

Guns Required in Every Household in Kennesaw, Georgia



Summary: A town in Georgia has a 30-year-old law that requires every household to own at least one firearm.

In one town in Georgia, having a gun is a requirement by law. The mayor told [CNN](#) that this decision was one of public safety.

"If you're going to commit a crime in Kennesaw and you're the criminal -- are you going to take a chance that that homeowner is a law-abiding citizen?" Kennesaw Mayor Derek Easterling said to CNN.

Since the school shooting in Parkland, Florida, the nation has been involved in a heated discussion about gun control, but for Kennesaw, gun ownership is technically a way of life.

CNN spoke with town native Wayne Arnold, who owns multiple guns include a AR-15-style rifle. He said that his guns gave him the ability to protect himself.

"It gives me the ability to protect myself as opposed to being somewhere where you weren't allowed to have a firearm or it was frowned upon," said Arnold.

The law, which was enacted in 1982, requires all households to own a firearm, but the local police said that they do not actually enforce the legislation. Lieutenant Craig Graydon said that it was originally passed as a "crime deterrent" and also as a political statement.

"It was also more or less a political statement because the city of Morton Grove, Illinois, passed a city ordinance banning handguns from their city limits," Graydon told CNN.

Kennesaw has a population of 33,000. Thirty years ago, when the gun law was passed, it was a small town with only a few thousand residents.

According to CNN, the gun law appears to have deterred crime, although there is no clear evidence that proves this or otherwise.

In the last six years, there has been only one murder and the crime rate is below 2%. City officials told CNN that one reason the community is so safe is because the local government has a good relationship with those who live in the town.

"We can't say that just that gun law contributes x number of percent to why we have a low crime rate. It may be part of it, but it needs to be looked at from a whole picture," said Graydon. "Don't just look at the ordinance."

While mandatory gun ownership may work for Kennesaw, gun ownership in other parts of the country is a hot topic after the Valentine's Day massacre at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida. On that day, a 19-year-old gunman entered his former high school, pulled the fire alarm, and shot and killed 17 students and staff.

The Parkland shooting seemed to be a tipping point for the country. Students who survived the violence campaigned to change gun laws, and their continuing efforts appear to be working. This month, Dick's Sporting Goods and Wal-Mart agreed to raise their minimum gun buying age; and Congress announced a bill that will increase school safety through government-funded trainings.

- [Bipartisan School Safety Bill Passed After Parkland Shooting](#)
- [FBI Warned Twice about Parkland, Florida Shooter](#)

What do you think of Kennesaw's gun law? Let us know in the comments below.

