Hunter Education Association – Annual Report of Hunting Related Incidents, 4) Center for Disease Control and Prevention – National Vital Statistics Report and 5) research conducted by Responsive Management commissioned by the National Shooting Sports Foundation.

INJURY FACTS® 2004

Injury Facts® is the National Safety Council's annual statistical report on unintentional injuries and their characteristics. This summary highlights only unintentional firearm-related fatalities and is updated every year (October.)

The National Safety Council, chartered by an act of

Congress, is a non-government, not-for-profit, public service organization devoted solely to educating and influencing society to adopt safety, health and environmental policies and procedures that prevent and mitigate human suffering and economic losses arising from preventable causes.

ABOUT THE NSSF®

The National Shooting Sports Foundation® is a non-profit trade association representing the recreational shooting sports industry. As such, we create, organize and promote programs and activities designed to foster shooting safety, to increase the public's understanding of the recreational shooting sports and to promote greater participation in these sports.

By providing members with access to a full range of benefits including the latest industry research, the National Shooting Sports Foundation leads the way in supporting all recreational shooting venues.

*Industry Intelligence **REPORTS...***

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Members who receive inquiries from the news media about firearms industry issues are encouraged to contact NSSF's Communications Department for assistance. Our Issues Management team has access to many resources with the latest information and keeps current on issues that affect proposed legislation and public perceptions about the shooting sports.

Check the Media Resources section at the NSSF Web site, www.nssf.org, to contact us by e-mail. You can also call (203) 426-1320 and ask for the Communications Department for assistance with media inquiries.

