

E-Newsletter Is Ready: Will You Accept It?

VERY FEW INSTRUCTORS have commented on whether or not they will accept an electronic newsletter instead of the traditional, printed/mailed newsletter. If we haven't heard from you recently, let us know what you think.

As noted in the last issue of this newsletter, we want to switch to an e-newsletter January 1, 2008 for instructors who have e-mail access. Instructors who lack e-mail addresses will still continue to receive their newsletters in a printed/mailed fashion. Obviously, we hope the majority of instructors prefer the electronic format to the current paper version.

The value in switching to an e-format can be measured in both speed and money. It typically takes between two and four weeks for us to get a paper newsletter printed, stuffed in envelopes, labeled, mailed and delivered. No, we're not slow workers: The newsletter goes through many hands before it eventually arrives in your mailbox. That's the speed (er, lack thereof) part. Measuring the money part is basic arithmetic: multiply the number of newsletters (1,200-ish) times the copying costs (averaging around eight cents per page) and the postage costs (varying between 50 cents and \$1.50 per newsletter). It should be self-evident that the e-format of-

fers a huge savings in both time and money. The only question is, "What level of instructor acceptance do we have for the e-news?"

For an e-newsletter to work effectively, we first need your e-mail address. If you haven't given it to us within the past four or five weeks, please e-mail (mikitmj@dfw.wa.gov), fax ([360] 902-2155) or send us your e-mail address via snail mail. We don't want phone calls because we may not correctly copy down the information. Printed e-mail addresses only, please.

Next, we also need a separate list of those instructors who want to receive the paper newsletter. If you haven't told us within the past four or five weeks that you want the snail mail version, please do so. Again, we prefer to have a written record to work from.

Beginning with the January 2008 edition, the e-newsletter will also look different than today's black-and-white version. The e-version can include color and pictures that are too expensive to reproduce with the paper newsletter. The basic content will be the same, but the instructors requesting the e-version will have it much faster.

Once again, much hinges upon the information you provide. We're standing by....

Calling For 2008 Class Schedules

THE 2008 EDITION of *Washington Outdoors*—listing all hunter education class schedules—goes to the printer on December 17th and we're asking all chief instructors to submit class schedules by 12/14.

The single biggest chal-

lenge for the hunter education division is linking public interest with available classes. Our two best tools in providing that linkage are the *Washington Outdoors* booklet and the class schedule information on the agency's web site.

We know it's sometimes

hard for instructors to confirm training dates and locations a year in advance. Listing the month the class will be held and 'TBA' still lets the public know that classes are scheduled.

Thanks in advance!

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Dates To Remember

- November 31, THMFSA Nominations Due
- December 1, IST Early-Bird Registration Due
- December 31, Chief Instructor Reports Due

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>

Know The Boundaries

HUNTER EDUCATION PARTNERS are found everywhere throughout the state. Whether it's the local gun club allowing you to post flyers advertising the upcoming hunter education class, the local sporting goods store giving you a discount on ammunition used in your live-firing program, or a national chain donating space, gift certificates or discounted gear, every partner's contribution to the hunter education program should be very welcome.

Not every instructor or teaching team is fortunate enough to enjoy ongoing business support. Sometimes generous offerings of free classroom space turn out worse than a bad dream. Promised donations may not materialize. Business downturns or personnel changes may mean that providing support to hunter education is now less of a priority.

Regardless of the amount of support hunter education teams expect or receive, the Golden Rule always applies.

Two incidents involving a major, national hunter education partner will illustrate the importance of the rule.

This past summer, a store manager was reportedly fired because he failed to provide sufficient support for hunter education. Later in the summer, another Washington store manager in the same chain reportedly received a phone call from the vice-president of the company wanting to know the issues surrounding hunter education classes at the second store. In both cases, the Washington hunter education program was reportedly the source of the concern.

Every instructor is also a private citizen, one who is entitled to speak his/her mind. However, it's one thing to voice discontent as a private consumer. It's another matter entirely when an instructor is representing hunter education—and by extension, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife. Simply put, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife does not tell businesses—whether partners or not—how to conduct their business.

Many organizations, businesses and individuals provide generous support for hunter education. Gun clubs often provide free meeting space or range access. Businesses and individuals often donate equipment, materials and money, etc. Whether or not we enjoy the fruits of direct support from those organizations, businesses and individuals, we must always remember that organizations and businesses serve their own needs and goals first. Their primary business is staying in business—not providing support for hunter education.

All of us can find things in life we do not like or agree with. In such cases it is important that we remember the boundaries surrounding hunter education and remember the Golden Rule always applies.

Warehouse Notes

Hunter education test booklets are designed to be reused. In fact, properly cared-for hunter education test booklets should last indefinitely. Worn, marked test booklets must be discarded, of course, but such situations should be the rare exception.

During the past year we have gone through a much higher number of test booklets than in previous years. Naturally, that translates into higher costs—which are no problem when justified by growing needs.

Please remember to (1) instruct your students to make all marks only on their answer sheets, (2) collect and retain all test booklets, and, (3) NEVER allow students to retain test booklets or answer sheets.

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.

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.

April 12 – 13, 2008 are the dates for the Yakima In-Service Training (IST) program, and all instructors are invited.

We expect the 2008 IST to be the biggest and best yet, and we're encouraging interested instructors to register early. As of early October we had almost 150 instructors signed up to attend!

Special early-bird prize winners will be drawn December 1, 2007 from the names of instructors who pre-register by that date.

Registration materials went out with the September issue of this newsletter. Please contact hunter education staff you've misplaced yours.

Lt. Steve Crown, formerly a Fish and Wildlife Officer in Region Two is the new training officer in the Enforcement Program. Lt. Crown replaces Captain Rich Mann, who is now the regional captain in Region Three.

Please join us in welcoming Lt. Crown to the hunter education team!

Jim Brown, Kittitas County, has a new web site that will be of interest to instructors interested in promoting hunter education. You can check Jim's revitalized web site at: <http://www.ellensburghuntered.net/>.

Jim indicated that instructors are free to borrow whatever information and ideas they like for their own hunter ed sites.

And speaking of **Jim Brown**, again, all instructors will be happy to know that Jim has put several hunter education forms into an e-format. Mik is now trying to get the forms on the agency's hunter education pages so instructors can benefit from more of Jim's handiwork!

Kelli Worthen, Bonney Lake, writes "The Evergreen SureFire hunter education team decided about a year ago to create an ethics video to teach the Ethics portion of classes. The DVD deals with 9 scenes that hunters may face while hunting.

We invite you to borrow a copy of our video from the hunter education division. After viewing the video, we are hoping that you may wish to purchase one to aid instructors on your team who teach this evolving topic.

The price for "Hunter Ethics, The Future Depends On You", is \$29.95 plus \$5.95 for shipping and handling.

If you have questions, please don't hesitate to call at (253) 241-1899."

Jerry Dougherty, Lincoln County, says: "Nowhere in any of the regulation pamphlets or on the WDFW web site is it explained that hunter education class graduates must purchase their first hunting license at a dealer. It does not say licenses are not available online."

Mik responds: Jerry, is correct in the requirement to purchase the first license at a dealership. The reason is the need to create a permanent "profile" (with all the necessary biographic information) for the newly-licensed hunter.

An **anonymous instructor** shared this:

"Each student in our class fires 5 rounds at the trap range. I noticed one student having a hard time getting a pump-action shotgun to lock up. Eventually the action closed and she fired her first round. When she closed the action on her second round the gun discharged! Fortunately, the muzzle was pointed in a safe direction. The student didn't have her hand or fingers anywhere near the trigger mechanism and I had a hard time believing what I had just witnessed. After removing the firearm and securing the range we all discussed what had just happened. This event brought home the reason for muzzle control at all times—in a manner that I am sure she and the other students will not soon forget.

Yes, safeties do fail on occasion!"

Vern Smith, Nine Mile Falls, and **Jack Dolan**, Medical Lake, wrote separate letters of concern on the same issue:

Vern wrote: "Will you please explain to me the Department's definition of 'Overly Strict, Military Demeanor?' It surely disappoints all of us in the group... to be subjected to such sarcasm and undeserving negative criticism of those who proudly served their country by those who may or may not have."

Jack wrote: "The statement 'Overly strict, military demeanor' is used. I for one personally took great affront to using the military as an example of what is wrong with a class..."

Mik responds: The reference (from the evaluation summary mailed in August to all instructors) was not intended in any way to be derogatory, negative or sarcastic to the men and women who have served our country. That element of the evaluation form was actually added many years ago—I cannot recall when it was first introduced or who suggested it be included in the form—but I will revise the form and delete the word "military."

However, please note that it *is* possible to be too strict in class. Not on safety rules or firearms handling, but on fair and responsible treatment of participating students. Fortunately, it rarely happens in hunter education classes.

JAN's Corner

Instructors have done a great job during the past few months getting records into the Olympia office on time. Student and course records have been much more accurate since late August and I appreciate the extra effort instructors are making.

Remember, too, that I'm offering a class with instructor Jim Goodman on course/student records at the 2008 IST! If you've never seen how we handle and process records, this is one PST class you shouldn't miss.

Although designed for chief instructors, all instructors are welcome to attend.

Be safe afield this year!

Deferral Program Now In Effect Under Emergency Rules

IN SEPTEMBER the new deferral program began taking enrollments. As of October 3, a total of 207 individuals (further detailed below) had requested deferrals to hunter education training. Created by the legislature through a revision of *RCW 77.32.155, Hunter education training*, the law now authorizes the director to offer a once in a lifetime, one license year deferral of hunter education training. In November the Fish and Wildlife Commission will adopt permanent rules relating to the deferral process.

Nationally, the concept of hunter education deferrals took a major step forward when a joint report prepared by Silvertip Productions, U.S. Sportsman's Alliance and Southwick Associates, Inc., published a survey showing that young hunters are the safest hunters in the woods when accompanied by an adult. Their research findings encouraged the three organizations to collaborate and develop the program that eventually grew under the name "Families Afield."

- ◆ Since 2004, 18 states have changed their laws to create additional hunting opportunity.
- ◆ 22 states now permit some type of youth or mentored hunts.
- ◆ 31 states have no minimum age restrictions, meaning parents decide when to introduce their sons or daughters to hunting.

The single common theme among all states that have adopted a hunter education deferral is reliance on a mentor to supervise the beginner hunter.

The State of Texas has the most significant experience with hunter education deferrals, and as of early October had issued more than 34,000 deferrals since their deferral program began. To date Texas hunter education officials report no safety problems attributable to individuals hunting under their deferral program and no citations attributable to hunting under the deferral program. While there are significant differences between Texas and Washington, their experience suggests we can expect similar positive results.

There is no way to accurately predict how many people in Washington State will request a once-in-a-lifetime deferral to hunter education. Hunter education staff are estimating 500 deferrals in the first year and as many as 1,000 annually in subsequent years. Each deferred hunter has the words HEDEF on their special license to alert Fish and Wildlife Officers to the fact these individuals have not yet completed basic hunter education training. One other unique provision of Washington's strict deferral law is that both the deferred and the accompanying hunter may be cited by officers.

Results of the deferral requests, by age, are shown in the table below:

Age	Total	Age	Total	Age	Total	Age	Total
8	11	15	6	22	5	29	4
9	11	16	7	23	9	30	8
10	11	17	5	24	9	31	7
11	10	18	4	25	12	32	3
12	9	19	3	26	10	33	2
13	6	20	8	27	10	34	5
14	9	21	11	28	8	35	4
	67 = 32.4%		44=21.2%		63=30.4%		33=15.9%

As of this date it is clear that the majority (roughly 60%) of individuals requesting deferrals are over 18 years of age. Deferral requests are coming from across the state, but the majority (roughly 70%) of requests are from western Washington; Spokane has the distinction of generating the highest number of requests (roughly 6% of all requests). Staff will continue to monitor and report on the deferral program.

From The Desk Of Lt. Crown, Enforcement Program

I AM THE NEW LIEUTENANT replacing Captain Mann (who is now in Yakima) and I look forward to meeting and working with all of you in the months and years ahead.

My schedule will remain hectic for some time as I shuttle back-and-forth between the Ephrata office in Region Two, my former duty station, and my new assignment as the training officer in Olympia. I ask for your understanding if you experience any difficulty in contacting me.

And "understanding" is also what this month's brief column is all about. Periodically, unique issues pop up in a hunter education settings. Policy guidelines can't really address every possible hunter education situation, and your clear understanding of how to proceed can help insure the best possible outcome for everybody involved.

A recent situation will illustrate what I mean here. Several western Washington instructors were conducting their skills evaluation as part of a class. One adult student was deemed to have failed the skills section and, not surprisingly, wanted to have the failure decision reviewed by the chief instructor. The chief instructor

merely reaffirmed what the evaluating instructor observed and the decision to fail the student stood unchanged. That's when the truly unique situation unfolded. The student—now mad that his failure was confirmed—used foul language to express his displeasure and then—as he was leaving the class—uttered an intimidating remark directed specifically at the instructors.

The chief instructor was genuinely concerned for the safety and well-being of all instructors because of the remark made. After class the chief instructor sent e-mails to the regional office and hunter education division staff in Olympia, notifying them of what transpired, the student's name, and the comments made. The next day, local Fish and Wildlife Officers followed up to determine whether the remarks warranted a citation.

The instructors involved in this case understood immediately the gravity of the situation and they took positive, timely action to address personal safety. They also made sure that a prompt report was filed to document events.

Fortunately, nothing else happened as a result of this incident. Thank you for your continued dedication!

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.

November 16 – 17	Ravensdale
January 11 – 12	Spokane
January 25 – 26	Olympia
February 15 – 16	Vancouver
February 22 – 23	Tri-Cities
March 7 – 8	Sumner
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

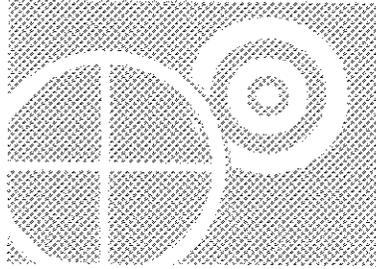
A DISTURBING TREND over the past few years was the increasing percentage of "no shows" (individuals who sign up but do not attend) at our PSTs. Nobody worried too much about one or two, but at some PSTs the "no show" rate hit 75%! Obviously, we would have cancelled such PSTs had we known in advance.

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.

Draft Policy: Hunter Education Instructor Associations

PERIODICALLY there is a need to add policies to provide guide hunter education activities. The draft policy below identifies support for hunter education associations. Please review and comment on the draft by December 1.



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.

There are currently several organizations within Washington State that focus on supporting certified hunter education instructors. 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.

Draft 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 X Washington-certified hunter education instructors;
- 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

THE WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

Hunter Education Program
600 Capitol Way North
Olympia, Washington
360-337-1091

Online learning now available at www.hunter-ed.com/wa/

Email: huntered@dhw.wa.gov
Blog: <http://hunter-education.blogspot.com>

"Safety First"

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

**Evergreen SureFire Hunter Education Video Order Form:
"Hunter Ethics, 'The Future Depends On You' "**

evergreen_surefire @ hotmail. com

Name of Organization: _____

Address of Organization: _____

Telephone and/or Fax Number: _____

Contact Person's Name: _____

<u>Number of DVD's Ordered:</u>	<u>Price Per DVD</u>	<u>Total Ordered</u>
	29.99	
	WA Residents-----	
	Add 8.8%	_____
	<u>Shipping & Handling</u>	<u>5.95</u>
	<u>Total Price</u>	_____

Check, Money Order or Visa/Mastercard is accepted.

Check Number: _____ **Make Checks Payable to: Evergreen SureFire Hunter Ed.**

Visa/Mastercard Number: _____

Expiration Date: _____

Signature: _____

Please Contact Evergreen SureFire Hunter Education with any Questions: 253 241 1899