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IOWA SHOOTING NEWS

MAGAZINE CLIPS



By Michael Ware

I'm sitting here in the dark typing on my laptop. The "Blizzard of 2013" is underway and we haven't had power for several hours. We all stay so busy building weapons and customizing in the shop, I rarely have much time to reflect. That hasn't been the case for quite some time this very early morning. My mind drifted to a bur I occasionally get stuck under my saddle. The firearms industry has too many myths. I ended up counting dozens that topped my list as important, but maybe we could knock off just a few as a start.

Weapon clips. This is one the most commonly misused or misunderstood words in our sphere of interest. I'm not sure if this is a Hollywood thing, whether this was adopted from common use weapons of yesteryear, or whether we just soaked it up via osmosis. Regardless, the term "clip" has managed to permeate our firearms circles and I'll need your help to halt this aggression. There certainly have been clips that are properly used and correctly named as such for use in various firearms. While most have been used to load a magazine, such as a detachable mag or internal box mag, most all simply hold ammunition in a fashion so they can be used to quickly load a magazine. The term "stripper clip" comes to mind as a very common one. Granted there are a couple of clips that actually load as an assembly, if you will, within a firearm, but 99% of the rest are magazines. I can assure you there are no such things as "clips" for your Ruger 10/22, your buddy's Glock 22, or your neighbor's AK47. They are magazines, or "mags" for short if you prefer.

Silencers. This little ditty is used incorrectly even by the ATF on their official forms. CCA holds a firearms manufacturing license and we have a Special Occupational Tax Stamp, also known as an "SOT" to manufacture and deal in weapons such as this. Incorrectly referred to as "Class III" firearms by nearly everyone in America, I'm not going to give in and get used to this. Instead a bit of education will benefit us all.

If there were ever something as nifty as a silencer, you can bet your patootie I'd be buying it. However, unless we figure out a way to negate basic physics, I won't plan on filling out that form. There are two primary noises we're concerned with in terms of weapon sound suppression. First we have the sound

of powder rapidly changing state from solid nearly instantly to gas. This is quite a boom, but we manage to tame it a bit with a suppressor. "Cans," which is the slang term for suppressors, manage to act just like a car muffler. They allow gas to expand and rapidly cool, thus reducing the noise associated with a firing weapon. Unfortunately when the projectile exists the muzzle and exterior ballistics are applied, the vast majority of projectiles are moving faster than the speed of sound. Just like a jet, breaking the sound barrier comes with a boom. Modern suppressors can tame the blast from a firing weapon, but negating the sonic crack of speedy bullets has yet to be wrangled. Thus, they silence nothing and aren't "silencers" in any sense of the word. The film industry would have you thinking otherwise, but suppressors are still quite loud, most of which only tame the decibel level to that of a lawn mower.

Class III actually refers to the classification of a FFL's tax computation on an ATF Form 5630.7. Class III happens to designate a dealer of machine guns or NFA (National Firearm Act) weapons. CCA is a class II and falls under the 'manufacturer' of NFA items category. We can drop the "Class III" stuff and just refer to those items as "NFA" weapons, as they fall correctly under that entire umbrella National Firearms Act weapons.

Iowa could use some brushing up on this considering so many of our neighboring states allow various NFA weapons while Iowa currently does not. Thomas Paine wrote: "A long habit of not thinking a thing wrong, gives it a superficial appearance of being right." Thus, it is incumbent on us all to stay sharp and help one another on our subject matter. Shoot straight and shoot often friends. If you miss, don't blame it on the gun... :) 🍻



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