

**FLORIDA PARK SERVICE
HISTORIC WEAPONS FIRING DEMONSTRATION
SAFETY PROCEDURES**

GENERAL

- These safety procedures will be strictly enforced through a safety officer and/or a safety committee, coordinated by the park staff. An individual or group will not be permitted to participate if any of these Procedures are not followed.
- The safety officer/safety committee will be responsible for ensuring compliance with the Procedures. A full safety inspection must be held prior to any individual firing weapons.
- Park visitors will not be permitted to handle any loaded or edged weapons. To prevent visitor injury or damage to the weapon, the staff person (this includes volunteers & demonstrators) must support the weapon at all times.
- Alcoholic beverages will not be consumed during normal park operating hours. Any intoxicated person will be removed from the event.
- ***All fires must be placed at or above ground level.***
- ***To protect the archeological resources, the ground must remain undisturbed. Digging is not permitted.***
- No sale of black powder is permitted, per the Federal Explosive Law (Public Law 91-452) & Title 27, Code of Federal Regulations Part 55, Commerce in Explosives, Subpart D-Licenses and Permits.

FIRING DEMONSTRATIONS

- All firing demonstrations will follow the Safety Procedures and the Ranges for *Blank Small Arms and Blank Cannon Firing*. Demonstrations will be coordinated by park staff.
- No black powder weapons of any kind will be carried by any participant under 14 years of age.
- No projectiles, bullets, musket balls, or loading blocks will be carried AT ANY TIME during the event.
- All cartridges should be made prior to the event. Prepare only enough cartridges for the scheduled demonstration. In the case of unexpected firing activities, **cartridges may only be made at an area designated by park staff**. No staples will be used in any cartridge. Nails, vent picks, etc should be kept out of the cartridge box to avoid accidentally dropping any of these objects into a muzzle.
- There will be no weapons fired in the encampment area or along routes of march without prior approval from park staff. The park staff will designate an area for weapons testing, if needed.
- Maximum musket or rifle charges will follow the *Table of Maximum Loads*. Only FFg black powder will be used – no Pyrodex. No FFFFg (4F) powder will be used, except by artillery units for priming. Cartridge paper will not be placed in the barrel and no wadding or ramming will be permitted except in the use of handguns. Multiple loading is not permitted.
- Powder will only be carried in the form of cartridges.
- Cartridges will not be carried anywhere on the person except in a hard cartridge box unless they are securely wrapped in foil in lots of 10 and carried in a secure location.
- Cannon charges will be Fg or C grade black powder only – no Pyrodex. Maximum cannon charges must follow the *Table of Maximum Loads*. For cannons smaller than full-scale, charges will be no more than 2 ½ ounces of black powder per inch of bore opening.
- Aluminum foil will be the only material used to prepare the charges; plastic bags will not be used. No additional materials, such as sawdust or flour, will be added to the charges.

- The ammunition box shall be constructed of wood or metal, and lined with non-sparking material. Powder storage must follow the Florida Park Service Procedures for the Purchase, Storage and Distribution of Black Powder.
- Cannon crews are required to perform firing and misfiring drills as a part of the safety inspection.
- For maximum safety, cannons should not be fired at a rate of more than once every 3 minutes.
- Torn or damaged small arms cartridges and cannon charges will not be used. Never allow loose powder in the demonstration area.
- When loading small arms, hold the cartridge with the thumb and index finger. Pour the powder into the muzzle at an angle, keeping your hand away from the muzzle.
- For protection against flash burns, all demonstrators will wear natural fiber or animal skin, long-sleeved clothes.
- Before firing, warn the visitors of the loud noise, and caution visitors with hearing aids and small children.
- If a weapon misfires, explain the procedures to the visitors, keeping them at a safe distance until the weapon is discharged or is rendered safe. If attempts fail to correct a misfire, small arms will be removed from the area. With artillery, visitors will be removed from the demonstration area. Standard unloading procedures will then be followed.

BATTLE REENACTMENTS (Opposing Forces)

- Only officers, NCOs and MOUNTED cavalymen may carry pistols or revolvers. These must not be fired directly at any person.
- Edged weapons may be carried but will not be unsheathed at any time without the direct command of an officer. Such command will only be given with the prior approval of the park staff.
- Opposing troops will not advance within 15 yards of another unit at any time during the battle. Exceptions will only occur if they have been carefully planned and approved prior to the event.
- All firing will be done at an elevated angle within 15 yards of opposing participants. Never aim a weapon directly at another person.
- Maximum grains for charges are 60 for small caliber, and 120 for .69 - .75 caliber.
- All rammers will be left in camp during battle reenactments except one to be carried by one NCO in each unit.
- Each Unit Commander is responsible for the conduct of all participants in the unit (including women and children). The Commander is responsible for making sure that the participants are aware of the safety rules and that they understand and abide by them.
- In the event of an actual injury needing immediate attention during a reenactment, either the injured person or someone going to his aid will shout the word "Medic" to signify this injury. The word "Medic" is to be used ONLY in the case of an actual injury requiring immediate attention. When the call "Medic" is heard, all activity will cease and the injured person cared for.
- Children, with the exception of functional musicians (boys 11 or older who can actually play a drum), are not permitted on the field during battle reenactments. Also, young boys are not to serve as color bearers during battle reenactments.