

# 3Rs Explosives Safety Guide

## Military Families

Among the benefits of being a military family is the opportunity to share in the military experience. However family members need not share the dangers potentially posed by military munitions used in training or combat.

Because the US military conducts live-fire training and testing to maintain combat readiness, military munitions may remain unexploded on operational ranges. Unfortunately, Service Members occasionally bring munitions home from training or deployments as souvenirs or war trophies.

Because military families often live on or near military installations, they are more likely to encounter munitions than the general public. Although installations post signs and restrict access to areas where explosive hazards exist, family members in search of adventure sometimes enter these areas. Fortunately, munitions are rarely present in garrison areas except when dangerous munitions are kept as souvenirs. Protecting military families, Soldiers and the public from explosive hazards associated with military munitions is everyone's responsibility.

Teens entered an operational range in 2000 and some took munitions home, even though signs warned of the explosive hazards and prohibited entry. During handling, a munition detonated, killing one and critically injuring another. Unfortunately, the teens did not recognize the hazard the munitions posed, and their lives were changed forever.

Soldiers and their families need to be aware of the risks posed by living on or near operational ranges or by having souvenir munitions in their houses and take necessary precautions. You can help protect yourself, your family, friends and community by following the 3Rs of explosives safety: Recognize, Retreat, Report.



### Don't Forget

- Munitions are dangerous and may not be easily recognizable!
- Avoid areas where munitions may be encountered!
- Follow posted warnings; Never disturb a munition!

### Follow the 3Rs

#### Recognize

When you may have encountered a munition and that munitions are dangerous.

#### Retreat

Do not touch, move or disturb it, but carefully leave the area.

#### Report

Immediately notify the military police if on installation or local law enforcement if off installation.

#### Emergency contact:

Call military police or 911



(installation information here)

For additional information call  
U.S. Army Technical Center for Explosives Safety  
at (918) 420-8919  
or see

the US Army's UXO Safety Education website  
[www.denix.osd.mil/uxo](http://www.denix.osd.mil/uxo)



# Recognize

**Recognizing that munitions are dangerous is the most important step in reducing injuries or deaths.**

Children are naturally curious and interested in exploring areas or handling equipment, including munitions, used by Soldiers. To keep them safe, we must help them understand the dangers of handling or disturbing munitions.



Munitions are designed to kill people or destroy equipment. They may be old or new, and easy or hard to identify. If you encounter or suspect you have encountered a munition, do not touch, move or disturb it. If they explode, anyone nearby could be killed or severely injured. Even cannon balls from the Civil War present an explosive hazard.



Munitions will most likely be encountered in areas the military used or still uses for live-fire training or disposal or where combat once occurred.

Help keep your family safe by staying away from ranges and out of restricted areas marked with warning signs.

Unfortunately, munitions often prove to be deadly souvenirs. Taking a munition for a keepsake presents an immediate and real danger to you, your family, friends and your community. Don't be tempted! Should you or someone you know have a souvenir munition, even if it has been kept for years, call the military or local police to report it. As a last resort, place it in an amnesty box before someone gets hurt.

# Retreat

**Military munitions should only be handled by trained and authorized personnel.**

If you encounter or suspect you may have encountered a munition, do not touch, move or disturb it. Carefully leave the area (retreat) by retracing your steps.

If your family or a friend encounter or suspect they have encountered a munition, instruct them:

- Not to touch, move or disturb it, but immediately and carefully leave the area.
- If on land, retrace their steps out of the area by the same path which they entered. Once safely away, mark the path, if possible.
- If in the water, swim away in the direction from which you came. If possible, determine the munition's position by using landmarks.

A Soldier who unexpectedly encounters or suspects they may have encountered a munition on or outside of a range or while deployed should not touch, move or disturb it. Instead, they should immediately leave the area, retracing their steps out of the area by the same path by which they entered and note the location.



# Report

**Report as much information as you can about what you saw and where you saw it, but do not approach.**



If you, your children or friends encounter or suspect they have encountered a munition, immediately report it to the police, or through your chain-of-command.

On land and while in water or near shore:

- Call the military police or 911
- Provide:
  - A landmark near the munition
  - A description of the munition, including:
    - » Its size and shape
    - » Any visible markings -- do not approach or handle the munition to see markings

Although a detailed report will help the police and explosive ordnance disposal personnel find, evaluate and address the situation, never approach a munition to get a better description. Your safety is more important.

