



ATF and the Explosives Industry 40 Years of Public Service



1972 – 2012



In 2010, ATF regulated . . .

5.9 billion pounds of explosives sold in the United States

Approximately 30 million pounds of display fireworks consumed in the United States

10,700 Explosives licensees and permittees





Explosives in the United States





Explosives Use

Sales of explosives in the United States has risen from 1,850,000 metric tons in 1991, to 2,680,000 metric tons (5.9 billion pounds) in 2010.

(Figures based on U.S. Geological Survey statistics)



100 million pounds of explosives consumed in underground mining in 1957



Mining for Coal, Metals & Minerals

According to U.S. Geological Survey statistics, the mining industry uses nearly 90% of all the explosives used in the United States on an annual basis.



Ammonium nitrate-based explosives account for most of the U.S. industrial sales



Specialty Uses

Other common uses of explosive materials are less apparent.

Aircraft evacuation systems

Air bag inflators in vehicles

Special industrial tools

Medical instruments

Laboratory testing

Fire extinguishers

Demolition . . . And more





Combating Environmental Disasters

When used to combat oil-rig fires, an explosive blast acts to temporarily drive fuel away from where flames are developing and to deprive the immediate area of the oxygen needed to reignite the fire.





Agricultural Uses

Explosives find a wide variety of agricultural use in the field of animal or pest control.



Explosive pest control devices are commonly used to protect agricultural, marine and aviation operations from wildlife pests.



Avalanche Mitigation



Avalanches are triggered during times when people can be cleared away to a safe distance and the risk to property is reduced.

Explosive charges are delivered above avalanche starting zones by remote launchers, helicopter, avalanche control experts on skis, or other means.



Pyrotechnics

Pyrotechnics and other explosives are used for special effects in the entertainment and film industries—to create underwater and other explosions, collapse bridges and buildings, and to simulate bullet hits. They are also used in sporting events and stage productions.





The Fireworks Industry



The fireworks industry in the United States has undergone steady growth over the last 35 years—from 29 million pounds used in 1976 to 213 million pounds used in 2009.



Fireworks Importation

Trends over the last quarter century have resulted in the majority of display and consumer fireworks used in the United States being imported from overseas.



199.6 million pounds imported in 2010

(U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission 2010 Fireworks Report)



Explosives are an unseen but important part of our everyday life in the United States.

From mining and road construction to pyrotechnic displays, airbags and space exploration, virtually all progress in the American standard of living has been impacted by the use of explosives.





But with all of the benefits that explosives bring to our lives, they have been and will continue to be used by those who seek to disrupt or destroy the peace and progress of civilization.



Rather than using explosives to improve humanity, some would use them in destructive activities to further their own ends and purposes.



Public Safety

Because of the potential misuse of explosives to the detriment of public safety, ATF's role in protecting the public from the dangers of inadequately stored or secured explosive materials is vital to our nation's efforts against terrorism and violence involving explosives.





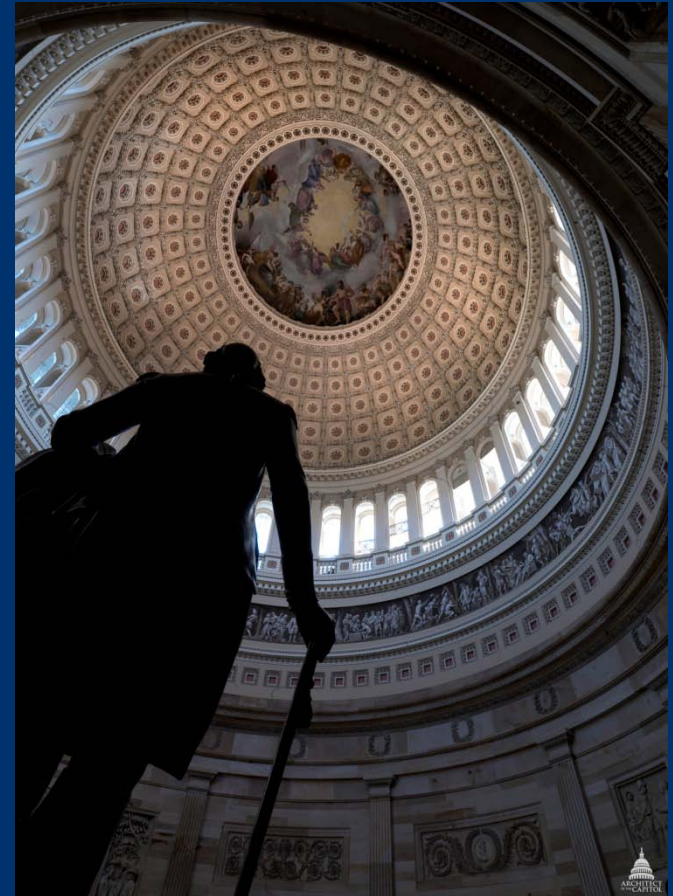
A History of ATF





Making Laws

As a result of the misuse of explosives in bombings in the United States in the late 1960s, Congress passed the Organized Crime Control Act of 1970, providing for close regulation of the explosives industry.





IRS Roots



With the Organized Crime Control Act of 1970, the Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms Division of the IRS became responsible for the regulation of explosives in the United States.



Creating a Bureau

On July 1, 1972, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (ATF) was established as a separate Bureau within the Treasury Department.





In response to the September 11, 2001 terrorist attack on the United States, the Homeland Security Act of 2002—and with it the Safe Explosives Act—was enacted.



Do you purchase or receive explosives without a Federal license or permit?

After May 24, 2003, you will no longer be able to purchase or receive explosives without a Federal license or permit.

This includes explosives purchases within your own State.



The Safe Explosives Act

Aimed at protecting . . .

- Commerce in the explosives industry;
- The public from inadequate storage or security of explosive materials; and
- Society against those individuals who might misuse these materials in a manner contrary to public safety.



A Different Department and A New Name

In January 2003, pursuant to the Homeland Security Act of 2002, ATF moved to the Department of Justice and its name was changed to Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives to reflect its new mission in the Department of Justice.





Jurisdiction

ATF's jurisdiction over explosives extends to requiring licenses to engage in the business of importing, manufacturing and/or distributing explosives materials. An ATF permit also is required to otherwise receive or transport explosives in interstate, intrastate, or foreign commerce.



ATF Inspections

ATF inspects the magazines and records of every explosives licensee and permittee on a regular basis to ensure compliance with Federal explosives regulations.



The law requires all persons, whether licensed or not, to properly store regulated explosive materials.



ATF and the Explosives Industries





What We Do for The Explosives Industries and Public Safety

ATF works with industry associations to:

- Provide guidance;
- Help identify areas of weakness or vulnerability in security;
- Ensure public safety with as little disruption to the industry as possible; and
- Protect the general public from explosives incidents.



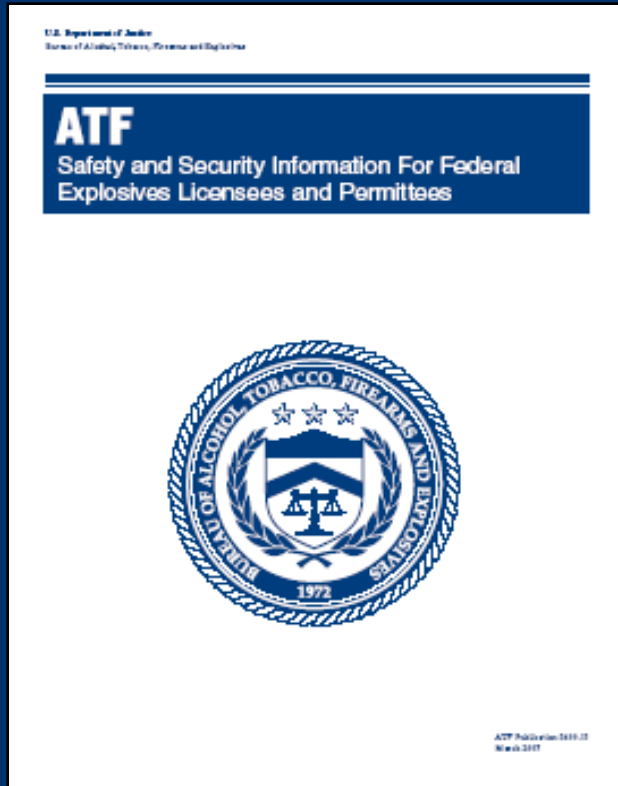
ATF is recognized by explosives industry associations throughout the country as a partner in public safety.



ATF and The Fertilizer Institute (TFI) initiative “America’s Security Begins with You” encourages agriculture industry members to report any suspicious activities or thefts of ammonium nitrate, a precursor chemical often sought after by those with criminal intent.



To identify areas of weakness and vulnerability in security . . .



ATF's Safety and Security Information for Federal Explosives Licensees and Permittees was produced in conjunction with the Institute of Makers of Explosives and the International Society of Explosives Engineers.



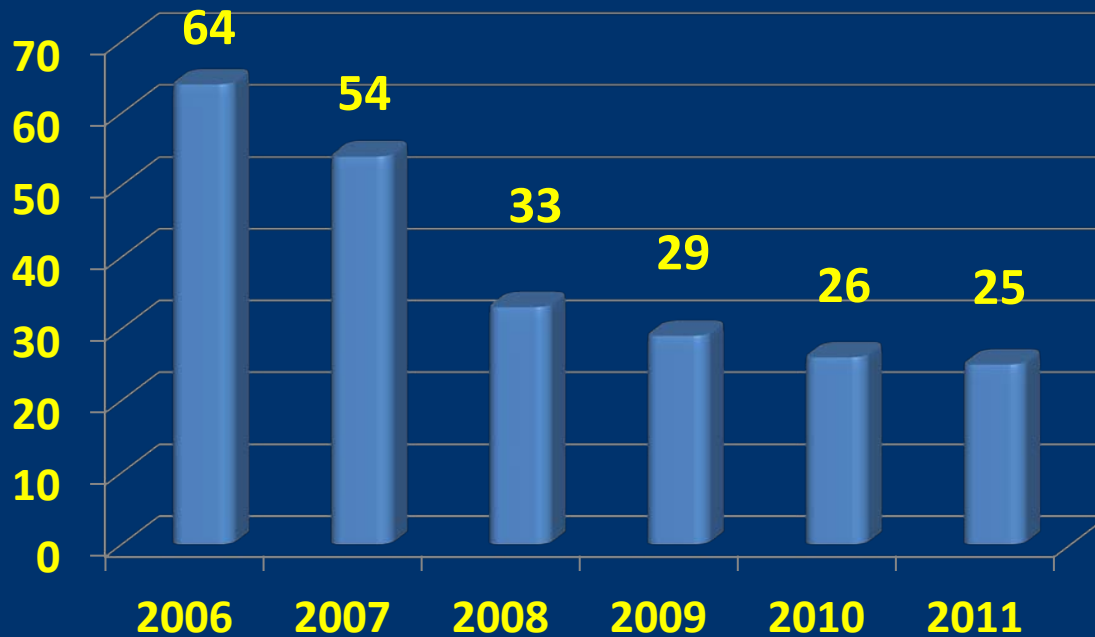
Collaboration

Collaboration with the explosives industries—identifying and eliminating illegal and/or unsafe practices or products—helps to safeguard not only the public, but also the safety and business interests of manufacturers, importers, dealers and users.





Industry Cooperation Leads to . . . Increased Public Safety



Working together has decreased the number of explosives thefts.



Why We Do What We Do





To protect commerce
in the industry . . .



Security measures
guard against
financial loss
incurred from
explosives thefts.





To protect the public from unsafe or insecure storage of explosive materials

To protect the general public from explosives incidents





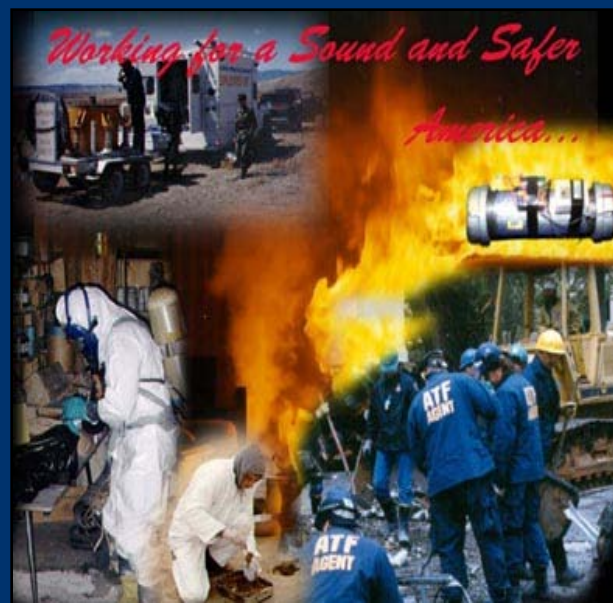
To protect the public against those individuals who might misuse these materials in a manner contrary to public safety.





40 Years of Dedication

ATF has dedicated itself to educating and working with the explosives industries we regulate, and the businesses, agencies, and groups that affect the industries, to help prevent terrorism, reduce violent crime and to keep the public safe.





For additional information about ATF, its history and its mission, access our website at www.atf.gov

