

- » History of alcohol or drug abuse.
- » Fascination with weapons/violence.
- » History of violence.
- » A sudden strong belief in a religion or a cause.
- » Blames everyone else for his problems.
- » Feels everyone is against him.
- » Is considered a “loner.”
- » Has few interests.

While no one can accurately predict the likelihood of a person becoming violent, there are signals to look for. These signals are likely to follow a pattern similar to this:

- » A person experiences DISTRESS. It may be a single major traumatic event or an accumulation of minor stressors.
- » The person perceives there is no way to resolve his problems or conflicts. His problems seem to have no viable alternatives and so he begins to narrow his focus in order to look for an easy way out of his problem.
- » The individual begins to rationalize in order to justify his position. Suddenly all his problems exist because of other people over which he has no control.
- » This person will now believe that he has a need to protect himself and that he is alone in his endeavors. Thus he seems to be more egocentric and self-centered.
- » Thoughts of violent acts become the belief as the only possible way to gain either control or to be heard. At first, he may begin talking about such acts or demonstrate obvious hostile thoughts.
- » Finally, the act of violence is either attempted or committed.

Whether it's executive protection or simply protecting yourself or your family, prevention is the key to success. Success comes by:

- » Preparing for any eventuality.
- » Offering a deterrence.
- » Making the target more difficult.
- » Attacks always occur suddenly.

Once the attack happens it's too late for prevention. Therefore, threat assessment, profiling and constant vigilance are the most important tools for preventing a violent attack.

For the professional bodyguard or the regular civilian, advanced planning should be part of your everyday life. Learn to think ahead when you are traveling, going out to dinner, shopping, or anything else you do.

—USCCA Inner Circle—

The Least Talked About Aspect Of Survival With Firearms: **MAINTENANCE**

By Michael A. Centafonte

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LOS ANGELES—We're all bombarded by gun writers telling us this new firearm or that firearm is the best one for self-defense.

There are stacks of magazine articles evaluating and justifying why a particular firearm should be selected for defense and even offense.

Every time you read one of these articles you want to rush out and buy the newest and best firearm to gain the upper hand and put the odds in your favor to survive that life-threatening encounter. With firearms, some are better than others. The same goes for all the myriads of shooting techniques and schools so often written about.

BUT you find few articles written for the proper maintenance of that best of the best firearm you are going to stake your life on when things go downhill.

You can have the best firearm, best technique, and best schooling, but if that firearm doesn't work when called upon you have an expensive paperweight. Maintenance isn't a glamorous topic. Maybe it's assumed that all gun owners automatically take care of the firearm(s) they use to protect themselves.

Maybe the importance of maintaining that firearm is not discussed because so many of the writers do not risk their lives every day or work with people who do. This is not to put them down. It is just fact.

I work for one of the largest law enforcement agencies in the country and my assignments for the last 15 years have placed me in a position to observe first hand thousands of shooters from the Law Enforcement and Military community.

In my observations the number one cause of firearms malfunctions is lack of maintenance, and number two doesn't come close.

I have also had the opportunity to try most of the cleaning and lubrication products available to firearm owners. So, let us get into the nitty gritty of firearms' maintenance and maybe shake up some old thinking as we do.

I will go through the maintenance of a semi-auto handgun since they are the most

prevalent today in the Law Enforcement and Military community along with most shooting schools.

Choosing Maintenance Supplies

There are many cleaning products on the market today: the old petroleum based standbys and the newer non-petroleum and biodegradable products. One needs to choose a product (keep in mind the petroleum based products may be harmful over time) and it should be a cleaner only. I understand the reasoning behind having a multipurpose product; something is better than nothing and the firearm is being lubricated.

Why a cleaner only?

What I have seen over the years with the “one product does all” theme is that it doesn't do as thorough a job as a cleaner only. If not shaken up then it is not doing either of its jobs (clean/lube).

A cleaner tends to work more aggressively on fouling with less brush work and removes the old oil and dirt better.

Also, the cleaner is a finer liquid, thus working itself into the places the heavier noncleaner can't reach. The cleaner will flush out debris from tight places better than the noncleaner.

Remember, we want the gun clean and free of old oil and dirt. Yes, there are cleaning tanks to place the whole firearm in and soak. However, the firearm must be disassembled to remove all the debris and this is not practical. Nor is using the local service station's air hose practical, it may blow moisture on weapon's parts.

Like the cleaning products, there are many lubricants to choose from. Luckily, most of the companies producing cleaning products produce lubricants.

I recommend that you stay away from the lubricants that need shaking. If it separates in the bottle it will separate on the firearm. My experience with this type oil is it doesn't stay on the firearm long.

I ask myself what happens when it's applied without shaking first? Is it the

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