

Country Home Security

For many Americans, one of the big goals in their lives is to reach the point when they can move out of the city and begin to enjoy country living. It may be farm/ranch property, or just a few acres in the country where they can enjoy the quiet and solitude. One thing to keep in mind, however, is that personal defense is just as important in the country as it is in the city, if not more so.. That said, it will take on different forms in the new environment, and it is important to modify your personal defense plan to accommodate these changes.

As a general rule, violent crime occurs less often in the country than in the city. Yet, this is often offset by significantly slower law enforcement response times in rural settings, as rural law enforcement simply has a larger physical area to cover. In fact, the average response time may be three to four times longer than what you experienced while living in the city. This will likely increase the importance of having a safe room in which a person can ride out the wait for help.



The country dweller may also have to deal with criminal attacks at greater distances than one would expect in the city. Much of today's defensive training is focused on dealing with a threat at ten yards, or less. However, in the country you may have to shoot from 25 to 50 yards, or even farther. This concern will definitely affect your choice of defensive handgun. And, it will increase the importance of practicing with that handgun at these longer ranges.

Hand in hand with the greater distances of engagement is the increased value of keeping a rifle or shotgun handy. If it is a shotgun that is chosen, it is equally important that the shotgun have iron sights and be sighted in for slug loads in order to deal with those greater distances.

Recently, I stepped out for my morning walk in time to see that two coyotes were after my neighbor's sheep. That carbine that stays at my back door was close at hand and the sheep marauders were soon history. Country dwellers learn to take care of these kinds of problems themselves. In the time it would have taken the county animal control officer to arrive on the scene, quite a bit of valuable livestock could have been killed.

This brings up another personal-defense issue that country folks have to deal with, and that is wild animals. This may involve poisonous snakes, possibly rabid animals (skunks, raccoons, coyotes) or even larger critters like mountain lions and bears. To begin with, the new country dweller should become familiar with the wild animals that inhabit his or her area. He or she should understand what their normal behavior is and also be able to recognize when those critters are acting strangely. Learning to recognize behaviors associated with a rabies infection is critical.

The types of wild animals found in a particular area will also have an effect on what kind of firearms the rural resident keeps on hand. In this area, the mountain lion is the largest wild animal that can be of concern to humans. For this reason, I am comfortable keeping several .223 Rem. carbines in handy locations. If I were living in an area that had a large bear

population—especially grizzlies—larger, more-powerful rifles would be indicated. And I am told that a semi-automatic shotgun loaded with slugs is also good bear medicine.

One of the smartest elements of any personal-defense plan is to get to know the neighbors. The more you know about those around you, their habits and what they drive, the easier it is to spot strangers and strange vehicles in the area. Many folks in rural neighborhoods have established e-mail chains or social media groups so they can keep each other posted on strangers, odd happenings and distempered critters in their area. This is just another form of the age-old neighborhood watch programs found in the city and suburbs.

A good outdoor-lighting system is critical to home defense. You need to be able to see



what is going on around you and to positively identify a threat before taking appropriate defensive action. Your choice can include dusk to dawn lighting or motion activated lighting. Both have their advantages. You must decide which alternative is the best for your situation.

It is also just as important to keep external doors locked in the country as well as in the city. In the country, we'll extend that to

the various external gates that are on the property. The fact that a crook can't drive onto your property may be just what it takes to convince him or her to go somewhere else. But, be advised that it is often customary to exchange gate keys with your neighbors. It allows rural residents to recover wandering livestock and, more importantly, to come to each other's aid if needed. Combination and personal code locks allow you to add and delete authorized users easily and immediately.

I actually don't know of any defensive trainers who offer classes that address the specific concerns of rural dwellers, Grant Cunningham has published a book that directly addresses personal defense for country folks. "Protecting Your Homestead" is available online at **GrantCunningham.com** and is well-worth reading and studying. Cunningham's approach to defensive training is common-sense.

Country living just can't be beat. However, the remote locations and quiet settings shouldn't lull someone into a false sense of security. Some of the issues are different, but our goals are just the same. We protect ourselves and our family by being well-trained, aware of our surroundings, properly alert and willing to do what we can to always make sure the bad guys lose.

Protect yourself and your family by signing up for a Concealed Carry or other Personal Protection class from *Advantage*. You'll learn more tips like these, how to protect yourself and essential protection techniques. You will learn how to use your tools to protect yourself and your loved ones. More importantly, you'll be taught how to hopefully never need to use these tools! Learn more about available classes online at www.AdvantageFET.com.