

Town of Bristol, VT

Ordinance Regulating Discharge of Firearms

The Selectboard of the Town of Bristol hereby enacts the following ordinance for the regulation of the discharge of firearms, BB Guns, or Similar Weapons, the purpose of which is to protect the health, safety and welfare of the public. This **CIVIL** ordinance is enacted pursuant to 24 VSA 2291 (8) and 24 VSA Chapter 59.

Article 1: Definitions.

“Discharge” shall mean to shoot or fire a firearm, BB gun or similar weapon.

“Firearm” shall mean any weapon from which a missile or projectile, such as a slug, shot or bullet, is hurled by an explosive. The term “firearm” includes, but is not limited to muzzle loaded weapons.

“BB Guns” or **“Similar Weapons”** shall mean any device from which a missile or projectile, is hurled by the device using other than an explosive charge. This includes, but is not limited to bows, cross bows, paint ball guns, or sling shots.

Article 2: General Prohibition.

The discharge of a firearm, BB Gun or Similar Weapon is prohibited within a safety zone of 500 feet from another person’s / entity’s residence, building, place of business or camper in the Town of Bristol. The discharge of a firearm, BB gun or Similar weapon is prohibited on or within 500 feet of any Town Owned Property and or with within 1,000 feet of any school in the Town of Bristol.

Article 3: Permit for Discharge within Safety Zone

Any resident / property owner may apply for a permit to discharge a firearm within a safety zone. The Chief of Police shall inspect the site and approve or deny the permit with requirements for safe discharge or reasons for denial. Any denial may be appealed to the Bristol Selectboard.

If a resident/property owner was denied and wanted to appeal the Police Chief’s decision, they would need to write a letter to the Town Administrator within 30 days of the denial of their permit, requesting their appeal be heard at the next duly warned Selectboard meeting.

Article 4: Exemptions and Exclusions.

This ordinance does not preclude the discharge of a firearm, BB gun or Similar Weapon in one's own defense or in the defense of another, in the humane termination of any animal that appears rabid or which poses an immediate threat to any person or persons. This Ordinance shall not be construed or interpreted to include lawful discharge of a firearm, or Similar Weapon by Law Enforcement Officers in the performance of their duties or to include the owner / tenant, members of their families or invitee's from discharging firearms, BB Guns or Similar Weapons on their own property where that discharge is done safely and beyond the safety zone distances of neighboring structures noted in Article 2, nor shall it include persons lawfully butchering animals by firearm discharged at close range provided the properties of others are not endangered nor shall it prohibit lawfully permitted shooting ranges. Discharge for ceremonial salutes, on occasions such as Memorial Day, Veterans Day, and Independence Day, using blank cartridges will be permitted. **NOTHING** in this ordinance shall be construed to limit the mere possession of firearms.

Article 5: Penalties.

A violation of this ordinance shall be a civil matter enforced in accordance with the provisions of 24 VSA 1974a and 1977. An issuing municipal officer or any Certified Vermont Law Enforcement Officer may issue for this violation and will be authorized to recover a waiver fee, in lieu of a civil penalty, in the following amounts, for any person who declines to contest a municipal complaint and pays the waiver fee. A warning shall be issued for the first offense unless evidence shows the violator was aware of the ordinance or was made aware of the ordinance prior to any violation.

Waiver:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|----------|
| A. First Offense | \$75.00 |
| B. Second Offense | \$100.00 |
| C. Third and subsequent offense | \$150.00 |

An issuing municipal officer or any Certified Vermont Law Enforcement Officer is authorized to recover civil penalties in the following amounts for each violation of this ordinance.

Civil Penalties:

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|---------------------------------|--|
| A. First Offense | \$150.00 |
| B. Second Offense | \$300.00 |
| C. Third and subsequent offense | Not less than \$300 nor more than \$800.00 |

4. Notice of adoption published in the Addison Independent newspaper on (date published- attach copy of actual paper) with a notice of the right to petition.

5. Other actions (petitions, etc.)

Certificate of the Clerk: I certify this ordinance was adopted as detailed above and filed / recorded on

_____ Day of _____ 2017

Bristol Town Clerk

DRAFT