



Explosives Safety Alert 78

Starter gun caps ignite in pocket

What happened?

An athletic club race starter placed a sheet of starter caps in his back pocket together with a 50 cent piece and later competed in a long jump event. During the event eight of the 60 starter caps ignited in his pocket. The ignition burnt holes in his clothing as seen in the photo below. It is likely the impact from the jump ignited the caps which were in contact with the coin.

Recommendations

1. Carry caps in a rigid container. Don't carry starter caps loose in your pocket or hand. Caps are explosives which are sensitive to ignition from friction and impact, especially when in contact with hard surfaces. They can cause serious injuries from accidental ignition and improper use.
2. Limit the quantity of caps to the immediate number needed.
3. Follow the manufacturer's instructions and precautions for storage, handling and use. Avoid exposure to high temperatures and conditions of impact and abrasion.



Image 1: Damage to clothing from starter pistol cap ignition



Image 2: Ignited starter pistol caps

Great state. Great opportunity.

Authorised by Geoff Downs | Chief Inspector of Explosives

This alert is a guide only and is issued to promote safety through experience. It is not to be taken as a statement of law and must not be construed to waive or modify any legal obligation.

Place on noticeboards and ensure relevant people in your organisation receive a copy.

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Version 1, 25 November 2013

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