

New in this version: The proportion of households with firearms in or around the home that store firearms locked and unloaded has been updated. This analysis now looks at **all Vermont households with a firearm**.

The proportion of those households who store firearms **locked and unloaded** is 49%.

Why is safe storage important?

Safe storage of firearms is important because firearms are lethal. Safe storage of firearms can reduce the risk of suicide by separating at-risk individuals from easy access to lethal means. In Vermont, firearm deaths are mostly due to suicide (91%, avg 67 per year). Safe storage helps put time and space between access to a firearm and may help reduce death for those in crisis.

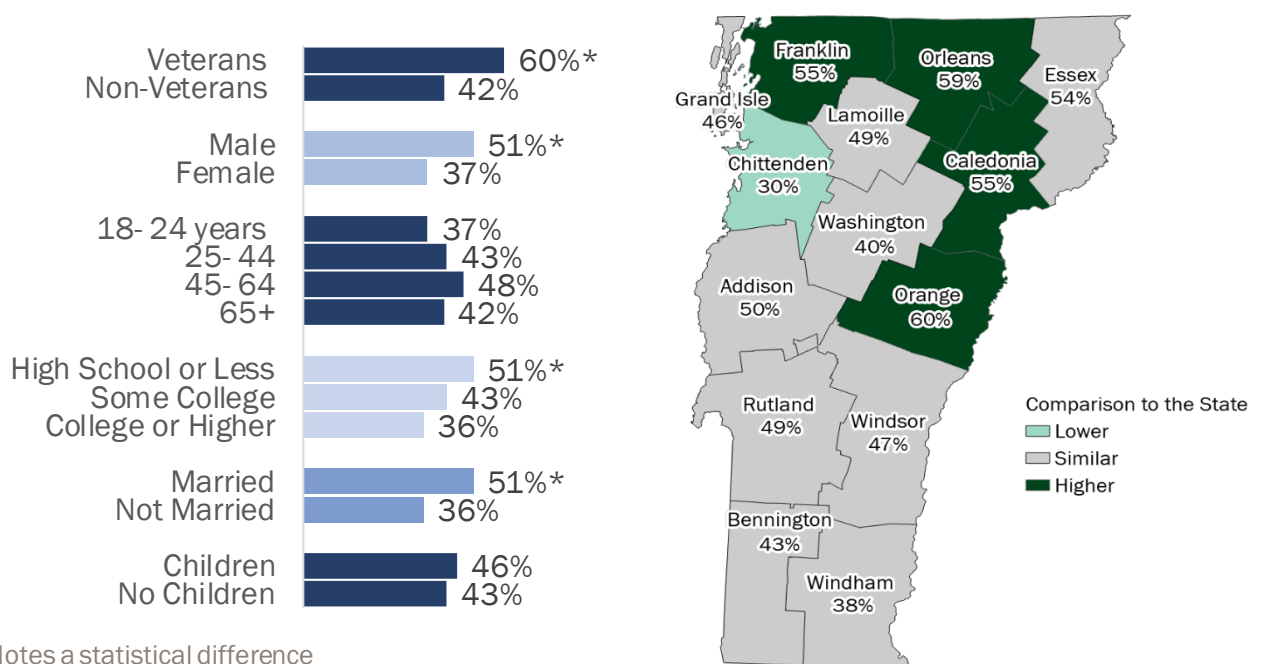
Who is more likely to store a firearm in their home?

Based on data from 2020, there are a few populations that are more likely to store a firearm in or around their home. Veterans are nearly 1.5 times more likely to have a firearm compared to non-veterans (60% vs. 42%). Residents living in Caledonia, Franklin, Orange, and Orleans County are also significantly more likely to have a firearm (55%, 55%, 60%, and 59% vs. state rate 44%). Adults with a high school education or less, who are male, and have married are also significantly more likely to have a firearm in the home.

KEY POINTS

- In Vermont, 44% of all households store at least one firearm in or around the home, and half of those households store them locked and unloaded (49%).

Prevalence of Firearms in or Around the Home



Best Practices for Safe Firearm Storage¹



Store **unloaded** firearms in a **locked** location inaccessible to children and unauthorized users, such as a safe.



Lock firearms with a device that requires a key or combination to access or fire it.



Store ammunition in a **locked** location separate from firearms.

Who is practicing safe storage?

Evidence shows that storing firearms unloaded, separate from ammunition, and in a locked place (or secured with a safety device) reduces the risk of attempting suicide among adolescents.² Research also suggests that actively providing safety devices leads to better safe storage practices than counseling alone or giving people money or discounts to buy safety devices themselves.² Half of households in Vermont store their firearm(s) safely – both locked and unloaded (49%). The remaining 51% of households in Vermont store at least one firearm loaded and/or unlocked. Some populations that are significantly less likely to practice safe storage include veterans, men, and households without children in the home (38%, 44%, 44% store their firearm(s) locked and unloaded). People age 45 to 64 are significantly less likely than adults with a firearm age 25 to 44 to store their firearm(s) locked and unloaded. There are no significant differences in the rate of households that store firearms safely by education or marital status. For more data on firearm storage practices, see the [2019-2020 BRFSS report](#).

References:

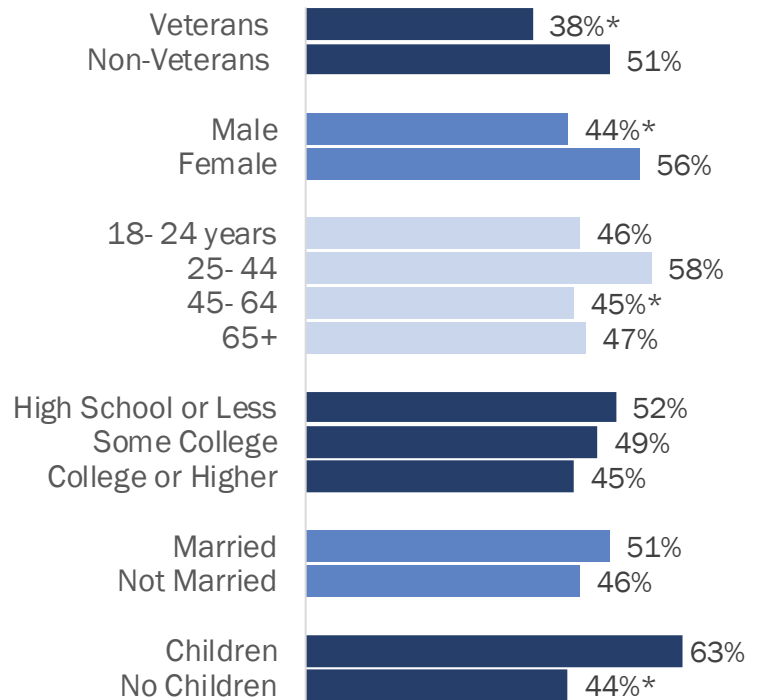
1. Project Child Safe, [Safe Firearm Storage](#).
2. [Rural Health Policy Brief](#)

For more information about the data: Caitlin Quinn, Caitlin.Quinn@vermont.gov

For more information on firearm storage safety: www.healthvermont.gov/firearm-safety

For more data on firearm and suicide in Vermont, visit: <https://www.healthvermont.gov/health-statistics-vital-records/surveillance-reporting-topic/injuries>

Prevalence of Households with Firearms that Store them Locked and Unloaded.



*Notes a statistical difference

Source: BRFSS, 2020