



## FEATURE

### Safety In A Snap

As a firearm owner, you have a full-time responsibility for your firearms. You are solely responsible for the whereabouts of your firearm at all times.

As it has been explained to me, a firearm owner should have their gun “in their hand, on their person or under their complete control” 24 hours a day, seven days a week. If you’re not willing to assume that responsibility, you’re probably not ready for firearm ownership.

Properly controlled, a firearm is benign; no different from any other tool. Without that control it is capable of grave harm.

That’s a lesson I learned the hard way. It nearly cost me my life, but it taught me that there is no “pretty safe” firearm. It is either safe, or it is not.

If it is not safe, it is dangerous. That is not negotiable, deniable or avoidable.

But a career that has taken me across the country has at times posed significant hassles for responsible firearms ownership.

Ultimately, controlling your firearms means keeping them in a safe location. Having learned the hard way, I believe the only safe location for a firearm that’s not in your hand or on your person is a safe.

And I’ve owned more than one. And another truth of firearms ownership is that moving a safe is a major hassle.

Movers and insurance agents don’t like relocating them.

After all, properly securing them means bolting them into the floor or building them into an enclosure that is just not designed to remove your big steel box easily. If it wasn’t secure, it would not be a “safe”.

Several weeks ago, an ingenious answer to my mobile safe challenge was delivered to my door in the form of a very substantial and extremely heavy wooden box a couple average-sized delivery men. When they left, they were average-sized, hot, sweaty and tired delivery men.

Inside the big wooden box was a SnapSafe. And pound-for-pound, it delivered much like any other safe I’ve ever seen.

Honestly, when I first heard about SnapSafe, I thought it was either a gimmick, or an answer in search of a problem.

After opening the box, I realized it was neither.



SnapSafes in one possible utilization. A full-featured safe that can be moved to any location by almost anyone and then assembled means it is no longer impossible to put a safe in a second floor bedroom without destroying stairs, walls or relationships. It was an ingenious application of existing technology to a proven problem- moving a safe.

To best explain the SnapSafe, only three words are needed: Some assembly required.

Yep, the SnapSafe Titan “closet vault” arrived in a set of pre-finished, snap-together (like the name) steel panels. I took two very simple pages of instructions, followed them exactly (OK, I followed them exactly the second time through) and in less than an hour (way less, not counting the first effort), I had a “closet vault” more than capable of keeping firearms under control and valuables protected.

The SnapSafes use a “peg in keyhole” system to lock the walls together. That, in conjunction with some heavy steel latches used to tighten the whole assembly, creates a safe that looks almost identical to most welded safes.

OK, I was skeptical, too. But the Titan unit is rated at 2300 degrees Fahrenheit/one hour fire protection through the use of ceramic fiber blankets and heat expanding gaskets that are supposed to expand twenty times to protect against water and smoke damage. Its walls are eighth-inch steel, and the door is a 7-gauge 3/16-inch steel unit hung with a non-breach seal dead bolt door and a Sargent and Greenleaf digital lock operating three-quarter inch steel locking bolts (eight on the Titan, three on the Little Titan shown in the photo above).

If it sounds like a safe, that’s because it is. The idea wasn’t a bolt of inspiration to someone unfamiliar with safes. SnapSafe’s inventor, Edward J. McGunn, is a third-generation safe builder, totally familiar with the problems associated with moving big honking steel boxes. His answer was to go to work on a modular safe design that was in components light enough to be moved by a couple of people, assembled in the desired location, and, when assembled, provided all the security of any other safe.

SnapSafes are available in two sizes, the Titan a sixty-inch high, seventeen-inch deep safe capable of holding ten long guns or a combination of long guns and handguns and other valuables, or the Little Titan, what I used to call a “shopkeeper’s safe” (it measures 30”Wx24”Hx20”D). Retail prices are \$899 and \$699, respectively. Shipping charges on either unit is \$99.

An option for either unit is the \$39.99 “FireBox” a document box the company calls a “safe within a safe” designed to hold documents and provide an additional hour of fire protection. The fit and finish of every component of these units was very well executed, and the labeling of components could not have been more clear.

I’m very impressed with the quality of the SnapSafe, although I know they’re not going to meet everyone’s needs. If you have needs for a large capacity safe, it’s not what you need to consider. If, however, you don’t have a large number of firearms or are looking for a safe that would be appropriate for a vacation home, hunting camp or any other location where you come and go with firearms, they are definitely worth considering.

Later this week, a look at some more of the new gear that we’ve been checking out.

As always, we’ll keep you posted.

--Jim Shepherd