

Columbus Police Division Directive	EFFECTIVE	NUMBER
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Gas Guns and Grenades		



I. Introduction

- A. Gas guns and grenades are used to deploy projectiles, distraction devices, and chemical **irritants** that are not designed to be lethal but have the potential to cause injury or death.
- B. Chemical **irritants** in the form of aerosol canisters that are thrown and spray devices worn on the gun belt that are not deployed by the ignition of a primer are excluded from the provisions of this directive.

II. Definitions

A. Bean bag round

Also referred to as a flexible baton round, a bean bag round contains a cloth bag filled with silica sand and is fired from a gas gun. It is designed for direct impact on a targeted subject.

B. Flashbang

A non-bursting detonation device that emits light and sound when deployed.

C. Gas gun

A 37mm or 40mm single-barrel or rotary-style firearm used to deploy projectiles, distraction devices, and chemical **irritants**.

D. Gas round

Any of a variety of rounds fired from a gas gun that release chemical **irritants** or projectiles containing chemical **irritants**.

E. Less-lethal weapons and ordnance

This includes gas guns, grenades, bean bag rounds, and multiple baton rounds, which have the potential to cause death, though they are not designed to be lethal.

F. Multiple baton round

A high velocity round containing wood projectiles fired from a gas gun. It is designed to be skip-fired (ricocheted off a hard surface) toward a targeted subject or to be used as a distraction device (deployed through and breaking a window). Operational exceptions may be made in a critical situation in which the use of deadly force is justified.

G. Rubber **ball blast** grenade

A combination irritant and diversion device that delivers three stimuli for psychological and physiological effect: light, sound, and chemical **irritant**.

H. Sponge round

A plastic body with a foam nose, which is spin-stabilized via the incorporated rifling collar and the 40mm launcher's rifled barrel, **fired from a gas gun.**

I. Warning/Signaling munitions

A plastic body, which produces 170 decibels of sound, emits 5 million candelas of light, and deflagrates (**explodes**) at a distance of **50 meters (approximately 164 feet)** with an **OC** irritant payload, **fired from a gas gun.**

III. Policy Statements

- A. Authorized sworn personnel shall only carry and use those gas guns and grenades that have been approved by the Chief of Police.
- B. The Division's use of force policy shall guide the use of gas guns and grenades; therefore, any discharge of a gas gun or detonation of a grenade (excluding flashbangs and multiple baton rounds used as a diversion) shall be a Level 7 use of force.
- C. Only sworn personnel who have satisfactorily completed annual specialty impact and gas munitions training are permitted to possess, deploy, or order the deployment of these munitions in the field.
- D. Supervisors shall issue the order to use a gas gun or grenade only when reasonable based upon the totality of the circumstances, which should include an evaluation of the need to use the device(s) weighed against the danger they pose to the suspect or others.
- E. Division personnel shall give a verbal warning that the use of a less-lethal weapon and/or projectile is imminent when practical.
- F. Deployment of gas guns or grenades shall be reported as outlined in this policy. The supervisor who ordered the deployment should not complete the investigation, but he or she should be included in the chain of command review on policy compliance.**
- G. Following a use of force with a gas gun or grenade, if a subject experiences a serious injury or is in medical distress, sworn personnel shall render aid as appropriate and as follows:**
 - 1. Notify Communications Bureau personnel;**
 - 2. Summon Emergency Medical Services (EMS) and ensure that the dispatcher acknowledges the request; and**
 - 3. Render medical aid consistent with training and available equipment as soon as it is safe to do so.**

IV. Procedures

A. Use of Gas Guns and Grenades

1. Zone Lieutenant

- a. Ensure that the zone has at least one gas gun available for use at all times.
- b. Determine whether to use a gas gun or grenade immediately or call for SWAT.
- c. Issue the order to use the gas gun or grenade. Such an order may be given via electronic or radio communications.

2. SWAT or Drug Interdiction Section Lieutenant

- a. Determine when a gas gun or grenade is to be used.
- b. Issue the order to deploy the weapon.
 - (1) The order may be given via electronic or radio communications.
 - (2) Designate a lower-ranking SWAT or Drug Interdiction officer to give the order when necessary, **except in crowd control situations**.

3. Personnel Assigned to Possess or Use a Gas Gun or Grenade

- a. Maintain the gas gun or grenade in good working order.
- b. Contact the Ordnance Unit for any needed maintenance or repair.
- c. Use a gas gun or grenade only on the order of a lieutenant, higher-ranking personnel, or the SWAT or Drug Interdiction Section Lieutenant's designee.

Note: Sergeants deploying beanbag rounds are not required to obtain prior approval.

- d. Do not fire a gas gun or detonate a grenade without the assistance of a cover officer with a firearm.

4. Ordnance Unit Personnel

Resupply personnel with gas guns, grenades, and less-lethal ordnance at the direction of a lieutenant or higher-ranking supervisor.

B. Reporting and Investigation of Deployment

1. Investigating Personnel

- a. Comply with the "Discharged Firearms" directive and forward a copy of the administrative investigation to the Legal Advisor when:
 - (1) A human subject is struck and serious physical harm as defined in the Ohio Revised Code results.
 - (2) A human subject is struck and death results.
- b. Comply with the "Use of Force" directive and forward a copy of the administrative investigation to the Legal Advisor when:
 - (1) No human subject is struck.
 - (2) A human subject is struck and not injured.

- (3) A human subject is struck, and the resulting injury does not amount to serious physical harm as defined in the Ohio Revised Code.
 - (4) A human subject is struck and flees the scene in an unknown condition.
2. Internal Affairs Bureau
 - a. Maintain required records of uses of force.
 - b. When the involved personnel are ordered by a supervisor to fire a gas gun or detonate a grenade, categorize the incident as an ordered use of force for purposes of the Employee Action Review System.
 3. Personnel **Detonating Explosive Devices That Must be Logged as Required** by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, **and Explosives (ATF)**
 - a. Be aware of the reporting requirement for devices such as the Defense Technology Corporation of America Distraction Device.
 - b. Report the use of force as required by the "Use of Force" directive.
 - c. Complete a Distraction Device Deployment report, form U-11.102, and forward it directly to the 1st Shift Ordnance Unit.
 4. 1st Shift Ordnance Unit

Maintain a log of all explosive devices as required by ATF.