

Armed Citizens Are Not the Answer to Mass Shootings

There are several examples of mass shootings where people with concealed handguns were present and yet unable or unwilling to intervene to stop the shooter or prevent loss of life. In some cases, the permit holder was seriously injured or killed.

RANCHO-TEHAMA MASS SHOOTING, NOVEMBER 14, 2017

A concealed carry permit holder attempted to intervene in a shooting rampage in Northern California that took the lives of seven people and left eight others injured, including seven children. The shooter, Kevin Neal, was armed with a homemade AR-15 assault rifle when he fired eight rounds into a Ford truck occupied by a mother and her son. The mother drew her handgun but was unable to fire before the shooter drove away. She was seriously injured. The shooter was later killed by police.

WALMART, THORNTON, COLORADO, NOVEMBER 1, 2017

When a gunman opened fire at a Walmart in Colorado, several shoppers pulled out handguns. Police say that the response of the armed shoppers only delayed the police investigation as their actions complicated the process of identifying the shooter on surveillance video. It took authorities more than five hours to correctly identify the suspect, Scott Ostrem, because police had to follow each individual with a firearm in the surveillance video until the person could be eliminated as a suspect.

INLAND REGIONAL CENTER, SAN BERNARDINO, CALIFORNIA, DECEMBER 2, 2015

Syed Farook and Tashfeen Malik killed 14 people and wounded 21 more. They were armed with two AR-type assault rifles. Glenn Willwirth owns a business across the street from scene of the shooting and grabbed his .45 caliber handgun and walked toward the Center when told there was an active shooter. Willwirth told *CNN* that he was able to target the shooters but chose not to fire because of the chaos. In a separate interview with the *Boston Herald* he explained his actions: "I wasn't going to travel onto their property to get involved — just because it's not my property — but I went up to the edge of it and that was as close as I really needed to be getting to the whole situation. If they came at me it would have been a different story."

UMPQUA COMMUNITY COLLEGE, UMPQUA, OREGON, OCTOBER 1, 2015

Chris Harper-Mercer killed nine and wounded another nine. He killed himself after exchanging gunfire with police. Army veteran John Parker was among the UCC students with concealed weapons permits and he had his gun with him when the shooting occurred. Parker was in another building near the shooting with some other students who also were armed. A college employee talked them out of trying to use their guns to save others. "If we would have run across the field, we would have been targets," Parker said. "We made a good choice at the time."

CICI'S PIZZA, LAS VEGAS, NEVADA, JUNE 8, 2014

Jerad and Amanda Miller executed two Las Vegas police officers at a CiCi's Pizza and then entered a Wal-Mart where they fired into the air and ordered everyone to leave. Permit holder Joseph Robert Wilcox was preparing to "end it" when Amanda Miller shot and killed Wilcox from behind. The couple subsequently killed themselves.

SAFEWAY PARKING LOT, TUCSON, ARIZONA, JANUARY 8, 2011

Jared Loughner killed six people and wounded 13 more, including Arizona Representative Gabby Giffords. He used a semiautomatic Glock pistol equipped with high-capacity ammunition magazines. A witness, Joe Zamudio, was carrying his handgun and attempted to intervene. As he rounded a corner moving toward the scene of the shooting he saw a man holding a gun and assumed he was the shooter. Zamudio yelled for the man to drop the

gun. It turned out that the man with the gun was not the shooter but rather someone who had wrested Loughner's gun away from him. Zamudio admitted he was very lucky that he didn't shoot the wrong person.

ABB, INC., ST LOUIS, MISSOURI, JANUARY 7, 2010

Timothy Hendron killed three co-workers and wounded five more. He was armed with a Romarm AK-47 assault rifle, a shotgun, and a .40 pistol. According to the police report, one victim, Stephen Sharp II, retrieved his .380 pistol from his truck and fired six shots at the gunman. In response, the gunman said, "I'm going to get you, you shot at me, I'm going to get you!" Sharp was seriously wounded.

THE REALITY ABOUT CONCEALED HANDGUN PERMIT HOLDERS AND MASS SHOOTINGS

While it is extremely rare for a private citizen to successfully intervene in a mass shooting, Violence Policy Center research shows that since 2007, individuals with concealed handgun permits have *committed* at least 31 mass shootings, resulting in the deaths of 147 innocent victims. For more information, visit the Violence Policy Center's *Concealed Carry Killers* project at concealedcarrykillers.org.