



City of Cambridge Police Department

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Robert C. Haas
Police Commissioner

Robert W. Healy
City Manager

October 11, 2011

Robert W. Healy
City Manager

Re: Council Order No. 1 dated September 19, 2011

Dear Sir:

As requested I am responding to the above council order regarding regulations around the sale of knives and BB guns.

The sale of knives and BB guns in the City of Cambridge are regulated by Mass. General Laws. With respect to the sale of knives, it is unlawful to sell or exposes for sale an instrument or weapon of the kind usually known as a dirk knife, a switch knife or any knife having an automatic spring release device by which the blade is released from the handle. In addition, it is unlawful for the blade to be over one and one-half inches; or a device or case which enables a knife with a locking blade to be drawn at a locked position, any ballistic knife, or any knife with a detachable blade capable of being propelled by any mechanism. These restrictions are outlined in detail in M.G.L c. 269, § 10. There is currently no restriction for the sale of knives that do not fall into these categories.

With respect to BB guns, the regulations for their sale can be found in M.G.L. 269, §12. The only restriction for their sale is that a BB gun cannot be sold to a minor under the age of eighteen. All air guns including those which are handguns are controlled exclusively by Chapter 269, §12A and §12B and do not require an LTC or FID card to posses or purchase. Commonwealth v. Rhodes, 389 Mass. 641 (1983) SJC held that BB pistols are controlled exclusively by c. 269, §12B and not c. 269, §10(a).

If you require additional information please contact me.

Sincerely,

Christopher J. Burke
Superintendent of Support Services