Practical APCP motor design for Amateur & High Power rocketry

# What we will be covering:

- The basics & definitions
- Some other considerations
- The process to get the data to input into the BurnSim program
- Designing motor profiles in BurnSim

### What we won't be covering:

$$\rho_{p} = \frac{1}{\frac{f_{a}}{\rho_{a}} + \frac{f_{b}}{\rho_{b}} + \frac{f_{c}}{\rho_{c}} + \dots} \qquad \qquad V_{1} = \frac{V_{p}}{V_{a}} = \frac{I_{b}}{I_{sp} \rho_{p} V_{a}}$$

$$V_1 = -\frac{V_P}{V_a} \ = \frac{I_b}{I_{\rm SP} \ \rho_P \ V_{\odot}} \label{eq:V1}$$

$$ho_{P} = \frac{\mathbf{m}_{grain}}{v_{grain}}$$

$$\rho_{P} = \frac{m_{grain}}{v_{grain}}$$

$$\frac{v_{grain}}{v_{grain}} = \frac{\pi}{4} \left( D^{2} - d^{2} \right) L$$
For a hollow cylindrical grain, where D =outer diameter

L = Length of grain

$$\rho_{p} = \frac{1}{\frac{f_{o}}{\rho_{o}} + \frac{f_{f}}{\rho_{f}}}$$

$$W_f = \frac{D - d}{D} = \frac{2 r b}{D}$$

$$W_f = \frac{D-d}{D} = \frac{2 r b}{D} \qquad \frac{A_P}{A_t} = \frac{\pi D^2 (1-V_1)}{4 A_t}$$

C<sub>1</sub>,H<sub>2</sub>,O<sub>11</sub> + 6.29 KNO<sub>3</sub> -> 3.80 CO<sub>2</sub> + 5.21 CO + 7.79 H<sub>2</sub>O + 3.07 H<sub>2</sub> + 3.14 N<sub>2</sub> + 3.00 K<sub>2</sub>CO<sub>3</sub> + 0.27 KOH 2 H<sub>2</sub> + O<sub>2</sub> <-> 2 H<sub>2</sub>O

$$v_A A + v_B B \Leftrightarrow v_C C + v_D D$$

$$K_{\text{p}} = \frac{y_{\text{c}} \stackrel{\nu_{\text{C}}}{} y_{\text{D}} \stackrel{\nu_{\text{D}}}{}}{y_{\text{A}} \stackrel{\nu_{\text{A}}}{} y_{\text{B}} \stackrel{\nu_{\text{E}}}{}} \left(\frac{P}{P_{\text{o}}}\right)^{\frac{\nu_{\text{C}} + \nu_{\text{D}} - \nu_{\text{A}} - \nu_{\text{B}}}{}}$$

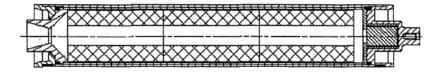
$$\sum_{k} n_{i}[h_{i} + \Delta h]_{i} = \sum_{k} n_{k}[h_{i} + \Delta h]_{k}$$

$$O_{2} < > 2 O$$

$$H_2O <-> HO + 1/2 H_2$$
  
 $O_2 <-> 2 O$   
 $H_2 <-> 2 H$ 



## **Basic concepts**



A solid rocket motor usually consists of a casing, nozzle, forward closure, a liner and a fuel grain.



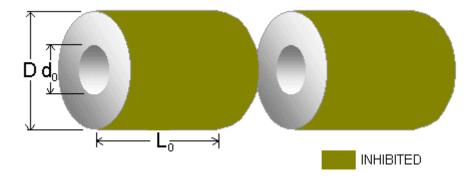


### **Aluminum Motor case**

- Aluminum strength rapidly decreases with increased temperature
- Liner material / heat protection
- Case bonding can be used for thermal protection
- The forward closure is a component of the case.

### **Propellant**

The grain behaves like a solid mass, burning in a predictable fashion and producing exhaust gases. The nozzle dimensions are calculated to maintain a design chamber pressure, while producing thrust from the exhaust gases.

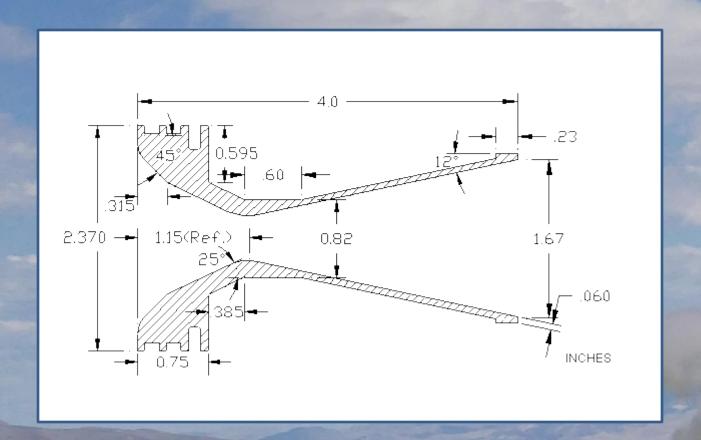


- The grain burns at a predictable rate, given its surface area and chamber pressure.
- The chamber pressure is determined by the nozzle orifice diameter and grain burn rate.
- Allowable chamber pressure is a function of casing design.
- The length of burn time is determined by the grain "web thickness".

Common modes of failure in solid rocket motors include fracture of the grain, failure of bonding to the casting tube or case bonding, and air pockets in the grain. All of these produce an instantaneous increase in burn surface area and a corresponding increase in exhaust gas production rate and pressure, which may rupture the casing.

### Nozzle

- Directs and accelerate combustion gasses to high velocities. Provides Choked flow to prevent catastrophic erosive burning. (Going supersonic in the propellant core)
- Goal is maximum thrust coefficient with minimum nozzle weight.
- Nozzle throat area controls combustion chamber pressure and divergent angle controls thrust amplification through the coefficient of thrust.



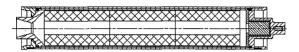
(burning-area to throat-area ratio) Kn

First, it is a general rule that long motors will be erosive. With a standard bates grain geometry, a large burning surface area means there will be a lot more combustion gases flowing, especially at the bottom grain. A general rule is if you have length/diameter of >=8 (measuring the propellant itself, not hardware) you should be concerned. With nominal bates grain geometries, this is a 5-grain motor.

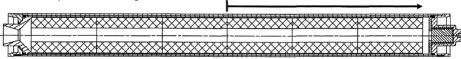
#### **Erosive Burning Motor Design Issues - 1**

High Length-to-Diameter (L/D) Motors Increase Rocket Flight Performance.

Maximizes Total Impulse within a Given Frontal Area, Minimizes Aerodynamic Drag in Minimum Diameter Rockets.



Keeping the Core Diameter the Same, Motor Propellant Grain Length is Increased. How Much Can Motor Length Be Increased For a Given Motor Diameter?



For Velocity-Based Erosive Burning:

- 1) Increased Propellant Grain Length Increases Propellant Surface Area.
- 2) For Same  $K_n$ , Increased Propellant Surface Area Requires Increase in Throat Area  $(A_{th})$ .
- 3) Increased Throat Area Approaches Port Area ( $A_p$ , the Core Cross-Sectional Area). Port-to-Throat Area Ratio ( $A_p/A_{th}$ ) Decreases, Core Mach Number Increases, Increased Velocity-Based Erosive Burning.

For Mass Flux-Based Erosive Burning:

- 1) Increased Propellant Grain Length Increases Propellant Surface Area.
- 2) Increased Propellant Surface Area Increases Mass Flow Rate Down Core.
- 3) With Same Core Diameter, Port Area (Core Cross-Sectional Area) Remains the Same. Increased Core Mass Flow Rate through Same Core Cross-Sectional Area Results in Increased Core Mass Flux, Increased Mass Flux-Based Erosive Burning.

Figure 1. Erosive Burning Motor Design Issues - 1.

### **Constant Core Mass Flux Core Design**

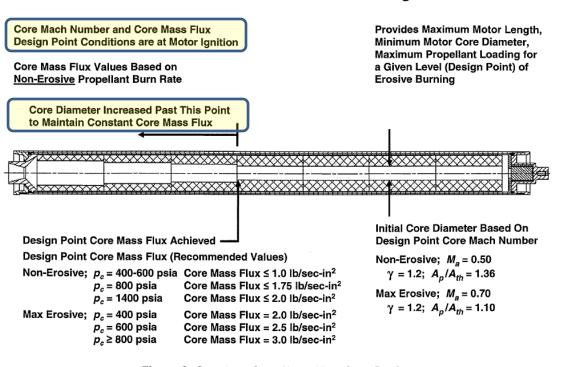


Figure 9. Constant Core Mass Flux Core Design.

# My motor design process from the start to finish

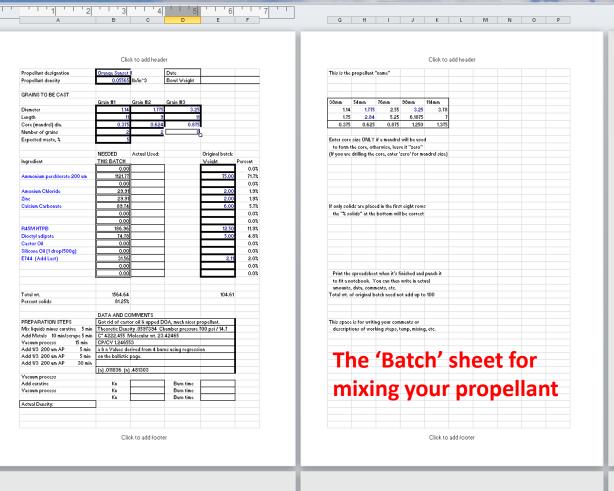
Using PROPEL20 spreadsheet workbook, ProPep3, and BurnSim

# Select Propellant formula for characteristics desired

- Simple formula to start
- Colored flame
- Smoke or no smoke
- Fast burn / High thrust / High performance
- Slow burn / Long burning / Long length to diameter motors
- Packable or pourable

Select the motor size (Impulse, motor case to be used, etc.)

 Test motor grain size x multiple burns for mix batch amount



Kn DENSITY BALLISTIC BATESBURN Everdear Everdear Modified Pitch Black Sparky

Orange Sunset II+Papi

OSII + E744

### Mixing the propellant

- HTPB / Binder fuel
- Plasticizer
  - DOA (Dioctyl adipate)
  - IDP (Isodecyl Pelargonate)
- Cross linking agent
  - Castor Oil
- Bonding Agent
  - Tepanol or HX-878
- Surfactant (Surface Acting Agent)
  - Lecithin
  - Silicon Oil

# Metals are fuel (Powdered Aluminum, Magnesium, Zinc)

- Increases combustion temperature
- Dampens combustion instability
- Magnesium reported to improve low pressure burning

### **Burn Rate Modifiers**

- Catalyst
  - Transition Metal Oxides 0.05% to 1% such as red Iron Oxide, manganese dioxide, cupric oxide, chromium oxide, etc.
- Burn Rate Suppressant
  - oxamide, ammonium chloride, calcium carbonate, etc.

## **Opacifier if needed**

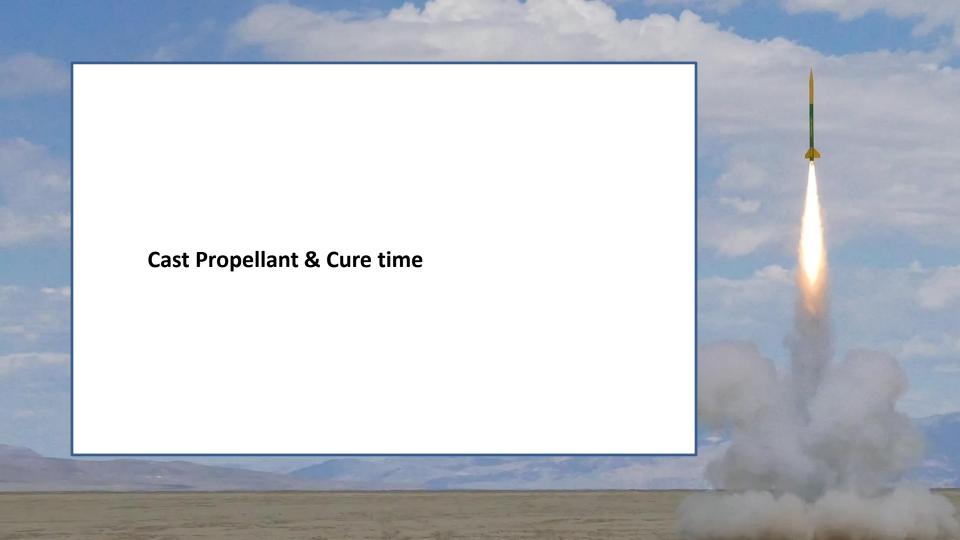
### **Ammonium Perchlorate Oxidizer (AP)**

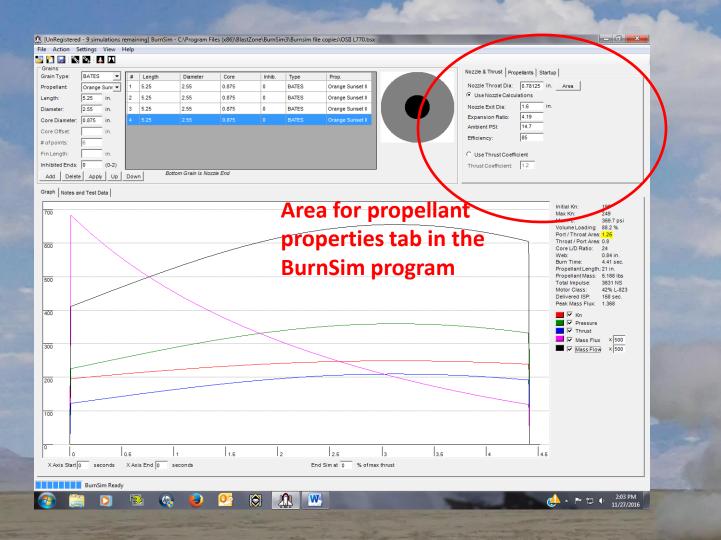
• 90 micron, 200 micron, 400 micron

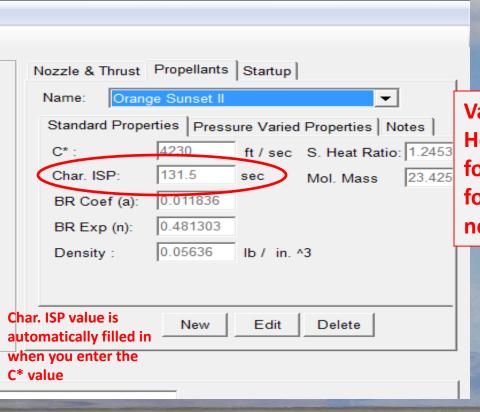
### **Curatives (Diisocyanates)**

MDI, IPDI, DDI, HDI, TDI, E744

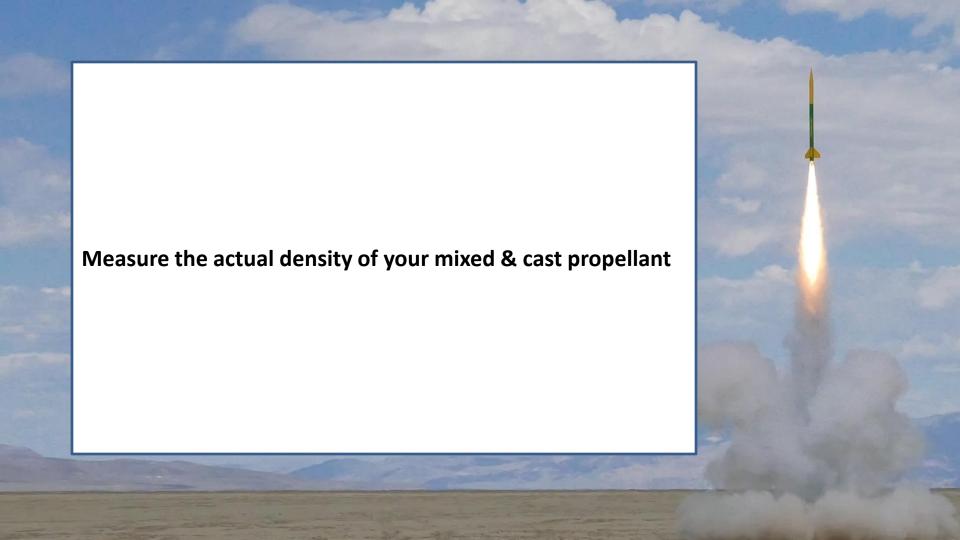
**Vacuum Processing** 

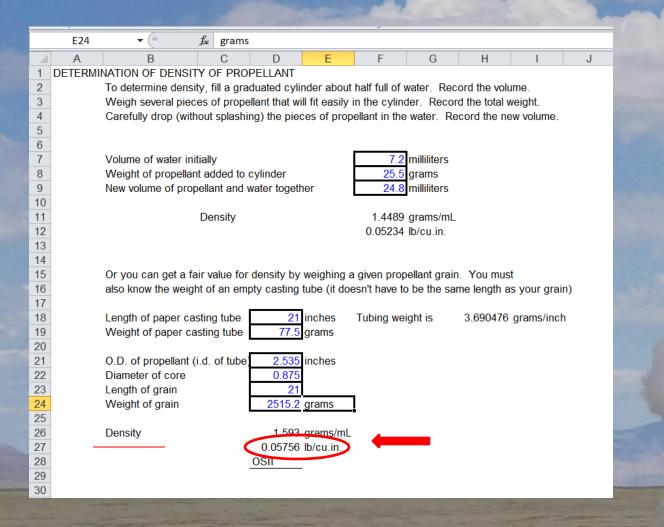


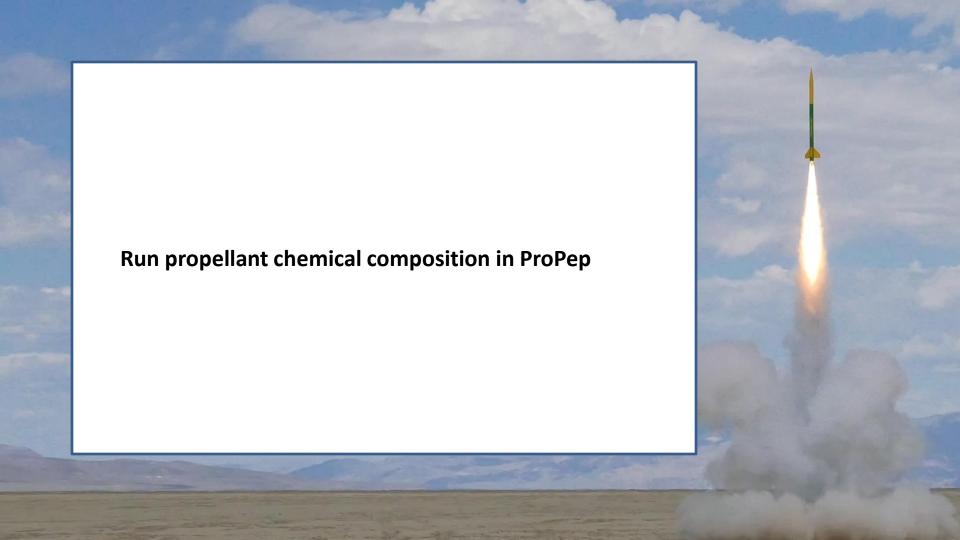


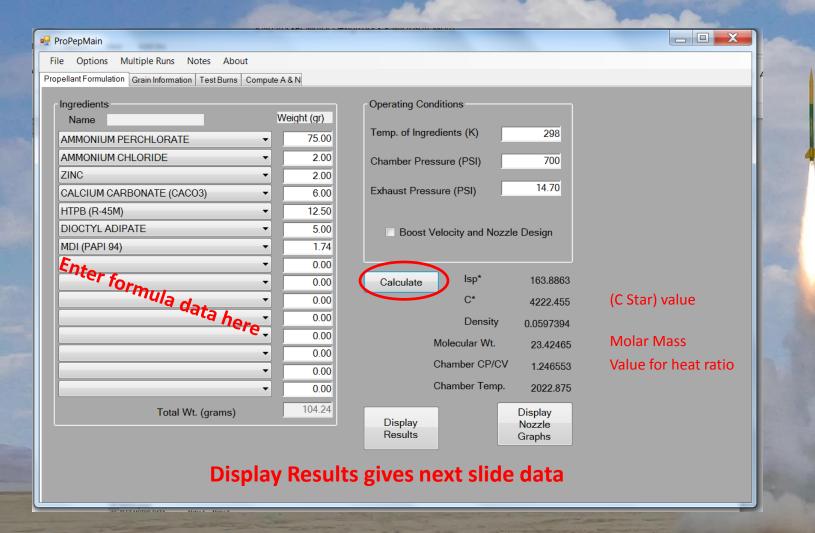


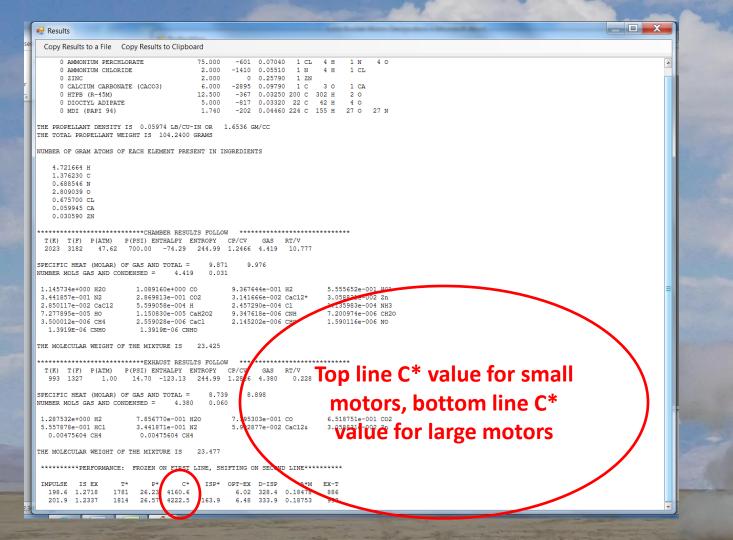
Values for C\*, (a), (n), Density, Heat Ratio & Molar Mass are found in the steps on the following slides. These are needed to run motor sims.





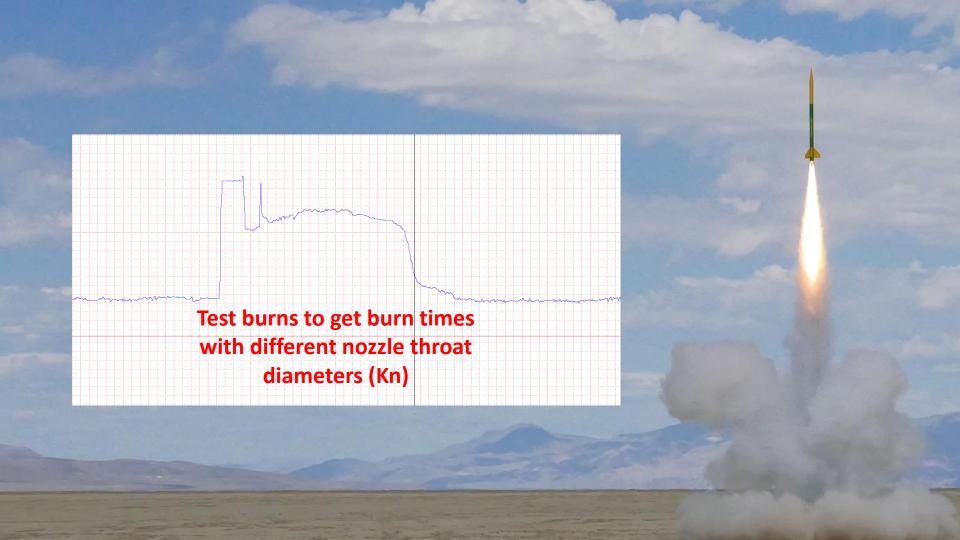


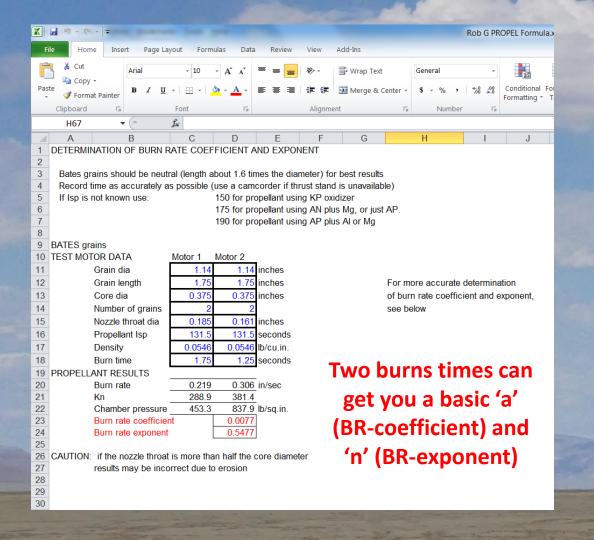


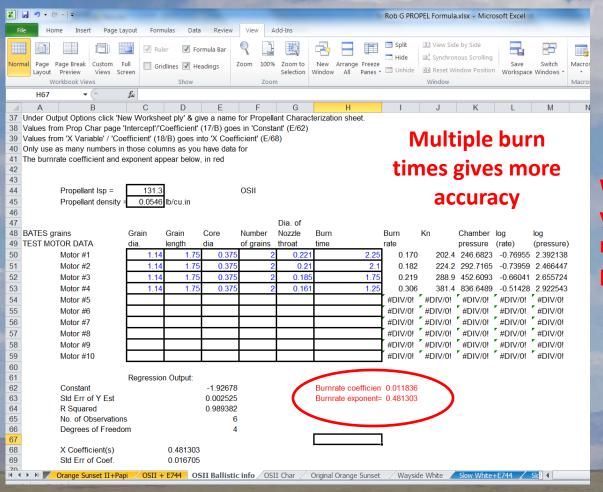


Do test burns & get time / pressure values with different Kn (Propellant surface area to Nozzle throat area ratio)

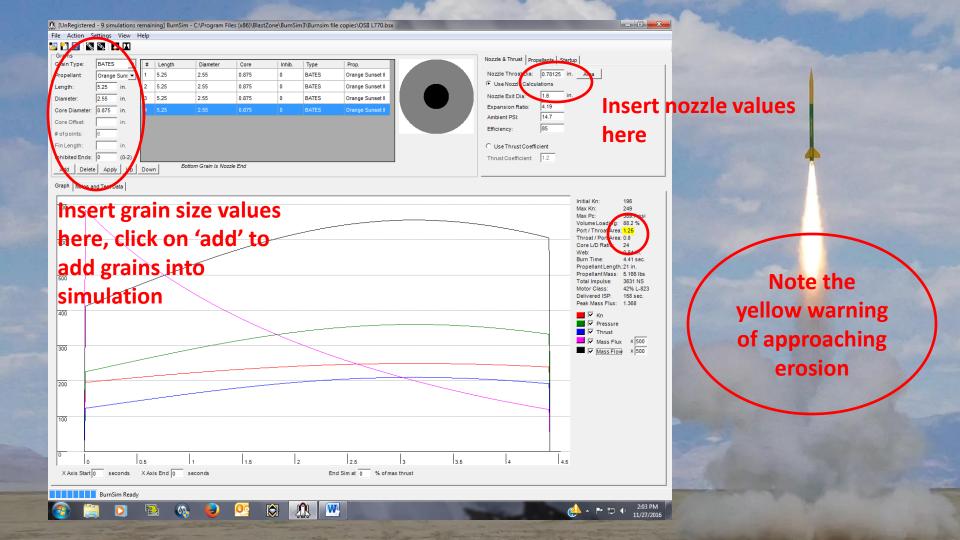
|    | A  | В        | С         | D          | F           | F         | G      | Н      | 1      | J      | K      | L |
|----|--|----------|-----------|------------|-------------|-----------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|---|
| 1  | DETERMINATION OF NOZZLE DIAMETER OR AREA RATIO   |          |           |            |             |           |        |        | •      | O      | 13     |   |
| 2  | (all grains are assumed to burn on ends as well as in the core)  |          |           |            |             |           |        |        |        |        |        |   |
| 3  | (=== g-=================================   |          |           |            |             | ,         |        |        |        |        |        |   |
| 4  | For Bates, core, and moon grains   |          |           |            |             |           |        |        |        |        |        |   |
| 5  | Number of grains   | 4        | 2         | 2          | 4           | 5         | 6      | 7      | 4      | 1      | 1      |   |
| 6  | O.D. of propellant   | 3.25     | 0.95      | 1.4        | 3.25        | 0.92      | 0.92   | 0.92   | 3.25   | 0.92   | 0.92   |   |
| 7  | Dia. of core   | 1.25     | 0.375     | 0.5        | 1.25        | 0.385     | 0.385  | 0.385  | 1.25   | 0.385  | 0.385  |   |
| 8  | Length of each grain   | 6        | 1.515     | 1.825      | 6           | 1.5       | 1.5    | 1.5    | 6      | 1.5    | 1.5    |   |
| 9  | Desired Kn   | 335      | 125       | 175        | 350         | 190       | 200    | 210    | 228    | 230    | 240    |   |
| 10 |  |          |           |            |             |           |        |        |        |        |        |   |
| 11 | Nozzle throat (inches)   | 0.7571   | 0.2465    | 0.2843     | 0.7407      | 0.3123    | 0.3335 | 0.3515 | 0.9177 | 0.1269 | 0.1243 |   |
| 12 | OR in 64ths inch   | 48.45    | 15.77     | 18.19      | 47.40       | 19.99     | 21.34  | 22.50  | 58.73  | 8.12   | 7.95   |   |
| 13 |  |          |           |            |             |           |        |        |        |        |        |   |
| 14 |  |          |           |            |             |           |        |        |        |        |        |   |
| 15 |  |          |           |            |             |           |        |        |        |        |        |   |
| 16 | Number of grains   | 4        | 2         | 2          | 2           | 1         | 2      | 1      | 1      | 1      | 1      |   |
| 17 | O.D. of propellant   | 3.25     | 1.14      | 1.14       | 1.14        | 0.92      | 0.95   | 0.92   | 0.92   | 0.92   | 0.92   |   |
| 18 | Dia. of core   | 1.25     | 0.375     | 0.375      | 0.375       | 0.385     | 0.375  | 0.385  | 0.385  | 0.385  | 0.385  |   |
| 19 | Length of each grain   | 6        | 1.825     | 1.825      | 1.825       | 1.5       | 1.517  | 1.5    | 1.5    | 1.5    | 1.5    | _ |
| 20 | Nozzle throat dia.   | 0.75     | 0.25      | 0.266      | 0.281       | 0.14      | 0.182  | 0.16   | 0.17   | 0.18   | 0.19   | _ |
| 21 |  |          |           |            |             |           |        |        |        |        |        |   |
| 22 | Area ratio Kn =  | 341.3    | 161.8     | 142.9      | 128.0       | 189.1     | 229.4  | 144.8  | 128.2  | 114.4  | 102.7  |   |
| 23 | N  |          |           | N. 11: 1 : |             |           |        | Use    | this   | sheet  | to     |   |
| 24 | Note: you don't have to fill in every box. Multiple boxes are given to allow you to see differences in Kn/nozzle throat with different dimension |          |           |            |             |           |        | _      |        |        |        | _ |
| 25 | allow you to see differ  | ences in | Kn/nozzle | tnroat wi  | tn differei | nt dimens | ions   | finc   | l you  | r Kn r | atios  | _ |
| 26 |  |          |           |            |             |           |        |        | •      |        |        | _ |
| 27 |  |          |           |            |             |           |        |        |        |        |        |   |

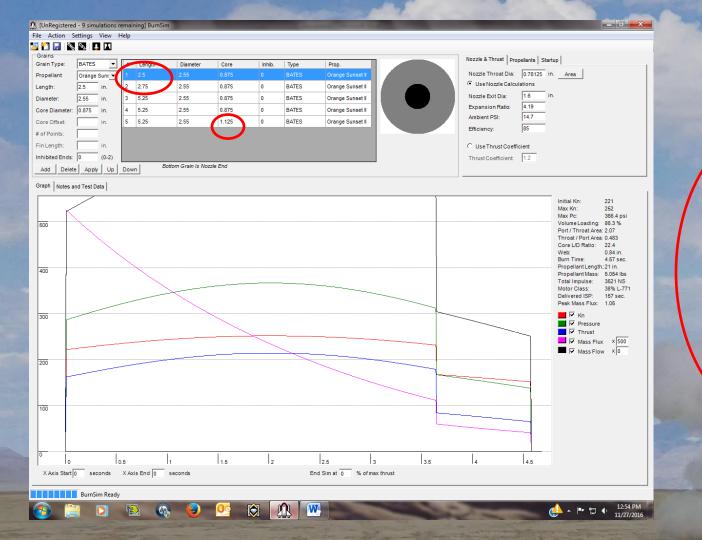




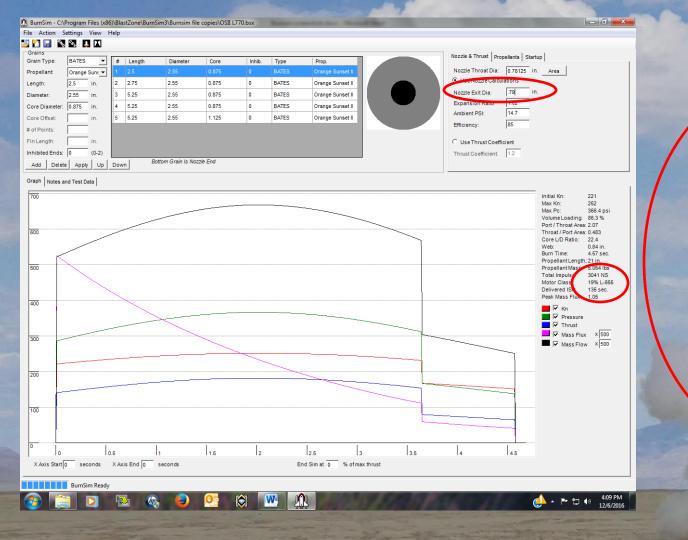


With the last of these values you can now start to model motors in the BurnSim program

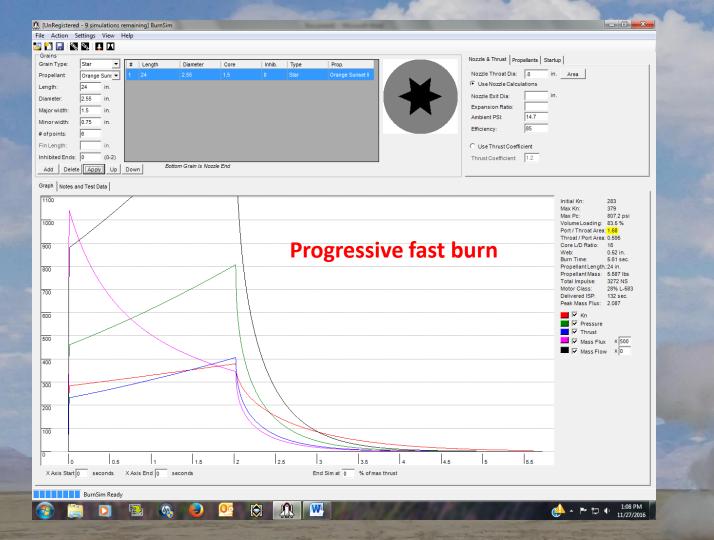


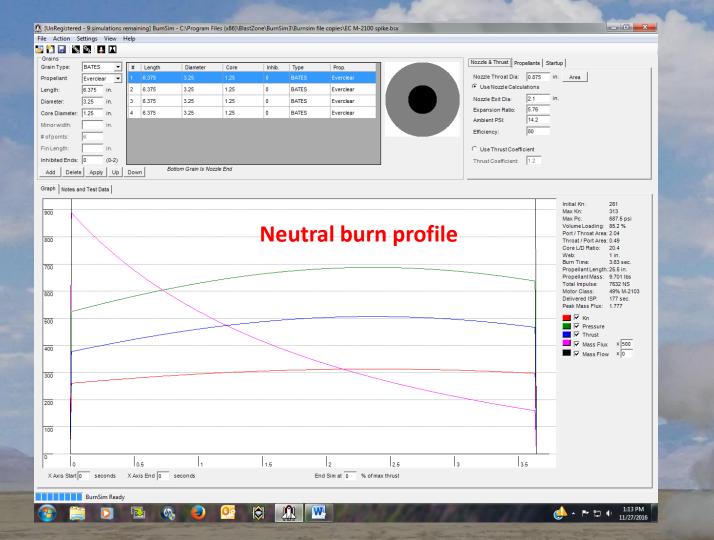


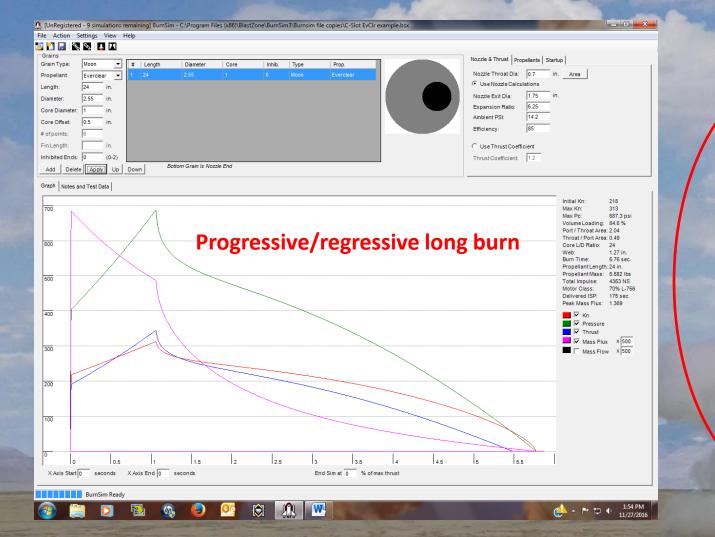
Cutting the top grain almost in half, and drilling the bottom core larger gets rid of the erosion warning



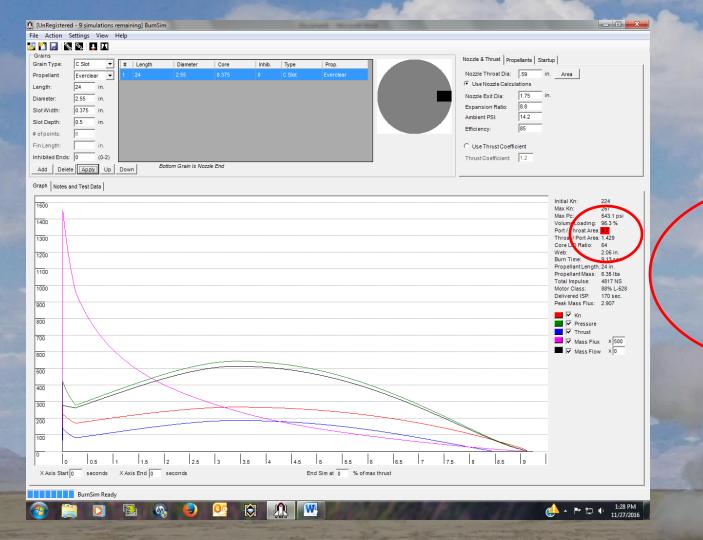
Having no expansion on the nozzle shows the difference having no thrust coefficient. It goes from 38% L motor to 19% L



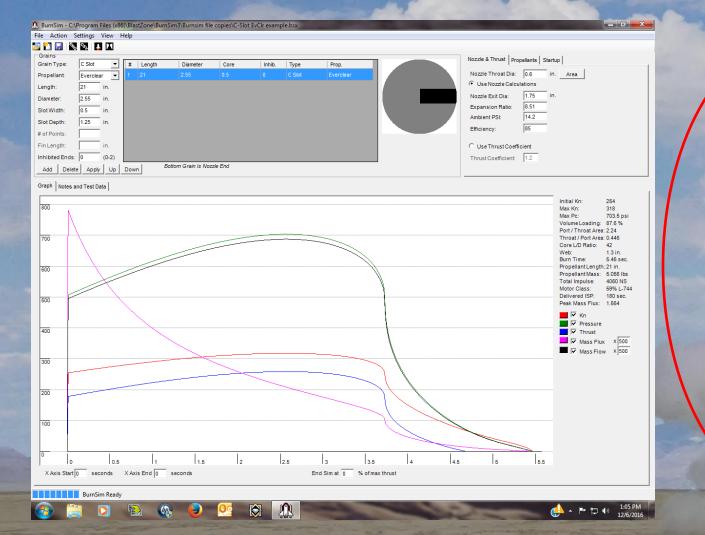




On a Moon burner the core diameter determines initial thrust, the core offset determines the peak pressure



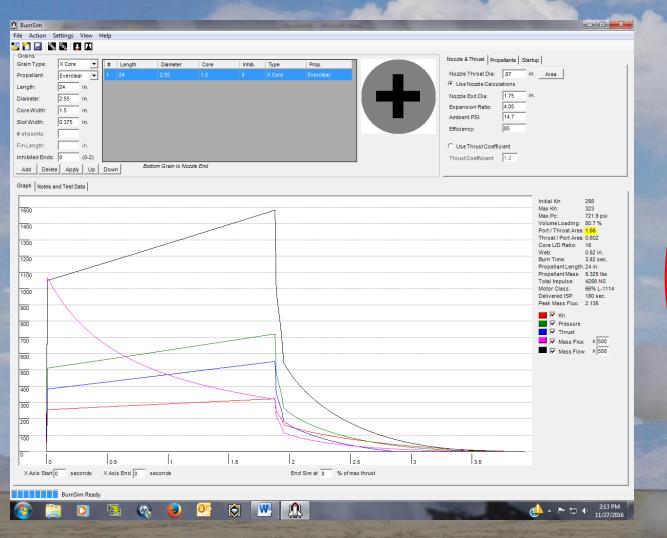
This motor will overpressure on start up because of erosion



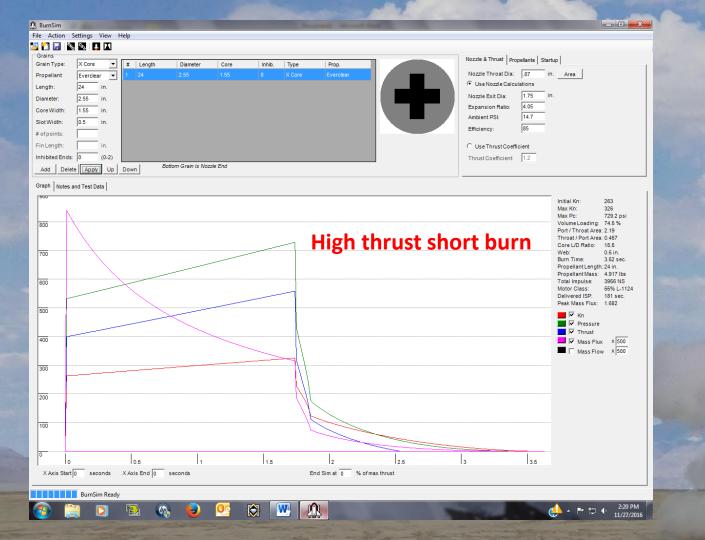
Larger core on 'C slot' and it will run well. The flow of hot gasses along the outside of the motor makes it harder to protect the case from burn-thru

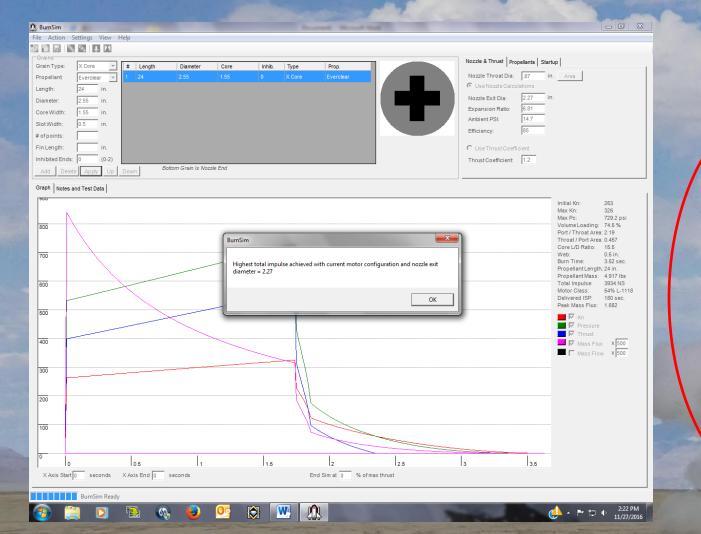
**Long motor** design with progressive grains using a slow propellant. Notice the larger cores on the bottom two

grains.



Core is a little small on this slide, the next shows a better sized core.





**Under the** 'Action' menu you can have the program run simulations to determine the most efficient exit diameter on the nozzle.

## References

- Experimental Composite Propellant by Dr. Terry W. McCreary, Ph.D.
- Richard Nakka
- Defense Technical Information Center Naval Weapons Center papers
- Wikipedia
- Charles E. Rogers
- John S. DeMar