MSHA Safety Alert
Electric Detonators Located Near Electrical Equipment

Precautions must be taken when storing, handling, transporting and using explosives and detonators in underground coal mines near energized equipment. These electrical systems include but are not limited to communications and tracking system infrastructure and electronic components worn or carried by miners. It is important to maintain appropriate separation distances between electric blasting circuits and all potential sources of electrical current including equipment that emits radio frequency (RF) energy. Follow manufacturer recommendations on storage, handling, transportation and usage.

BEST PRACTICES

• Protect electric blasting circuits from all sources of stray electric current.
• Maintain a minimum 50-foot distance from RF energy unless other means are provided and approved. Other means may include placing detonators in a container compliant with 30 C.F.R. 75.1311 that is housed in a fully enclosed metallic structure to provide shielding from RF energy.
• Consider and manage all sources of stray electric current, including portable and RF emitting devices that electric detonators may be exposed to when stored, transported, handled, and used.
• Maintain detonators in their original containers, coiled, shunted and folded as received from the manufacturer until ready for use.
• Review and update, as necessary, the Emergency Response Plan (ERP) to ensure that proper procedures are in place to prevent exposure to RF energy during storage, handling, transportation and use of explosives and detonators.

www.msha.gov
askmsha@dol.gov
Twitter: @MSHA_DOL
Report Accidents & Hazardous Conditions
1-800-746-1553