

## Squirrel Hunting on Private Property

There have been several shooting incidents in the recent past that prompted a discussion about how we can help make squirrel hunting safer for everyone. In this cause we have put together these suggestions for hunters and landowners, in the hope that squirrel hunting will be safer and remain beneficial for all.

### Some basic suggestions for hunters when asking a landowner for permission to hunt:

- Engage the landowner directly (in person) and ask permission. Let the landowner know how many will be in the hunting party.
- The hunter should present his hunting license as proof he has been trained on hunter safety (you cannot obtain a California hunting license without first passing a hunter safety course.)
- According to California Fish and Wildlife, hunters must have dated written permission to access any private property.
- Hunter should give description of his vehicle(s) and tell landowner what days and times he would like to hunt.
- Collect your brass, other than rim fire.

### Recommendations for the Landowner:

- By meeting the hunter, the landowner can determine the intent of the hunter and make the decision to grant or deny permission.
- Landowner should verify hunter has valid hunting license.
- According to California Fish and Wildlife, hunters must have dated written permission to access any private property.
- Landowner should point out the exact location of the fields that can be hunted, and safe direction of fire (making hunter aware of homes, cattle, roads, equipment, etc.)
- Landowner should make the hunter aware that damage to wheel lines or other property is hunter's responsibility and that safety is of the utmost importance.
- Landowner should recommend hunter use expanding or varmint grade bullets on all center fire ammo.

### 10 Rules for Firearm Safety:

1. Keep muzzle pointed in safe direction
2. Treat every firearm as if it were loaded
3. Be sure of your target, and what's in front and beyond
4. Keep your finger off the trigger until you are ready to fire
5. Check the barrel for obstructions
6. Keep the action open
7. Only point the muzzle at something when you intend to take a shot
8. Unload before jumping, running, or climbing
9. Always store firearms separately and securely, away from both children, careless adults and animals
10. Never consume alcohol before or while you handle firearms. Avoid legal and illegal drugs that can alter your behavior and mental status.

**Helpful sites:** To take hunter safety course on-line: [www.hunter-ed.com/california](http://www.hunter-ed.com/california)

To study: <https://www.hunter-ed.com/california/studyGuide/20100501/>

Regulations: <http://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Regulations>