



Airline Inspection / Inspection des entreprises de transport aérien

Dangerous Goods Warning

Mise en garde au sujet des marchandises dangereuses

**SUBJECT/ SUJET : Flammable Gas Torches
Torches aux gaz inflammable**

Date: October 13, 1999 / 13 octobre 1999 **Number/Numéro:** AARXD-TDG-003

The following is a dangerous goods warning for all air operators assigned to the Airline Inspection Division. Please distribute this warning to affected staff.

Ce qui suit est une mise en garde concernant les marchandises dangereuses adressée aux opérateurs aériens assignés à la division des Inspections des entreprises de transport aérien. S'il vous plaît, veuillez distribuer cette information aux employés concernés.

The United States Department of Transport has released advisory materials about the illegal transportation of flammable gas torches in baggage. You will find this material as an attachment.

Le Département des transports Américain a publié des avis concernant le transport illégale de torches aux gaz inflammable dans les bagages. Vous trouverez cet avis en annexe.

The Canadian Regulations does not allow such torches to be transported in checked or carry-on baggages.

La Réglementation Canadienne ne permet pas que ces torches soient transporté dans des baggages enregistrés ou de cabine.

Recommendation: We recommend that personnel pay close attention to the content of toolboxes for the presence of these torches.

Recommandation: Nous recommandons au personnel de porter une attention spéciale aux contenues des coffres d'outils pour la présence de ces torches.

Applicable Regulations:

Réglementations applicables:

Note that persons who fail to comply with a provision of the Transportation of Dangerous Goods Regulations are guilty of:

Il est à noter que toute personne qui enfreint les dispositions du Règlement sur le transport des marchandises dangereuses est coupable, selon le cas :

- (a) an offence punishable on summary conviction and liable to a fine not exceeding fifty thousand dollars for a first offence, and not exceeding one hundred thousand dollars for each subsequent offence; or
- (b) an indictable offence and liable to imprisonment for a term not exceeding two years.

- a) d'une infraction punissable sur déclaration sommaire de culpabilité et est passible d'une amende maximale de 50 000 dollars pour une première infraction et de 100 000 dollars pour chaque infraction subséquente;
- b) d'un acte criminel et est passible d'une peine d'emprisonnement maximale de deux ans.

Additionally, an operator must report any occurrence when undeclared or fraudulently declared dangerous goods are discovered in passenger's baggage. (ICAO 5;4.5/IATA 9.6.2)

De plus, les exploitants qui découvrent des marchandises dangereuses non déclarées ou mal déclarées dans les bagages d'un passager doivent le signaler. (ICAO 5;4.5/IATA 96.2)

For additional information on this issue, please contact the undersigned.

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Pour plus d'information sur ce sujet, veuillez contacter le soussigné.

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Airline Inspection Dangerous goods warnings are intended to provide information and guidance regarding the safe transportation of dangerous goods by air. These warnings may serve as an acceptable, but not the only, means of demonstrating compliance with existing regulations. Airline Inspection Dangerous Goods warnings in and of themselves cannot change, create any additional, nor authorize changes in, or permit deviations from regulatory requirements.

Les mises en garde de la division des Inspection des entreprises de transport aérien visent à fournir de l'information et des directives concernant le transport sécuritaire des marchandises dangereuses par air. Ces mises en garde peuvent servir à décrire un moyen acceptable, mais non le seul, de se conformer au règlement existant. Cependant, en soi, une mise en garde ne peut modifier ou créer une exigence réglementaire, ni peut-elle autoriser des changements ou des dérogations aux exigences réglementaires.



don't pack **light**
for your next flight!

Torch Flames on Airplanes Don't Fly

Torches come in many shapes and sizes
BUT ALL MAY BE **DANGEROUS**



Micro torches, soldering tools and utility lighters are powered by flammable gas in a lighter, other gas receptacle or built-in fuel tank. Many of these torches have electronic starters. Some do not have safety devices to prevent accidental ignition. **The FAA has investigated several incidents recently where these micro torches either caught fire or exploded during loading aboard passenger aircraft.**

Larger torches consist of a torch head (often with a self-igniting switch) that is designed to be attached to a 14-16 ounce container of flammable gas. **In two recent incidents involving a fire, these cylinders were packed or shipped with the torch head attached, and the electronic ignitor switch was found to be in the "on" position.**

Even if you think your torch is empty, it may still

contain flammable gas vapors that could ignite! One passenger checked a toolbox containing a micro torch. The toolbox exploded during loading and injured two airline employees. The passenger claimed he had emptied the torch by running it on high for four hours.



Department of Transportation Hazardous Materials Regulations forbid the carriage of butane or other flammable gas products on passenger aircraft. Do not pack any flammable gas torches in any checked or carry-on baggage.

What's in the toolbox?



Think before you pack!

Need More Information?

Call FAA at (202) 267-7530

or

Visit our website at:

<http://cas.faa.gov/cas/dgp.htm>

Also visit the DOT's HAZMAT website:

<http://hazmat.dot.gov>

Hazmat info line: (800) 467-4922

PENALTIES

A violation of the Federal Hazardous Materials Regulations can result in 5 YEARS IMPRISONMENT and PENALTIES of \$250,000 or More.

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From the Federal Register Online via GPO Access [wais.access.gpo.gov]
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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Research and Special Programs Administration
[Docket No. **RSPA-99-5143**; Notice No. **99-9**]

Hazardous Materials: Advisory Guidance; Transportation of
Flammable Gas Torches

AGENCY: Research and Special Programs Administration (**RSPA**), DOT.

ACTION: Advisory Guidance.

SUMMARY: This advisory guidance is to remind all persons who travel or ship materials by aircraft that flammable gas torches are prohibited in passenger-checked or carry-on baggage and regulatory restrictions apply when flammable gas torches are offered as cargo for air transport. Recent incidents in which flammable gas torches ignited during transportation suggest that many persons are not aware of the requirements and prohibitions applicable to flammable gases and flame-producing devices.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Eric Nelson, Office of Hazardous Materials Standards, **RSPA**, Department of Transportation, 400 Seventh Street, SW, Washington, DC 20590-0001, Telephone (202) 366-8553, or William Wilkening, Dangerous Goods and Cargo Security Program, FAA, Department of Transportation, 800 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20591 Telephone (202) 267-7530.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Recent incidents involving micro-torches and larger torches in the air transport system highlight an urgent need to warn airline passengers not to pack flammable gas torches in their checked or carry-on baggage. In addition, persons offering these torches as cargo for transportation are subject to the Hazardous Materials Regulations (HMR; 49 CFR Parts 171-180) and must comply with all applicable requirements.

I. Background

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has made **RSPA** aware of several recent incidents where flammable gas torches ignited during transportation that highlight the need to assure torches are transported in accordance with the requirements in the HMR, because of the risks posed by passengers carrying torches in their checked or carry-on baggage.

On April 22, 1999, at Seattle Tacoma Airport, checked baggage was being transferred between connecting flights. Ramp personnel heard a popping sound coming from a soft-sided duffel bag, and then noted a burning smell and heat emanating from the bag. When the bag was opened, air carrier personnel discovered a compressed gas cylinder fitted with a self-igniting torch assembly, with the switch in the ``on'' position. The bag also contained a butane barbeque lighter, a one-quart can of flammable paint, and an eight-ounce can of flammable adhesive, which are all regulated materials.

On April 1, 1999, at a cargo air carrier's sort facility in New York City, a box containing a cylinder charged with a flammable compressed gas caught fire. The electronic igniter on the torch head, which was attached to the gas cylinder, was discovered with its switch in the ``on'' position. Apparently, the package contents, which were loosely arranged, shifted enough to activate the trigger of the torch head, which ignited the gas, causing a flame that ignited the package.

On February 21, 1999, at the Detroit Metropolitan Wayne County Airport,

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while a checked toolbox was being loaded into an aircraft, it exploded and injured two airline employees. One of the items in the toolbox was a butane torch equipped with a refillable gas canister. The passenger who checked the toolbox as baggage claimed that he completely emptied the canister by setting the lever to the open position for approximately four hours.

On August 23, 1998, at Houston International Airport, a toolbox checked as baggage gave off a flame as it was being loaded aboard an aircraft. A micro-torch with a refillable gas canister was found inside the toolbox. The micro-torch lacked safety devices to prevent accidental ignition.

On March 3, 1997, at Dulles International Airport, a small metal suitcase exploded while it was being loaded onto a conveyor belt. A ramp agent was struck in the head by fragments from the exploding suitcase and sustained minor injuries. The explosion appeared to have been caused by a charged butane micro-torch used for heating wax that is applied to skis.

Based on these incidents, **RSPA** and the FAA are concerned that many people may not be fully aware of the provisions of the HMR pertaining to the transportation of torches and similar devices. Ignition of a torch and the subsequent risk of fire aboard an aircraft constitute a grave threat to transportation safety.

II. Requirements for the Transportation of Flammable Gas Torches

Flammable gas torches may be designed in various configurations and differ in their intended use. However, all are forbidden to be carried aboard passenger-carrying aircraft as either checked or carry-on baggage. Butane, propane, and other flammable gases must be offered for transportation and transported in full compliance with the HMR.

Micro-Torches

Cigarette lighters or similar devices (such as mini-or micro-torches) equipped with an ignition element and containing gaseous fuel are regulated under the HMR as Lighters or Lighter refills and subject to the provisions of Secs. 173.21 and 173.308. Section 173.21 forbids the transportation of packages containing a cigarette lighter or similar device equipped with an ignition element and containing fuel, except that a cigarette lighter or a similar device may be shipped if the design of the device and its inner packaging has been examined by an approved laboratory, and specifically approved by the Associate Administrator for Hazardous Materials Safety. Transportation regulations which apply to these devices include fuel capacity and filling limits, pressure capability of the device, and packaging restrictions. Devices containing a flammable gas must conform to the quantity limits and packaging requirements specified in Sec. 173.308.

Larger Torches

A flammable gas torch that includes as one of its components a cylinder charged with liquified butane or propane gas is regulated

under the HMR as Liquified petroleum gas, UN 1075, and subject to the packaging requirements of Sec. 173.304. Flammable gases are forbidden on passenger-carrying aircraft. Flammable gases may be transported on cargo aircraft only if they are packaged, marked, and labeled, and otherwise conform to the requirements of the HMR. A torch head, many of which are self-igniting, may not be attached to the cylinder. In the above-described incidents, the owners of the torches did not remove the torch heads before packing them, which greatly increases the probability that the torch will activate and start a fire.

III. Reminder to Passengers, Cargo Offerors and Transporters

Anyone who offers for transportation or transports torches is encouraged to carefully review the requirements in the HMR, to examine all shipping procedures, and, where necessary, take measures to prevent potential incidents in transportation. Passengers, shippers, and carriers are reminded that the offering for transportation or carriage aboard aircraft of any forbidden material in violation of the HMR may subject them to enforcement action, including the assessment of criminal or civil penalties.

Additional information on the requirements for shipping torches may also be obtained by calling the **RSPA** Hazardous Materials Information Center at (800) HMR49-22 (467-4922) between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Eastern time, Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays, or the FAA Dangerous Goods and Cargo Security Program at (202) 267-7530. Information is also available at the following Internet sites: <http://hazmat.dot.gov/> and <http://cas.faa.gov/cas/dgp.htm>.

Issued in Washington, DC, on September 24, 1999.
Alan I. Roberts,
Associate Administrator for Hazardous Materials Safety.
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