

.22 Rimfire Ammunition

Over the last few decades, rimfire .22 ammunition has presented a challenge to gunshot residue (GSR) experts due to the differences in primer compositions between brands. Some manufacturers have changed their .22 primer compositions during the last two decades. Remington Arms Company in 1989 went from Pb (headstamps “U” (1958-1983) and “Rem” (1983 – 1989)) as the only heavy metal in their .22 primer material to PbSbBa (headstamp “Rem” only). Federal Cartridge Company went from PbSbBa to PbBa in early 1990 along with a change in all their cartridge box designs. This information was verified by recent conversations with representatives from both of these companies. Currently, it appears that U.S. manufacturers and many foreign manufactures of .22 ammunition use PbBa in their primers. Remington remains the exception for US manufacturers in that it has stayed with a primer composition of PbSbBa.

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