



OFFICE OF THE  
**DISTRICT ATTORNEY**

COUNTY OF SHASTA

**Stephen S. Carlton**  
*District Attorney*

**DA FILES MISDEMEANOR CRIMINAL STORAGE CHARGE AGAINST  
SUSPECT IN SHOOTING INVOLVING YOUNG CHILD**

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March 23, 2011  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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Redding – The District Attorney has filed a misdemeanor “firearm storage charge” against John Edward Stepp. Specifically, the charge filed identifies a violation of Penal Code section 12035(b)(1), titled Criminal Storage of a Firearm in the First Degree.

On February 13, 2011 in Shingletown, California, the defendant failed to properly store a loaded 9 mm handgun, which allowed a young child access to the firearm. After obtaining the firearm, the child shot himself accidentally through the head.

“This tragic event was 100 percent avoidable,” said District Attorney Steve Carlton.

Carlton continued, noting, “Proper control and storage of a firearm is every gun owner’s responsibility. This responsibility is never absent and must be addressed 24 hours a day.”

Accordingly, Penal Code section 12035(b)(1) codifies language making it a criminal offense where a child obtains access to a loaded firearm and causes great bodily injury to himself when the weapon he or she used was under the control of a person who knew or reasonably should have known that the child was likely to gain access to the firearm. The penalty associated with this offense as a misdemeanor is one year in county jail and a \$1,000 fine.

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