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## Handgun law reauthorized

NRA instructor hails importance of classes



**BRIAN BASHAM/TRIBUNE**

**NRA certified instructor Paul Horvick, Detroit Lakes, describes the proper steps in preparing for and shooting at a firing range with handguns. Horvick teaches courses on the use of handguns.**

By TIM KJOS  
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With the passage of a "new" carry concealed handgun law in Minnesota, there could be renewed interest again from persons wishing to obtain the five-year permit.

One of the 2005 law's requirements — as contained in the 2003 law, which was rejected last year by Minnesota courts — is a handgun safety course dealing with the important aspect of deadly force.

Plus, applicants will be tested on a handgun firing range for their proficiency with a revolver or pistol.

There are several area instructors that teach a course accepted by county sheriffs, including Paul Horvick of rural Detroit Lakes.

Last week, Horvick, who is a certified National Rifle Association instructor, invited area media members to a one-day course featuring the classroom and firing range.

Detroit Lakes Newspapers photographer Brian Basham and myself accepted the offer, which centered on the dos and don'ts of using handguns, and was blessed by a sunny, near perfect afternoon on the Erhard firing range.

Horvick is a retired attorney, who practiced in the Twin Cities. He teaches the classroom portion at his Pelican Lake residence, an ideal, quiet setting for proper learning.

Horvick can teach any of three courses sanctioned by NRA: NRA Firearms Instruction Responsibility and Safety Training (FIRST) Steps, NRA Basic Pistol course, and Personal Protection in the Home. There is a charge for taking these courses.

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Poll Results	
During the summer season in Detroit Lakes, should parking along West Lake Drive be:	
Beach side only	25%
North side only	42%
Both sides of the thoroughfare	33%
<b>Total Votes:</b>	<b>227</b>
<a href="#">Let Me Vote</a>	

The first course is designed for people with little or no handgun experience, and likely don't own a handgun. It lasts about three hours, which includes a live fire session.

The second course is more in depth, taking about 10 hours. Students have either purchased a handgun or have decided to get one.

The instruction covers more material than the first course, and students will fire 100 to 150 rounds of factory ammunition through the handgun they have purchased.

Students take a 50-question written test, based on a textbook supplied by the NRA. If students pass that and a shooting proficiency test, they will be awarded an NRA basic marksmanship award.

The third class is not for novices, advises Horvick. Participants must provide proof they have either completed the NRA Basic Pistol course or possess a current Minnesota permit to carry.

This class incorporates issues such as shooting from cover or concealment, shooting on the move and shooting from different positions.

"It is a very hands-on detail-oriented how to protect yourself course," emphasized Horvick.

In addition, Horvick teaches a Minnesota Permit to Carry class and a North Dakota permit test, for which a fee is also charged.

For the Minnesota class, students who have taken the NRA Basic class within the past 60 days and can provide the NRA completion certificate, the Permit to Carry class will cover the state legal issues related to carrying a concealed handgun. There will also be a short shooting exercise.

Horvick said it has been his experience that most concealed carry permit holders are very cautious when carrying a handgun.

"They know that something terrible could happen if they don't use common sense and good judgment," he said.

He also reminds students to be mindful of the laws of other states should they wish to or happen to be carrying in those states.

He said some states will not honor the permit issued by the person's home state. For example, Minnesota has reciprocity with four other states, and Minnesota's permit is recognized in several other states, although Minnesota doesn't recognize permits issued by those states.

Horvick said the permit carry situation could be rectified nationally. "One real common school of thought is it should be like driver's licenses. Every state should set their own standard for a handgun permit, but it should be honored throughout the country."

Horvick noted that some proponents are suggesting a national standard for permit carry laws, but he fears that may limit the number of permits ultimately issued.

Horvick emphasizes frequent practice with a handgun at a firing range. And, he suggests practicing with another person, because then it won't become boring or mundane.

"If they are doing it for self defense, they should come out and set up a target and work from maybe 21 feet and in," he said.

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