

Public Safety Fact Sheet

A publication of the Washington County Anti-Terrorism Advisory Committee

In response to recent world and national events, Washington County's police and fire agencies, local governments, health officials and emergency managers have increased coordination and communication. The purpose of this effort is two-fold: to ensure an effective countywide response should a major public safety incident occur locally, and to provide residents with timely, consistent information on issues of public concern.

Explosives

"Explosive" is a chemical compound, mixture or device, with the primary or common purpose of explosion. This includes dynamite, pellet powder, initiating explosives, detonators, flammable liquids, safety fuses, common fertilizers, squibs, detonating cord, igniter cord and igniters.

There are many types of devices. **Pipe bombs** are the most common and readily assembled explosive. Once detonated, they act as a hand grenade, sending small fragments of pipe into the air. **Time bombs** and **car bombs** (Oklahoma City bombing) are designed to give the bomber time to get away from the scene before the bomb detonates.

Molotov cocktails are an incendiary device. **Booby trapped bombs**, such as mail bombs, are typically detonated by an innocent person. He or she disturbs what appears to be a harmless object or performs a seemingly "safe" act and triggers the detonation. A **dirty bomb** uses an explosive to disperse radioactive material.

How Dangerous are Explosives?

Regardless of the type, explosive devices are *very unstable!* They are extremely sensitive to shock, friction, impact and heat, and may detonate without warning. Even the smallest devices can cause serious injury or death. If you find a suspicious device, do not touch it. Carefully leave the area as there may be more than one device, and call 911 immediately.

Following an Explosion:

- **Call 9-1-1.**
- **Stay calm.** Local law enforcement, fire and medical services will arrive within minutes to assess the situation and provide aid if necessary. If you were close to the explosion, **move away from the site but remain close enough to the scene** that medical responders can evaluate you and provide aid if needed.
- **If you were not directly affected by the explosion, stay away from the scene.** Do not rush to provide aid (there may be more than one device).
- **Listen to news reports.** If necessary, emergency responders will use the Emergency Alert System to broadcast public safety instructions using radio and TV stations.

For More Information Contact:

- Your local law enforcement agency
- American Red Cross: www.redcross.org
- US Department of Homeland Security: www.ready.gov



What You Should Know About Explosives (Topic #9)