



Big Hollow Shooting Range Refresher Course

For 2015 renewals

As part of Des Moines County Conservation's commitment to safety, we require all certified shooting range users to complete a refresher course in order to maintain certification.

This course will keep our range users up to date on rules and policies governing the Big Hollow Shooting Range.

At the end of this series of pages, there will be an exam to test your knowledge of the information presented. The questions are specific to the information contained in this course so be sure to read and understand every page. The answers must be delivered to Des Moines County Conservation to be graded and upon achieving at least a 90% score, you'll be eligible to renew your range certification.

If you have questions, feel free to contact us any time.

Renewing memberships

To renew a shooting range membership, all members are required to take this refresher course and pass the exam to show they understand the information. This information is also available in hard copy at the Des Moines County Conservation office.

Email Required for Renewal Reminders

Des Moines County Conservation no longer sends membership renewal reminders through the mail. However, reminders are still sent via email. If you want to receive a reminder when your membership expires, you must provide your email address. Des Moines County Conservation does not share email addresses with anyone and will only use your email for range-related correspondence.

Grace Period Extended

Range members now have 90 days past their expiration date to renew their membership. After 90 days, members will have to re-certify their membership by attending the full range certification course again. Membership renewals can be done in person by stopping in the Des Moines County Conservation office or through the mail by mailing a copy of the completed range refresher course test with the annual membership dues. Upon receipt of test and payment, a new card will be returned to the member.

Types of Memberships

Three types of range memberships are available:

1. **Individual membership (\$25/year):** Only the cardholder is the member and can only use the range alone or with one guest.
2. **Family membership (\$30/year):** The cardholder can bring immediate family (those residing in member's household). The cardholder must be present and is responsible for ensuring that everyone follows the range rules and operates safely.

3. **Lifetime membership (\$500):** This is the same as an individual membership with no annual membership fee. Lifetime members must still renew their memberships annually by taking the refresher course and acquiring a new card but are exempt from paying the annual membership fee.

Spouses as joint cardholders

Spouses can now serve as joint cardholders for family memberships provided BOTH have attended the certification course. Both spouse names will be printed on the membership card in these cases but only one membership fee will be required. This allows for either spouse to bring their family to the range without the other using the same membership card. As with any family membership, one of the cardholders must be present during each range visit and he/she must be in possession of the membership card when on the range. Renewals will require both spouses to take the refresher course but only one fee (\$30) will be required.

Membership Exception

With only one exception, everyone that uses the shooting range must have taken and passed the range certification course and keep their membership cards current by taking the refresher course and paying the membership fee annually.

An exception to this requirement is made for *active duty military personnel only*. Des Moines County Conservation recognizes that active duty military personnel cannot be reasonably expected to have the time to attend a certification course but may wish to use the ranges while on leave. These individuals are allowed to use the ranges individually, without guests. They're expected to know, understand and follow all range rules and policies the same as any certified member. In lieu of a certification card, active duty military personnel must possess identification indicating their active duty status and must sign in and out of the ranges the same as any other member.

No other exceptions to the membership requirement exist.

Range Guests

Members may bring one guest per range visit. The range member is responsible for making sure everyone follows all range rules and policies. All range users, members and guests included, must sign in and out of the ranges using the forms provided inside of the range buildings.

Des Moines County Conservation asks its range members to encourage anyone who is a repeat guest to the range to attend a range course and acquire their own membership.

Range Reservations

Ranges may be reserved by local law enforcement agencies and organized groups (such as 4-H, Boy/Girl Scouts, etc.). Organizations will be required to provide proof of insurance and may not reserve the ranges for more than eight (8) hours per month without special approval. A competent range officer must be present and in control of any range being used at all times. A reservation fee of \$40 per every four (4) hours of reservation per range will be required.

Organizations may reserve up to two ranges at one time. However, the 25 and 50 yard ranges may not be reserved simultaneously, nor can the 100 and 300 meter ranges be reserved simultaneously without special approval from the Conservation Board. Organizations may not reserve ranges on weekends without special approval by the Director. Range reservations are posted online on Des Moines County Conservation's website. Reservation signs area also posted at the range.

Checking In/Out of Ranges

All range users, including family members and guests must sign in and out of the ranges using the forms provided in either of the two range buildings (the white building near the entrance to the 300 meter range or the brown building between the 50 and 100 yard ranges). All information on the form must be provided.

Why this information is important:

Tracking range use allows Des Moines County Conservation to write and justify annual budgets. It also provides a way for the department to show how important and popular the ranges are and to plan for future maintenance/development needs. For example, sign in information revealed that the ranges' 800 members made over 3,100 visits to the range in fiscal year 2014. That's an average of eight range users per day, every single day of the year. That's approximately double the number of people that camped in Des Moines County campgrounds in any year prior. Those numbers justify the public investment made in the ranges and ensure the ranges stay open and maintained in the future.

Sign in information is also important in the event of a range incident or rule violation that puts range users at risk. Being able to see who was using the ranges at the time of an incident will help investigators find witnesses and resolve any issues that may arise. Sign in information has proved valuable in the past in such circumstances.

Clay Pigeon Shooting

Clay pigeon shooting is not allowed on the ranges or anywhere at Big Hollow Recreation Area. Des Moines County Conservation follows NRA-provided guidance when constructing and operating its public ranges. The landscape at Big Hollow does not provide a way for the department to meet those guidelines.

A shotgun range that allows for clay bird shooting requires a large shot fall zone beyond and angled out from the line of fire. Big Hollow does not offer an area large enough to meet those fall zone dimensions without posing a safety risk to other park users or causing undue environmental damage by allowing lead shot (known to be toxic) to fall on sensitive areas such as steep slopes, lakes or waterways. Therefore, Des Moines County Conservation cannot allow public clay pigeon shooting activities at Big Hollow.

However, in an effort to meet at least some of the high demand for shotgun shooting activities, Des Moines County Conservation occasionally allows clay bird shooting during department-sponsored events

such as Hunter Education classes and public range events like the annual Youth Jamboree. In these cases, the existing ranges are set up in such a way that directs shot to areas on the established range thereby minimizing or eliminating those safety and environmental concerns. Furthermore, trained instructors and range officers are present to ensure the course of fire is followed.

Lead exposure can be dangerous

A large number of health issues have been linked to lead exposure. Since most common firearm ammunition contains lead, range users are encouraged to take precautions during and after range use. These include:

- Never handle large quantities of lead without safety equipment
- Never eat or drink while using the range
- Always wash hands with cold soapy water immediately after using the range

A water hydrant is provided between the shelter house and check in building near the 50 yard range. It is available from April to October for this purpose.

Range Regulations

Please review and follow these rules when using the range:

1. All shooters must have their certification card with them. The first person on the range will assume the Range Officer position. He/she is in charge of range commands and appointing a Range Officer when he/she leaves the range. Most importantly, he/she is in charge of safety on the range.
2. All range users and guests must sign in and out on the forms provided inside the range buildings.
3. Shooters shall use only the target frames or reactive targets supplied and approved by the Des Moines County Conservation Director. Shooters must use cardboard or the backing furnished for the target frames. Only paper targets on the frames are allowed; No other targets will be allowed or accepted.
4. All bullets must impact the termination berm. All target frames on the 25 yard, 50 yard, 100 yard, and 300 meter ranges are permanently affixed and shall remain where installed.
5. Shooters must always know their target, use good judgment and be extremely cautious of what may be behind their target. Be aware there are homes and people beyond the shooting range and stray bullets from the range can cause damage to life and property. Shooters must always keep the muzzle of the firearm pointed in a safe direction.
6. All loaded firearms must be pointed downrange at the termination berm.
7. All firearms shall be unloaded with action open until ready to fire.
8. All firing shall be done from the firing line on the 50, 100, and 300 ranges.
9. On the 25 yard range shooters may move forward as a group under the direction of the Range Officer.
10. Only shooters, spotters, and coaches are allowed on the firing line while it is in operation. Spectators are to stay behind the firing line at all times.

11. All barrels should be checked for a bore obstruction before firing. Malfunctioning firearms should not be used. Only legal firearms are to be used.
12. All unsafe acts or situations on a range shall be corrected immediately.
13. Any person may call "CEASE FIRE" at any time they see an unsafe situation or act.
14. Upon the command "CEASE FIRE" all firearms will be unloaded immediately.
15. Eye and ear protection is required during active shooting.
16. Dry firing is permitted on the firing line only.
17. Make sure the correct ammunition for the firearm is being used.
18. Inexperienced shooters must be accompanied by experienced shooters.
19. All shooters should clean their target and firing station when they have completed their firing.
20. When shooters go downrange to change targets and score, the Range Officer must control movement by using standard range commands.
21. Clay pigeon shooting is not allowed on ranges except during Des Moines County Conservation sponsored events.
22. During heavy range usage there will be a 30 minute time limit.
23. Des Moines County Conservation reserves the right to close the shooting range at any time.

General Area Regulations

1. Loud or abusive language will not be permitted.
2. Alcoholic beverages or shooters having immediate prior consumption are prohibited at the shooting range complex.
3. During heavy use vehicles should be carefully parked, permitting all vehicles to exit the range area in a safe manner.
4. Please stay on the walkways.
5. Pick up any trash or debris in the shooting area.

Security and Enforcement

1. Disregard for and failure to adhere to range or general area regulations will automatically and immediately disqualify the offender from using the shooting range indefinitely.
2. Des Moines County Conservation will make every effort to provide safety and security for the shooting range. Des Moines County Conservation will strictly enforce all rules, regulations, policy and procedures.
3. The range is fenced and posted with "Danger No Trespassing Shooting Range" and "Stop Only Certified Shooters May Use Ranges" signs; violators will be prosecuted under Code of Iowa, Section 461A.44, "Prohibited Areas".
4. Individuals found to be intentionally or unintentionally shooting over berms will be prosecuted under Code of Iowa Section 724.30, "Reckless Use of a Firearm".
5. The range will be supervised when in operation at all times.
6. The Des Moines County Conservation Board will determine the penalty or punishment on reported violations other than those covered by public law.



Big Hollow Range Refresher Course Exam

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. If you want to be reminded when your range membership expires, what must you provide?
 - a. Postal address
 - b. Email address
 - c. Phone number

2. You'll have how many days past your expiration date to renew your membership?
 - a. 30
 - b. 60
 - c. 90
 - d. 120

3. Spouses may serve as joint cardholders for family memberships as long as...
 - a. both spouses have concealed carry permits
 - b. both spouses attend the range certification course
 - c. one spouse attends the range certification course

4. Range members may bring _____ guest(s) to the range per visit.
 - a. no
 - b. one
 - c. multiple

5. Only _____ may use the ranges on their own without having taken the certification course.
 - a. Law enforcement officers
 - b. Military reservists
 - c. Retired Military personnel
 - d. Active duty military personnel

6. Special approval is required for a group to reserve the 25 and 50 yard ranges together.

True False

7. Who must check in/out of the ranges each time they're used?
 - a. Everyone that uses the range, including guests and family members
 - b. Just the cardholder but not their guests
 - c. Nobody
 - d. Only guests of certified members

8. Why is clay pigeon shooting not allowed at Big Hollow except during department-sponsored events? (check all that apply)
 - Environmental concerns including soil and water pollution
 - There is no demand for shotgun shooting areas
 - Safety issues within the necessary fall zone

9. To minimize health risks posed by lead exposure, range users should do what after using the range?
 - a. Wash hands with WARM soapy water
 - b. Wash hands with COLD soapy water
 - c. Sanitize hands with an alcohol-based sanitizer

10. How often do you estimate you visit the shooting range annually?
 - a. 0-5 times/year
 - b. 5-10 times/year
 - c. More than 10 times/year
 - d. More than 20 times/year