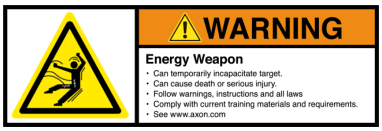
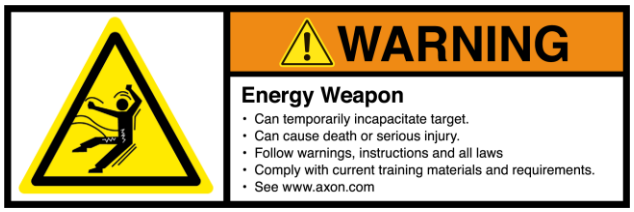
# TASER Handheld Energy Weapon Warnings, Instructions, and Information: Law Enforcement




## IMPORTANT SAFETY AND HEALTH INFORMATION




This document presents important safety warnings, instructions and information intended to minimize hazards associated with the use of an Axon Enterprise, Inc. ("Axon") TASER energy weapon. These instructions and warnings are for your protection as well as the safety of others. **Read the entire document before handling or using an energy weapon.**

When used as directed in probe-deployment mode, energy weapons are designed to temporarily incapacitate a person from a safer distance than some other force options, while reducing the likelihood of death or serious injury. However, any use of force, including the use of an energy weapon, involves risks that a person may get hurt or die due to the effects of the energy weapon, physical incapacitation, physical exertion, unforeseen circumstances or individual susceptibilities. Following the instructions and warnings in this document will reduce the likelihood that energy weapon use will cause death or serious injury.

These warnings and instructions are effective **September 20, 2022**, and supersede all prior revisions and relevant Training Bulletins. **Immediately distribute this document to all TASER energy weapon users**. The most current warnings are also available online at www.axon.com.

1. **Complete training first.** Significant differences exist between different TASER energy weapon models. Do not handle or use any energy weapon model unless you have been trained by a Certified TASER Instructor on that particular model.[1]
2. **Read and follow.** Read, understand and follow all current instructions, warnings and relevant TASER training materials before handling or using a TASER energy weapon. Failure to do so could increase the risk of death or serious injury to the user, force recipient, or others.
3. **Obey applicable laws, regulations and agency Guidance.** Use of energy weapons must be legally justified and comply with applicable federal, state and local laws or regulations. The decision to use an energy weapon in a particular manner or circumstance must follow applicable law enforcement agency Guidance.[2]

This document uses a signal word panel to mark specific warnings:

**⚠WARNING** This signal word panel indicates **a potentially hazardous situation which if not avoided could increase the risk of death or serious injury.**

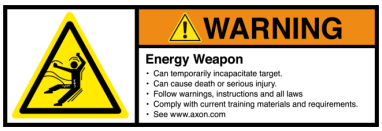
Warnings may be followed by instructions and information to help reduce risks, avoid the hazard, and improve energy weapon safety.

## SAFETY INFORMATION: ENERGY WEAPON RISKS AND RISK AVOIDANCE

**⚠WARNING** **Secondary Injury.** The loss of control resulting from an energy weapon exposure may result in injuries due to a fall or other uncontrolled movement. When practicable, avoid using an energy weapon when secondary injuries are likely unless the situation justifies an increased risk.

[1] A Certified TASER Instructor is not an Axon agent, but maintains a current TASER instructor certification and complies with Axon's most current training requirements, materials and license agreement. Representations inconsistent with this document made by any Certified TASER Instructor are expressly disclaimed.

[2] Law enforcement agencies are force experts and are solely responsible for their own Guidance. "Guidance" includes policy, custom, procedure, rule, order, directive, training, continuum and standard. Axon has no authority to mandate Guidance, set policy, require training, or establish standards of care or conduct.




Loss of control associated with energy weapon use can have several causes including:

- **Seizure.** Repetitive stimuli (e.g., flashing light or electrical stimuli) can induce seizure in some people, which may increase risk of death or serious injury. This risk may be increased in a person with epilepsy or seizure history, or if electrical stimuli pass through the head. Emotional stress and physical exertion, both likely in incidents involving energy weapons and other uses of force, are reported as seizure-precipitating factors.
- **Fainting.** A person may experience an exaggerated response to an energy weapon exposure, or threatened exposure, which may result in fainting or falling.
- **Muscle contraction, incapacitation or startle response.** Energy weapon use may cause loss of control from muscle contraction, incapacitation or startle response.

To reduce these risks, consider the person's location before using an energy weapon.

**When practicable, avoid using an energy weapon on a person in the following circumstances unless the situation justifies an increased risk:**

- is on an elevated or unstable surface (e.g., tree, roof, ladder, ledge, balcony, porch, bridge or stair);
- could fall on a sharp object or hard surface (e.g., holding a knife, falling on glass);
- is less able to catch or protect self in a fall (e.g., restrained or handcuffed);
- is running;
- is operating or riding any mode of transportation (e.g., vehicle, bus, bicycle, motorcycle, or train), conveyance (e.g., escalator, moving walkway, elevator, skateboard, rollerblades), or machinery; or
- is located in water, mud or marsh environment if the ability to move is restricted.

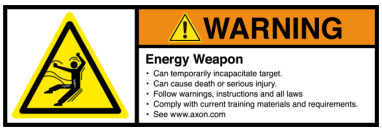
**WARNING** **Fire and Explosion Hazard**. Energy weapon use can result in a fire or explosion when flammable gases, fumes, vapors, liquids or materials are present. Use of an energy weapon in presence of fire or explosion hazard could increase the risk of death or serious injury. When practicable, avoid using an energy weapon in known flammable hazard conditions without justification.

- An energy weapon can ignite explosive or flammable materials, liquids, fumes, gases or vapors (e.g., gasoline, vapor or gas found in sewer lines or methamphetamine labs, butane-type lighters, flammable hair gels, some self-defense sprays, and alcohol-based hand sanitizer). Do not knowingly use an energy weapon in the presence of any explosive or flammable substance unless the situation justifies an increased risk.

**WARNING** **Muscle Contraction or Strain-Related Injury.** Energy weapons in probe-deployment mode can cause muscle contractions that may result in injury, including bone fractures.

**WARNING** **Higher Risk Populations.** Energy weapon use on a pregnant, infirm, elderly, low body-mass index person or small child could increase the risk of death or serious injury. As with any force option, energy weapon use has not been scientifically tested on these populations. Use an energy weapon on such persons **only** if the situation justifies an increased risk.

- Energy weapons in probe-deployment mode can cause muscle contractions resulting in injuries similar to those from physical exertion, athletics or sports. Such injuries may include hernia rupture, dislocation, tear, or other injury to soft tissue, organ, muscle, tendon, ligament, cartilage, disc, nerve, bone or joint. Fractures to bone, including compression fracture to vertebrae, may occur.
- These injuries may be more serious and more likely to occur in people with pre-existing injuries, orthopedic hardware, conditions or special susceptibilities, including pregnancy, low bone density, spinal injury, or previous muscle, disc, ligament, joint, bone or tendon damage or surgery. Such injuries may also occur in drive-stun applications or when a person reacts to the energy weapon deployment by making a rapid or unexpected movement.




**WARNING** **Physiologic and Metabolic Effects.** As with most force options, energy weapon exposure can cause physiologic and metabolic changes, stress, and pain. For some particularly susceptible individuals, the risk of death or serious injury may increase with one or more energy weapon exposures. When practicable, minimize repeated, continuous or simultaneous exposures without justification.

**Physiologic and Metabolic Changes.** Energy weapon use can cause physiologic or metabolic changes that may increase the risk of death or serious injury for some particularly susceptible individuals. These include changes in blood chemistry, blood pressure, respiration, heart rate and rhythm, and adrenaline and stress hormones, among others.

**Stress and Pain.** Energy weapon use, anticipation of use, or response to use can cause startle, panic, fear, anger, rage, temporary discomfort, pain or stress, which may increase the risk of death or serious injury for some particularly susceptible individuals.

**Particularly Susceptible Individuals.** Include those who are already physiologically or metabolically compromised due to heart disease, asthma or other pulmonary conditions, and people suffering from excited delirium, profound agitation, severe exhaustion, drug intoxication or chronic drug abuse, or over-exertion from physical struggle.

In human studies of electrical discharge from a single completed circuit of up to 15 seconds, the physiologic, metabolic, and stress hormone changes were comparable to or less than changes expected from physical exertion similar to struggling, resistance, fighting, fleeing, or from the application of some other force tools or techniques.

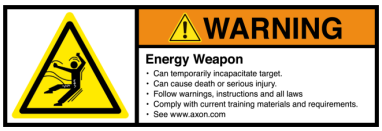
To reduce the risk from energy weapon exposure:

1. **Minimize the number and duration of energy weapon exposures.** Use the shortest duration of energy weapon exposure objectively reasonable to accomplish lawful objectives, and reassess the subject's behavior, reaction and resistance before initiating or continuing the exposure. If an energy weapon deployment is ineffective in achieving compliance, consider alternative control measures in conjunction with or separate from the energy weapon.
2. **Avoid simultaneous energy weapon exposures.** Do not knowingly use multiple energy weapons or multiple completed circuits at the same time without justification.
3. **Control and restrain immediately.** Begin control and restraint procedures, including during energy weapon exposure ("cuffing under power"), as soon as reasonably safe and practical.
4. **Avoid touching probes/wires during energy weapon discharge.** Controlling and restraining a subject during energy weapon exposure may put the energy weapon user and those assisting at risk of accidental or unintended shock. Avoid touching the probes and wires and the areas between the probes during the electrical discharge.

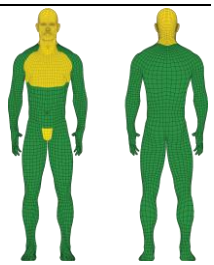
**WARNING** **Cardiac Capture.** Energy weapon exposure very near the heart has a low probability of inducing extra heart beats (cardiac capture). In rare circumstances, cardiac capture could lead to cardiac arrest. When practicable, avoid targeting the frontal chest area near the heart to reduce the risk of potential serious injury or death.

Cardiac capture may be more likely in children and thin adults because the heart is usually closer to the skin surface, and closer to the energy weapon probes if deployed near the heart (dart-to-heart distance). Serious complications could also arise in those with impaired heart function or with an implanted cardiac pacemaker or defibrillator.

To reduce the risk of injury:




1. **Use preferred target areas.** The preferred target areas (green) are below the neck area for back shots and the lower center mass (below chest) for front shots. The preferred target areas increase dart-to-heart distance and reduce cardiac risks. Back shots are preferable to front shots when practicable.
2. **Avoid sensitive areas.** When practicable, avoid intentionally targeting the energy weapon on sensitive areas of the body such as the face, eyes, head, throat, chest area (area of the heart), breast, groin, genitals or known pre-existing injury areas.



## SAFETY INFORMATION: ENERGY WEAPON EFFECTIVENESS

An energy weapon, like any force option, does not always function as intended and is not effective on every subject. As with any use of force, if a particular option is not effective, consider using other force options, disengaging, or using other alternatives per agency Guidance. **Always have a back-up plan.**

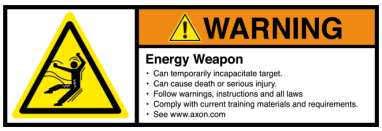
**WARNING** **Subject Not Incapacitated.** An ineffective energy weapon application could increase the risk of death or serious injury to the user, the subject or others. If an energy weapon does not operate as intended or if subject is not incapacitated, disengage and consider redeploying the energy weapon or using other force options in accordance with agency Guidance.

An energy weapon's effects may be limited by many factors, including absence of delivered electrical charge due to missed dart(s), clothing disconnect, intermittent connection, or wire breakage; probe locations or spread; subject's muscle mass; or movement. Some factors that may limit the ability to control a subject include:

- **Subject may not be fully incapacitated.** Even though a subject may be affected by an energy weapon in one part of his body, the subject may maintain full muscle control of other portions of his body, particularly the hands and arms. Control and restrain a subject as soon as practicable and be prepared if the subject is not fully incapacitated.
- **Subject may recover immediately.** A subject receiving an energy weapon discharge may immediately regain physical or cognitive abilities upon cessation of the delivered energy weapon discharge. Control and restrain a subject as soon as practicable and be prepared if the subject immediately recovers.
- **Drive-stun mode is for pain compliance only.** The use of a handheld energy weapon in drive-stun mode is painful, but generally does not cause incapacitation. Drive-stun use may not be effective on emotionally disturbed persons, those under the influence of alcohol or drugs, or others who may not respond to pain due to a mind-body disconnect. Avoid using repeated drive-stuns on such individuals if compliance is not achieved.
- **Probes may deviate.** Energy weapons are not precision-aimed weapons. Probe discharge, flight trajectory and impact location can be affected by numerous factors, including cartridge or probe accuracy; failure of cartridge to properly deploy; strong air movements; user and subject movements; or probe striking subject, clothing or object with insufficient force or trajectory to penetrate or adhere to subject. Deviations can result in limited or lack of effectiveness.
- **Energy weapon or cartridge may fail to deploy or operate.** No weapon system, force option or energy weapon is always operational or effective. If an energy weapon, cartridge or accessory is inoperable or fails to function, consider reloading and redeploying, deploying a backup cartridge, using other force options, disengaging or using other alternatives per agency Guidance.

## SAFETY INFORMATION: INJURY OR INFECTION

An energy weapon may cause injury as a result of the probe or electrical discharge. The nature and severity of these effects depends on numerous factors including the area of exposure, method of application, individual susceptibility, and other circumstances surrounding energy weapon use, exposures and after care. Medical care may be required.




**⚠WARNING** **Eye Injury Hazard.** A TASER probe, electrode, or electrical discharge that contacts or comes close to an eye can result in serious injury, including permanent vision loss. DO NOT intentionally aim an energy weapon, including the LASER, at the eye of a person or animal without justification.

**LASER Light Hazard.** Energy weapons use LASER targeting aids. LASERs can cause serious eye injury, including permanent vision loss. **NEVER** aim a LASER at an aircraft or the operator of an aircraft or moving vehicle.

**⚠WARNING** **Probe or Electrode Injury, Puncture, Scarring or Infection Hazard.** Energy weapon use may cause a permanent mark, burn, scar, puncture or other skin or tissue damage. Infection could result in death or serious injury. Scarring risk may be increased when using an energy weapon in drive-stun mode. Increased skin irritation, abrasion, mark, burning or scarring may occur with an energy weapon with multiple cartridge bays when used in drive-stun or 3-point deployment modes.

**⚠WARNING** **Penetration Injury.** The TASER probe has a small dart point which may cause a penetration injury to a blood vessel or internal organ, including lung, bone or nerve. The probe or dart point (which may detach or break) can puncture or become embedded into a bone, organ or tissue, which may require immediate medical care, surgical removal, or may result in scarring, infection or other serious injury.

To reduce the risk of serious or permanent injury:

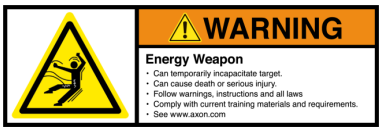
1. **Provide medical care as needed.** Injury due to penetration of a probe or dart point into a blood vessel, organ, nerve or bone may require medical care. A probe, dart point or barb embedded in a sensitive area such as the eye, genitals, breast, neck, throat or vascular structure may cause serious injury and require medical care. As with any injury of this type, infection or tetanus and resulting complications may occur. In accordance with your agency's Guidance, ensure access to medical care if needed.
2. **Follow agency Guidance for removing probes.** Probe removal may cause injury. Leaving a probe in the body may result in pain or injury. Follow your agency's Guidance and biohazard protocols for probe removal. In the case of embedment, organ or bone penetration, or probe, dart point, or barb detachment, immediate medical care and possible surgical removal may be required.
3. **Follow biohazard protocols.** Use appropriate biohazard protocols including isolation procedures and protective equipment (e.g., gloves, masks, and washing of hands and exposed areas as necessary). Follow your agency's Guidance and appropriate biohazard, waste and evidence protocols when dealing with biohazards.

## SAFETY INFORMATION: ENERGY WEAPON DEPLOYMENT AND USE

**⚠WARNING** Energy weapons and cartridges are weapons and, as with any weapon, require safe weapon-handling practices and secure storage. Follow practices herein and additional requirements in your agency's Guidance. Failure to follow these warnings may result in an increased risk of death or serious injury.

**⚠WARNING** **Confusing Handgun with energy weapon.** Confusing a handgun with an energy weapon could increase the risk of death or serious injury. Learn the differences in the physical feel and holstering characteristics between your energy weapon and your handgun to help reduce the risk of confusion. Axon recommends that the user carry an energy weapon on the opposite side of a handgun to reduce the risk of confusion. Always follow your agency's Guidance and training.

**⚠WARNING** **Trigger Hold-Back Model Differences.** If the trigger is held back, most energy weapons will continue to discharge until the trigger is released or the power source is expended. With an APPM installed, the X2 and X26P can be programmed to stop an energy weapon discharge at 5 seconds *even if the user continues to hold back the trigger*, requiring a deliberate action to re-energize the deployed cartridge. The TASER 7 and TASER 10 offer similar options incorporated into the device (independent of the battery pack).




Know your model and how it works.

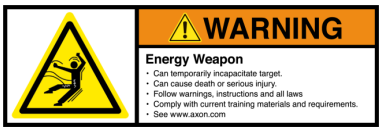
**⚠WARNING** In stressful or noisy circumstances, the APPM, TASER 7 and TASER 10 audible warnings may not be heard.

**⚠WARNING** **Difference in Models and Cartridge Angles.** Know the difference between each TASER energy weapon model and cartridge angles. The M26, X26E, and X26P cartridges have an 8-degree angle; the X2 Smart Cartridges have a 7-degree angle; the TASER 7 cartridges are available with a 3.5-degree (standoff) and 12-degree (close quarter) angle; and the TASER 10 deploys each cartridge individually with no pre-set angle. The recommended deployment distance will depend on the model and cartridge being used. Each user should be properly trained on each model and cartridge they may use in the field and know the required deployment distance necessary to achieve the recommended probe spread.

1. **Use properly.** Use an energy weapon only for its intended purpose, in legally justifiable situations, and in accordance with your agency's Guidance. Do not use for torture or other improper use.
2. **Store in a secure location.** Store energy weapons, cartridges, and accessories in secure locations inaccessible to children and other unauthorized persons to prevent inappropriate access or use.
3. **Use the safety switch.** Place the energy weapon safety switch in the down (SAFE) position when the energy weapon is not in use. Remember to place the energy weapon safety switch in the up (ARMED) position when you intend to use the energy weapon.
4. **Assume energy weapon is loaded.** Always assume that an energy weapon is loaded and capable of discharging. To help avoid an unexpected deployment or discharge, ensure that no live cartridge is in the energy weapon when inserting a battery pack, TASER CAM, or TASER CAM HD recorder, or while performing spark tests (except when function testing the X2, X3, TASER 7 or TASER 10), maintenance, data downloading or battery charging.
5. **Be aware of energy weapon trigger and arc button.** Keep your finger off the trigger and arc buttons until it is legally justifiable to use the energy weapon and you are ready to deploy or discharge.
6. **Know how the energy weapon works.** Significant differences exist between different TASER energy weapon models. Before handling or using any energy weapon, including a multi-shot energy weapon, understand the functioning and effects of that model.
7. **Be aware of X2 and X3 deployment mode.** Be aware of which deployment mode (manual or semi-automatic) is set on the X2 and X3 before use.
8. **Be Aware of X2 Static (Fixed) LASER Sight Mode.** The X2 has static dual LASERs. One LASER is intended to approximately align with the top dart and the other with the bottom dart, both of which are set-up for 15′ (4.6 meters (m)) and 25′ (7.62 m) cartridges at a 15′ distance from the target. The trajectory of the 35′ (10.7 m) long range cartridge will not line up with the bottom LASER when placed in the X2.
9. **Be Aware of TASER 7 Dynamic LASER Sighting.** The TASER 7 is equipped with three LASERs. One LASER is intended to approximately align with the top dart set-up at a 15′ (4.6 meters (m)) distance from the target. The other two LASERs are active depending on the cartridge type loaded (3.5-degree or 12-degree), and are aligned with the approximate trajectory of the bottom probe.
10. **Use simulation (training) cartridges ONLY for training or practice. DO NOT** use an energy weapon loaded with a simulation training cartridge for field use or self-defense. Simulation cartridges are intended for practice only and will have no incapacitating effect on a subject. Simulation cartridges use non-conductive wires and will not transmit electrical pulses to the probes.

## SAFETY INFORMATION: OTHER HAZARDS

**⚠WARNING** **Probe Recoil or Ricochet**. If your target is farther away than the length of the probe wire, or if one or more probes miss the target, the probe can recoil and bounce back to strike the user or a bystander,




causing injury. Probe recoil is more likely with simulation cartridges because of the nylon probe wire used.

Always be sure your intended target is within range. Wear protective eyewear when deploying any energy weapon in training or for practice. Be sure practice targets have a firm backing that allows the probes to stick and not bounce off and strike an unintended person, animal, or object, or continue through the backing and strike objects behind the target.

**⚠WARNING** **Untethered Discharged Probe.** A discharged probe that does not impact a subject or target may become untethered from the wire and travel a significant distance risking serious injury. Always be sure your intended target is within range.

## SAFETY INFORMATION: GENERAL PRECAUTIONS

**⚠WARNING** **Unintentional Energy Weapon Deployment or Discharge Hazard.** Unintentional energy weapon activation, discharge or deployment could increase the risk of death or serious injury to the user, subject or others.

To reduce the risk of unintentional deployment or discharge:

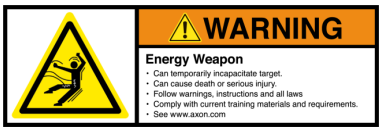
1. **Avoid static electricity.** Keep cartridge away from sources of static electricity. Static electricity can cause an energy weapon to discharge unexpectedly, possibly resulting in serious injury. Carry the energy weapon in an approved holster to minimize static electricity and an unintentional discharge.
2. **Keep body parts away from front of energy weapon or cartridge.** Always keep your hands and body parts away from the front of the energy weapon and cartridge. If the energy weapon discharges or deploys unexpectedly, you could be injured.
3. **Avoid electronic equipment interference.** Electronic transmission equipment close to an energy weapon could interfere with the proper energy weapon operation and cause the energy weapon to deploy or discharge. Keep the energy weapon at least several inches away from other electronic equipment. Place the energy weapon safety switch in the down (SAFE) position whenever it is near electronic equipment, including transmitting radios and cell phones. Remember to place the energy weapon safety switch in the up (ARMED) position before use.
4. **Avoid dropping energy weapon or cartridge.** If an energy weapon or cartridge is dropped or damaged, it may unintentionally deploy or discharge, become inoperable, or fail to function making it unsafe for continued use. If an energy weapon or cartridge has been dropped or damaged, refer to the recommended procedures in the current version of the TASER Training materials.

## SAFETY INFORMATION: MAINTENANCE

**⚠WARNING** Failure to maintain an energy weapon as instructed may cause the energy weapon to malfunction or fail to function optimally, which may increase the risk of death or serious injury. Follow recommended maintenance procedures.

To reduce these risks:

1. **Safely perform spark (function) test before each shift.** Testing helps confirm that the energy weapon is functioning properly. See the current version of the TASER Training materials and Product Manuals for further information on testing.
2. **Avoid using a damaged energy weapon or cartridge.** Do not use a cartridge with a missing blast door unless facing an immediate threat. Energy weapon repair or modification by an unauthorized person may cause the energy weapon to deploy, discharge or malfunction, will void the warranty, and may put the user or other person at risk of death or serious injury. Cartridges with blast doors that have been repaired should only be used for training and not for field use.




3. **Update energy weapon software.** Some energy weapons have updateable software. Current energy weapon software may be obtained by contacting Axon's Customer Service Department or following instructions at www.evidence.com or www.axon.com.
4. **Use only Axon-approved components, batteries, accessories and cartridges.** The energy weapon is a sophisticated electronic system. For proper function, use only Axon-approved components, batteries, accessories and cartridges with your energy weapon. Use of anything other than Axon-approved components, batteries, accessories and cartridges will void the warranty, may cause malfunction, and may put the user or other person at an increased risk of death or serious injury.
5. **Avoid exposure to wet conditions.** If the energy weapon is drenched or immersed in water or other liquid, **DO NOT** use or attempt to use the energy weapon until completing the procedure recommended by the manufacturer.
6. **Keep the cartridge and cartridge contacts clean.** If the contacts on the cartridge or inside the cartridge bay are not kept clean the energy weapon may fail to properly deploy the cartridge.
7. **Know energy weapon and cartridge expected useful life.** Under normal storage, handling, and operating conditions, an energy weapon and cartridges have a 5-year expected useful life. Use or attempted use of an energy weapon or cartridge after its expected useful life may result in malfunctions and lack of effectiveness. Failure to properly care for and maintain an energy weapon or cartridge may substantially reduce or eliminate the expected useful life of the product.

## SAFETY INFORMATION: DISASSEMBLY AND DISPOSAL

**⚠WARNING** Do not disassemble. Refer to your agency's Guidance for proper handling and disposal.