



## MECKLENBURG COUNTY FIRE MARSHAL'S OFFICE

April, 24, 2008

To: Mecklenburg County Volunteer Chiefs

From: Michael C. Fox  
Mecklenburg County Fire Marshal

Reference: **Improvised Explosive Devices, Molotov Cocktails and Hoax Devices**

The Mecklenburg County Fire Marshal's Office is charged with conducting post blast investigations. In the event that there is an incident where a bomb has been found whether it has detonated or not, the on call Fire Marshal shall be contacted. The device is to be left in place and not disturbed by on scene personnel. A safe zone should be established around the device to await the arrival of trained personnel. If the police department has not contacted the Bomb Squad it shall be the responsibility of the responding Fire Marshal to contact the Bomb Squad either through Central by telephone or by contacting CMPD directly. The on call Group 1 Agent or the Arson / Explosives Agent with ATF shall be contacted.

If the device has not detonated the bomb squad will render the device safe and the Fire Marshal on call will be available to assist ATF to collect the remains of the device so that it may be submitted to their lab for analysis. This includes Hoax devices as well. If the device has detonated, the Bomb Squad must still be notified so that a render safe can be conducted as they will examine the area for secondary devices as well. No personnel shall enter the area prior to a Bomb Technician conducting a render safe procedure. If the Incident Commander deems it necessary to enter the blast zone, it should only be to conduct life saving actions and personnel needs to be aware of the potential of secondary devices.

The on duty Fire Marshal does not need to be contacted for Soda Bottle Bombs which usually consist of a plastic soda bottle, aluminum foil and a chemical. These devices are considered over pressurization devices and are not considered as explosives. However if the devices contain any type of shrapnel or if someone is injured by one of these devices, the on call Fire Marshal should be contacted. These devices are very unstable as they may rupture from seconds after they are sealed to twenty minutes after they are sealed so extreme caution and full PPE should be used approaching one of these devices.

Molotov Cocktails usually consist of a glass bottle filled with and ignitable liquid and a rag in the neck for a wick. These are considered as an incendiary device and a weapon of mass destruction. If you have any questions please contact the Fire Marshal's Office.