

# Fact Sheet - Illegal Explosive Devices

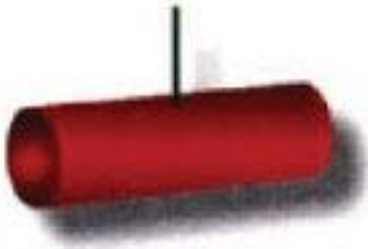
## Fast Facts

1. ATF investigates the use of illegal explosive devices which, are often manufactured and used during the fireworks season.
2. Explosive devices commonly referred to as M-80s; M-100s, M-250s; M-1000s, and cherry bombs exceed the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission's explosive weight limits for consumer fireworks and are therefore classified as illegal by ATF and many other law enforcement agencies.
3. Under federal explosives law, it is illegal to engage in the business of manufacturing explosives without a license; to improperly store explosives; to sell or distribute explosives to any person who does not hold an ATF license or permit.

Illegal explosive devices are often manufactured and used during the fireworks season. The explosive compositions in these devices are typically extremely sensitive to heat, shock, electrostatic discharge and friction that may initiate, unexpectedly causing serious injury or death. The risks associated with these devices are further compounded because the persons manufacturing, transporting and using these devices often do not have the knowledge, skills and experience required for such activities.

Many law enforcement agencies consider these explosive devices, commonly referred to as M-80s; M-100s (also known as silver salutes); M-250s; M-1000s (also known as quarter sticks); and cherry bombs illegal because they exceed the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission's explosive weight limits for consumer fireworks. Additionally, these devices may also be illegal under similar state laws and local ordinances.

### M-80

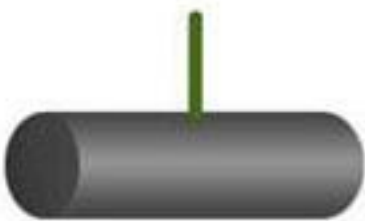


**Average Size:** Five-eighth inch diameter, 1.5 inches long

**Average Load:** Approximately 3 grams explosive mixture

**Risk Factor:** Damage to fingers, hands, and eyes

### M-100, Silver Salute

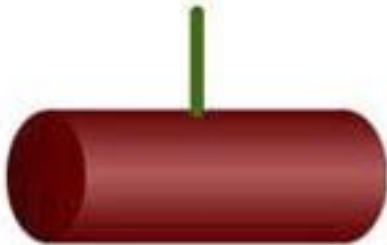


**Average Size:** 1 inch diameter, 2.5 inches long

**Average Load:** Approximately 9 grams explosive mixture

**Risk Factor:** Severe damage to face, arms and body

### M-250

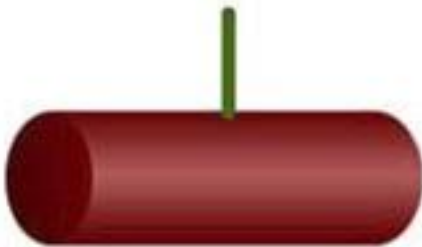


**Average Size:** 1 inch diameter, 3 inches long

**Average Load:** Approximately 13 grams explosive mixture

**Risk Factor:** Severe crippling, disfiguring injuries

### M-1000, Quarter Stick



**Average Size:** 1 inch diameter, 6 inches long

**Average Load:** Approximately 25-30 grams explosive mixture

**Risk Factor:** Extremely severe injuries to body, has caused death.

The U.S. Department of Transportation regulations forbid the transportation of any unapproved explosive. These explosive devices typically are not submitted for testing and have not been approved for transportation under the Hazardous Materials Regulations. Additionally, under federal explosives law it is illegal to engage in the business of manufacturing explosives without a license; to improperly store explosives; to sell or distribute explosives to any person who does not hold a Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) license or permit; to receive explosives without a license or permit; or to transport explosive materials without a license or permit.

Some indicators that a device may be an illegal explosive device are:

- It consists of a red, silver, yellow, salmon or brown spiral wound cardboard tube or similar product with a green hobby fuse.
- It may be 1-6 inches long and up to an inch or more in diameter.
- It is sold in non-commercial locations, such as out of a vehicle or residence.
- Individual in possession has no evidence of receipt, commercial packaging or cannot identify a purchase location.

Each year ATF investigates explosives accidents regarding the manufacture of illegal explosive devices. These accidents often result in serious injury or death and extensive damage to property. ATF cautions the public against handling suspected illegal explosive devices and urges everyone to report the manufacture or sale of such devices to their local ATF office or by calling ATF's toll-free hotline at 1-888-ATF-BOMB (1-888-283-2662).