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PML News Volume 11

Protecting Your Onboard Electronics From Damage From Black Powder  
Smoke/Residue

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All: we've gotten reports from our supplier of the P5, Transolve, that they're seeing a number of P5's being returned for warranty service with black powder damage. Here's a snippet from the P5 instructions under the section Mounting/Installation:

"The altimeter bay section of the rocket should be sealed from the rest of the rocket. This is very important to allow correct pressure sensing, as well as to protect the P5 from the pressure of the deployment charge firing and black powder residue. If the P5 is exposed to black powder residue, malfunction may result."

Some users are not heeding the information and their altimeters are being damaged. (By the way, all electronics are damaged by BP residue; it's not just a P5 thing. Make sure you protect ANY electronic device you fly from BP residue). We've added the following statement to our instructions:

"IMPORTANT! The P5 must be protected from black powder residue! BP smoke and/or residue will cause problems, so you must ensure no BP residue can get on the unit. For CPR2000 systems, we recommend sealing the small holes where the BP charge wires come through the fore and aft LES tube holders with a small amount of modeling clay after installation of the wires. BP damage to the P5 will also incur a repair charge from Transolve, even if the unit is under warranty. "

So, please throw a little lump of clay in your range box if you don't already carry some, and be sure to plug up the holes in the LES tube holders after you've installed the wires for the BP charges. The P5 will then be protected from both BP smoke/residue and from the ejection pressure blast, which can also be damaging to the pressure sensor in severe cases.

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