

# Rolling Powder Charges

## *Preparation Of Charges*

State and Federal regulations regarding the transportation of black powder must be followed at all times (only transported in approved containers). This means that powder charges cannot be prepared prior to coming to an event. Special care must be taken to mitigate the many hazards present in the field to ensure the safety of the operation.

The charges should be carefully prepared in cylindrical packages using plastic “baggies” and heavy aluminium foil. Make sure that the foil does not have any holes or tears that would allow powder to come into contact with a lingering spark. The following outlines the assembly of foil wrapped charges.

1. Use a highly polished wood or metal mandrel or a water glass.
2. Wrap several layers of heavy duty aluminium foil around it. Leave enough at one end so the foil can be folded to form the bottom. The mandrel should have a very slight taper so the foil bag can be easily taken off of it.
3. Form the bottom by folding the foil over the mandrel and pressing it against the end. You can pick up the foil and mandrel and, turning it upside down, tap it on a hard, flat surface.
4. Pour measured powder into the “baggie.”
5. Roll the powder in the “baggie,” being sure to get all air out and not to tear the “baggie.” Fold and secure the flap on the “baggie.”
6. Remove the foil bag from the mandrel and place the powder bag into it.
7. Fold the excess foil around the top of the powder charge. Turn the charge over and flatten the top fold so that the charge looks the same top and bottom. Do not roll the excess foil into a “pig tail” as this creates a potential projectile and could cause a misfire if the charge gets turned around while loading.

## *Storage Of Charges*

The completed charges should be placed in a heavy cardboard cylinder with a bottom and lid. This will protect the charges when being handled. If a bag does develop a leak, you will not have loose powder scattered about the limber chest. Another suggestion is to use a metal ammo box either with or instead of the cardboard cylinders.

## *Storage Of Primers*

At no time allow primers to be stored in the same container, or in the same compartment, with the charges. They should be placed in a metal box and stored separately from the chest.

## *Limber Chest*

The limber chest should be divided into at least 2 compartments. Only accoutrements and equipment essential to servicing the piece, and charges should be allowed in the chest. Primers should be kept separate from the charges if possible. Keep it free of loose powder at all times. It should be equipped with a hasp and lock.