Weapons Regulations

George Washington’s Mount Vernon has established standards necessary to protect visitors and staff when weapons are being used during a demonstration at our site. Unit commanders will be held accountable for their memberships’ compliance with these standards.

Weapons
- Unit commanders must select a safety officer for their unit who will be responsible for weapons inspection, enforcing safety practices and reporting to Mount Vernon staff on safety issues immediately.
- An individual who brings a weapon onto the site is responsible for maintaining the security and safe usage of the weapon at all times. At no time will the weapon be left unattended or handled by visitors.
- No one under the age of 18 will be allowed to fire a weapon.
- Weapons may be loaded and discharged only during approved drills and/or demonstrations with the unit safety officer’s presence and approval. No weapon will be fired any time anyone is in the field of fire. No weapon will be loaded or fired in the camp area or any other unapproved sites on the estate.
- An immediate cease fire and halt will be called when anyone is in, or moves in, close proximity to the field of fire or demonstration area that creates an unsafe situation. No weapon will be fired until the situation is resolved.
- Edged weapons and bayonets are to be drawn only for formation and approved drills. Rifle stacks will not be left unattended.
- George Washington’s Mount Vernon will not accept responsibility for the loss or damage of any weapons or equipment used in a living history demonstration, or the personal safety of reenactors involved in the handling and discharge of weapons.

Demonstrations
- The unit safety officer will inspect all weapons, ammunition and accouterment at the beginning of the day and directly prior to a demonstration. Only reproduction black powder weapons will be used in a firing demonstration.
- A safe distance or barrier will be maintained between reenactors and visitors during all weapons firing demonstrations and/or demonstrations of drill with fixed bayonets. Demonstrations will be conducted only in areas designated by Mount Vernon staff.

Ammunition
- Black powder will be carried securely in pre-rolled paper cartridges.
- Only blank paper cartridges, made properly and neatly, and which do not exceed the maximum of 60 grains f.f.g., will be accepted. The use of newspaper, staples and other unsafe materials is prohibited.
- Loose powder, live ammunition or fireworks are not allowed on the site.