

Chapter 66 – OFFENSES AND MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

ARTICLE III. – HOME SHOOTING RANGES

Sec. 66-75 Purpose

The purpose of this article is to establish regulations surrounding the discharge of firearms for target-shooting purposes on private property to provide for the safety and well-being of the residents of the Town of Coventry

Sec. 66-76 Definitions

Firearm

Any shotgun, pistol, rifle, revolver, muzzle-loading device or other such weapon which uses chemical propellant to expel a projectile capable of killing, injuring, or inflicting physical damage

Air gun

Any device which uses springs, air, compressed gas, or other non-explosive force to expel a projectile capable of killing, injuring, or inflicting physical damage

Backstop

A device, structure, or terrain designed to stop and contain projectiles fired on a range.

Commercial Shooting Range/Private Gun Club

An organization of individuals which meets the following criteria:

- a) Maintains in good condition a shooting range in a fixed location with an adequate design to contain fired projectiles;
- b) Said shooting range is ~~approved by the Chief of Police and~~ in compliance with all federal, state, and local laws;
- c) Individuals discharging firearms are adequately trained in firearms safety; and
- d) Has criteria for members or other range users to ensure the safe discharge of firearms.

Recreational Shooting

For the purposes of this chapter, recreational shooting is understood to be shooting a **Firearm** or **Air Gun** at an inanimate target

Sec. 66-77 Safety Requirements

The following restrictions apply within the Town of Coventry:

- a) Persons wishing to engage in recreational shooting with **Firearms** or **Air Guns** must be the owner of the property on which the discharge is to occur, be the spouse or lineal descendant of the owner of the property, have on their person the written permission from the owner of the property, or be an invited guest with the owner of the property present.

Commented [AT1]: This ordinance is a draft based on preferences expressed by the FS/HRSC. This is not finalized, and all language present within may be subject to change.

Commented [AT2]: A separate definition was given for the sake of clarity, and Air Guns were specifically included on restrictions based on safety but excluded from those where noise may be the central concern

The same requirements apply for the location of the backstop at which projectiles are being directed.

- b) Persons wishing to engage in recreational shooting with **Firearms** or **Air Guns** must do so only with an adequate backstop capable of stopping all projectiles intended to be used. The backstop must be of sufficient depth and strength to contain any projectiles fired or intended to be fired at a range and must be of a sufficient height or size to stop projectiles at any position the shooter intends to use.
- c) Persons wishing to engage in recreational shooting with **Firearms** must do so at a distance of greater than 250ft from any structure or enclosed outdoor space occupied by people or domestic animals unless they are the owner of such property, the spouse or lineal descendant of the owner of the property, or have on their person the written permission from the owner of the property to do so. A building is considered to be occupied for the purposes of this ordinance unless it appears from a reasonable inspection of the structure to be unoccupied.
- d) Persons wishing to engage in recreational shooting with **Firearms** or **Air Guns** must not shoot across any public roads or public trails.
- e) Persons wishing to engage in recreational shooting with **Firearms** or **Air Guns** must do so at an inanimate stationary target which does not possess any secondary reaction upon being hit by a projectile, including explosions, incineration, or expelling projectiles or shrapnel.
- f) Minors under 18 years of age wishing to shoot **Firearms** must be properly supervised by a parent or legal guardian of such minor, or another adult with the approval of their parent or legal guardian.

Sec. 66-78 Time Requirements

The following restrictions apply within the Town of Coventry:

- a) Persons wishing to engage in recreational shooting with **Firearms** must do so between the hours of 9:00 AM to sunset as defined in the current Connecticut Hunting and Trapping Guide.
- b) Persons wishing to engage in recreational shooting with **Firearms** must call the Coventry Police Department and give notice fifteen (15) minutes before the intended start of shooting. Once shooting begins, persons engaging in recreational shooting shall have a four (4) hour window in which to do so. One such window shall be granted per calendar day.

Sec. 66-79 Exceptions

The restrictions within this Sec. 66 Article III shall not be construed to apply in the following circumstances:

- a) The use of a **Firearm** or **Air Gun** by a police officer or animal control officer acting within the scope of their official duties;
- b) The use of a **Firearm** or **Air Gun** for the purposes of hunting as defined by the Connecticut General Statutes, Sec. 26-1;

- c) The use of a **Firearm** or **Air Gun** for the purposes of defending oneself or other persons from physical force in accordance with all federal, state and local laws;
- d) The use of a **Firearm** or **Air Gun** for the purposes of shooting wildlife actively causing property damage or posing an active threat to public safety in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes;
- e) The use of a **Firearm** or **Air Gun** at a range on the property of The Manchester Sportsmen's Association, Manchester Coon and Fox Club, or a ~~recognized~~ Commercial Shooting Range/Private Gun Club duly organized in accordance with Town zoning requirements;
- f) The use of a device designed and operated solely for the purposes of construction, such as a nail or staple gun, which by its design might otherwise fall under the definition of a **Firearm** or **Air Gun**;
- g) The use of a **Firearm** or **Air Gun** as a part of a memorial ceremony or parade by police officers, active duty members in military service of the United States or Connecticut National Guard, or by a nationally recognized veteran's organization; and
- h) The use of a **Firearm** or **Air Gun** as a part of an authorized historical reenactment ~~which has obtained an event permit from the Town.~~

Sec. 66-80 Penalty for violation of article

Any person who violates the regulations set out in this article shall be subject to a fine for such a violation pursuant to Sec. 1-10 of the Coventry Code of Ordinances

Secs. 66-81 – 66-96 Reserved

Commented [AT3]: Sec. 1-10 indicates fines shall be at most \$100 if not otherwise specified. Each day a violation continues may be counted as a separate offense.