

## Disposing of explosives: What employers and workers need to know

Employers must ensure all WorkSafeBC-certified blasters know how to properly dispose of explosives. Otherwise, workers may be at risk of serious injury or death. Safe disposal means following the manufacturer's instructions on disposal. If employers or blasters don't know what to do or don't have these instructions, they must contact the manufacturer and follow the manufacturer's recommendations for the disposal of misfired and unexploded materials.

### Damaged or deteriorated explosives: What are the dangers?

Improper disposal of damaged or deteriorated explosive materials can result in accidental detonation and misfires. Deteriorated or defective explosive materials or accessories must not be used and must be safely handled and disposed of. Damaged or deteriorated explosives include partially exploded explosives, time-expired explosives, weather-damaged explosives, and mishandled explosives. Other materials that pose a risk are initiating devices such as electric detonators, safety fuse assemblies, and shock tubes. All items used in this process are dangerous when handled improperly; deteriorated products may be as dangerous as products that retain their properties.

### Legal disposal requirements

According to Part 21.39 of the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation, explosive materials and accessories must not be abandoned. These materials must be placed in suitable storage or disposed of in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

Under Part 21.37 of the Regulation, if these explosive materials and accessories have deteriorated or are deemed defective, they must not be used or stored and must be disposed of in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

### What does safe disposal mean?

When disposing of explosives, only workers qualified as WorkSafeBC-certified blasters can and must examine the disposal site to ensure there are no remaining explosives or accessories. Employers must train blasters to know how to deal with these hazards at all subsequent locations that involve the handling of explosives to be destroyed.

### For more information

See the *Blasters' Handbook*, or call the Prevention Information Line at 604.276.3100 or toll-free at 1.888.621.7233.