

Ammunition & Air Travel

Are you planning that hunting trip of a lifetime to Alaska? Perhaps you plan to participate in a civil war reenactment event, or possibly compete in a skeet shooting match? If your plans involve air travel, the Federal Aviation Administration wants you to have a safe, legal and enjoyable trip and ensure you are aware of the limitations and restrictions on traveling with small arms ammunition or muzzle loading supplies.

Title 49, Code of Federal Regulations (49 CFR) regulates the transportation of hazardous materials by all four modes (air, highway, vessel, rail). The regulations allow small arms ammunition for personal use to be carried by a passenger in checked baggage, if securely packaged in boxes or other packagings specifically designed to carry small amounts of ammunition. Ammunition clips and magazines must also be securely boxed. While domestic regulations do not limit the amount of ammunition, most airlines limit ammunition in checked baggage to a maximum of 11 pounds per passenger.

What about muzzleloader powder/propellants?

Propelling charges such as black powder and black powder substitutes are not allowed in passenger baggage.

Civil penalties can be assessed against a passenger who improperly offers these items in air transportation. The transportation of these materials should only be performed by a person with knowledge of the hazardous material regulations. For destinations within the United States, contacting your supplier and having them ship these materials directly to your destination is a great way to ensure it is done properly.

What about primers?

Primers, cap type, are not allowed in passenger baggage.

While certain primers can be transported, others are forbidden in air transportation. Again, any transportation of these materials should only be performed by a person with knowledge of the hazardous material regulations. The best way to ensure compliance is to have the primers shipped directly to your destination by the supplier or purchase the primers upon arrival at your destination. Remember the motto: "Avoid a flight and buy on site".

What if I am traveling overseas?

For international air transportation, the regulations permit up to 11 pounds of small arms ammunition per passenger in checked baggage. Since airlines may have more restrictive policies, it is prudent to contact your airline in advance to ensure they allow small arms ammunition in checked baggage. Black powder, black powder substitutes, and primers are forbidden from international air transportation in passenger baggage. Many problems can be avoided by coordinating in advance with hunting guides or local retailers in the country to which you are traveling. Leave the preparation and shipping of the hazardous materials to the experts.

More information can be obtained by contacting the nearest Federal Aviation Administration, Security & Hazardous Materials Office. Contact information can be found at www.faa.gov. Information on international air transportation can be found at www.iata.org.