



M-44 FACT SHEET by Predator Defense

Should our great outdoors really be laced with land mines?

Thousands of pets and wild animals have already been killed by M-44s.

People have been poisoned.

An adult has died, 15 years after an M-44 destroyed his health.

And a child narrowly missed death, due to wind direction.

“This is a vital public safety issue. M-44s simply cannot be used safely. They must be banned before a child is killed.”

- Brooks Fahy, Executive Director
predatordefense.org



Predator Defense
Fighting for wildlife since 1990

JUNE 2025 - A question we’ve long asked is whether it will take the death of a child to succeed in banning the M-44s “cyanide bombs” used by our government in 10 states in a futile attempt at predator control. We are still hopeful it won’t, as media coverage and public outrage in demand of a ban has grown exponentially in recent years. But as a high-profile M-44 poisoning in Pocatello, Idaho amply demonstrated in 2017, it is only a matter of time before one of these deadly devices does kill a child.

Thousands of pets and wild animals have already been killed by M-44s. People have been poisoned and suffered long-term health effects. One adult (pictured below) has died in Utah, following cyanide exposure from an M-44, and Canyon Mansfield, the teenager in Idaho who was poisoned in 2017 and lost his dog, appeared to have only escaped death because of wind direction.

We continue to work toward a full public lands ban through federal legislation, while also pushing local jurisdictions to lead the way. We played a key role in driving Idaho’s 2017 statewide ban and hope to make it permanent. We achieved a statewide ban in Oregon in 2019. In 2023 we got M-44s banned on all 245 million acres of BLM land. But currently, all progress is at stake, due to the politics in D.C.

IN MEMORIAM

Dennis Slaugh, 1942-2018
Vernal, UT

Dennis’ M-44 injury in 2003 caused permanent disability, making him unable to work. It was listed as a contributing cause on his death certificate.

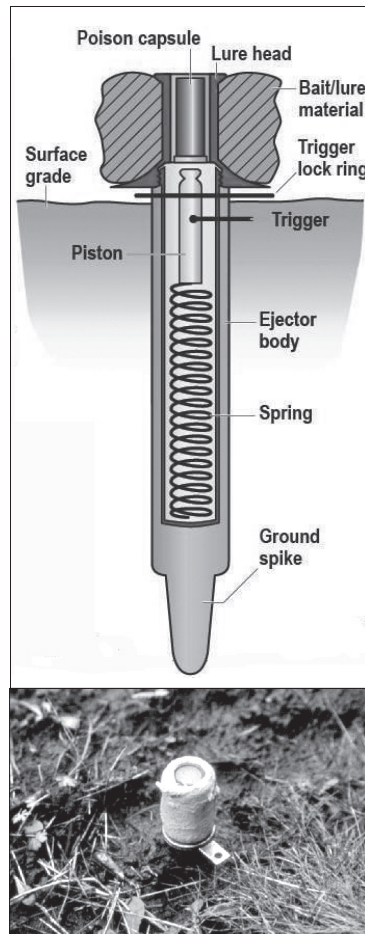


In honor of all victims and for public safety’s sake, LET’S GET M-44 “CYANIDE BOMBS” BANNED!

M-44 "CYANIDE BOMBS" ARE KILLERS THAT NEED TO GO

What are M-44s?

- ▶ M-44s are spring-activated devices that eject a deadly dose of sodium cyanide, which the EPA has rated at Category 1, the highest degree of acute toxicity. Sodium cyanide suffocates the body's cells. It causes dizziness, weakness, labored breathing, and nausea, followed by a weak/irregular heartbeat, unconsciousness, convulsions, and death. Victims exhibit intense anxiety. They can die within minutes or suffer for hours.
- ▶ A federal program within the USDA called Wildlife Services has been using M-44s for decades to kill native predators on behalf of the agricultural industry.
- ▶ The heads of M-44s are applied with a smelly bait that lures coyotes, but also attracts non-target wildlife and dogs. M-44s are triggered when lightly pulled on. There have been reports of triggering due to a mere light touch. Their poison granules can spray up to five feet.
- ▶ Wildlife agents are required to carry an antidote, amyl nitrate. But people who stumble across M-44s, which are often unmarked, have no such protection. And young children, dogs and wild animals can't read warning signs.



Why M-44 use must end

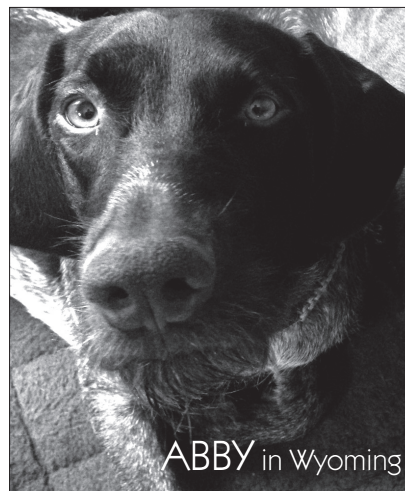
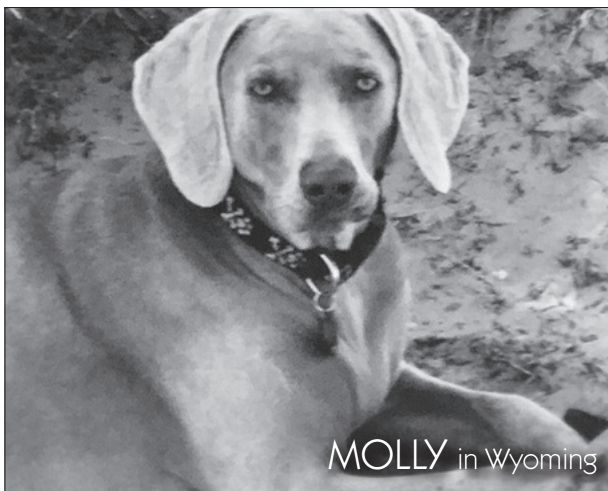
THE UNINTENDED TARGETS OF UNSAFE DEVICES: Wildlife Services' own records show numerous mistakes made and risks taken with M-44s. Once placed in the field, they are essentially uncontrolled. Countless animals are never found after an M-44 firing. M-44s account for thousands of wild animal deaths a year per USDA Program Data, plus an untold numbers of domestic dogs. Whistle-blowers say agents rarely record pet deaths, are often told to lie, and often discard the evidence (see film at predatordefense.org/exposed). But the bottom line remains: M-44s can never be used safely because children, dogs and wild animals don't understand warning signs.

THE INEFFECTIVENESS: The impact M-44s have on preventing livestock losses is minuscule and not worth the profound risks and harm they cause to pets, humans, wildlife and ecosystems. M-44s comprise a tiny fraction of all lethal control methods used by Wildlife Services. Meanwhile, predation is one of the smallest causes of livestock loss (behind disease, birthing problems, weather, digestive issues...even poisoning).

THE COUNTER-PRODUCTIVENESS: Science increasingly shows that lethal predator control is unnecessary and counter-productive. For example, poisoning coyotes has not been shown to be effective in reducing predation on livestock and game species; in fact, it may increase it, as coyotes respond to killing by increasing reproduction rates. So the reason USDA Wildlife Services gives for needing to use M-44s—predator control—is without merit.

Recent M-44 Victims

Countless dogs suffer an inhumane death each year from M-44 poisoning. Yours could be next. This is unacceptable!



You can help us ban M-44 "cyanide bombs" by urging your Senators & Representatives to support Canyon's Law, a tax-saving, common-sense bill introduced in Congress in June 2025. Canyon's Law will improve public safety and protect wildlife and pets in the great outdoors by banning M-44s on public lands.

Learn more & support our work at predatordefense.org/m44s.htm.