



Reporting Violations: What *Should* You Do?

A RECENT E-MAIL posed one of the toughest hypothetical questions instructors will ever have to face: "What responsibility do certified instructors have to report any knowledge about illegal activity?"

My answer to the instructor's question was divided into two parts: An ethical answer and a legal answer.

The ethical answer--at least for me--is to provide all violation information to WDFW while also taking all necessary precautions to protect the safety of the reporting party. Act anonymously, if necessary, to avoid the potential for retaliation. Individuals can always provide confidential information to WDFW to identify suspicious persons/ suspicious behaviors for future WDFW enforcement action. Our field officers understand that reporting violations--especially in smaller, more rural communities--can have repercussions for the reporting party. Enforcement officers certainly do not want to place a reporting party in potential jeopardy--but they also definitely want to know who to keep a future eye on in their community. Information provided anonymously or confidentially for future refer-

ence may help build a subsequent case.

The other part of my ethical answer is that it is also necessary to separate good actors from bad actors. Bad actors will continue to do bad things, whether or not good actors are present. Being *present* during the commission of a fish or wildlife violation is a very different fact pattern than merely having knowledge about a violation that has already taken place. It is easy to imagine a bad actor exploring the boundaries of "friendship" or "trust" by committing an infraction to test the waters. The ethical choice for me would be to avoid fish and wildlife situations with individuals that can place a good citizen in legally compromising situations.

The legal answer is that certified instructors have no added legal duty or burden beyond that of ordinary citizens to report violations. However, credibility, community standing and character are all called into question whenever instructors do not practice publicly and privately what they teach students in hunter education classes.

Thanks Again For Your Continued Support!

ENCLOSED WITH THIS NEWSLETTER is a travel mug to thank you again for your support over the past year. Only certified hunter education instructors are receiving the coffee mug.

Agency staff appreciate the many tens of thousands

of hours you and your fellow instructors contribute on behalf of hunter education. Your work represents an enormous dollar figure if hourly wages were paid for hunter education training. We also know that even total hours only tell part of the story because

the real impact of your work is in the field, on the faces of the thousands of safe hunters trained each year. Every instructor, every teaching team, and every training class contributes to the success of hunter education.

Thanks again to all!

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Dates To Remember

- January 11 – 12, Spokane PST
- January 25 – 26, Olympia PST
- April 12 – 13, Yakima In-Service Training

Important Contacts

- Olympia: 1-800-215-1979
- Chuck Ray: 1-800-468-5006
- E-mail: huntered@dfw.wa.gov
- Blog: <http://hunter-education.blogspot.com>

IST A-Comin'

THE 2008 IN SERVICE TRAINING (IST) PROGRAM takes place April 12 – 13 in Yakima and all certified hunter education instructors and instructor applicants are invited to attend. More than 210 instructors signed up by early December, and we're hoping for a record 400+ instructors this year. Come join us!!

Your \$35 registration fee provides a room (shared with a fellow instructor) for Saturday night, four meals at the conference (Saturday lunch through Sunday lunch) training options, and automatic entry for door prizes. The registration is non-refundable so we can plan another successful program. (NOTE: Many instructors choose to arrive Friday evening, but Friday meals and lodging are not included.)

The early-bird drawing winners (who submitted their IST applications by December 1) for the April 12 – 13, 2008 IST were:

Grand Prize Winner	-Ruger 10/22 camo	Matt Tuttle
First Runners-Up	-\$50 Gift Certificates	Rebecca Thomas, Bill Montgomery, Gerald Perryman
Second Runners-Up	-First Aid Kits	Ray Boone, Reuben Kulla, Alex Moody
Third Runners-Up	-Gun Cleaning Kits	Jerry Pfeifer, Kris Bailey, Tom Mechler
Fourth Runners-Up	-Mini-mag/holster	Roger Hamilton, Mike Turner, Aaron Kuntz
Fifth Runners-Up	-Shooting glasses	Patrick Guinan, Alan McNamara, Jim Benedict
Sixth Runners-Up	-Hearing Protection	Jim Goodman, Joe Ford, Gilford Palmer

Door prizes are only a small part of the total IST package, but along with the training, camaraderie and opportunity to meet and share with/learn from fellow instructors it all combines into a weekend of fun and fellowship. The Saturday classes give instructors a chance to pick-and-choose from a variety of training options, while the Sunday program brings all instructors together for pertinent training in three key areas. Add food, lodging and a chance to come home with a new toy or two and it makes for a great hunter education weekend in Spring 2007. We hope to see you there!

Incentive Permit Drawings

Qualifying hunter education

Instructors in the Evergreen State will have another opportunity in 2008 to receive special deer, elk, moose or turkey permits available to certified instructors through a random drawing.

Enclosed with this mailing is a drawing postcard. Eligible instructors are those who have been in "active" status for a minimum of three years by January 31. Previous instructor incentive permit recipients are ineligible to apply for 10 years.

If you are in doubt about your initial certification date, please check the mailing label we used to mail this issue of the newsletter. For this mailing only it includes the month and year of your initial certification. Instructors certified after 1/31/05 are not eligible to apply for this year's incentive permit drawings.

Again this year instructors must first decide whether to apply for a turkey or big game permit. Turkey permits will be drawn February 15. Big game permits will be drawn at the In-Service Training program in Yakima April 12 – 13.

Last year 25 lucky instructors received incentive permits.

IST OPTIONS

Options available for the annual IST requirement include:

- ◆ Home Study Option. Instructors who did not attend the April 2007 Yakima training will receive a home study packet to complete and return, or they can choose other options below.
- ◆ Instructor's Forum. Attend a meeting in your area with Dan Boes or Chuck Ray. A minimum of 10 instructors is required to conduct a Forum. *Instructors must request this option.*
- ◆ Chief Instructor Waiver. Any Chief Instructor who serves as a chief instructor in three or more classes can request an IST waiver for the calendar year. *Must request this option.*
- ◆ Active Instructor Waiver. A certified instructor who teaches in three or more classes with at least 10 hours' participation total can request a waiver. *Must request this option.*
- ◆ Cross-Training Waiver. A certified instructor who teaches with another group for at least 2-1/2 hours can request an IST waiver for the calendar year. *Must request this option.*

Instructors must complete their annual IST requirement by 12/31 to remain active in the hunter education program. Instructors who do not complete the IST will become inactive.

Field Notes: News, Views And More....

Remember

Policy: Instructors charging a fee of more than \$5 per student are required to get approval in writing in advance! This policy applies to every instructor and every team.

Savage Arms is offering special, discounted pricing to all certified hunter education instructors. Please order through Cathy Hale (413) 642-4121.

A Federal Firearms License with an original ink signature is required from any dealer who will receive firearms for instructors. A copy of your instructor certification is also required, along with prepayment via check or credit card. Savage Arms will even pay for shipping!

David Hughes, Grays Harbor, recently asked if there is a form available to keep track of hunter education expenses throughout the year. Dave thought it would be helpful to have such a form when compiling the *Chief Instructor's Annual Financial Report*, which is due each year by December 31.

While there isn't a WDFW form available, there are two possibilities. Individuals without computers can simply use one copy of the current form to keep track of all expenses. Write all expenses—by category—each time a cost is incurred and then simply add everything up at the end of the year. Computer-savvy instructors can create a spreadsheet to create and track all expenses. No software? No problem if you download Open Office—a free (really!) suite of products similar to Microsoft Office. You can find the software at <http://www.openoffice.org/>

Student Dominique Wright, Kittitas Republic, was a winner of the 2007 International Hunter Education Heritage Hunt held at the end of October in Del Rio, Texas. Dominique was one of three students and two instructors nationwide who were randomly drawn from several thousand entries. Entry forms appear each year in the *Hunter's Handbook* distributed to students in hunter education

classes.

Dom was successful in harvesting an animal and thoroughly enjoyed the hunt.

Jack Dolan, Medical Lake, recently asked hunter education division staff about preparing a certificate of recognition for a school principal in his area. Hunter education staff are always available to assist in recognizing local individuals and organizations that support hunter education training. It's always best to work through Chuck Ray (eastern Washington) or Dan Boes (western Washington), and advance notice will insure we get the certificate(s) to you or the recipient in a timely manner.

Alex Moody, Skagit County, writes

"Well, you have been through your instructor training and you have helped teach at a number of classes. You have decided that you would like to try being a Chief Instructor. The location where the other instructors have been teaching is pretty well booked up and you have decided to try and find another location to teach at. Here are some items that you may want to consider when trying to decide on the location.

How many students do you want to have in the class? Will there be seating for that many along with their parents? Are the restrooms accessible and fairly close? How much background noise is present at the location? If you are going to be teaching at a location that is a business it would be best to visit the business during the hours that you are planning to teach in order to assess the noise level you're likely to encounter while teaching your class. How many distractions are present in the building? Is heating and lighting going to be an issue? Keep in mind that some heating systems are cold or left off when the building is unoccupied. How early will you have to arrive to turn on the heating system and get the building warm? What kind of seating and tables are present? Will you be expected to set up and take everything down prior to and after each class or can you keep things set up through the duration of the class? Add that time into your schedule! Do you have room and a safe

place to do some practical gun handling with students? Will you be able to go outside if you want? If you anticipate other instructors assisting in your classes is there a location where they can gather and talk without disturbing the lessons as they are being taught? Do you have an area where you can read tests to students without disturbing the rest of the class? Are there refreshments or drinking water available?

Make sure to sit down with the building owner to discuss both your needs and the building owner's needs and policies. Should you decide to use the building make sure to set aside time to have a conversation with the owner after class to discuss any issues that either of you may have. Make sure the owner of the property realizes that you appreciate them letting you use their facilities. Invite them to attend your classes to introduce themselves. Encourage them to attend your range activities if applicable. Letters thanking them for the use of the building are always a nice way to express appreciation. Make sure that both of you have an understanding on who is responsible for building security. Finally, be sure to remain in contact with the owner so you can address any issues long before they become a (bigger) problem."

JAN's Corner

First of all I want to wish a very Merry Christmas to our instructors and their families during this special time of year. I appreciate the support and consideration you have shown again this year.

Please remember to send in all incomplete and failed records.
Some chief instructors still do not send in students who are incomplete or fail the course. Beginning in 2008 I am required to check all deferral applicants to see if they have failed a hunter education class and such records will only appear if they are provided by our chief instructors. Your help in this area will make my job much easier.

Do We Need A “Lessons Learned” Addition To The Web Site?

DURING THE PAST FEW MONTHS hunter education division staff have received reports of individuals who have tried to use instructor certification status to avoid tickets, possible violations involving general hunters, hunter education instructors and/or advanced hunter education instructors, field reports of mule deer mistaken for white-tailed deer and a grizzly bear mistaken for a black bear. Each individual report paints a troubling picture by itself, but collectively these (And who knows how many other reports we haven't heard about?) incidents suggest a learning opportunity for the hunting community at large.

For example, Dana Base, WDFW biologist and certified hunter education instructor in Region I, notified Olympia staff that six voluntary hunter check stations along State Highways 2 and 395 identified three hunters who *voluntarily* stopped in with three illegally-taken mule deer (mistaken for white-tailed deer). Those were not hunters who were deliberately violating the law—otherwise they certainly wouldn't have stopped at a WDFW check station!—but they clearly had to be unfamiliar with the species they were hunting. Similarly, Dana reported the death of an 18 year-old female grizzly bear in the Washington Selkirks as another case of a hunter not knowing the differences between a grizzly and a black bear. Dana noted that none of these incidents received any media coverage that he saw in his area. Absent some form of media coverage to highlight problems, how can hunters possibly know what other hunters are doing (whether right or wrong) and what kinds of problems exist afield?

Sometimes there is not enough information to thoroughly pinpoint issues with a common thread. Wouldn't it be helpful to know whether the hunters involved in these situations were beginning hunters who had just completed hunter education training (perhaps indicating insufficient wildlife identification training in the curriculum or they lacked supervision/experienced support afield)? We would draw very different conclusions if the same individual were “experienced” hunters and had much more time afield.

Regardless of the specific details of problems in the hunting world, the fact is they do exist. The question to ponder for all of us involved in hunter education is whether we have any responsibility to try and collect and channel the lessons gleaned from the field into some form of educational opportunity that can benefit the hunting community. Historically, we have confined hunter education to our classroom training efforts for beginning hunters. While we have been very successful in the classroom, it is also clear we don't deliver our messages to a large percentage of the hunting population in any given year, touching perhaps only five to seven percent of Washington hunters. That leaves 90+% on the outside!

Think about the possibility of an electronic “Dear Abby” for hunters. A wildly popular, trusted source of commonsense advice, the syndicated “Dear Abby” column generates its articles from readers—providing a steady supply of material to fuel future articles—and provides guideposts for readers' actions. Imagine a similar approach available on a hunter education or WDFW web site: Soliciting ideas from the world of hunting could help highlight issues (wildlife identification, questions on regulations, etc.) and focus on instructive lessons teased from the item under discussion. Some authors have developed whole books on this kind of a “lessons learned” format. The goal, of course, remains on useful lessons.

Biologist Base brought to our attention several specific cases where wildlife identification and conservation were not reaching the right hunting audience. Those four hunters—deliberately or unwittingly—may well be the only four people this year to have mistaken and shot the wrong animals. Or they could be four out of a total of 40 or out of 400 similar Washington cases. One possible way to efficiently reach more individuals with our hunter education messages is via the Internet. True, not every hunter uses the Internet and there are no guarantees that those that do use it will ever look for a “Lessons Learned” column on hunting. But we also know we offer important messages for all hunters—not just beginners—and if we can deliver them in a timely, topical way to a larger audience we can build upon our already solid hunter education base.

There are other ways to deliver information. Fact sheets, brochures, and information in our hunting pamphlets are all valid options to deliver content. The only weaknesses with such traditional tools are the costs, the fact that material is static (once printed, it's fixed) and very one-sided. A “Dear Abby” approach offers the potential of engaging an audience and developing an ever-growing group of hunters.

From The Desk Of Lt. Crown: First Impressions

ALMOST THIRTY YEARS AGO I attended a hunter education program in Buhl, Idaho. Thinking back on that experience, I know that this was the first and only interaction I had with the Idaho Fish & Game Department, even though I was an avid hunter and fisherman. I can remember that there was clear relationship between the instructor and the conservation officer. The stories were interesting and a real sense of teamwork appeared to be present. Like most kids, I thought the marksmanship segment was very exciting. The point is that the favorable memory and interaction with the hunter education instructors and the Idaho conservation officers stuck with me through all these years. I have always kept that in mind when teaching the officer section of instruction at the hunter education classes held in my area.

In my opinion, the relationship between hunter education and enforcement goes far beyond any command structure within the hierarchy of government. Hunter education instructors and enforcement officers are the first introduction to the Department of Fish and Wildlife Agency as a whole. It is for that exact reason that we should make every effort to capture the interests of our students and plant the seeds of hunting ethics, wildlife conservation, and firearm safety.

I recently read an e-mail submitted by one of our hunter education instructors that clearly illustrates this partnership between hunter education and enforcement. A former hunter education student was hunting deer in a three-point minimum GMU. The hunter mistakenly shot a two-point buck with no eye guards. In a panic, the hunter called his hunter education instructor and explained what had happened. After

empathizing with the former student, the instructor provided information on how to contact enforcement and report the situation. An enforcement officer responded to the scene, investigated the situation and took the appropriate action. The former student later relayed a favorable outcome to the hunter education instructor. In then end, the student put lessons learned into action. The partnership between hunter education and enforcement served one young hunter well.

This is one of the many examples of what should happen when there is a strong, positive working relationship between instructors and officers. As classes resume in the coming months, I would like to challenge and encourage all instructors get to know their local Department of Fish and Wildlife Officers. Such networking will benefit our students and foster a very positive "first impression" of our agency.

In the coming months, a Powerpoint presentation will be completed for officers to use during their portion of the hunter education classes. Some of you may have already seen the draft. This will be a great tool for the officers and will be of great value to the students. Again, please make every effort to meet the enforcement staff in your area and take advantage of their resources to the benefit of the program. Feel free to contact me directly if you need telephone numbers or other officer contact information.

I look forward to meeting and working with you at the Yakima IST!

Pre-Service Training Classes: Remember The "Fee"

PRE-SERVICE TRAINING (PST) is a requirement for new instructor applicants.

Please note that all new instructors are required to attend a training session prior to certification.

January 11 – 12	Spokane
January 25 – 26	Olympia
February 15 – 16	Vancouver
February 22 – 23	Tri-Cities
March 7 – 8	Summer
March 28 – 29	Yakima
April 25 – 26	Colville
May 9 – 10	Custer
May 30 – 31	Walla Walla
June 20 – 21	Chelan
	Kitsap TBA
July 18 – 19	Spokane

There is no exception—every new instructor is required to successfully complete the PST prior to certification.

Signing up for a PST training is painless process. Simply check the PST training dates, decide which location and dates best meet your schedule and send in a fully-refundable \$25 check along with your name, telephone number, your preferred

PST training dates and you're done!

Registration for all PST's must be made at least seven days in advance of the scheduled training dates. Your \$25 check is required to confirm PST attendance. All attendees receive and study materials in advance to prepare for the PST. There is pre-class work required and, therefore, we actively discourage last-minute registration.

PST enrollments are limited. Once a PST location has reached its maximum enrollment, registration will be closed for that location. In simple English, that means first-come, first-served.

A minimum number of new applicants per location is required to conduct a PST program. If we have too few applicants for a given location, we may cancel that training session. All participants will be notified in advance in event of cancellation.

As always, contact Chuck Ray (eastern Washington) or Dan Boes (western Washington) if you have any questions.

'No – Shows' Less Of A Problem

A DISTURBING TREND over the past few years was the increasing percentage of "no shows" (individuals who sign up but do not attend) at our PSTs. Nobody worried too much about one or two, but at some PSTs the "no show" rate hit 75%! Obviously, we would have cancelled such PSTs had we known in advance.

Last year we began charging a \$25 reservation fee—which was cheerfully refunded to all instructor applicants who honored their word and attended the PST they signed up to attend. For those that failed to attend, they made a \$25 hunter ed donation!

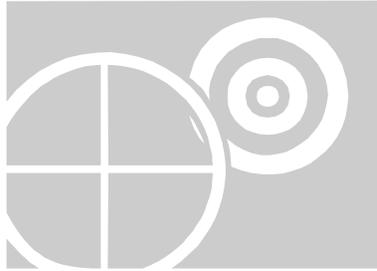
The system worked well and we will use it again in 2008. Note that it's not the money we wanted! We wanted prospective instructors to attend the PST. The "reservation fee" helps reduce "no shows" in student classes and also worked for our PSTs.

Final Policy: Hunter Education Instructor Associations

BOTH STATE INSTRUCTOR ASSOCIATIONS (Hunter Education Resources Organization and Washington Hunter Education Instructors' Association) weighed in on the draft policy for hunter education associations. Here is the final policy:

Policy: Associations represent the interests of their constituents. To assist associations which support volunteer hunter education instructors, hunter education works cooperatively with groups that:

- Have or have applied for 501 c 3 (or comparable) status with the Internal Revenue Service;
- Comply or have registered to comply with the State of Washington, and/or any applicable county, city or



municipality authority regulating associations;

- Retain an annual membership of at least 50 Washington-certified hunter education instructors, and draw instructor membership from at least four counties or two WDFW administrative regions;
- Represent certified hunter education instructors first and foremost, and that no paid staff or board of directors serve the association;

- Demonstrate via Articles of Incorporation, board meetings and action items that their mission is consistent with the goals of the Department of Fish and Wildlife and the policies and guidelines followed by the hunter education division; and
- Provide the hunter education division with a copy of their Articles of Incorporation.

Minimum standards will help insure that staff support and cooperation is offered to those organizations best suited in terms of size and established performance to serve the needs of certified hunter education instructors.

THE WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

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"Safety First"

**We're on the Web at
wdfw.wa.gov**