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Washington, April 22 (RHC)-- In the United States last year, in 2020, a surge in gun sales at an all-time was widely attributed to nationwide anxiety due to the pandemic as well as social unrest following the murder of George Floyd by a Minneapolis police officer.

A year later, even with the U.S. making significant strides vaccinating people against COVID-19, gun retailers say firearms sales are on pace to surpass their peak at the height of the global health crisis.

"We expect to sell more guns this April than any other April we've ever had," said Eric Wallace, who owns and manages Adventure Outdoors in Smyrna, Georgia. The 80,000-square-foot store, which opened in 1977, advertises itself as the nation's largest gun store.

One factor driving gun purchases now is the latest round of federal stimulus payments distributed to most Americans, Wallace said, noting that Adventure Outdoors saw a jump in sales in March after the government started sending out the third check. He also thinks a temporary shortage of firearms in 2020 forced some consumers to wait until this year to buy a gun.

Federal background check records and buoyant financial results at one of the nation's largest gun manufacturers supports retailer reports of a flourishing firearms trade. More recently, Wallace also said some customers have cited what they see as the possibility of new gun control rules following a rash of mass shootings this year as the reason to buy a weapon. He said: "Whenever you talk about taking things away, people want it more."

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