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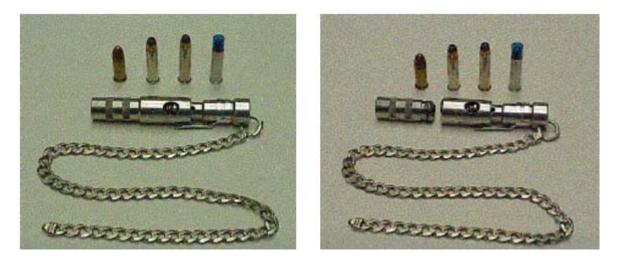**William Schievella**
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March 30, 2010

INTELLIGENCE CRIME TASK FORCE
OFFICER SAFETY BULLETIN
BULLETIN #10-002

Bangstick Adapted for Pocket or Neck

This device, which is a "bangstick," measuring 4 5/8" in length with a 1 ¾" barrel and capable of firing either a single .38 cal. short Colt, .38 special or .357 magnum cartridge, is intended for use by fishermen and scuba divers to kill sharks and alligators. When used in such a way it is attached to a threaded pole and then used as a prod to hit the target. A very slight tap at the end of the barrel will cause the device to discharge. The "bangstick" is considered a firearm. ATF has classified this device as an "any other weapon" that is prosecutable by 10 years in prison and up to $10,000 in fines under Title 26, Section 5871. These devices can be found at almost any scuba or diving accessories shop.

Officers should be extremely cautious when handling these devices; they can discharge simply by being tapped on the barrel end. In addition, its appearance is deceiving and can lead an officer to discount it as a dangerous weapon. It is a triggerless device that can easily be mistaken for a tool or some other harmless article.

Source: Brunswick PD, Brunswick, ME.