

**KNOWLTON TOWNSHIP  
COUNTY OF WARREN  
ORDINANCE 25-08**

**AN ORDINANCE REGULATING COMMERCIAL SHOOTING RANGES WITHIN  
THE TOWNSHIP OF KNOWLTON**

**WHEREAS**, the Township of Knowlton desires to regulate the establishment and operation of commercial shooting ranges due to their potential noise impacts and safety concerns; and

**WHEREAS**, commercial shooting ranges merit careful review to minimize adverse effects on adjoining properties; and

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED**, by the Township Committee of the Township of Knowlton, in the County of Warren and State of New Jersey, as follows:

**SECTION 1.** Section 11-3 of the Code, entitled “Definitions and word usage” shall be amended by adding the following definition:

**COMMERCIAL SHOOTING RANGE**

Any place designed, used or intended to be used for the discharge of a rifle, pistol, shotgun or other firearm defined in N.J.S.A. 2C:39-1f for commercial purposes. This shall include the following: target range, rifle range, trap shoot, trap skeet range, allied shooting ranges, ranges operated by gun clubs or hunting clubs where firearms are discharged.

This definition does not include the following:

- A. Discharge of firearms by any law enforcement officer of any municipal, county or state or federal government or any representative of the Division of Fish and Wildlife, the Department of Environmental Protection, State of New Jersey, while in the performance of their official duties.
- B. Discharge of firearms on commercial farms duly recognized by the Warren County Agricultural Development Board where the intended target is an animal that is detrimental to the farm’s crops or property.
- C. Discharge of firearms by any person in protection of himself/herself, members of his/her family, or his/her guests or in protection of his/her property.
- D. Discharge of firearms by a duly licensed hunter, so long as he/she is in full compliance with all laws, rules and regulations governing hunting in the State of New Jersey.
- E. Discharge of firearms by a person to whom has been issued a permit by an agency of the State of New Jersey permitting the killing of a bird, animal, vermin or pest with the type of firearm permitted thereby, so long as he/she is in full compliance with all laws,

rules and regulations applicable to such permit holder. This shall include any lease or rental of land to gun clubs for hunting purposes.

F. Target practice on private property by the occupants and limited number of invitees of such property for non-commercial purposes.

**SECTION 2.** Section 11-318 of the Code, regarding conditional uses in the Commercial (C-2) Zone is hereby amended as follows by adding Subsection (I), entitled “Shooting Ranges,” as follows:

- I. Commercial Shooting Ranges. Indoor commercial shooting ranges are permitted within the C-2 Zone of the Township of Knowlton *only*, subject to the following conditions. Outdoor commercial shooting ranges shall be strictly prohibited. Uses that are not included in the definition of “Commercial Shooting Ranges” as set forth in Section 11-3 shall not be regulated or otherwise prohibited by this Section. The operation of commercial shooting ranges shall be prohibited in all other zones of the Township of Knowlton.
  - a. Issuance of site plan approval by the Township Land Use Board
  - b. Setbacks.
    - i. Structures associated with shooting ranges shall be located at least 300 feet from all property lines and public rights-of-way.
    - ii. The setbacks of all structures not used for shooting ranges shall comply with the setbacks for principal structures in the districts in which they are located.
  - c. Permanent structures on properties used as shooting ranges shall be limited to those customarily associated with the principal use of the property as a commercial shooting range.
  - d. Outdoor discharging of firearms shall not be permitted as part of an indoor Commercial shooting range.
  - e. Design. Commercial shooting ranges shall be constructed to eliminate danger to persons or property from flying projectiles. The area between the firing point and target shall be baffled, fenced, or otherwise shielded so that the fired projectiles cannot escape the range area. Safety design (including backstops) should be in accordance with accepted standards and practices. Specifically, shooting ranges shall be designed by a licensed professional architect or engineer in compliance with the standards listed in the current National Rifle Association (NRA) “The Range Manual, A Guide to Planning and Construction”.
  - f. Environmental Protection. Commercial shooting ranges shall be designed such that they are in compliance with the Best Management Practices of the current edition of the United States Environmental Protection Agency’s Best Management Practices for Lead at Outdoor Shooting Ranges. Ranges shall be designed to prevent contamination of any waterway, wetland or floodplain in accordance with applicable local, state, and federal regulations.
  - g. Safety Plan. A safety plan shall be provided that complies with the requirements of the NRA current edition of, “The Range Manual, A Guide to Planning and Construction.”
  - h. The minimum lot size shall be 10 acres.

- i. Hours of operation. Commercial Shooting ranges shall be permitted to operate between the hours of 9:00 am and 7:00 pm.
- j. Commercial Shooting ranges shall obtain an annual permit in compliance with Code Chapter 151.

**SECTION 3.** All ordinances or parts of ordinances in conflict or inconsistent with any part of this Ordinance are hereby repealed to the extent that they are in conflict or inconsistent.

**SECTION 4.** If any section, provision, or part of provision of this Ordinance shall be held to be unenforceable or invalid by any court, such holding shall not affect the validity of this Ordinance, or any part thereof, other than the part so held unenforceable or invalid.

**SECTION 5.** This Ordinance shall take effect after passage and publication in the manner provided by law.

Introduction : November 10, 2025

Motion: Shipps

Second: Van Horn

AIF: Baley, Bates, Mazza, Shipps, Van Horn

Adoption: December 8, 2025

Motion: Baley

Second: Shipps

Roll Call: Baley—yes, Bates—yes, Mazza—yes, Shipps—yes, Van Horn—yes

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Kristin Shipps, RMC