The quicker a gun becomes police evidence after it is purchased from a gun dealer, the greater the chance that the original buyer had criminal plans for it, experts say. A recovery time of three years or less is a red flag to the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives for potential gun trafficking. Since 2004, nearly 70 percent of the guns that traced back to D & R Arms in Portsmouth, Va., were seized within a year of leaving the store — some only days or weeks after they were sold.

HOW TO READ THIS CHART
Each pie wedge represents the total number of crime guns that were traced back to D & R in each year.

GUN DEALER INSPECTIONS
The ATF looks for sudden shifts in trace patterns to detect trafficking. Inspectors may look at how many guns were traced to a specific dealer in the past year that were sold in the previous 12 months.

D & R had very few traces in its first 10 years of business. There was a surge in guns traced to the store in 2004 and 2005.

28 guns in 2009

SOURCE: Post analysis of Virginia Criminal Firearms Clearinghouse