

EXPLOSIVE SAFETY GUIDE

The Explosive Safety Guide has been compiled from explosive experts and Federal Documents dealing with explosives. This material is to ensure an understanding of explosives and policies, procedures and methods utilized when handling explosives.

A basic recognition of explosives is pertinent before handling may occur. It is recommended that a certified explosive technician review what explosive compounds are being utilized and their individual chemical make up.

Low explosives (burn rate of less than 3,300 fps) including black powder, smokeless powder, flash powder and chlorates, are EXTREMELY SENSITIVE to heat, shock and friction. Keep in mind powders have been involved with a majority of training accidents.

High explosives (burn rate of more than 3,300 fps) including RDX, PETN, TNT, boosters, plastics, ammonium nitrate, commercial dynamites, gels/slurries are SHOCK AND CAP SENSITIVE.

One must understand and remember Safe Handling procedures to include that low explosives are static sensitive and are susceptible to moisture intrusion. High explosives are shock or cap sensitive and require safe separation. All explosives are sensitive to climatic conditions and STATIC Electricity is always present!

Safe storage requirements must be adhered to. The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives Guideline requirements give Law Enforcement exemptions but still mandate storage recommendations. A copy of their guide will give you the examples and recommendations for proper storage and handling. The private sector is required to be properly licensed and inspected on an annual basis. When dealing with inventories, one must keep a current log and include who is responsible for that inventory. An inventory log must be current and readily available for inspection. This log must include amounts stored as well as amounts signed out and returned upon completion of its use. This inventory log will also help when explosives have completed their shelf life and are to be disposed of by certified explosive technicians. A rule of thumb is replacement annually or sooner when deterioration is observed.

It is recommended no more than two pounds of any explosive substance be kept in inventory for training purposes. Large amounts for training should be at the discretion and preparation of an on site explosive technician.

The training environment is a critical element to ensure the canine is exposed to as many scenarios as are available in your environment. When utilizing explosives one must be aware to avoid cross-scent contamination. Even though it is well known that several explosive compounds in a device are used in today's world of terrorism, training to detect a single compound is the priority. Storage in non-static producing containers such as Tupperware, glass Ball jars with pressure lid inserts to name a few. One component per each container. Avoid any static producing containers!

Training aid placement has become the most critical element of potential tragedy. The training area must be a safe environment. Turn off or remove any source of electricity. Vehicle batteries must be removed or avoided when placing aids. Remember that vehicles also contain other electric components that have electric sources you may encounter. Buildings also will have electric sources that must be avoided. Outlets and switches will be encounter and must be avoided with placements.

Be aware of potential hazardous toxics that are within the training environment. Acids from vehicle batteries and other components will be present. Common cleaners and antifreeze solutions are also present. One must give a thorough overview of the training environment before aids are placed in the environment.

Placement logs are a must for documentation and inventory. Simply, who placed the aid and who recovered the aid are essential. Remember, varying the people handling the explosive aids will vary the scent picture to assist the canine. Included in the placement log include the amount and location of the aid. A two person check and balance will ensure the aids are safely placed and properly recovered.

Finally, documentation is critical when handling explosives and training with explosives. Storage/Inventory logs must be maintained on a regular basis. It has been recommended a weekly inventory log be maintained. Individual training logs are crucial to the development of a training program as well as the individual canine's development. A good training log should include the explosive compound, amount, date, time, location, environment, weather conditions, time aid placed, location of aid placement, who placed aid and who retrieved aid. These logs should be maintained by a trainer as well as a file for the handler and a file for the canine.

IF THESE GUIDELINES ARE ADHERED TO, ACCIDENTAL INJURY SHOULD BE MINIMIZED.

Remember this is only a guide. Contact your local explosive technician for more information.