

Self-Imposed Recommendations for Police Use of Stun Guns Are Not the Same as Leadership and Assistance from the Industry, Says an Expert on Personal Safety

(BOSTON, Mass. – Oct. 24, 2005 – StunGun.com) After a well-known advocacy group added its weight to the stun gun debate earlier this month, officials met last week and drafted stun gun use recommendations. A national expert on personal safety says recommendations fall short of what those who use these weapons need: new safety regulations with teeth and leadership from stun gun manufacturers.

“In the beginning, use of electroshock technology in the form of stun guns was a response to a market that wanted reliable, less-lethal weapons,” said Siciliano. “Since then, the stun gun industry’s zeal to continue making a profit has led many to question whether safety—the whole reason for less-lethal technology—remains as the industry’s primary goal. Count me among those with questions.” An expert in personal security and identity theft, Siciliano delivers presentations to Fortune 500 companies across the nation and is author of “The Safety Minute: 01.”

On Oct. 7, *The Associated Press* ran an article on an American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) report. The ACLU expressed concern about the safety hazards unregulated stun gun use may pose. Of the law enforcement agencies that the ACLU surveyed, only four were found to regulate the number of times an officer is allowed to use a stun gun on a suspect during one incident.

“Less-lethal technology is not the same as non-lethal technology,” said Siciliano. “We can always expect a handful of people to die from stun guns, and anyone who calls for perfection is grandstanding. But organizations make a good point when they call for official rules to govern these weapons’ use and decrease deaths to a bare minimum. Any technology with ‘lethal’ in its name, no matter how characterized, demands the attention of regulators.”

According to reports, Department of Justice officials and more than four dozen police agencies attended a conference of the Police Executive Research Forum last week and discussed stun gun policy. An *Associated Press* article later reported that, on Oct. 19, the attendees announced 50 recommendations for proper use of stun guns from the industry’s largest manufacturer.

“Stun gun safety deserves more than lip service from manufacturers,” said Siciliano. “But lip service is all we seem to hear from some of the major producers. This is why law enforcement organizations end up making grand overtures, like last week’s, to protect the reputation of police departments—but they shouldn’t have to. The industry should take the lead.”

“Some stun gun manufacturers essentially use peer-pressure,” Siciliano added. “They promise safety. Police departments see peers using the weapons and, at least partially in the interest of appearing responsible, buy and use the weapons themselves. But we rarely hear a peep from these companies when questionable incidents then occur. Producers of these weapons seem to leave police departments holding the bag.”

“This industry needs to deliver on safety, not just on orders for stun guns,” Siciliano concluded. “If they don’t, legislators facing mounting public and media pressure will eventually draft regulations of their own. Nobody wants that.”

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Certified as an instructor of safety and security by dozens of state governing boards, Siciliano teaches people how to avoid and escape assaults. Numerous industry associations have certified his programs to provide their members with security training. In addition to CNN, MSNBC, Fox News, and CNBC, he has been featured on "ABC News with Sam Donaldson," "The Montel Williams Show," "Maury Povich," "Sally Jesse Raphael," "The Howard Stern Show," and other programs.

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