Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) Safety

Recognize
Retreat
Report

Munitions can be hard to see, especially when they have had years to rust and settle into place. Beware as munitions can be hidden by deep grass, foliage or thick brush.

Military munitions that were used, but fail to function as intended are called UXO or unexploded ordnance. Military munitions abandoned without proper disposal or removed from storage in a military magazine or other storage area for the purpose of disposal are called discarded military munitions or DMM. The United States has always maintained a trained and ready military to protect its national interests. As a result of the munitions-related activities (e.g., live-fire training and testing, disposal operations) required to maintain this force, and other actions (e.g., souvenir collecting), UXO or DMM can be found almost anywhere. Although the Military controls access to areas known or suspected to contain UXO on active installations, a number of areas that are known or suspected to contain military munitions that were once used by the military have been transferred to public uses.

When anyone encounters or believes they may have encountered a munition, they should consider it extremely dangerous. To protect their family, friends and neighbors, everyone should learn and follow the 3Rs of explosives safety: **R**ecognize—when you may have encountered a munition and the potential danger; **R**etreat—do not approach, touch, move or disturb it; **R**eport—notify local law enforcement of what you saw and where you saw it.

Although military munitions will most likely be found in areas that the Military currently uses or has used in the past, they could be encountered anywhere (e.g., Civil War battlefields, in homes as family souvenirs). Following the 3Rs when you have or think you may have encountered a munition can prevent a tragedy.

UXO are often referred to as duds, bombs, dummy rounds, or by other terms. Regardless of what you call them, they should be considered dangerous. Never approach, touch, move or disturb munitions. Even Civil War cannon balls and souvenir munitions that may have been kept by a family and handled for years can be extremely dangerous.

Even small munitions can be dangerous and should be treated with caution. If you believe you have encountered a munition, retreat - do not touch or disturb it, and call 911.

Remember UXO:

- Come in many shapes and sizes
- Can look like a:
  - Pointed pipe
  - Soda can
  - Baseball
  - Muffler
- They may:
  - Be visible on the surface or be buried
  - Be exposed by erosion or fires
  - Look new or old
  - Be complete or in parts
  - Be found alone or in groups
  - Should be considered dangerous regardless of size or age

Munitions including their components (e.g., projectiles, fuzes, rocket motors) may contain high explosives, propellant or pyrotechnics. Munitions should never be collected as souvenirs or "trophies." No matter how old or damaged a munition may look, it can still be as or more dangerous than the day it was made.

Munitions can be clean or rusty and may be hard to recognize. Even old munitions can be very dangerous.

The 3Rs of Explosives Safety

Recognize – Recognizing when you may have encountered a munition is key to reducing the risk of injury or death. If you encounter or suspect you may have encountered a munition, consider it extremely dangerous. Remember, munitions are sometimes hard to identify.

Retreat – If you encounter or suspect you may have encountered a munition, do not approach, touch, move or disturb it, but immediately and carefully – do not run – leave the area following the same path on which you entered. If you can, mark the general area, not the munition, in some manner (e.g., with a hat, piece of cloth, or tying a piece of plastic to a tree branch).

Munitions may be found both on land and in water.

Report – When you think you may have encountered a munition, notify your local law enforcement – call 911.

DON'T FORGET

Munitions are dangerous and may not be easily recognizable. Never touch, move or disturb munitions or suspected munitions.

REMEMBER THE 3Rs

RECOGNIZE: **Recognize when you may have encountered a munition.**

RETREAT: **Do not approach, touch, move or disturb it, but carefully leave the area the way you entered.**

REPORT: **Call 911! Immediately notify local law enforcement of what you saw and where you saw it.**

For more information visit the UXO Safety Education Website at:
www.denix.osd.mil/uxo

and the Formerly Used Defense Sites Program Website at:
www.fuds.mil

ORecognize
ORetreat
OReport