



DISCHARGING FIREARMS ON OWN PROPERTY AND A MUNICIPALITY'S AUTHORITY TO REGULATE

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QUESTION

Are there any state laws concerning a homeowner discharging firearms on his or her own property and does a municipality have the authority to regulate this type of activity? Please note that the Office of Legislative Research is not authorized to provide legal opinions and this report should not be construed as such.

There is no state law that specifically prohibits a homeowner from discharging firearms on his or her own property, but other state laws still apply. For example, if a homeowner fired his or her firearm in a manner likely to cause bodily injury or death to a person or domestic animal or wanton destruction of property, he or she could be guilty of unlawfully discharging a firearm ([CGS § 53-203](#)). Additionally, a homeowner could be guilty of reckless endangerment if he or she recklessly engages in conduct that creates a risk of physical injury to another ([CGS §§ 53a-63](#) and [53a-64](#)).

State regulations generally prohibit hunting with firearms or carrying loaded firearms within 500 feet of any building occupied by people or domestic animals or containing flammable or combustible materials, without the owner's written permission. Such permission can allow hunting waterfowl within 250 feet under certain conditions. Landowners, their spouses, and certain other relatives are exempt from this prohibition when hunting near buildings they own (Conn. Agencies Reg., § 26-66-1(d)).

Municipalities are generally allowed to pass ordinances to protect the public health, safety, and welfare of their citizens. Connecticut statutes do not expressly preempt local firearm ordinances. Courts have ruled that the statutes implicitly preempt municipalities from passing ordinances regulating firearm sales and hunting.

Several towns have ordinances concerning various other aspects of firearm use, such as prohibitions on firearm use in residential areas and regulations on range safety, gunfire noise, and target practices. For more information on municipal firearm ordinance preemption, see OLR Report [2011-R-0137](#).

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