

The Fort Taylor Pyrate Invasion

Black Powder Safety Rules

By their nature, any time weapons are used – with or without black powder – there is an increased risk of injury. Park staff and living historians are acutely aware of this and share both the concern and the responsibility for safe practices. Many living history groups hold their members to high safety standards and the NPS depends upon a strong, consistently demonstrated commitment to safety for any person or group involved in a park event. Ultimately, though, it is the National Park Service that is responsible for the safety of an event.

All firing demonstrations will be done according to National Park Service black powder safety regulations, under the direct supervision of a certified NPS Black Powder Safety Officer who will have the final say on the conduct of all historic weapons firing demonstrations. Safety is our primary concern, and our common goal.

GENERAL

These guidelines apply to the use of Black Powder firearms for historical demonstration purposes at Fort Taylor Historic State Park by Member Units. “Member Units” mean an organization that is recognized by Fort Taylor HSP and is officially enrolled as such, or any unit or person that is a guest of Fort Taylor HSP. “Demonstration” means the loading and firing of a black powder weapon, for the purpose of public education, under the direction of a Safety Officer. Every Member Unit is required to have a Safety Officer. This individual is thoroughly knowledgeable of the Safety Standard and Guide to Black Powder. This individual is directly responsible for the weapons and/or Artillery Piece and how they are used by the members of their own Unit. This individual is answerable to the Fort Taylor HSP safety staff for any compromise or violation of these Guidelines, and has signed a statement declaring such.

The Chief Safety Officer shall be a Park Service Employee or his designee. The Chief Safety Officer, or his designee, will require the inspection of all weapons prior to firing. If at anytime the Chief Safety Officer, or his designee, believes there to be a safety violation, the live demonstration of black powder weaponry shall be halted until the violation has been corrected. If the violation cannot be corrected, the weapon(s) and demonstrator(s) shall be required to leave the firing line.

SAFETY ZONES

The Chief Safety Officer, or his designee, shall designate additional safety personnel as needed for crowd control. Illustrations of the Safety Zones for small arms, long arms and cannon are attached.

ACCEPTABLE WEAPONS

Reproduction firearms are the only types of weapons that may be allowed to fire. The use of original firearms is prohibited. Acceptable black powder weaponry will be appropriate for the interpreting the period between 1675 and 1725:

- Pistol (flintlock and percussion cap)
- Long arms – musket and blunderbuss (flintlock and percussion cap)
- Cannon – naval and field carriage mounted. Cannon will be fired either by cannon fuse, quill primer, or friction primer. If firing cannon by fuse or quill primer, the authorized “firing” mechanism will be slow match. **The use of cigarette lighters to fire cannon is strictly prohibited.**

An individual who operates a muzzle-loaded black powder weapon in an Individual Demonstration must be trained and the weapon inspected prior to use by a Safety Officer. A Unit participating in a Tactical Demonstration (including reenactments) must have present, during the demonstration, at least one member who is a Safety Officer.

Cannons are extremely dangerous to load and fire. Cannons may be demonstrated by members only under the direct supervision of a Safety Officer. The Safety Officer and the Gun Commander should be one in the same. Cannon crews will be required to demonstrate their firing drill and their misfire drill to the Chief Safety Officer prior to being permitted to take a place on the firing line. Cannon crews will be required to have all necessary implements in working order for their piece. Cannon crews will be required to have with them discharge equipment available in the event of a Level II misfire.

The Fort Taylor Pyrate Invasion

Black Powder Safety Rules

WEAPONS SAFETY, YOU, AND THE PUBLIC

To ensure the safety of participants and our visitors, a high degree of firearm discipline is expected of each and every participant. The Chief Safety Officer, or his designee, may conduct a spot check of weapons at any time during the event to insure firearm discipline is maintained.

- All weapons will remain under physical control of its owner at all times.
- No weapon is to be left unattended.
- Weapons are to remain unloaded when not on the firing line.
- Under **NO** circumstances shall a weapon be discharged anywhere other than the firing line. Weapons shall not be discharged in camp or anywhere off the field of demonstration. Failure to adhere to this rule will result in the weapon(s) and demonstrators(s) to be banned from future demonstrations during the event.
- Visitors are not allowed to handle or touch a loaded weapon.
- Visitors are not allowed to fire any weapons.
- Visitors may touch an unloaded weapon so long as the owner maintains physical control of it. **DO NOT HAND YOUR WEAPON TO VISITORS.**
- Participants under the age of 16 may not handle weapons (firearms or edged weapons).
- **NEVER** point your weapon (firearm or edged weapon) at any member of the public at anytime.

AMMUNITION LOADING

Blank charges are not to exceed the maximum load designated in the appended Table of Maximum Loads for the particular weapon used.

Small and long arms are to be loaded from pre-wrapped paper cartridges prepared according to correct period procedures. Aluminum foil, coin wrappers and metal staples, etc, are not to be used. Wadding is permitted for individual demonstrations only. Ramrods will not be allowed on the field during battle scenarios. Powder contained in horns is strictly prohibited. Powder horns containing powder will be confiscated and secured by the NPS, or his designee. Powder horns may be carried empty. Aluminum foil cartridges may only be used for cannon charges.

When loading and firing, the demonstrator will follow the correct manual for the type of weapon being fired. Long arms demonstrators who do not have a prescribed manual will follow safe procedures.

Members will observe the following rules for the transportation and storage of blank ammunition. Blank ammunition will be prepared off-site before the demonstration is held. Loads shall not exceed the loads specified in the appended Table of Maximum Loads for the particular weapon to be fired. Cartridges (if used) will be paper-wrapped, rolled on a former of the proper caliber for the weapon being fired, and secured. **METAL CLOSURES ARE NOT PERMITTED.** Ammunition should be transported in bulk, in secure, non-sparking boxes. Bulk or loose black powder is absolutely prohibited. Demonstrators must carry rolled cartridges (if used) in cartridge boxes that are in good repair, have secure leather flaps, and are kept clean of loose powder granules. Member Units are required to store ammunition in a safe fire free area and out of the reach of the public.

CARTRIDGES WILL NOT BE GIVEN AWAY TO THE PUBLIC.

The Fort Taylor Pyrate Invasion

Black Powder Safety Rules

AMMUNITION

Black powder is to be kept secured at all times away from the public. For cannon, black powder must be secured in a BATF approved (*Type 4 Lockable*) portable magazine. The use of any projectiles is prohibited. Smoking is strictly prohibited in the area where black powder is secured. A minimum of two fire extinguishers shall be located in the immediate proximity of the black powder storage area.



SMALL ARMS AND LONG ARMS FIRING LINE

When small arms and long arms demonstrators are on the firing line, a Safety Zone shall be maintained at all times. Additional personnel may be designated to assist in maintaining the Safety Zone. The Chief Safety Officer, or his designee, shall command the Order of Fire. The Chief Safety Officer, or his designee, may designate a member on the firing line to issue the commands for the Order of Fire. The commands for the Order of Fire shall be: **Load, Ready, Fire.**

CANNON FIRING LINE

When cannon demonstration crews are on the firing line, a Safety Zone shall be maintained at all times. Additional safety personnel may be designated to assist in maintaining the Safety Zone. The Chief Safety Officer, or his designee, shall command the Order of Fire. Artillery drills are subject to approval by the Chief Safety Officer, or his designee. Cannon crews shall consist of ideally six (6) personnel but may fire with a minimum of four (4) members:

- **The Gun Commander** – This man has overall command of the gun crew. He is responsible for giving commands and assuring that crew members execute their duties correctly and safely. He does not normally take part in any of the loading or firing activities. If he does serve the gun, he will only serve as Gunner #1.
- **Gunner #1** – (Firer) This job is to maintain the linstock and to touch off the charge when ordered by the Gun Commander.
- **Gunner #2** – (Vent Tender) This man stops (tends) the vent to be sure NO air escapes during worming, sponging and loading. He picks open the charge with a priming wire and priming the piece. This man must have a leather thumbstall to protect his thumb from the heat of the gun while tending the vent. This position is critical to safe operation of the piece, and should always be manned by an experienced Artillerist.
- **Gunner #3** – (Ram & Sponge) This man sponges the piece and rams home the cartridge. He must always be sure the sponge is in good condition and that there is water for the artillery bucket. This man is required to wear heavy duty welder's gloves for protection while performing his duties. It is the most dangerous position on the crew and, must exercise extreme caution at all times. Like #2, this position should always be served by an experienced crew member.
- **Gunner #4** – (Worm & Loader) This man's job is to extract the spent cartridge casing (search the piece), and to place the new round in the muzzle for #3 to ram (charge the piece). In case of a four man crew, Gunner #4 will double as #5.
- **Gunner #5** – (Powder Handler) This man's job is to remove the powder box to a secure position before the piece is fired, and to bring each round forward to #4 for loading. He is also responsible for manning the tiller for aiming the gun, and guarding the powder box at all times. Powder box must be closed prior to the fire command.
- **Gunner #6** – (Powder Handler) This man is charged with the security on the powder box at all times. Powder box must be closed prior to the fire command.

The Fort Taylor Pyrate Invasion

Black Powder Safety Rules

BLACK POWDER WEAPONS INSPECTIONS

All small arms and long arms used in firing demonstrations will be inspected by the NPS, or his designee, once in the morning to ensure serviceability of the weapon. Weapons that pass this inspection will be “tagged” by a small, unobtrusive piece of natural wool yarn (provided by the NPS). Weapons that fail inspection may not be carried. The owner must return the weapon to the encampment or secured in his/her vehicle. All small arms and long arms weapons must meet the following standards to pass inspection:

- Secured flashguard and hammer stall (shoulder to shoulder firing demonstrations only)
- No cracks or splits in the stock
- Furniture and barrel fit securely to stock
- No missing stock pins or screws
- Lock works smoothly
- Half-cock position works properly
- Flint is secured by leather or lead
- Steel and spring are in good condition
- Barrel is free from visible dents or cracks
- No excessive rust or corrosion on the barrel, lock and touch hole
- No fouling in the barrel or the lock

All cannon must meet the following standards to pass inspection:

The Tube:

- Tube is clean and free of rust or corrosion
- No sign of external damage or strain
- Inside of tube is clean and relatively smooth
- No internal signs of damage (bulges, pits, etc.)
- No sign of corrosion damage at breach
- The vent is clear and of the acceptable size
- No signs of cracked or bending around the trunnions
- No signs of weakness at the chaplets on bronze tubes

The Carriage:

- Wheels are tight and free of rot and infestation
- The body of the carriage is free of rot and infestation
- No pieces or parts are missing, cracked, bent, or broken
- Wheels move freely
- None of the iron work is loose
- Tube rotates freely on its trunnions
- Trunnion caps fit snugly and are properly keyed
- Lids of Ammunition boxes and limber chests fit snugly, and are free of loose powder
- Wheel hub does not gouge the end of the axletree
- Linch pin is not digging into the wheel hub

Equipment:

- All necessary equipment is present
- Sponge is in good condition and is fitted to the bore
- Rammer head is secure and free of cracks
- Small items are in good condition (linstock, thumstall, buckets, etc.)
- Prongs of the worm are sharp and not bent

The Fort Taylor Pyrate Invasion

Black Powder Safety Rules

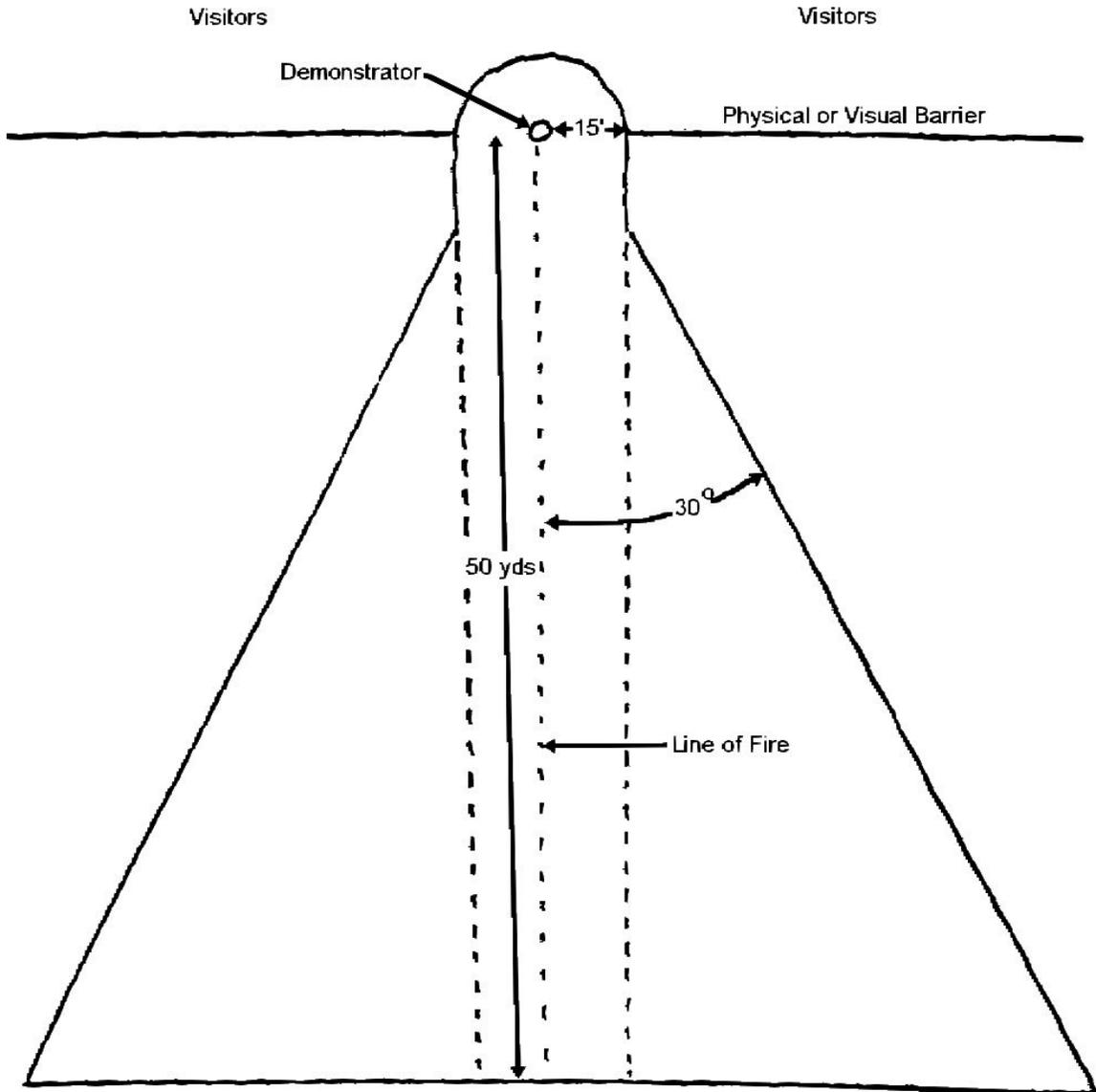
TABLE OF MAXIMUM LOADS FOR WEAPONS

<u>Weapon Type</u>	<u>Caliber</u>	<u>Maximum Load</u>
<u>Shoulder arms:</u>		
Brown Bess Musket	.75	100 grains ffg
Charleville Musket	.69	100 grains ffg
Rifles	varies	80 grains ffg
Pistols	varies	45 grains ffg
<u>Artillery</u>		
Grasshopper	3 pounder	8 ozs. fg
Light 6	6 pounder	12 ozs. fg
Howitzer	5.8 inch	10 ozs. fg
1 Iron Gun	3 pounder	8 ozs. fg
Iron Gun	4 pounder	10 ozs. fg
Iron Gun	6 pounder	12 ozs. fg
1 to 1.5-inch Bore Gun	1 pounder	2 ozs. fg
2-inch Bore Gun	2 pounder	4 ozs. fg

The Fort Taylor Pyrate Invasion

Black Powder Safety Rules

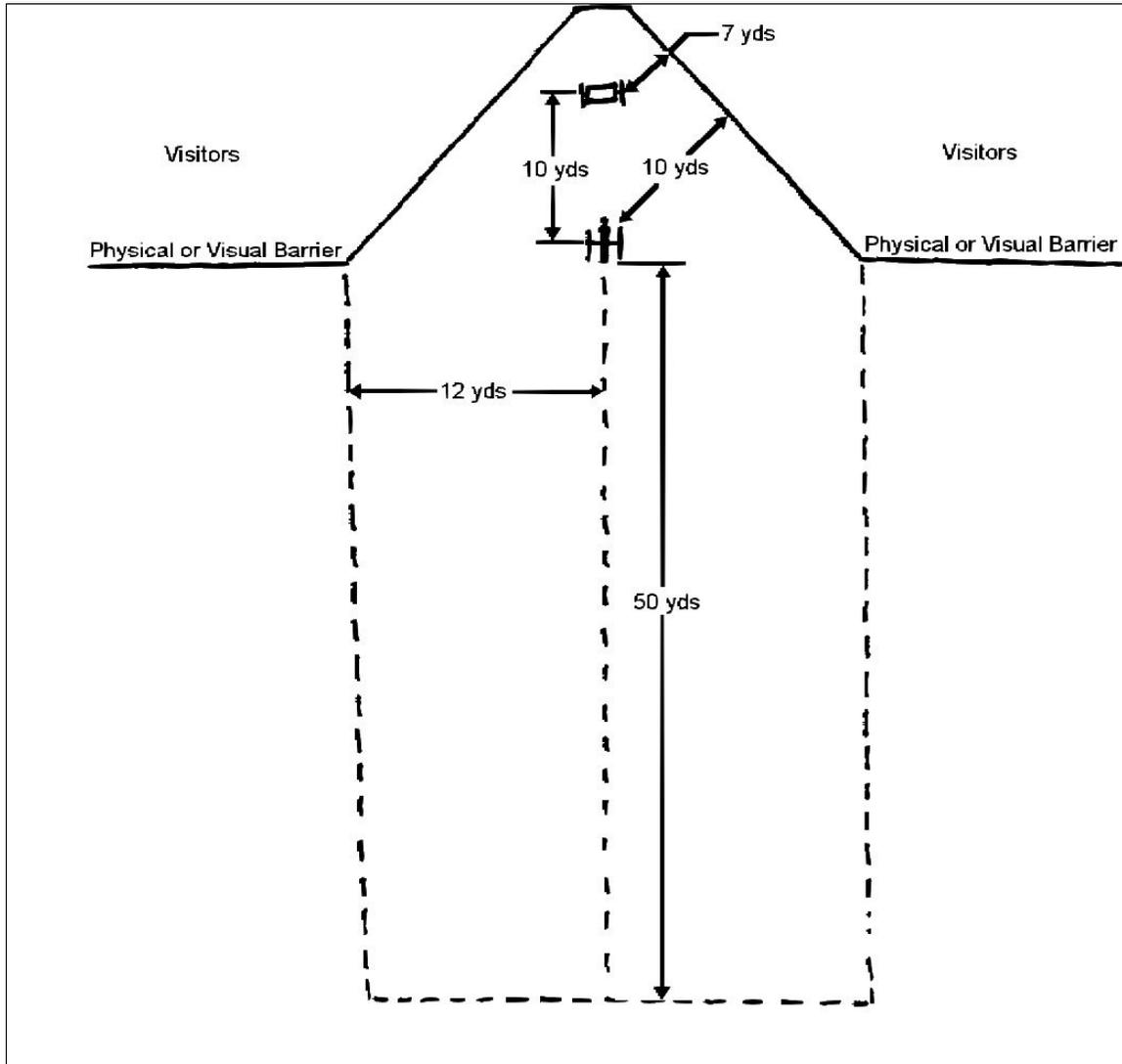
SAFETY ZONE FOR SMALL ARMS AND LONG ARMS DEMONSTRATIONS



The Fort Taylor Pyrate Invasion

Black Powder Safety Rules

SAFETY ZONES FOR ARTILLERY DEMONSTRATIONS



The Fort Taylor Pyrate Invasion

Black Powder Safety Rules

STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITY

This page is to be filled out, signed and turned in to weapons inspection personnel at the first black powder safety meeting you attend at 9:00 AM.

I _____ hereby certify with my signature that I have read the Black Powder Safety Rules of Fort Taylor Historic State Park and the Fort Taylor Pirate Invasion. I further certify with my signature that I fully understand these safety rules and the consequences listed for violating these safety rules.

Signature

Signature of Fort Taylor HSP Representative

Printed Name

Printed Name of Fort Taylor HSP Representative

Date

Date