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SPECIAL REPORT: GUNS AT WORK

Data lacking on U.S. concealed-carry laws

Probe shows those with guns at work may shoot, be shot.

By Lynn Hulsey
Staff Writer

Concealed-carry advocates say laws allowing permit-holders to keep guns close at hand serve as a crime deterrent.

Opponents say just the opposite.

So which side is right? While there are strong opinions on both sides of that question, definitive data is lacking to prove either point.

“The numbers are pretty low in how many of (CCW holders) have actually used their concealed weapon to save themselves from a crime,” said Grant Neeley, associate professor and chairman of the political science department at the University of Dayton.

But, he added, the law hasn’t created the “Wild West effect” that opponents warned about either.

Part of the problem in many states, including Ohio, is that the CCW licensee list is not made public, said Jennifer Thorn, executive director of the Ohio Coalition Against Gun Violence.

Ohio doesn’t even keep a tally of how many people have CCW licenses, though there is data on how many licenses are approved or rejected each year.

Anecdotally, CCW holders



Beginning March 21, companies will no longer be able to ban people with concealed-carry permits from bringing handguns into company parking lots. The guns must remain stored inside a locked car. LYNN HULSEY / STAFF

have been on both sides of the law – acting to thwart a shooter and being the shooter, an examination by this newspaper found.

Jim Irvine, chairman of the pro-gun rights Buckeye Firearms Association, argues that private citizens with guns can and do thwart mass shootings.

He cited a 1998 incident in Edinboro, Pa., where student Andrew Jerome Wurst killed a man and wounded three other people before being stopped by a man with a shotgun.

Another incident, in 2014, involved a doctor at Mercy-Fitzgerald Hospital in Delaware County, Pa.,



Grant Neeley, University of Dayton associate professor and chair of the political science department, hasn’t seen the “Wild West” effect.

who wounded psychiatric patient Richard Plotts after the patient fatally shot his caseworker and injured the doctor.

“Part of the reason you don’t have these huge big killings where a license holder saves the day is because it doesn’t become a huge killing,” Irvine said. “The bottom line is waiting for law enforcement will always result in a higher body count when you look collectively at the stuff.”

But of the eight shootings Irvine cited as examples of armed private citizens intervening, two of the shooters were stopped by police and one by an off-duty police officer, rather than private citizens.



State Rep. Niraj Antani, R-Miamisburg, who voted for the bill, said the law protects the rights of both gun owners and property owners. CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

Another example on the Buckeye Firearms Association website is a 2009 robbery of an Akron pizza parlor, and in that case the owner of the business shot and killed an armed intruder.

The Violence Policy Center, which supports stronger gun regulations, says 921 people – including 17 law enforcement officers – have been killed by concealed-carry permit holders, a number disputed by gun rights groups.

The center also says 31 mass shootings have been committed by CCW holders, including the 2010 shooting at a Connecticut beer distributorship that resulted in the deaths of nine people, including the shooter.

Thorne, whose group opposes increasing access to weapons, says in expanding the CCW law to allow holders to keep guns locked in cars parked at their workplace, Ohio lawmakers ignored data showing that increased access to guns leads to increased gun violence.

“Unfortunately the Ohio Legislature chose to side with the corporate gun lobby over the concerns of countless gun violence prevention advocates, business leaders, law enforcement, and other kinds of public health advocates and community leaders,” Thorne said.

State Rep. Niraj Antani, R-Miamisburg, who voted for the bill, said it protects the rights of both gun owners and property owners.

“This bill in general was a very pro-Second Amendment bill,” he said. “The vast majority of CCW holders are good citizens and law-abiding.”

Butler County Sheriff Richard K. Jones said having a concealed-carry license doesn’t mean holders don’t get angry or get in fights.

But the law has worked well in the state and preserves the right of law-abiding citizens to protect themselves, he said.

“We’re targets. People come up, try to rob you, try to shoot you,” Jones said. “So why wouldn’t you have the right to defend yourself?”

SPECIAL REPORT GUNS AT WORK

Wright-Patt employees can’t take guns to work

Federal employers exempt from state law, official says.

By Lynn Hulsey
Staff Writer

Workers at the state’s largest single-site employer, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, won’t be allowed to bring their handguns to work even though a new state law says employees with concealed-carry permits can keep their guns in locked cars on company property.

“Wright-Patterson AFB is an exclusive federal jurisdiction and therefore CCW holders are not authorized to carry privately owned weapons on base,” said Daryl Mayer, media operations sections chief at the base, which employs about 27,000 people.

Other federal employers, such as the U.S. Postal Service, also are exempt from



Employees at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio’s largest single-site employer, won’t be allowed to take handguns to work despite an Ohio law that takes effect March 21, because the base is under federal jurisdiction.

a state law that drew deep objections from business leaders.

In the legislation, the Ohio

General Assembly in December expanded the CCW law to overrule private employer’s “no-guns” policies. The law,

which takes effect March 21, does not require businesses to let employees bring guns inside their buildings.

Federal employers don’t have to follow the law, however.

“This law does not apply to buildings or parking lots owned or controlled by the Postal Service, where possession or storage of firearms is not permitted,” said David Van Allen, spokesman for the Postal Service’s northern Ohio and Ohio Valley districts.

“The Postal Service regulation was held to be constitutional by a federal appeals court, which found that the prohibition did not violate the Second Amendment,” Van Allen said.

In 2015 the 10th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Denver overturned a lower court ruling that would have allowed guns in private cars on postal service property.

Employees and others also cannot bring their guns to the federal court building in Dayton, said U.S. District Court Judge Walter H. Rice.

“Federal installations are not bound by the state law except in certain situations which I don’t think are relevant,” Rice said. “My opinion is that it is not applicable to federal facilities unless the federal installation decides to adopt that portion of the law. What I said applies to the parking lot as well.”

Rice said Ohio’s expansion of open carry and concealed-carry laws concern him.

“I think open carry (and concealed-carry) laws, with all due deference to the Second Amendment, which I support...are dangerous to any community because of the epidemic of mental health issues throughout this country,” he said. “Putting guns in the hands of mentally incompetent people is a recipe for disaster.”

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SPECIAL REPORT: GUNS AT WORK

What do area residents think of the new Ohio law?

On March 21 a new Ohio law takes effect allowing concealed-carry permit-holders to bring their handguns to work and store them inside their locked car in the company parking lot. We asked area residents what they think of the new law.

Judith Finley, Dayton

“I don’t think that’s good. We’ve had how many incidents across the United States of people bringing guns to work and unfortunately shooting up the place? I know unfortunately we have to have a concealed carry permit. It’s OK. I don’t have a problem with that. I have a problem that we have too many people that we work with and walking around in the community that are unbalanced.”



said the laws for access need to be looked at just like the laws for being incarcerated ought to be looked at. I don’t have a problem with it at all (bringing gun to work locked in car). With what is going on in this state, let alone in the country and the state, people are unhappy generally. And the law needs to be changed.”

John Allen, Champaign County

“I think it’s a great idea. I think anybody should be able to protect their self at all times at all costs because you never know when somebody’s going to act stupid and you should be able to protect yourself. I don’t agree with carrying it into the work place because you’re there to work. You’re on somebody else’s property, that’s their



Carol Eason, Dayton

“On my job I’m responsible for the staff, the visitors, the inmates, the building and everything in between. So I’ve dealt with it all and like I



belief. But in your vehicle, and your home, your property, yeah, I’m behind it 100 percent.”

Mary Carpenter, Fairfield

“I think that’s fine. If you go through the classes and you get your concealed carry license then you should be able to carry.”

Colin Shanahan, University of Dayton student from Buffalo, N.Y.

“I’ve always preferred more gun control to less gun control just in general because I feel a bit more safe. But I can understand their point



of view as well. If you’ve got a gun for self-defense then you want to have it nearby. But I would personally be against it.”

Domenic Nicholas, University of Dayton student from Cleveland

“Being someone that’s usually been a proponent for gun control I’ve always seen it better to have a gun concealed in the home. It seems kind of crazy to me that we’re going to be bringing our guns to the workplace and leaving them in our car. It seems a little bit extreme to me.”

Anthony Hubbard, Dayton

“I think it’s going to backfire. You know people are full of fear these days. You’re looking at perspectives, and things like that they may not agree with reality and



then you have these shootings going on. That’s what I see. So I disagree with it.”

Marlo Carr, Dayton

“I support concealed weapon permitting, a liberal form of that. But there are restrictions to everything. You can’t do what you want to do all the time. I hate to say it really but I’d almost fall on the business side of that. I think it is their property and if they don’t want to have guns on their property then they have just as much of a right to not have guns on their property as people have to carry the guns.”



Wally Mohler, Clayton

“I think it’s a great idea. I’m not sure how much good they’ll do locked up in the trunk of a car in case of an incident. But I think to expand the carry law is fine.”



Dana Silvey, Miami Twp.

“I think it’s a good idea. Well, an even better idea would be being able to have it in the building. I think we should be able to protect ourselves. And if you’re a law-abiding citizen with a permit I don’t see why not.”

Joan Lyons-Spon, Cincinnati

“I’m anti-gun big time. So when you want to go postal do you think you’ll have enough time to calm down to go get your gun and then you won’t shoot people? Nah. Come on people. Guns and folks and anger and mental illness just do not mix.”

By Lynn Hulsey, Staff Writer.

Staff writer Jeff Guerini contributed to this report

COMPLETE COVERAGE
The Dayton Daily News covers all sides of the issue of guns in America. For more stories on this topic, go to MyDaytonDailyNews.com.