

Man Arrested for Posting WWII Incendiary Bomb on Online Auction Site

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Southampton, England A civilian who discovered a munition while using his metal detector thought he could make a few bucks from the find by posting the item for sale on an on-line auction site. Luckily for everyone, a military collector recognized the device in the item as a live WWII era German incendiary bomb and promptly notified authorities. The British Army's bomb squad responded and evacuated the neighborhood around the man's home.

According to reports, the man listed the ordnance on the auction site with the price starting at 15 pounds (approximately \$18). Military collector Ralf Sherwin saw the listing and sent the following message to the man - "Mate, do you realize that's not de-activated it's live!". The military collector described what happened to reporters covering the story, "I went into great detail about that fact that you could see the iron oxide seeping out of the air holes and the join. In the nose there's a detonator, and once that dries out, it will go off, and I told him he wouldn't be able to put it out. After that, I expected him to take it down and call the police, but the idiot completely ignored me and carried on selling it. What was he going to do if someone bought it cover it in bubble wrap and post it off in a Jiffy bag?"

After the man ignored the warnings by failing to take down the post, Sherwin alerted the police. "I went online and reported him to Hampshire Police," he told said. "I later found out that they contacted eBay, found his address and pounced. I'd never have forgiven myself if I'd done nothing and then read about a family being wiped out in a house fire."

The police arrested the man as they raided his house. Neighbors were evacuated from the area and a 50-meter cordon was established while a fire brigade and a British Army EOD unit responded to safely remove the bomb. A spokesman from the Hampshire Police released a statement which read, "We were made aware of the bomb after it was reported as being advertised for sale on eBay. A 50-meter cordon was put in place and homes within that area were evacuated for the safety of residents. The Explosive Ordnance Disposal team attended and transported the ordnance to the police training center in Netley, where a controlled explosion was carried out at 4:15 PM."

The 'would be' seller was eventually released without any charges. A police statement read, "A 51-year-old man from Southampton was arrested on suspicion of possessing an explosive substance for an unlawful purpose. He has been released and no further action will be taken against him."