

# CPSC Issues Warning for Paintball Guns

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) has issued a warning about paintball guns. The warning is based on CPSC's investigation of two deaths caused by carbon-dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) canisters flying off these guns.

Both deaths occurred because users unscrewed the brass or nickel-plated valve from the canister when removing the canister assembly from a paintball gun. This action turned the pressurized canister into a deadly projectile.

In the first incident, which occurred in June 2003, a 15-year-old boy died after a CO<sub>2</sub> canister he was removing hit him in the head. The second incident occurred in February 2004, and involved a female bystander. Someone else was removing a canister when it flew loose and hit her. While these investigations aren't complete, the CPSC is issuing this warning to help others avoid the hazard.

"We are very concerned about the recent deaths associated with paintball-gun canisters," said CPSC Chairman Hal Stratton. "...Even though our investigation is not complete, we believe it is urgent to provide this safety message about the valve detaching from the canister while unscrewing it from the paintball gun."

The CPSC also recommends that people make sure any modifications they make to the paintball gun or the CO<sub>2</sub> canister are done properly. For example, installing anti-siphon tubes involves removing and reinstalling the canister valve. It is critical that the valve be reinstalled with the appropriate adhesive and the proper torque. Follow all these other procedures, too:

- Make sure the brass or nickel-plated canister valve is securely attached to the canister and rotates with the canister, instead of unscrewing from it. Suggestion: Use paint to mark the brass valve and the CO<sub>2</sub> canister so you can tell if the valve and canister are rotating together while being removed from the gun.

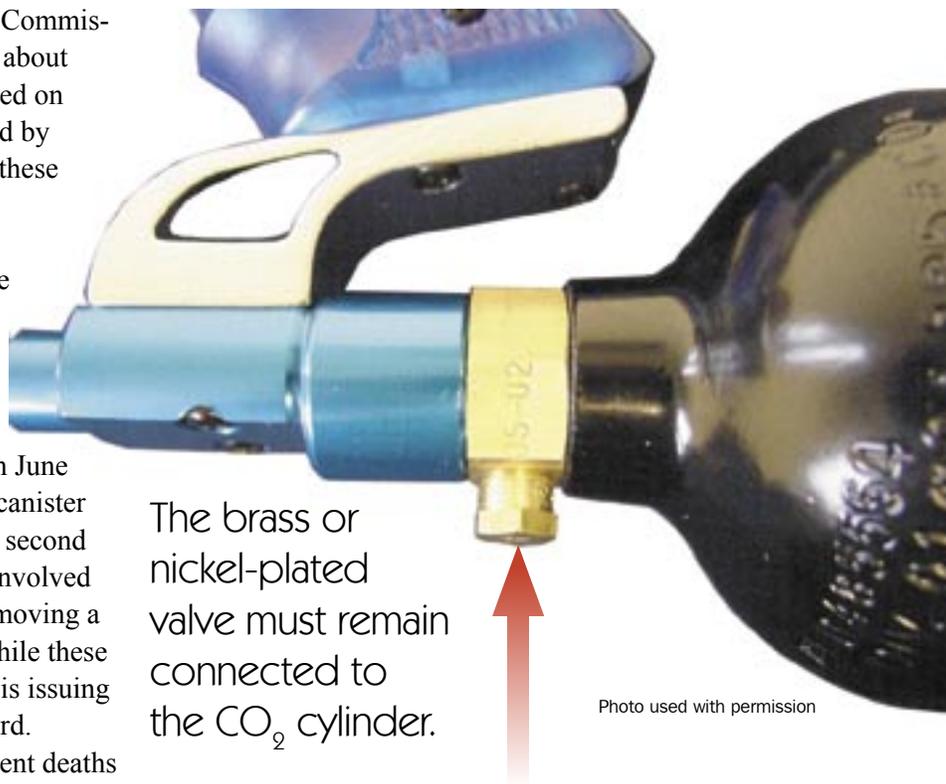


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The brass or nickel-plated valve must remain connected to the CO<sub>2</sub> cylinder.

- The canister assembly should unscrew from the paintball gun in about three or four full turns. If you finish the fourth full turn and the canister hasn't come loose, stop and take it to a professional.

- Do not unscrew the canister if the valve does not rotate with the canister unless the latter is discharged completely.

- To discharge a canister, point the barrel of the paint gun down—away from anyone—and then pull the trigger until the canister is discharged.

- If you find the valve loose after removing a canister, reinstall the valve, using the proper adhesive and torque. ■

You can review the CPSC warning at [www.cpsc.gov/CPSCPUB/PREREL/prhtml04/04105.html](http://www.cpsc.gov/CPSCPUB/PREREL/prhtml04/04105.html).