

**Information Bulletin No. IB09-008**

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## **ALERT**

### **Pumpkin Guns**

We have recently been made aware of pressure equipment being used to contain compressed air as a source of energy to propel pumpkins from “pumpkin guns” at public displays in Alberta.

This practice may be safe providing due care and attention is given to the design of the equipment, and providing the installation and operation is in accordance with the Safety Codes Act. Pressurized equipment that is not adequately and properly designed can present a significant safety hazard. An equipment failure could have lethal consequences to bystanders. A rupture of the equipment could propel shards or pieces of the equipment at bystanders at the same or higher velocities as it propels the pumpkin from the barrel.

ABSA inspectors recently inspected two separate pumpkin guns in Alberta as a result of public safety concerns. In one installation, the pressure vessel that was being used had been altered by a welding shop without authorization. In the other, a vessel that had been scrapped was used as the pressure container. In both installations, the pressure vessels were being operated illegally without a certificate of inspection permit as required under the Safety Codes Act, Pressure Equipment Safety Regulation. In both cases, the owners were instructed to cease operation of the equipment immediately until they could demonstrate compliance with the legislation.

Pressure vessels can rupture causing death or injury. Owners and operators of pressure equipment are responsible for its safe operation, and for the safety of people that could be impacted by its operation. The use of pressure equipment that does not meet the requirements of the Safety Codes Act is an offense subject to fines and/or imprisonment. Rules regarding the safe design, construction, installation and operation of pressure equipment are contained in Alberta’s Pressure Equipment Safety Regulation and the Safety Codes Act. ABSA administers the Alberta Safety Codes Act and Regulations concerning pressure equipment, power engineers and pressure welders. Anyone having questions regarding the safe operation of pressure equipment should refer to the Act and Regulations or contact ABSA, the pressure equipment safety authority.



Mike Poehlmann  
Acting Chief Inspector and Administrator  
Pressure Equipment  
Province of Alberta