



## U.S. Department of Justice

Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco,  
Firearms and Explosives

*Assistant Director*

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Washington, DC 20226

[www.atf.gov](http://www.atf.gov)

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### ADVISORY NOTICE TO ALL EXPLOSIVES INDUSTRY MEMBERS

Recently, there has been a series of armed thefts of explosives from storage sites in Mexico along the southwest U.S. border. The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) would like to remind all Federal explosives licensees and permittees of the importance of security at their explosives storage sites, and we advise all industry members to take heightened security precautions in light of these thefts. This advisory is a precaution and not due to any criminal intelligence.

Additionally, ATF partners with the explosives industry to protect the public and as part of this ongoing effort, industry members are commended for their voluntary reporting of explosives thefts that occurred in Mexico to the U.S. Bomb Data Center. Federal explosives licensees and permittees are encouraged to continue the voluntary reporting of explosives thefts that occur in Mexico.

ATF is working with and advising the explosives industry on new developments or methods to prevent thefts and to prevent terrorists and those with criminal intent from gaining access to explosive materials. We have created the [attached checklist of steps](#) that you can take to make your business more secure. Please review this checklist and ensure that your business is doing everything it can to secure your explosives.

We also ask that all licensees and permittees review ATF P 5400.15, [Safety and Security Information for Federal Explosives Licensees and Permittees](#), a publication that we produced in partnership with the Institute of Makers of Explosives and the International Society of Explosives Engineers. We believe this information can identify potential weaknesses in security and offer security precautions to prevent thefts and the illegal use of explosives.

While these recommendations are mostly voluntary, we appreciate your continued support and welcome any comments or suggestions you may have for future initiatives. Should you have any questions regarding this notice or these recommendations, please contact your local [ATF Field Office](#). Thank you for your continued cooperation and vigilance.

Carson W. Carroll  
Assistant Director  
(Enforcement Programs and Services)

#### **Attachment -**

- [Security Checklist](#)



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### SECURITY CHECKLIST

In response to recent thefts of explosive materials, ATF requests that all Federal explosives licensees and permittees follow these best practices:

- Consider conducting a full inventory of all explosive items and reconcile any recordkeeping discrepancies.
- Document and report any indication of shortages, losses, thefts, or otherwise unaccounted for explosives to ATF immediately at **1-888-ATF-BOMB**. Per 27 CFR 555.30(a), you must also prepare and send ATF Form 5400.5, Theft or Loss of Explosive Materials, to ATF.
- Strongly suggest that you inspect your perimeter security and report any indications of attempted thefts of explosives to ATF (i.e., cut fences, unlocked gates, etc...).
- Visually inspect your magazines and locks for any damage affecting their theft-resistance. Repair or make changes to magazines in accordance with 27 CFR 555.63.
- Report any suspicious behavior at or near explosives storage and distribution areas or any indication of an attempted theft of explosive materials, e.g., breeches to magazine structures, or actual or attempted magazine break-ins, to ATF immediately.
- Verify that all keys to magazines can be accounted for. If they cannot be located, or you do not know how many keys your employees possess, change your magazine locks.
- Ensure that only non-prohibited and essential personnel have access to magazines and explosive materials in accordance with 27 CFR 555.26(d) and 27 CFR 555.57(b).
- Know your customers and vendors. It is a good idea to identify all unknown contract carriers and follow up with your customers to ensure the delivery of the explosive materials. Report any attempted explosives purchases by any person(s) unknown to you or who does not appear to have a legitimate need for explosives.
- Teach employees what they can do in case of an emergency at the job site and keep the ATF hotline number (**1-888-ATF-BOMB**), and emergency numbers, available at your premises for immediate use should any of the above circumstances arise.
- Notify the appropriate State and local law enforcement authorities of any of the above items, in addition to reporting thefts, losses, or suspicious activity to ATF in accordance with 27 CFR 555.30(a).
- Never leave explosive materials in unapproved storage per 27 CFR 555.201(a). Explosive materials may not be left unattended in Type-3 magazines, including "day boxes," and must be removed to Type-1 or Type-2 magazines for unattended storage in accordance with 27 CFR 555.209.

ATF will continue to work with and advise the industry on new developments or methods to increase the security of explosive materials. Thank you for your cooperation.

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