

# PAPER WAD NOT THE SPRING SOLUTION



Dear Editor,

While repairing small arms here at the Ft Bliss DOL, we've run into several instances where soldiers tried to fix a weak buffer spring in their M16 rifle or M4/M4A1 carbine by sticking a wad of paper behind the spring.

That is not the solution to a weak spring! The paper wad gives too much tension to the spring, which means the bolt can't lock to the rear. The rifle jams. Stretching or compressing a spring doesn't help, either.

The only fix for a weak recoil spring is a new spring, which the unit armorer should have in stock. As long as an M16 spring measures between  $11 \frac{3}{4}$  and  $13 \frac{1}{2}$  inches ( $10 \frac{1}{16}$  to  $11 \frac{1}{4}$  for the M4), it should be ready for action. If it's shorter or longer, it's time for a new spring. Again, don't try to stretch or compress the spring.

M16 recoil spring should measure between  
 $11 \frac{3}{4}$  and  $13 \frac{1}{2}$  inches



Eric Bostic  
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*Editor's note: Good points! Your rifle is definitely something you shouldn't experiment with. Take care of it like your -10 TM says.*