

SAFETY ALERT

OnStar SYSTEMS AND EXPLOSIVES

INCIDENT DATE:

Ongoing

INCIDENT LOCATION:

Any site involving the preparation and handling of explosives.



DESCRIPTION OF THE INCIDENT:

The issue of the GMC / Chevrolet vehicles equipped with the OnStar communication system and the incidental operations involving the preparation and handling of explosives, is again being brought up. In 2002, the CAGC issued an industry bulletin addressing this issue; "There have been an increasing number of vehicles showing up on location(s), which are equipped with OnStar. In light of this, we have contacted General Motors Technical Department to be sure we have a clear understanding of how this system works and what impact it will have during a perforating operation. (Seismic operations utilize the same style of detonator) Technical Specifications:

- Mobile Frequency Transmit 824-855 MHz
- Base Transmit 824-900 MHz
- Power Output 3 watts maximum with an Odbi antenna

The system works the same as an analog cellular phone. When the key is in the "Off" position the system wakes up for one (1) minute every nine (9) minutes to search for commands (e.g.: door unlock). The system is active in this mode for 48 hours and then shuts down completely.

With the key in the "On" position the system searches more frequently for OnStar commands."

RECOMMENDATIONS AND OUTCOMES:

Vehicles, equipped with the OnStar system or other similar communications equipment, are not to be permitted to enter the active area (blasting zone) where the preparation of explosives is ongoing. The blasting zone is considered to be a 50m radius from the explosives. All communication devices are to be turned off, with in the blasting zone, during the preparation and handling of explosives.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Part 33 of the Alberta OH & S Code, Schedule 10, Table 3, indicates a minimum separation of 5 meters between cellular telephones and explosives. This is also supported by the Institute of Makers of Explosives (IME) SLP # 20 Table 3. The British Columbia Regulations, regarding minimum separation distances, refer to the IME Table 3. Ultimately; there remains the concern for the accidental detonation of explosives in close proximity to Radio Frequency (RF).

CONTACT INFORMATION:

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