

SUICIDE PREVENTION

FIREARM SAFETY MATTERS



VA



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

ROCKY MOUNTAIN
MIRECC

WHY SUICIDE & FIREARM SAFETY MATTERS

Thank you for making the important decision of obtaining this cable lock.

Read on for safety tips and steps to securing your firearm.

A locked firearm can mean the difference between a tragic outcome and a life saved for someone in crisis.

Information on safe firearm storage and additional suicide prevention resources are provided in this pamphlet.

Though Veterans are well-versed in firearm safety, all owners should understand that during emotional or stressful times limiting access to their firearms could prevent suicide.

Veterans
Crisis Line



1-800-273-8255 **PRESS 1**

or Text to 838255

or Chat online:

www.VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat

Firearm locks can prevent a crisis from becoming fatal.

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SUICIDE & FIREARMS: FACTS THAT MATTER

- ✓ Firearms are in the **TOP 5** leading causes of injury-related deaths.
- ✓ About **1/2** of all suicides are by firearm.
- ✓ Nationally, suicides account for roughly **2 OUT OF EVERY 3** firearm deaths.

– Center for Disease Control and Prevention National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, 2013

- ✓ Veterans and Servicemembers most frequently used **FIREARMS** to end their lives.”

– Department of Defense Suicide Event Report, 2014
– VA Suicide Data Report, 2016

- ✓ Approximately **85%** of suicide attempts with a firearm are fatal.

– Center for Disease Control and Prevention Surveillance for Fatal and Nonfatal Injuries, 2001

- ✓ However, evidence suggests that states requiring handgun **LOCKS** have lower overall suicide rates and lower firearm suicide rates.

– American Journal of Public Health, 2015



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WHY THIS LOCK MATTERS



Firearm cable locks can provide critical life-saving moments between *impulse* and **ACTION**.

This lock can mean the difference between a life lost and

- ✓ Spending time with family and friends
- ✓ Enjoying your kids/grandkids and watching them grow up
- ✓ Doing what you want to do in life
- ✓ Remembering who and what you love, and who loves you

Every Veteran's Life Matters. Your Life Matters.

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KEEP YOURSELF SAFE FOR THOSE WHO MATTER



Family



Companion



Neighbors and
Community



Pets



Fellow Veterans



YOU



Friends

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LEARN TO RECOGNIZE SIGNS OF SUICIDE RISK



If you or a Veteran you care about is showing any of these warning signs, take extra precautions with firearms.

- ✓ Thinking about hurting or killing yourself
- ✓ Looking for ways to kill yourself
- ✓ Talking about death, dying, or suicide
- ✓ Self-destructive behavior, such as drug or alcohol use
- ✓ Hopelessness – feeling like there is no way out, no reason to live
- ✓ Anxiety, agitation, sleeplessness, mood swings, rage, or anger
- ✓ Engaging in risky activities without thinking
- ✓ Withdrawing from family or friends

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WHEN A VETERAN IS IN CRISIS



Everyone can play a role in preventing suicide. If you or a Veteran in your family is feeling distressed, depressed, hopeless, or suicidal, it can be overwhelming in the moment. One phone call can save a life!

WHAT WE KNOW: Many suicide attempts occur with little planning during a short-term crisis. When someone feels overwhelmed in crisis, impulsive actions could tragically mean a life lost to suicide.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

FIREARM LOCKS CAN PREVENT A CRISIS FROM BECOMING FATAL.

Help is available anytime. If you or someone you love experiences warning signs of a crisis, stay with them and call the Veterans/Military Crisis Line:

1-800-273-8255 Press 1

For urgent safety concerns, call **911** or go to the nearest emergency room.

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SECURE YOUR FIREARMS WITH A CABLE LOCK

The cable lock supplied fits many types of personal firearms.
When in proper use, these locks prevent unauthorized access and discharge.
Please follow the installation instructions provided.



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BEFORE USING YOUR FIREARM CABLE LOCK

- 1. UNLOAD THE FIREARM:** Make sure the firearm is completely **UNLOADED**, and any safety mechanism is **ON**. **ALWAYS** keep it pointed in a safe direction and never assume the firearm is unloaded.
- 2. PREP THE LOCK:** Turn the key in a clockwise direction to unlock the cable lock. Remove the loose end of the cable from the padlock.



For additional information, please read the **OWNERS MANUAL** for safe handling and storage methods

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HOW TO WORK THE LOCK

1. With the key in the clockwise position, insert the loose end of the cable into the padlock.
2. Turn the key counterclockwise to engage the lock and then remove the key.
3. Always double-check to confirm the cable is locked and secure.
4. Store the key to the firearm cable lock separately from both firearms and ammunition.

SAFETY TIPS

NEVER PUT THE CABLE LOCK WITHIN THE TRIGGER GUARD.

Do not use the firearm with the cable lock in place.

BASICS OF SAFE HANDLING INCLUDE:

- ✓ Point the firearm in a safe direction
- ✓ Keep fingers off the trigger
- ✓ Keep unloaded when not in use



Remember to keep firearms locked and unloaded when not in use.

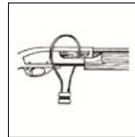
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HOW TO INSTALL CABLE LOCK INTO A FIREARM

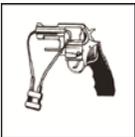
Please reference the attached Instruction Sheet



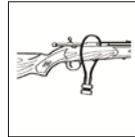
AUTOMATIC PISTOLS: remove the magazine, and with the slide back, insert the cable part through the ejection port and out of the magazine well.



AUTOMATIC or PUMP-ACTION SHOT FIREARMS: put the bolt in the open position and insert the cable part through the ejection port and out of the loading port.



REVOLVERS: open the cylinder and insert the cable part through the barrel or through an empty chamber.



BOLT ACTION RIFLES: open the action or remove the bolt from the rifle. Then remove the magazine and insert the cable through the ejection port and out of the magazine well or the receiver assembly.

Make sure ALL firearms are UNLOADED before they are put away.

This cable lock can be used with many different firearms.

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ADDITIONAL STORAGE OPTIONS

A **TRIGGER LOCK** prevents unauthorized access by blocking the trigger mechanism, but it does not prevent loading. A trigger lock should *never* be applied to a loaded firearm as it can cause it to unintentionally discharge.

A **LOCK BOX/SAFE** conceals and protects a firearm from unauthorized access. Firearms should be stored *unloaded* and separate from ammunition.

Some firearms can also be **DISASSEMBLED** for further safety. This is not possible with all firearms, and requires knowledge of correct assembly.

If safety at home is a concern, **TEMPORARY OFF-SITE STORAGE** of firearms at a trusted alternative location can also be a useful option.

Discuss storage options with Veterans and loved ones in your life.

Determine what is best for ensuring safety in your home.

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FIREARM SAFETY CHECKLIST



Properly storing your firearm and ammunition can reduce the **RISK OF SUICIDE AND UNINTENTIONAL INJURY** to Veterans and loved ones in your life.

- ✓ Keep firearms unloaded and ammunition in a place that cannot be accessed by children and unauthorized adults.
- ✓ Store ammunition separate from firearms.
- ✓ Regularly reassess to ensure safe storage of firearms, especially during periods of increased stress or emotional crisis.
- ✓ Together, we can increase firearm safety by following this guide.

Responsible firearm owners prevent suicide.

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RESOURCES



Rocky Mountain MIRECC for Suicide Prevention Firearm Safety

Webpage. This webpage provides additional information to Veterans and their families about firearm safety for suicide prevention, and the ability to request additional firearm safety cable locks for free. Safe Storage Matters. www.mirecc.va.gov/visn19/firearmsafety



1-800-273-8255 **PRESS 1**
Text to 838255

Veterans/Military Crisis Line. If you or someone you know is in crisis, call **1-800-273-8255**, press **1** for Military or Veterans. This crisis line connects Veterans/Servicemembers and their families and friends with qualified, caring responders through a confidential, toll-free hotline, online chat, and text-messaging service. Many counselors are Veterans themselves, providing confidential support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. You can text to **838255** or chat online. www.VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat

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Suicide Prevention Lifeline. When you dial **1-800-273-TALK (8255)**, you are calling the crisis center in the Lifeline network closest to your location. You will be helped by a skilled, trained crisis worker who will listen to your problems and will tell you about mental health services in your area. Your call is confidential and free.



Prevencion del Suicidio. Una persona capacitada le escuchará y hablará con usted. Si es necesario, podrá darle información sobre recursos o servicios existentes en su comunidad que podrán prestarle ayuda después de la llamada. Siempre puede usted volver a llamar al número **1-888-628-9454** si lo necesita o lo desea.



Make the Connection. Connect with Veterans and find information, support and inspiration to overcome challenges. www.maketheconnection.net



Suicide Prevention Coordinator. Contact your local VA Suicide Prevention Coordinator for additional information and firearm safety materials. www.VeteransCrisisLine.net/ResourceLocator



Means Matter.

The Harvard Injury Control Research Center Means Matter campaign is dedicated to activities that promote safety and prevent firearm injury by reducing a suicidal person's access to lethal means. www.hsph.harvard.edu/means-matter/

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