

National Explosives Task Force

Public Safety Advisory

May 29, 2015

Exploding Targets

Exploding Targets (ETs) are a combination of non-explosive chemicals sold in a pre-packaged form that, when thoroughly mixed, form a high explosive for use in shooting sports. ETs are designed to explode when struck by a high velocity bullet and produce both an audible and visual effect for target shooters. While most people who use ETs do so in a recommended and responsible manner, a number of individuals have been seriously injured or killed by their misuse. These explosives produce a blast and, if misused, can potentially generate high velocity fragments that can cause damage to nearby objects and could injure or kill people. This advisory is designed to increase the public's awareness of these products, and to inform people using, encountering, or in the proximity to ETs that, when mixed, they are high explosive materials and can pose a safety risk if used improperly. Each manufacturer of ETs includes instructions detailing the proper and safe use of its products which should be followed closely.

Recommendations for Safe Use:

NEVER

- Exceed the amount of explosive mixture recommended by the manufacturer;
- Place ETs in, under, or next to objects that could produce dangerous fragments;
- Add any materials (internally or externally) to the manufacturer's mixture;
- Combine multiple ET packages to form a single target.

ALWAYS

- Utilize ET containers provided by the manufacturer;
- Mix the targets at the use location immediately prior to use;
- Ensure that the manufacturer's recommended safe distances are used for the shooter and all other persons;
- Use ETs only at shooting ranges or in remote areas, and respect property owner's rights.

Once mixed, ETs are high explosives and subject to Federal regulations. Mixed ETs may not be transported without a Federal explosives license or permit. In addition, individuals or companies must obtain a Federal explosives manufacturers license if they intend to engage in the business of manufacturing ETs for sale, distribution, or for their own business use. Furthermore, ETs may also fall under the purview of other federal, state, or local laws, if they are utilized outside of the manufacturer's intended use.

If you encounter exploding targets, and you are unsure if they are mixed, assume that they are in a high explosive state – maintain a safe distance and contact local law enforcement, or call 911. For questions concerning exploding targets, contact your local ATF office.



The National Explosives Task Force (NETF) coordinates rapid integration of explosives expertise with intelligence and Law Enforcement information to support operational activities. Products are peer-reviewed by explosives experts from participating agencies.

