



CITY OF REDDING

POLICE DEPARTMENT

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PRESS RELEASE PROJECT CHILDSAFE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 25, 2009

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The Redding Police Department encourages gun owners to secure their firearms in a responsible manner to prevent theft, accidents, and unintended use. The most effective way to keep personal firearms secure is with a gun safe.

Between October 2008 and January 2009, 42 firearms were stolen in residential burglaries in the Redding city limits alone. Once procured by criminals, these weapons can end up being used in local drug violence and crimes against citizens. There is also evidence that many of them end up in Mexico, fueling the drug war there and the violence that results. Not only is the situation worsening with homicides on the increase in Mexico, but the violence is spreading to the United States, particularly in border communities. The Mexican drug cartels are invading communities and forest lands in the United States to conduct their illegal activities and their presence creates a dangerous environment for those caught in the crossfire. Their presence in our community is a real threat to our peace and security.

Not only does a secure storage container guard firearms from theft, but also protects them from fire and keeps them inaccessible to children. In recent months our community has experienced tragic events involving the intentional and accidental deaths of children which could have been prevented with proper storage and security of the firearms involved.

Gun safes or lockers which provide secure storage for firearms at home are available for purchase at several local businesses. Many local locksmiths, retail stores, and firearms safe companies offer secure storage options which allow access for personal protection needs. Local firearms dealers can provide information and assist with the selection of these security measures.

The Redding Police Department is a partner in Project Childsafe, a nationwide program whose purpose is to promote safe firearms handling and storage practices among all firearms owners. The program is supported by the firearm's industry, the U.S. Department of Justice, and the National Shooting Sports Foundation, which administers the program. The Redding Police Department has available, free of charge, gun locks to assist with safe storage of weapons at home.

Project Childsafe warns, "As a firearms owner, you must make absolutely sure that guns in your home are stored so that they are not accessible to children or other unauthorized persons. If you must have quick access to a loaded firearm in your home, you need to take special safety measures. Keeping a gun to defend your family makes no sense if that same gun puts your family member or visitors to your home at risk. If you choose to keep a firearm for home security, your objective should be to create a situation in which the firearm is readily available to you, yet inaccessible or inoperative to others. Special lockable cases that can be quickly opened only by authorized individuals are options to consider. You must exercise full control and supervision over a loaded gun at all times."

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