Electric Trap Machines and Safety

Electric trap machines have proven to be a great asset to both our state and county programs. In fact, many county programs began using electric machines to facility local trainings and practices long before they were introduced on the state level. However, these machines do pose some risk of injury if not handle carefully and respected by all on the range.

1) Trap machines should only be operated by persons that have been trained and are familiar with the equipment. Second guessing how a machine works or how to load it without proper instruction is an accident waiting to happen. Take time to familiarize everyone on the range regarding how your machine operates.

2) Do not remove any safety devises that are designed to warm people to the operational path of the throwing arm.

3) The SAFE Development Committee recommends that only adults be responsible for loading and making adjustments to a machine.

4) Only approach an electric machine from behind. A barrier should always be installed between the shooter and machine to protect them from broken targets or possible broken springs or other parts from the machine.

5) When loading or unloading a machine, turn off all movement of the machine, turn off the power and release the throwing arm. The power source should be disconnected or the cables removed from the battery. Electric Trap machines are controlled by a micro-switch that times the cocking and release of the throwing arm. Even if the machine is turned off, as long as power is still supplied, there is a chance that the machine could cock and the throwing arm could be release due to a bad micro-switch. Don't trust the off switch. Your hands, arm, or face are not worth the risk.

6) When a machine becomes jammed, follow the same procedures for loading an unloading a machine. Make sure that the machine is off, the cocking arm released and the power source disconnected before performing any maintenance.

7) Inspect machines for any broken or damaged parts prior to each use.