



NWCG Equipment Technology Committee

Equipment Bulletin



Date: February 25, 2016

ETC-EB-2016-01

Subject: Phase-out of drip torches that do not comply with US Department of Transportation and US Occupational Safety and Health Administration specifications

Issue: Some older drip torches do not meet US Department of Transportation (DOT) specifications for transportation of fuel and are not colored red to meet US Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulations.

Action Recommended By: June 2019

Background: Drip torches were not originally designed to meet DOT hazardous material¹ or OSHA container storage and color² regulations. DOT testing was completed to determine compliance for transportation of full drip torches, and the drip torch did not pass. Since the torches did not meet DOT specifications, they could not be legally transported with fuel in them. In 2003, drip torches were redesigned to meet DOT specifications and later were painted red to meet OSHA regulations for dispensing, storing, and transporting fuel.

All new drip torches purchased by the Federal land management agencies must meet Forest Service specification 5100-614. The specification requires that drip torches meet DOT specifications, including the addition of a flammable liquid label, and to be powder coated red.

In 2009, the Equipment Technology Committee recommended a 10 year phase-in of the new drip torches (see the Interagency Transportation Guide for Gasoline, Mixed Gas, Drip-Torch Fuel, and Diesel)³ in order to provide a reasonable transition period and to reduce the cost burden of meeting this recommendation. Units are strongly encouraged to transition to red drip torches that meet DOT specifications (as required in specification 5100-614) as fuel can be legally stored and transported in these drip torches. A United Nations (UN) symbol is cast or engraved into each drip torch that meets DOT specifications (figure 1).

¹ 49 CFR parts 171-180

² 29 CFR parts 1910.106 and 1910.144

³ refer to Chapter 14 of the *Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations*



Figure 1. The UN symbol and required text is cast into the bottom of this drip torch.

Recommended Action: Federal land management agencies should discontinue use of all drip torches that do not have a UN marking and are not colored red by **June 2019**.

Additional Information: For further information, review the Interagency Transportation Guide for Gasoline, Mixed Gas, Drip-Torch Fuel, and Diesel (<https://www.nwcg.gov/publications/442>) and the Interagency Ground Ignition Guide (<https://www.nwcg.gov/publications/443>) for questions, please contact Shawn Steber at the Missoula Technology and Development Center via email at smsteber@fs.fed.us or by phone at 406-829-6785.