

# Grenade Confidence Clips - An Engineering Solution

[Return to Cover page](#)

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In September 2007, a Soldier lost his arm when a grenade detonated as he attempted to remove tape from the safety pin and fuze. Two other Soldiers in his squad were also seriously injured in the incident. The Soldier who was permanently injured in that incident was removing tape from an M3A2. Had it been an M67 grenade, the Soldier would have been killed.

Every day, a Soldier somewhere will tape the safety pin and lever of a freshly issued hand grenade. Sometimes he will tape the safety pin to keep it from rattling. Sometimes he will tape a grenade to his combat vest. Sometimes he will tape the grenade for no other reason than that was what he was told to do.

According to the US Army Forces Command (FORSCOM) Explosives Safety and Range Manager, taping isn't necessary. "To the best of my knowledge, there is no evidence in the history of the M67 hand grenade to suggest that it requires taping and there is no evidence that a Soldier needs to tape it because of inherent safety issues". There is no real reason to tape a grenade because the Army has grenade pouches for Soldiers to transport them. These pouches eliminate the possibility of the grenade getting snagged on something or becoming entangled.

The Army issued two safety alerts in 2007. Then, after the incident in September 2007 in Al Asad, Iraq, the US Army Joint Munitions Command (JMC) issued an Ammunition Information Notice on the safety risk of taping



grenades. From a supply standpoint, there is a good probability that lot numbers are pulled off with the removal of tape. Once those numbers are gone, the ammunition becomes unserviceable. Ammunition experts say tape also leaves a sticky residue on grenades, and it takes a lot of time to remove tape, which makes the inspection process more lengthy than needed. With some 900,000 grenades currently in service, taping grenades exposes ammo handlers and Soldiers to unnecessary risks.



In an effort to address the perception in the field that current safety mechanisms are inadequate and eliminate Soldier taping of grenades, the US Army Research and Development Command has worked with FORSCOM since 2007 to develop, test, and field a confidence clip. Although engineering and testing took some time, it was done right and is worth the wait. The new confidence clip is an engineering solution to securely hold the pin in place and should increase Soldier confidence in safety of M67 grenades. The clip goes between the M213 fuze and the M67 grenade body. The US Army Infantry School at Fort

Benning, GA, is the proponent for the hand grenade clip, which was tested at the Soldier Battle Lab.



Retrofitting of existing stockpiles of M67s with the

confidence clip began in December 2008. The remaining stockpile is scheduled to be retrofitted between January 2009 and June 2011. Beginning in July 2009, all new M67 hand grenades produced will include the confidence clip. Army ammunition experts are optimistic this new feature will increase Soldier confidence and negate the perceived need to tape grenades. Help get the word out that an engineering fix is on the way and grenade taping needs to become a thing of the past.