8.01.000 GUIDE FOR COLLECTING EVIDENCE

8.01.005
INTRODUCTION: 10/15

The collection of evidence is an important part of a deputy's duties. Failure to properly collect and preserve evidence could seriously affect the identity of a suspect or outcome of a trial. The decision to collect evidence, or not collect particular items, lies within each deputy's discretion. However, each of the below questions shall be considered when collecting evidence.

1. Is the item(s) part of a crime or a series of crimes?
2. Is there a possible nexus to other crimes?
3. Can the preliminary crime lead to a more serious crime?

In addition, any evidence that is not collected will be described in detail in the incident report, as well as an explanation as to why it was not collected.

The guidelines set forth in this section are used by the Washington State Patrol Crime Lab (WSPCL) and the Property Management Unit (PMU). These guidelines are intended to assist in gathering, marking and the preservation of evidence. Deputies should keep in mind that specialty units (e.g., Special Assaults, Major Crimes, Fire Investigations, etc.) have expertise in the collection of evidence. See GOM 8.02.000 or Guidelines on Packaging and Storing Evidence.

Information on precautions and general guidelines are listed below in this policy. Specific information for handling evidence is found in the WSP Forensic Services Guide.

8.01.010
PRECAUTIONS: 05/07

The handling of items contaminated with biological fluids and stains presents hazards due to the possible presence of bloodborne pathogens. Hepatitis B (HVB) and AIDS (HIV) are of particular concern to those handling liquid blood or bloodstained items. Special care must be taken when handling such materials. Refer to GOM 10.00.000 Exposure Control Program.

Infectious evidence: use universal precautions when handling biological specimens or stains (i.e., act under the assumption that the specimen or stain contains a dangerous pathogen, particularly HIV or Hepatitis B, and proceed accordingly). Use appropriate protective equipment, such as face, eye, hand, and shoe protection. Pointed and sharp-edged objects must be handled with extreme care. Blind searches are definitely to be avoided. Searchers must not place their hands into any space that is not first visually inspected. Eyes must be protected if splashes are likely to occur.

Eating, smoking, and the drinking of beverages at the crime scene must be prohibited. Shoes should be protected from blood on the floor or grounds. The tracking of blood beyond the perimeter of the crime scene must be avoided. Careful processing of the crime scene will minimize the risk.

8.01.015
GENERAL GUIDELINES: 02/21

1. Ensure that you meet **legal** requirements before entering the crime scene or collecting evidence.

    - Determine if a search warrant, court order or consent is necessary prior to the collection of evidence.

2. Take extra caution when collecting evidence, especially the first responders to a scene. Use gloves and possibly face masks to prevent contamination of possible biological evidence and as protection from biological other hazardous evidence.

   - Take steps to avoid contamination of latent evidence, such as fingerprints, shoeprints etc.

3. Maintain a chain of custody for all evidence collected.

   - Documentation is necessary to name all who have had evidence in their possession from the time of collection until it is entered into evidence in a court proceeding.

4. Collect a sufficient number and quantity of samples:

   - It may be difficult if not impossible to return to the crime scene for more samples.

5. Label evidence with the following information:

   a. Case number.
   b. Brief description of the item.
   c. Mark43 evidence label.

6. Preserve the evidence.

   a. The general rule is to submit the evidence in the same condition as when collected.
   b. The evidence must not be allowed to spoil, deteriorate, evaporate, or in any other manner be diminished in content or evidentiary value.
   c. Biological stains, leather goods, plaster casts and vegetable matter must be thoroughly dried and packaged in paper containers.

      - Do not use plastic containers.

7. Do not contaminate the evidence:

   a. The evidence shall be handled in a proper manner so that no extraneous material or substance is added.
   b. Handle evidence as little as possible.
   c. Avoid placing the evidence on a surface that is soiled or that may contain material similar to that of the evidence.
   d. Package items separately so that transference does not occur.
   e. Care must be taken to avoid leakage or breakage of liquid samples.
   f. Protect a stain on clothing with a clean piece of paper so that when the clothing is folded, the stain will not be transferred to another portion of material.

      - An accidental transfer may cause misinterpretation by the examiner.

   g. Eating, smoking and the drinking of beverages within a crime scene is prohibited.

8. Sealing evidence:

   a. Use non-removable tape or evidence tape to seal evidence.

      - Staples and glued flaps on envelopes do not constitute proper seals.

   b. Every seam on an envelope, including the manufacturers should be sealed with tape.
   c. Each strip of tape shall be initialed.

      - The initials shall be written across the tape and onto the envelope surface.

d. Bottles and jars shall be capped tightly to avoid leakage and then sealed with tape.

- The tape shall extend across the top of the lid and down the sides of the container.
- The initials shall be written across the tape and onto the container.

e. **Staples on envelopes or paper bags do not constitute proper seals.**

9. Control samples:

- Control (known) samples are necessary when comparisons are to be made.

10. Documenting evidence:

a. The circumstances in which evidence is obtained shall be documented in the incident report.
b. The description of each item will be recorded on the Custodial Property Summary.

11. Shipping evidence to Crime Lab:

- PMU will transport or arrange shipping for all evidence.

12. The Request for Laboratory Examination Form is required by the State Crime Lab and must accompany all submissions of evidence to the crime lab. The following are important point when filling out this form:

a. Fill in all of the requested information, incomplete forms will not be accepted.

- If a suspect or victim name is unknown, indicate that in the appropriate block on form.

b. Always list the most serious offense first.
c. If needed, link the current submission with any previous submissions from the same investigation.
d. Include the investigator's phone number and email address.
e. List the order of priority in which the investigator would like the evidence examined.
f. When submitting six (6) or more items the submitter should fax a copy of the lab request or the list of exhibits to the crime lab and stating when the investigator will be available for the crime lab to call to discuss and prioritize the list of exhibits.
g. The WSP Crime Lab and Toxicology Lab provide written reports of laboratory findings as standard procedure on all laboratory examination requests. The requesting detective should note the desire for a written report in the narrative portion of requests to crime labs other than the WSPCL.

8.01.020
BIOLOGICAL FLUIDS AND STAINS AND CELLULAR MATERIAL: 02/21

Forensic biochemical and DNA analyses are frequently of value in investigations, particularly those involving violent crimes. The recognition and recovery of such evidence must be performed properly by deputies and investigators. Deputies and investigators shall treat all blood and bloodstained objects as sources of bloodborne pathogens and take appropriate protective actions when processing a crime scene.

1. Precautions:

a. The handling of biological fluids and stains present a hazard due to possible presence of bloodborne pathogens.

- Refer to GOM 10.00.000, Exposure Control Plan.

b. Protective gloves shall be worn to protect the hands.
c. Pointed and sharp edged objects shall be handled with extreme care.
d. Blind searches shall be avoided.

- Searchers shall not place their hands into any space that is not first visually inspected.

e. Shoes should be protected from blood on the floor or ground.
f. Good hygiene should be observed.

- Hands should be washed thoroughly after the removal of protective gloves.

2. Significance:

a. Biological fluids and stains can be helpful in many ways. Some include:

- Assist in locating the crime scene.
- Determine if a crime has been committed.
- Help identify the weapon used.
- Assist in eliminating or establishing suspects.
- Establish or disprove an alibi.
- Assist in reconstructing events.

b. Biological and microscopic analyses can often:

- Identify the fluid or stain as blood, semen, saliva, or urine.
- Determine the species as human or animal.
- Determine the presence of various blood factors.
- Establish the probability of an individual as the source through traditional and DNA analyses.

c. DNA analysis can conclude:

- Identify the suspect(s).
- Exclude individuals not involved in the crime being investigated.
- Reconstruct the events related to the crime.
- Identify the weapon used.
- Locate the crime scene.
- The identity of a missing person or the unidentified remains of a person.

3. Crime scene search:

a. A careful search must be made of the scene.

- Although bloodstains are often obvious, care must be taken that small stains are not overlooked.

b. If bloodstains, spatters or smears are present, they should be:

- Carefully recorded as to the size, shape, location and pattern.
- Diagrammed in detail.
- Photographed from long, medium and close ranges.

    - A scale should be included in the photographs.

4. Collection of biological fluids and stains:

   Blood and bloodstained articles require special handling as evidence. The evidentiary value of blood and bloodstained articles can be reduced, or destroyed by bacterial action and warm temperatures.

   a. Bloodstains and other biological stains must be air-dried at room temperature without the application of any heat or sunlight.
   b. It is best to air dry and then freeze the stains.

      - If unable to freeze, store the dried evidence in a cool dry place.

   c. After drying, store the stained evidence in manila envelopes or brown paper bags.

      - **Do not use plastic bags or containers.**

   d. When removing dried bloodstains from a surface, two methods may be used:

      - Transfer the stain to clean cotton threads dampened with clean water using a swabbing action.

        - This is the preferred method for laboratory examinations.

      - Transfer the stain onto clean paper using a clean scalpel, knife, or tweezers.

   e. Obtain a control sample of the unstained area adjacent to the stain using the same method used when gathering the stain.
   f. Package stain sample and control separately and ensure that each are properly labeled with case and item numbers, location, date, and initials of the person collecting the items.

      - Do not allow the stain and control sample to come into contact with each other.

5. Collecting liquid blood:

   a. Remind the medical personnel to collect the liquid blood in **lavender top** vacutainer tubes.

      - Do not confuse with gray top tubes which are used for alcohol and drug analysis.

   b. Ensure the tubes are properly labeled with name and date.
   c. Refrigerate the tube(s) for at least two (2) hours before packaging for shipping.
   d. Ship liquid blood to the crime laboratory within five (5) days of collection.

      - This is important if the possibility of getting a later specimen from the subject is highly unlikely or nonexistent.

6. Collecting small bloodstained articles:

   a. Air dry entire article at no higher than room temperature.
   b. Package the article in manila envelopes or brown paper bags.

      - Do not use plastic bags or containers that form a vapor barrier, as condensation may form inside the container leading to degradation and putrefaction of the sample.

   c. After drying, keep article frozen.

      - If freezer storage is not available, keep the dried article cool and dry.

d. Hard or metal objects such as rocks, guns, and knifes should not be frozen. These types of objects should be air dried, kept cool, and sent to the crime laboratory as soon as possible.

- Condensation will form on these objects when thawed and brought to room temperature.
- The condensation will dilute the stain.
- Do not place in plastic bags or containers.

e. Send entire article in for analysis.

7. Collecting samples from large bloodstained objects:

a. Cut out stained area or, at least, several square inches of the stained area and if the sample is still moist, air dry at room temperature.
b. Cut out a control sample of an unstained portion of the object adjacent to the stained area.
c. Package and label each sample separately ensuring that the control sample and stained sample are not mixed or confused.
d. Store the stained sample and control in the same manner by air drying and freezing.

8. Collecting evidence from non-removable bloodstained objects:

a. If the bloodstain is wet and sufficiently large, collect the stain on a piece of clean cotton gauze.

- For smaller stains, use a portion of the gauze.
- Air dry the collected stain place it in a paper envelope, and seal and label the envelope.

b. If the blood is dry and can be easily flaked off the surface, use a clean scalpel or knife and scrape it into a clean piece of paper. Fold and tape the paper and keep in a cool dry place.

- Clean the blade of the scalpel or knife with tap water and wipe with a clean tissue prior to each use.

c. A control sample must be taken from an area adjacent to the stain.
d. If the bloodstain cannot be easily removed by scraping, the stain must be swabbed.

- For large stains a gauze pad can be used and a portion of a gauze pad can be used for smaller stains.
- Hold the gauze by the corners or if possible, use tweezers.
  - Do not touch the area of the gauze where the sample is to be taken.
- Moisten the cotton enough to dissolve the stain, not dripping wet.
- Swab the stain keeping the transference concentrated on the cotton.
  - The stain should appear dark on the cotton.
- Saturate an area the size of a half dollar, approximately one (1) inch in diameter, on the cotton.
- A control sample must be taken, following the same procedure.
- Air dry the sample and control, and package and label each separately in manila envelopes and freeze or keep cool and dry.

9. Preservation:

Bacterial action, mold, sunshine, moisture and warm temperatures can damage the evidentiary

value of biological evidence due to the damage or destruction of DNA.

10. Shipping procedures:

- Dried stained evidence, control samples and liquid blood samples shall be sent to PMU. PMU will transport or arrange shipping for all evidence.

8.01.025
FIREARMS EVIDENCE: 02/21

The purpose of this section is to establish guidelines for the consistent processing, handling and submission to the WSPCL of all firearms and firearm related evidence that have been recovered during investigations by deputies.

1. Purpose:

   a. All firearms used in the commission of a crime, illegally possessed, found or recovered, will be processed as evidence.

      - Does not include firearms turned in for safekeeping or turned over because of a DV court order.

   b. Process all firearms as evidence. The typical sequencing is:

      - ATF ownership, Trace form (ATF-F-3312.1)
        - To be completed by original investigating deputy.
      - Trace Evidence.
        - Blood, tissue and fibers may be found on the firearm or in the barrel (blowback).
      - Prints.
      - Ballistics.
        - Integrated Ballistics Identification System (IBIS).
        - All recovered fired cartridge cases will be submitted for IBIS testing.
      - Serial number restoration/retrieval.

   c. A detective will review all cases involving a firearm, misdemeanor or felony. The detective will decide the steps for processing the firearm for evidence and fill out the IBIS testing request on the WSP request for laboratory examination form or the KCSO IBIS Request form (KCSO Form #A-146).

2. Precautions:

   a. **Treat every firearm as if it is loaded.**
   b. Handle carefully.

      - Trace evidence may be present.
      - Do not remove trace evidence from the firearm.

   c. Do not pick up the firearm by placing a pencil or other object in the barrel.
   d. Firearms **should** be unloaded prior to placing it into evidence.

      - If the firearm cannot be unloaded, the WSPCL must be called to determine how the

firearm is to be packaged and delivered and what documentation is needed.

3. Unloading a Firearm:

a. **Do not attempt to unload a firearm with which you are unfamiliar.**
b. Unloading a Revolver:

- Place a line on the cylinder on each side of the top strap with a pencil or felt pen prior to opening or moving the cylinder.
    - This will inform the examiner which chamber was on top.
- While pointing the barrel downward, open the cylinder. Before moving the cylinder or removing the cartridges, make a diagram of the cylinder.
    - Number the chambers, starting at the top and go clockwise.
    - Note any cartridge in each chamber, whether the cartridge has been fired, and the manufacture of the cartridge. (figure 1)

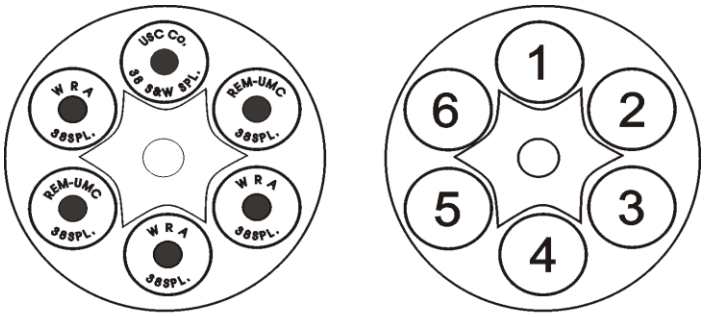

Figure 1

- Each cartridge or cartridge case that is removed must be placed in individual containers and properly labeled.
    - The number of the chamber from which it is removed must be noted on the container.

c. Unloading a semi-automatic pistol:

- Remove the magazine, handling it with care, if it is to be processed for latent prints.
    - Do not remove any rounds from the magazine.
- Package the magazine separately, and submit it with the firearm.
- Remove the cartridge, if any, from the chamber.
    - Indicate on the package that it was removed from the chamber.
- Package the cartridge separately from the magazine and submit it with the firearm.
- Reasons you cannot unload the firearm.

- You do not know how.
- The firearm has modifications.
- The firearm is an unusual make or action.
- Unloading the firearm will damage valuable evidence.

- Firearm is jammed or corroded.

4. Packaging Firearms:

   a. Unload firearm if possible.

      - Packages with loaded firearms must be clearly labeled **"LOADED FIREARM"** on the outside of the package.

   b. Disable action or block open.

      - Nylon tie through action (not barrel).
      - Hammer blocked from firing pin.

   c. Secure firearm in a gun box.
   d. If the firearm is to be processed for latent prints, caution is necessary not to smear or destroy the prints
   e. If the firearm is recovered from salt or fresh water, it should be placed in a container of fresh water immediately.

      - Immersion in fresh water will slow the oxidation process and remove the corrosive action of salt water

   f. The firearm box shall have the case and item number written on the box and the Mark43 evidence label clearly displayed on the end of the box.
   g. Description of firearms should include the serial number, make, model, caliber and the condition when found (i.e., loaded, unloaded, cocked or un-cocked, safety on or off, etc.)

5. Packaging Firearm Related Evidence:

   a. Recovered bullets and fragments:

      - Each bullet or fragment should be wrapped separately in tissue paper and then placed in a small container to protect the striations on the bullet or fragment.

        - Do not use cotton material for wrapping as it may be confused with fibers from clothing involved in the case.

      - If a bullet is buried in a wall or other object, cut around the bullet removing the material containing the bullet, wrap and place the section in a box or carton

        - Do not probe the hole or try to dig out the bullet as it may damage the bullet.

      - Do not touch recovered bullets with bare fingers. Use a clean, unused pair of plastic gloves or a clean tissue.

        - Handling bullet with bare fingers could contaminate possible traces of blood.
        - Bullet fragments often have sharp edges that can cut.

- Shot pellets should be collected and submitted in the same manner as bullets.
- Search for shot shell wads and shot cups whenever a shotgun is used.
- Shot patterns should be measured, sketched, photographed with a scale, and if possible, the surface containing the shot pattern should be recovered.
- Bullets and fragments recovered at an autopsy should be carefully rinsed and dried then wrapped and placed in a small container.

b. Fired cartridge cases:

- Consider processing for fingerprints.
- Cartridges should be packaged/labeled separately and placed in an E-142 Cartridge Envelope.
- Do not mark a fired cartridge.
    - This interferes with IBIS processing.
- Labeling includes completing the pertinent data sections on the E-142 Cartridge Envelope and affixing a Mark43 evidence label.

6. Significance of Exam Results:

The WSPCL examination may reveal data about the firearm, ammunition, or information regarding the target object, and may contribute information regarding the circumstances of the firearm incident. For example:

a. Firearm:

- The caliber of the firearm.
- The type of firearm.
- Firearm type from no-gun cases.
- Any malfunctioning of a firearm.
- Any obliterated serial numbers.

b. Ammunition:

- The caliber of the ammunition.
- If the recovered bullets and expended cartridge cases were fired from a particular firearm.
- Unfired cartridge identification.
- Fired bullet identification matched to firearm.
- Fired cartridge case identification matched to firearm.

c. Target Object:

- The entrance and exit holes in clothing.
- Firearm identification.
- The approximate distance from muzzle to target.
- Which way a bullet went through glass.

d. Firearm Residue:

- Unburned powder residue patterns.
- The distance fired.
- Type of firearm used.

8.01.030
SHIPPING FIREARMS, BULLETS, FRAGMENTS, AND SHOT TO THE WSPCL: 03/95

1. Items requiring processing by the WSPCL will be sent via the Property Management Unit.
2. When examinations are complete, the results will be sent to the detective and the evidence will be returned to the Property Management Unit.

8.01.035
SEXUAL ASSAULT EVIDENCE: 02/21

Evidence in sexual assault cases may be recovered from several sites, for instance from the scene of the assault, from the suspect, the suspect's vehicle and clothing, and from the victim's body and clothing. **It is imperative that the victim receive immediate medical attention.** Promptness of an examination will permit medical personnel to retrieve any physical evidence before being lost through washing or cleaning. Hospitals have sexual assault kits that are used by medical personnel when collecting specimens and the controls required by the crime lab.

1. Collection of physical evidence by medical personnel, general precautions:

    a. Proper labeling: Each item must be labeled with:

        - Contents.
        - Case number.
        - Item number.
        - Source.
        - Subject's name.
        - Date and time of collection, and
        - Initials of medical person collecting evidence.

    b. Proper packaging: Each item, including articles of clothing must be packaged separately to avoid transference of materials between items.

        - Use clean paper bags and envelopes to avoid accumulation of moisture inside the package.

            - The presence of moisture enhances bacterial growth.

        - All packaging should have tape over any gum seals and all openings to ensure that small particles are not lost.

    c. Proper drying: Stains and swabs must be thoroughly dried at room temperature without the use of heat.

        - Cool air fans may be used to dry swabs.

            - Partially dried items may have bacterial action and mold, destroying their value as evidence.

    d. Proper collection of control samples: Control samples that are to be compared to samples of unknown or questioned source must be collected from a known source.

2. Collection of evidence:

    a. Clothing:

        - Have the victim undress while standing on a double layer of clean paper.

- Clothing must be thoroughly air-dried.
    - Do not use a fan or blow dryer, they may blow off small particles, hairs or fibers.
- Place each article of clothing, including shoes, in a separate clean paper bag.
- Properly seal and label the bag(s).
    - Include the initials of the person who collected the article.
- Fold, seal and properly label the top layer of paper as evidence after clothing has been packaged.
    - Discard the under layer of paper.

b. Foreign objects and debris:

- Collect solid material such as hair, grass, and soil on a clean piece of paper.
- Fold, seal and properly label the piece of paper.
- Place the sealed paper in an envelope and seal and properly label the envelope.
    - Note the area of the body from where the material was collected.
- If possible, collect oils, lubricants, lotions, and stains in a glass test tube or vial.
    - Do not use plastic containers.
- If not possible, use a small gauze pad to collect the sample.
- Cut away the excess gauze and place the sample in a glass test tube or vial.
- Seal and label test tube and wrap carefully to avoid breakage.

c. Pubic hair collection:

- Place a clean piece of paper under the patient and have the patient comb the pubic hair area with a 100% cotton-stuffed comb until no more hairs comb out.
    - The 100% cotton-stuffed comb is prepared by taking a new comb and running it several times through clean, rolled absorbent cotton.
- Place the comb on the paper and fold, seal, and label.
- Place the paper in an envelope, seal, and label as "pubic hair combings" with other necessary identifying information.

d. Pubic hair control:

- After the combing, pubic hair controls must be obtained. Pluck at least two (2) hairs from each of the following areas: center, left side, right side, and top near the navel, for a total of at least eight (8) hairs.
- Place in a properly labeled envelope which is additionally marked "plucked pubic hairs" and seal.
- Clip an additional four (4) hairs from each of the above areas and from the labia or scrotum for a total of at least twenty (20) hairs.
    - The hairs should be clipped as close to the skin as possible.
- More hairs should be taken if the hair is gray or graying.
- Place hairs in a properly labeled envelope which is additionally marked "cut pubic hairs" and seal.

- Do not package pubic hair combings with pubic hair controls.

e. Head hair collection:

- Collect any loose hairs and debris. Comb the head with a 100% cotton-stuffed comb until hair stops coming out.
- Place the collected loose hairs, debris, and cotton-stuffed comb on a piece of clean paper, fold with comb and combings, seal and label.
- Place paper in a properly labeled envelope which is additionally marked "head hair combings" and seal.

f. Head hair control:

- Pluck at least two (2) hairs from each of the following areas: left temple, right temple, top front, top center, back of head, and the back of the neck. Place on paper and fold, seal, and label.
- Place paper into a properly labeled envelope which is additionally marked "plucked head hairs" and seal.
- Clip at least ten (10) additional hairs from each of the above areas at the scalp.
    - Additional hairs are required if the hairs are many-colored or are graying.
    - If the subject has sideburns, include several sideburn hairs.
- Package clipped hairs together in a folded piece of paper, fold, seal, and label. Place the paper into an envelope, seal, label, and additionally mark "clipped head hairs."

g. Facial hair combings:

- Follow the same procedures as for head hair. Comb beard with a 100% cotton-stuffed comb and place comb on a piece of paper. Fold the paper, seal, and label. Place paper containing the comb into an envelope, seal, and label and additionally mark "beard combings."

h. Facial hair controls:

- Pluck two (2) hairs from each cheek, two (2) from the chin, and two (2) from the upper lip if a full beard or moustache is present. Place in paper. Place paper into an envelope, seal, and label, and additionally mark "plucked facial hairs."
- Clip at least ten (10) additional hairs from each area as close to the skin as possible. Place in paper, fold, seal, and label. Place paper into envelope, seal, and label and additionally mark "cut facial hairs."
- Do not package facial hair combings with facial hair controls.

i. Fingernail scrapings:

- Place subject's right hand over a clean piece of paper. Using a clean toothpick, scrape any material under the fingernails onto the paper and place the toothpick on the paper. Fold, seal, and label, including the notation "fingernail scrapings (right) hand." Place paper into envelope, seal, and label and additionally mark "fingernail scrapings (right) hand" on the envelope.
- Repeat process with the left hand.
- An alternate procedure is to collect fingernail cuttings. Package fingernail clippings from each hand separately.

j. Deposits on skin and bite marks:

- Wipe the area of the deposit or bite mark with a sterile damp swab and follow it up with a sterile dry swab.
    - Save both swabs for analysis.
- A substrate control from the skin must be collected from a saliva/deposit-free area, adjacent to the deposit.
    - The substrate sample must be collected in the same manner as the questioned sample.
- Air-dry the gauze at room temperature and package in paper. Mark paper "bite mark area," label, and seal. Place the paper in an envelope, seal, label, and additionally mark "bite mark area."
- Obtain a control sample of saliva from the suspect.
    - The suspect must not consume any food or beverage for at least thirty (30) minutes prior to the sampling.
- Have the suspect chew on a clean piece of cotton gauze. Place the gauze on a clean Petri dish or clean, non-absorbent surface and air-dry thoroughly.
- Place air-dried saliva control sample into a paper envelope.
    - Do not lick gummed envelope flap.
- Close and seal envelope with transparent tape. Mark "saliva control" and note case number, name of subject, date, time, and initials or name of person sealing the control sample.

k. Biological specimens:

- The crime laboratory requires a whole blood sample from the victim and the suspect when apprehended. The blood sample must be labeled and refrigerated.

8.01.040
PRESERVATION AND SHIPPING OF SEXUAL ASSAULT KITS: 02/21

1. Precautions:

a. The investigator should remind medical personnel that:

- Four vaginal, four anal, and four oral swabs must be collected as appropriate.
- All swabs must be completely air-dried before packaging. This can be accomplished with a cool air fan in approximately one (1) hour.
- All evidence such as tubes, swabs, envelopes, etc., must be properly labeled.
- The materials in the sexual assault kit must be packaged in a sturdy container to avoid breakage during shipping.
    - Some commercial kits are enclosed in cartons designed for shipping.

b. The use of protective shipping containers-such as those containing "bubble" sheets or heavy padding may be necessary to prevent breakage.

c. The materials in the kit should not be subjected to a rapid rise in temperature, sudden changes in pressure and humidity, or exposed to damaging radiation, such as ultra-violet

rays from the sun.

d. The handling of biological fluids and stains presents a hazard due to the possible presence of bloodborne pathogens. Hepatitis B (HVB) and AIDS (HIV) are of particular concern to those handling liquid blood or bloodstained items. Special care must be taken when handling such materials.

e. Investigators shall use universal precautions and treat all blood and bloodstained objects as sources of bloodborne pathogens, and take appropriate protective actions.

- Good personal hygiene must be observed.
- The hands should be washed thoroughly after the removal of protective gloves, even if the gloves are not cut or punctured.
- Used protective gear must be properly disposed of.
- See GOM 10.00.000 Exposure Control program.

f. **Blind searches are to be avoided.** Searchers must not place their hands into any space that is not first visually inspected.

2. Preservation of sexual assault kits:

a. Facts of the case, case status, and laboratory readiness will dictate when the sexual assault kit shall be sent to the WSPCL, via PMU, by the assigned detective.

- If it is to be sent within five (5) days of collection, the entire kit should be stored in the refrigerator at least two (2) hours before it is shipped.

b. If the kit is to be held longer than five (5) days after collection, the liquid blood sample must be removed from the kit, labeled, and refrigerated.

- The remainder of the kit must be frozen until the laboratory is prepared to receive it.
- In instances when the liquid blood sample becomes too aged (after one (1) to two (2) months), it may be necessary to draw another sample from the victim.
- This decision should be made after discussion with the laboratory personnel.

c. If the case is a rape-homicide, the blood must be shipped to the WSPCL within five days.

- The liquid blood sample from the victim should be refrigerated for at least two hours before shipping.
- The remainder of the kit must be frozen until it is requested by the WSPCL.

3. Submission procedures:

Sexual assault kits shall be submitted at a Precinct evidence room with a refrigerator and subsequently transferred to PMU. PMU shall transfer custody to a lab when directed by the assigned detective .

- CALL THE WSPCL IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR ARE UNSURE OF THE PROCEDURES.

8.01.045
TRACE EVIDENCE: 05/07

1. Introduction:

Small, often microscopic quantities of material have always been of interest to crime scene investigators. These particles can be the key to a successful investigation. An individual leaves or picks up traces of materials, however brief and slight the contact with another person or an

environment (Locard's Principle of Exchange). Evidence that results from this exchange can connect the suspect with the victim and the crime scene. The connection is established by the comparison of

trace evidence from a questioned source with samples from a known source (control); for example, glass found on a burglary suspect's clothing can be compared with glass from a broken window (known sample) at the burglary scene. **The timely collection of known samples from the victim, suspect, and the crime scene is critical.** Technological advances enable analysis of even smaller particles, placing an even greater burden on the investigator to find and collect the evidence. The search must be done carefully and thoroughly.

2. Precautions:

a. Since Locard's Principle of Exchange is always active, the investigator must use caution to avoid unnecessary, damaging exchange with the crime scene.

- Some exchange is unavoidable; however, it must be controlled and held to a minimum.

b. After the incident, the suspect and the victim must not come in contact.

- Neither the suspect nor the victim must be brought back to the crime scene while it is still being processed.

c. Samples taken from the scene should be packaged separately from the suspect's and victim's clothing to avoid contamination.

d. Special care must be taken not to contaminate or loose any small particles of evidence.

e. Avoid damaging any critical areas of the evidence which may have rips, tears, smears, impressions, stains, or cuts. When removing clothing, avoid cutting through these critical areas.

- If cutting is unavoidable, such as removing clothing in an emergency room, be sure to make careful notes on the location and description of the critical area, and identify the cuts made by medical personnel.

f. Control samples must be collected as soon as possible to avoid loss and change. If control samples and suspect samples are not both available, contact the crime laboratory to determine if the evidence should be submitted.

- Both known and suspect samples must be submitted before any comparisons can be made.

g. Damp or wet items, particularly clothing and leather goods, must be air-dried at room temperature over clean paper. After drying, handle the clothing and leather carefully so that trace evidence is not lost. Package the clothing and leather in clean paper or paper bags.

- Do not use plastic containers.

h. Care must be taken to correctly label the origin of each item collected as evidence.

i. It is critical that each item or container be properly labeled. The label must describe the contents, the donor or source if known.

- Do not identify the item as from the "victim" or "suspect."

j. Proper packaging is particularly important when handling fragile evidence such as paint flakes and glass shards.

k. Do not submit razor or scalpel blades for trace evidence.

l. Do not submit hypodermic needles or a syringe with the needle attached. The crime laboratory will not accept cases containing needles, regardless of the packaging.

3. Hair:

Hair evidence is found in all types of crimes and is frequently found in crimes where bodily contact has been made. Hair evidence is likely to be found if physical force is involved, such as in crimes involving rape, homicide, and assault. Microscopic examination and comparison of hair cannot usually prove conclusively that the hair came from a particular individual. If hair from a person has strong similarities to hair found at a crime scene, it can be stated that the hair could have come from this person or another individual with similar characteristics.

a. Significance:

Examination and comparison of hair can reveal:

- If the hairs are of human origin and, in some circumstances, the race and the body area.
- If the hairs may have come from a specific species of animal.
- If the hairs were forcibly removed from the body or were naturally shed.
- If the hairs have been freshly or recently cut.
- If the hairs have been chemically treated.
- If the hair has been subjected to trauma, such as high temperatures, flame, or a crushing blow.
- If the hair was damaged by disease.

b. Collection:

- Make detailed notes showing date, time, and location of the collected hair.
- Do not sort hairs that are found in the same location.
- Do not mix hairs that are collected from different locations. Place them in separate envelopes.
- If hair is firmly attached or embedded in an object, do not remove the hair. Send the object with the adhering hair to the crime laboratory, if feasible. Otherwise, photograph the hair in place and then remove the hair carefully, keeping it intact.
- Pubic hair combings in sexual assault cases are preformed by medical personnel.
    - It is important that the medical personnel have a sexual assault kit which contains materials for the collection of pubic hair as well as other necessary samples.
- Check the hands of assault and homicide victims. Hairs may be found clutched in their hands. Hairs may also be found on their bodies or on their clothing.
- Contact the crime laboratory if there is any question on how to proceed.

c. Packaging:

- Fold the hairs in a piece of clean paper. Seal with tape and write the date, time, description of the evidence, and the location where it was found. Then place the sealed paper into an envelope. Seal the envelope and identify the contents; note the date, time, and initials of the person handling the evidence.
- If the hairs are placed directly into an envelope, make sure that all the flaps and corners of the envelope are sealed with tape.
    - Even a slight gap can cause hairs to be lost.

4. Glass:

Burglaries, traffic accidents, and assault cases often provide useful glass evidence. Glass taken at a burglary scene (control sample) may be compared with glass fragments found on a suspect's clothing. Glass from a broken headlight may be compared with pieces of glass found on a hit-and-run victim's body or glass found at the scene. These types of cases involve comparison of the glass to determine if they have a common origin. With larger pieces of glass, it may be possible to physically fit the control samples to pieces of the suspect glass.

a. Significance:

The examination of glass may reveal:

- If two pieces of glass are of common origin.
- The direction of force that broke the glass.
- The direction of a projectile that perforates the glass.
- The type of glass (i.e., auto glass, headlight lens, etc.).
- Glass fragments from the scene which can be physically fitted with fragments from sources such as the suspect's vehicle.
- These physical matches, particularly if the surface markings also match, can prove conclusively that the fragments were once one integral part.
- Similarities in properties such as refractive index, elemental composition, color, density, and thickness increase the probability that several fragments may have or are consistent with having a common origin.
- Glass may reveal the direction of a projectile and even the order in which several projectiles penetrated the glass pane or window.

b. Collection:

- If the direction of force which broke the glass is to be determined, all of the glass must be retrieved. Glass remaining in the frame must be marked so the surfaces can be identified as "inside" or "outside." The amount of glass on the ground or floor on each side of the frame should be noted and collected.
- If projectile holes, such as bullet holes, are to be examined, the entire pane of glass should be submitted intact. The glass may have to be taped on the exit surface to hold it together.
    - If the exit side cannot be determined, consult with the crime laboratory.
    - Care must be taken not to disturb any possible gunshot residue on the surface of the glass.
- At traffic scenes, it is important to search a wide area. Glass fragments can fly in many directions. Pieces of glass may drop off a fleeing auto some distance from the scene. All glass must be recovered, with each different location identified and packaged separately.
- If glass fragments are suspected to be on clothing, do not remove the glass. Handle the clothing carefully so that the fragments are not lost and package each article of clothing separately.
- Glass fragments are often embedded in the soles and heels of shoes as the criminal walks over broken glass. Do not remove the glass from the shoes.
    - Submit the shoes in paper bags.
- Known samples collected at the scene should be submitted separately.
- All of the glass must be collected if a physical match is to be considered.
- Care should be taken to preserve any other trace evidence such as hairs, fibers, shoe prints, or stains which may be adhering to the glass.

c. Packaging:

- Glass found in different areas must be packaged separately.
- Small pieces of glass should be placed in a paper-fold, sealed, labeled, and packaged in a small rigid container (i.e., a pill box). The box must also be sealed and properly marked.
- Package so that if a container opens or tears during shipping, the glass is not lost and does not leak out and contaminate other glass evidence.
- Large pieces of glass should be packaged in rigid containers. Use packing material such as cardboard or part of a corrugated carton to avoid breakage and to protect the edges.
- Hand delivery is the easiest way to submit large pieces, as it avoids the task of extensive packaging and reduces the risk of breakage.

d. Controls:

- It is important to collect and send all of the known broken control glass to the crime laboratory for comparison with fragments from the criminal, suspect vehicle, the victim, etc.
- If the known glass source is large, a number or representative samples may suffice.
- Glass in the frame of a window or remaining in a headlight rim are the best control samples.

5. Cloth and fibers:

The transfer of fibers and fragments of cloth can be the result of such actions as violence to a person with a weapon or vehicle, clothing snagged and torn, or the contact of clothing with another article of clothing. Microscopic examinations can reveal many characteristics which can be further supported by chemical and physical analyses. The type of fiber, color, dye characteristics, thread count, and twist can be determined. The piece of cloth may be physically fitted into a garment, showing a common origin.

a. Significance:

The examination of fibers and fabric may reveal:

- Contact between two or more persons.
- Contact with objects such as blankets, upholstery, carpets, and drapes.
- Contact between a vehicle and victim.
- Contact between the suspect and the crime scene.
- Positions of persons riding in a vehicle.

b. Collection:

- Pieces of fabric, threads, or fibers may be found adhering to the front or underside of a vehicle that hit a pedestrian.
    - They may be part of a fabric impression.
- Fibers are readily caught in hair. An assault victim should have the head combed with a cotton-filled comb to recover any fibers. Sexual assault victims should have the pubic area combed as well.
    - A suspect's head should be combed in the case of an assault or if a head covering was used as a disguise.

- The head covering should also be collected.

- Recover the clothing to be examined, taking care to avoid loss of fiber and other trace evidence. If it is damp or wet, dry it carefully over a clean piece of paper.
- Threads and long fibers should be picked up with tweezers. Place the recovered material on a clean piece of paper and fold, seal, and label. Place the folded paper in an envelope, seal, and label.
- Small fibers should be left on the item and the entire item, or at least the part holding the fibers, should be submitted to the crime laboratory.
- Do not pick up the fibers with moistened gummed paper tape. Transparent tape can be used to pick up fibers from surfaces. The adhesive surface of "Post-it" notes is also useful for collecting fibers. The adhesive surface of the tape or Post-it should be placed on a clean glass slide or similar surface.
- Vacuum cleaning is not a desirable collection procedure for fibers.

c. Packaging:

- In most cases, it is best to collect the loose fibers or threads on a clean piece of paper and then fold, seal, and label. Then place the folded paper into an envelope, seal, and label.
- Since fibers, threads, and fabrics can be easily lost, care must be taken to seal the container. The corners and flaps of an envelope must be sealed with tape.

d. Controls:

- All clothing that may be involved in the case must be collected for comparison with the collected questioned fibers.
- Possible sources of the collected questioned fibers such as rugs, blankets, and upholstery must be submitted. These controls must be representative of the source.
- If carpet fibers are involved or suspected, a representative sample of carpet must be submitted. The sample must be a piece of the carpet and not just fibers pulled from the surface.

    - Carpets can consist of several types of fibers.

6. Paint and other protective coatings:

Chips and fragments of protective coatings such as paint, varnish, lacquer, enamels, and plastics can often be found at the scenes of hit-and-run cases and burglaries involving forced entries. A transfer of paint can occur when two vehicles collide. Chips of paint at the accident scene or on the victim's clothing may produce information regarding the vehicles involved. Traces of paint on burglary tools may connect these tools to the burglary scene.

a. Significance:

The examination and comparison of protective coating chips and fragments may reveal:

- That the paint chip from the scene came from a particular object or vehicle by a physical match (i.e., the chip edges fit like a piece of a jigsaw puzzle with edges of the damaged area).
- A probability of common origin if the chips show similarities in physical and chemical characteristics. Multi-layered chips also show similarities and correspondence in the number of layers, order of colors, and thickness of the layers can increase the probability of a common origin to a very high degree, sometimes to the level of reasonable, scientific certainty.
- The type of paint or coating and there applications.
- Information regarding the make, model, and year of manufacture.

b. Collection:

- Paper folds and plastic or paper envelopes can be used to collect the paint samples.
- Small samples of material should be collected on a clean piece of paper. The paper fold is then labeled, sealed, and placed in an envelope which in turn is labeled and sealed.
- A convenient method of collecting paint scrapings is to tape an envelope or plastic bag just below the sampling area. Hold the envelope open and scrape the paint samples loose, allowing them to fall into the envelope.
- Be sure to sample the underlying surface.
- If small enough, the item containing the paint or paint smear should be submitted to the laboratory.
- Do not attempt to remove the paint.
- If an item is too large to submit to the laboratory, paint chips representing all of the layers must be submitted.
- Do not scrape off the sample in such a manner that the paint chip sample contains only a partial number of layers.

c. Packaging:

- Each of the recovered items must be packaged separately, properly labeled, and sealed.
    - If a vehicle is involved, labeling should include the location on the vehicle, make, model, year, and license plate number.
- Envelopes must be sealed on the corners with tape to ensure that no leakage occurs.
- Tools with paint smears must be protected to avoid loss or contamination of the paint. The area containing the paint smear should be protected with soft tissue paper.
- If paint chips are to be submitted for a possible physical match, they must be packaged so that the chips do not break. The chips must be protected with tissue paper or cotton and placed in a small, rigid container.

d. Controls:

- In all cases, the control samples must be taken immediately adjacent to the area of damage or of interest.
- The collected chips must contain all of the layers down to the underlying surface.
- When investigating a hit-and-run collision, at least two control samples should be taken from each vehicle.
- The samples should be taken from within the damaged area where paint transfer has occurred and from the undamaged area immediately adjacent to the damage.
- Similar samples must be taken from the suspect vehicle when it is apprehended.
- At burglary scenes, samples should be taken from an area immediately adjacent to the tool mark.
- Do not touch the tool mark itself; it may be altered and rendered useless for later tool mark comparison examinations.

8.01.050
LATENT PRINTS EVIDENCE: 04/18

1. Introduction:

   Latent prints are perhaps the most common form of physical evidence and one of the most valuable. They relate directly to the objective of every criminal investigation and that is the identification of the offender. Because latent prints are fragile and susceptible to destruction, proper collecting, handling and packaging of the evidence are very critical.

2. Handling evidence:

   a. In order to avoid destruction of latent print evidence, items collected should be handled by the edges or in areas that avoid commonly touched areas.
   b. Wearing gloves during handling may protect against leaving additional latent prints on evidence, however, it does not prevent damage to latent prints already deposited.

3. Crime scene processing:

   a. Ensuring that a crime scene is processed for latent print evidence is the responsibility of the responding deputy. Assistance from King County Regional AFIS (KCRA) may be warranted, given the specific circumstances of a scene. Guidelines for requesting assistance from KCRA are outlined in GOM 11.00.040.
   b. Items that are smooth, solid, dry and non-porous are most conducive to black powder processing at the scene.
   c. Items that are textured, porous or sticky, e.g., paper, cardboard, and tape, should be submitted via the Property Management Unit (PMU) for distribution to the Latent Processing Lab for chemical processing.
   d. Areas within a crime scene that were most likely touched, e.g. door knobs/handles, light switches, rearview mirrors, seatbelts, and gear shifts, as well as entry and exit points should be processed for latent prints.

4. Collecting evidence:

   a. Collecting evidence is the responsibility of the deputy, detective, or evidence specialist at the scene.
   b. All evidence recovered and preserved by commissioned staff, including latent print cards, must be submitted to the PMU for distribution to the Latent Print Unit.

5. Packaging evidence:

   Consideration should be given to the items surface type:

   - Non-porous items, e.g., glass and metal: Non-porous items should be packaged individually and secured within the packaging to prevent destruction of prints.
   - Porous items, e.g., paper and cardboard: Multiple porous items may be packaged together as the latent prints will not be destroyed by contact with other surfaces.
   - Adhesive tape: Both sides of tape can be processed for latent prints. Tape should be affixed inside of a sheet protector or similar material before submitting to the Latent Processing Lab.

6. Precautions:

   a. Latent prints are fragile and easily destroyed. Proper care during handling, collecting, and packaging is critical.
   b. Chemicals are routinely used on evidence submitted to the Processing Lab. Consideration should be made to the value of the item(s) submitted as these chemicals may damage and/or destroy evidence. It is recommended that the submitting deputy notify the owner(s) of this possibility and notify the Latent Processing Lab if chemical processing should be avoided.
   c. Drugs or unknown substances must be removed before sending items for latent print processing. Exceptions can be authorized by the Latent Print Supervisor.
   d. Weapons must be unloaded prior to sending to the Latent Processing Lab. Exceptions can be authorized by the Latent Print Supervisor.

7. Additional forensic testing:

   Consideration should be given regarding whether additional forensic testing should be completed before or after latent print processing. Additional testing may include:

   - **BLOOD** - The Latent Print Unit should be contacted for assistance in determining the best course of action when both blood and latent print examination are required.
   - **DNA** - Items requiring DNA and latent print examination must include a notification for special handling within the request. These items will be processed in a limited manner to preserve DNA evidence. Following DNA examination, the item(s) should be re-submitted to the Latent Processing Lab for additional chemical processing.
   - **DOCUMENT EXAMINATIONS** - Items requiring both latent print and document examinations should be submitted for document examination prior to latent print examination. Latent print chemical processing may cause inks to run or bleed, possibly destroying the ability to perform document examination.
   - **FIREARM OPERABILITY TESTING** - The disassembly and chemical processing required to locate latent prints could compromise operability testing. Conversely, complete operability testing prior to processing is likely to destroy latent print evidence. The Latent Print Unit or Washington State Patrol Crime Lab should be contacted for assistance in determining the best course of action when both firearm operability and latent print examination are required.

8. Submitting requests for latent print examination:

   a. Provide names and DOB's of subjects whose prints are to be compared, if known.
   b. Obtain elimination prints whenever possible.

8.01.055
TOOL MARK EVIDENCE: 03/95

1. Introduction:

   A tool mark is a mark made by one object on the surface of another object. Although these marks are generally made at the entry point of a burglary, various kinds can be found elsewhere, such as fractured knife blades, cut marks on wire, abrasions left on a vehicle, cut marks on a padlock, or machine marks on a metallic surface. If a tool mark does not have sufficient detail, a decision must be made whether the tool mark is of value and worth expending time and effort to collect.

2. Types of tool marks:

   a. Wood or soft material marks show the basic shape of the tool and lack specific detail to single out a particular tool.
   b. Marks that contain striations and indentations which show the individual characteristics of the tool.

      - These marks can lead to the identification of a particular tool.

3. Precautions:

   a. Do not attempt to fit a suspected tool into a questioned mark.

      - This may damage the tool mark.

   b. Protect the suspected tool so the face of the tool is not damaged.

      - Protect the face of the tool with soft tissue paper.

   c. Protect any trace material on the face of the tool. Paint, metal particles, and other materials from a surface frequently adhere to the tool.

      - Trace material can be compared with samples of the surface containing the tool mark.

   d. Samples of the surface adjacent to the tool mark must be taken.

4. Preservation of tool marks:

   a. When possible, submit the object containing the tool mark.

      - This may involve the cutting out a portion of the object containing the tool mark.

   b. Close-up photos, which include a scale, must be taken of the object containing tool marks if the object cannot be submitted.

      - The film plane should be parallel to the tool mark.
      - Oblique lighting should be used.

   c. Keep tool mark clean and dry except when a tool mark on a metal surface is subject to rust.

      - Coat the tool mark with a film of light oil.

   d. Casting of a tool mark should only be done as a last resort and should be done by an experienced person.

      - Use a suitable silicone rubber material.
      - Do not practice on the tool mark to be used as evidence.

5. Tool fragments:

   a. A recovered fragment may be fitted to a specific tool that was used at a crime scene.
   b. At crime scenes, tools may break while forcing such things as windows, doors, and drawers and fragments of the broken tool may be found at the scene.
   c. Since these fragments may be very small it may be helpful to use a magnet or a light held obliquely to the search area.
   d. Package each fragment separately.

8.01.060
IMPRESSION EVIDENCE: 05/07

1. Introduction:

   a. Wherever a crime has been committed, someone has had to enter and exit the scene. In the process shoeprints, footprints, and tire tracks can be left.
   b. This evidence should be aggressively searched for at crime scenes and precautions taken to preserve it, for later documentation and collection.

2. Significance:

   a. Examination of impression evidence may reveal:

      - Possible number of footwear and/or objects present.
      - If an impression was created by a specific object.
      - The approximate size of the object creating the impression.
      - Manufacturing information about the object creating the impression.
      - Possible sources of what caused the impression.
      - Order of deposition and possible movements/direction of travel at the time the impressions were made.

   b. Impression evidence can show class characteristics, wear characteristics, and individualizing characteristics.
   c. Class characteristics include such things as the overall pattern of a shoe outsole, the weave of a fabric, or the number of ribs and grooves in a tire track.
   d. Wear characteristics are those due to the erosion of the surface of the item being examined and are reflected in the impression.
   e. Individualizing characteristics are a product of random events which occur to that one item, such as cuts in a shoe outsole, a flaw in the weave of a fabric, or a stone in a tire's tread.
   f. When present in sufficient quantity and detail, the individualizing characteristics in an impression allow it to be identified to a specific source.
   g. Shoe prints can be examined to obtain information as to possible manufacturer, type of footwear (boot, athletic, dress), and approximate size.
   h. Tire tracks can be examined to obtain information as to possible tire manufacturer, design name and type of tire (automobile, truck, off-road vehicle).
   i. Fabric impressions can be examined to determine the type of weave and possible sources.

3. Collection:

   a. The impression needs to be photographed both with and without a scale/ruler, using a low speed film, and using lighting which highlights the impression (usually several oblique or side lighting shots). The camera should be positioned as close as possible to the impression (fill the frame with the impression).
   b. Whenever possible, the entire object which has the impression should be submitted to the laboratory.

      - Positive identification of the source of the evidence is more likely when the original impression can be examined.
      - The evidence has to be packaged in a manner which protects the impression from contact with any other surface.

   c. When the impression cannot be submitted to the laboratory, the impression should be documented using photography.
   d. It should then either be cast or lifted.

e. Impressions in snow and under water require special handling, and the crime laboratory should be contacted for instructions when these types of impressions are encountered.
f. Be aware of clothing impressions on car finishes, bumpers, undercarriages, etc.
g. Care should be taken to preserve any trace evidence such as hairs, fibers, or paint in the impression.
h. Some impressions may be latent in part or whole and need to be chemically enhanced before correct documentation and collection is possible.

- Contact the WSPCL for instructions in these instances.

i. Impressions and dust print lifts of impressions should be secured in boxes in a manner which prevents anything from coming into contact with the impression or lift.
j. Plastic should **never** be used to **package impressions or dust print lifts** of impressions since the plastic can actually develop an electrostatic charge which can then remove portions of the impression or lift.
k. Casts should be thoroughly air dried prior to packaging. The cast should be cushioned and packaged in a cardboard box which allows the cast to continue drying.

- Never use plastic.

l. All items should be clearly marked as to location, orientation to the scene, date, and agency information.

8.01.065
CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE EVIDENCE: 01/19

Any unpackaged or uncontained suspected synthetic opioids (i.e. Fentanyl, Carfentanil, Remifentanil or other opioid analogs) in any form (aerosol, liquid, solid or powder) shall be handled by call-out of the BDU/Hazmat Unit.

Anyone coming into contact with a suspected synthetic opioid should thoroughly wash their hands and clothing with soapy water as a precautionary measure.

Do not submit any hypodermic needles, razor blades, or other sharps. The WSPCL will not accept any case that includes a needle or a syringe with the needle attached.

1. Precautions:

a. Many drugs are very potent and even minute amounts present a health hazard. Proper Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) shall be worn when handling. At a minimum N-95 masks and nitrile gloves shall be worn. See GOM 10.00.040. Deputies shall not:

- Taste the suspect substance.
- Hold the suspect substance close to the nose in order to smell it; and
- Eat, drink, or smoke while handling the suspect substance.

b. Small amounts of material must be handled with care to avoid contamination and loss.
c. Do not store green or wet plant material in a tight bundle or pile.

- The biological degradation process may generate sufficient heat to produce a fire hazard.

d. Use extreme caution when collecting and packaging hypodermic needles.

- The contents of the syringe should be placed in a separate container for testing and the needle should be disposed of. See GOM 10.00.000

2. Field tests:

   Deputies shall not field test any substance that they believe contains any type of synthetic opioid.

   a. Field tests SHALL be conducted in a well ventilated area wearing nitrile gloves and N-95 mask.
   b. Field tests are **presumptive** tests and are:

      - Not conclusive tests which prove the presence or absence of a particular drug.
      - Useful in establishing probable cause.
      - Useful in obtaining search or arrest warrants.
      - Useful in keeping a person in custody.

   c. If the amount of material is small or the material is a liquid do not use a Field Test Kit.

      - Send the material to the WSPCL for testing.

   d. Do not send the Field Test Kit to the WSPCL.
   e. Test kits shall be neutralized using F kits and disposed of properly.

3. Plant material:

   a. Dry any plant material thoroughly then place in a paper sack or envelope.

      - Do not place dried plant material in any plastic or plastic coated containers.

   b. If a large amount of plant material is collected, it is not necessary to send all the material to the WSPCL.

      - A representative sample should be sent to the WSPCL lab.
      - Deputies should note the total weight of the material collected and the amount and locations of the samplings.

4. Solid dosage forms and powders:

   a. Ensure that each item is properly identified and sealed.
   b. Ensure that the outer envelope or package containing the item is properly sealed.

   c. Use the Drug Analysis Request form (WSP-CL-442).

      - List the items in the order you want them examined.
      - Do not list suspect substances as a particular drug. List substances as "suspected cocaine", "suspected of containing heroin", etc.

5. Clandestine drug laboratories:

   a. If there is a belief that a clandestine laboratory exists, deputies shall not enter the premise.
   b. If deputies have already entered, they shall leave the premise immediately.
   c. Deputies shall not:

      - Smoke.
      - Turn any electrical switches on or off.
      - Shut off any running water.
      - Pour any water on any equipment or material.
      - Touch or turn off any equipment.

d. Deputies shall:

- Notify the BDU/Hazmat Unit Immediately.
- Secure the surrounding area.
- Treat the laboratory and surrounding area as a crime scene.

8.01.070
FORENSIC DOCUMENT EVIDENCE: 03/95

1. Introduction:

A document is defined as anything printed, written, typed, etc., relied upon to record or prove something. The role of the document has become increasingly important in a society of contracts, wills, checks and promissory notes, as well as threat and hate notes, ransom notes, examination papers, and professional records. The authenticity of these documents is often a critical issue to the resolution of a crime or dispute.

2. Significance:

Document examinations may lead to definite conclusions that identify the writer or the device that produced the questioned item.

a. Handwriting examinations may identify the writer of a check, letter, or questioned signature.
b. Handwriting examinations may eliminate a person as a writer.
c. Typing examinations may determine the make of machine and if a particular machine was the source of the questioned typing.
d. Document examinations may reveal if a document is counterfeit.

3. Structure of examination:

To have documents examined an investigator must have:

a. The questioned documents.

- If possible the original of the documents should be submitted.
- Copies of documents reduce the probability of a definite conclusion.

b. Known samples of the suspect's writing.
c. Known samples of the victim's writing.

4. Handling and shipping of evidence:

a. Questioned documents generally do not require special procedures except documents should be protected from excessive handling.
b. There are two (2) notable exceptions that require special handling.

- Charred documents should be placed in a box lined with cotton.
  - Do not separate the pages.
- Indented writing from the impression of a pen that transfers to sheets under the sheet with writing should be protected from excessive handling and additional impressions.
  - Do not write on the envelope after the document is placed inside.

- Indented writing must be examined before being processed for fingerprints.
    - Fingerprint processing will destroy the indented writing.

5. Handwriting standards:

    a. **Requested standards** are obtained through the use of the Handwriting Exemplar Form. The exemplar, when used properly, will provide the document examiner with sufficient writing by the subject to reach a definite conclusion.
    b. All four (4) pages of the exemplar are necessary to obtain a representative sample of the subject's writing.
    c. One-half of the exemplar is designed for the investigator to dictate to the subject the various writings specific to the case.
    d. When completing the exemplar Investigators should:

        - Dictate to the subject each signature, name, word, etc., fifteen (15) to twenty (20) times.
        - Dictate the various names, dates, questioned entries, etc., in a random manner.
        - Ensure the subject is completing the form with a black ink ballpoint pen.

    e. **Collected standards** are any writing that will be accepted in court as the genuine writing of the subject. These include but are not limited to:

        - Driver's licenses.
        - Business records.
        - Payroll checks.
        - Letters.
        - Diaries.

6. Other questioned writings:

    a. In some cases the questioned writing may not be typical of a normal writing situation.
    b. The investigator should obtain writing standards under circumstances similar to those of the questioned writing. These may include:

        - Graffiti on a wall: Have the subject write on a paper that is taped to a wall.
        - Writing on unlined paper: Have the subject write dictated, verbatim samples on unlined paper.

8.01.075
FIRE EVIDENCE: 02/21

1. Introduction:

    The crime of arson is an extremely difficult to investigate. The crime scene is often a smoldering, charred mass on the verge of collapse. To compound the problem, most of the evidence is altered or destroyed by heat and smoke and is usually soaked with water.

2. Precautions:

    a. Keep alert for evidence which may indicate that an attempt is being made to conceal another crime (i.e., robbery, homicide).
    b. The search for flammable liquids must not be delayed.

        - These liquids evaporate quickly.

c. Use a vapor detector since many flammable liquids do not have a noticeable odor.

- Liquid odors may be masked by the odor of burnt material.

d. Evidence suspected of containing traces of flammable liquids must be packaged in a special manner.

- Each container must be properly sealed and labeled.
- Containers must be sealed with tape extending across the top of the container and down the sides.
- The tape must be initialed so that the initials are across the tape onto the container.

e. Call the Fire Investigation Unit if there are any questions concerning the procedures for collecting and packaging arson evidence.

3. Significance:

a. Examination may reveal:

- The presence and nature of any accelerant.
- The manner and area where the fire was set.
- The connection of a suspect with the arson scene.
- The presence of another crime (i.e., robbery, homicide).

4. Collection:

a. Flammable liquid evidence, such as fire debris, are found in areas such as:

- Lower surfaces where liquids may flow.
- Protected areas.
- Porous materials.
- Soil.
- Unsealed concrete.

b. The method for collection is to cut a cross-section through and below the pour pattern if possible.

- Do not use a gas-powered saw or generator near the collection/sample area.

c. Flammable liquids are found:

- In cans.
- In bottles.
- On porous materials.
- On the surface of puddles.

d. The method for collection is to:

- Pipet, pour, or syphon into a proper container.
- Blot the surface with a paper towel or gauze.
- Skim surface of water with paper towel.

e. Package flammable liquid and wick separately from the bottle, jar or glass fragments of a molotov cocktail.

- If fingerprint examination is desired, the glass should be stored so it can dry out rapidly.

- Fingerprints are dissolved by flammable liquids.
- If there is insufficient liquid for analysis, seal the glass in a vapor-tight container.

f. Burned, charred paper:

- For document examination handle as little as possible leaving the charred paper where it was found if in a box, drawer, wastebasket, etc.
    - If it is necessary to repack, place loosely in a rigid container lined with cotton.
    - Label all containers as "fragile".
- For analysis of a volatile liquid on papers, seal papers in a new, unused paint can.

g. Freeze all soil samples after collection or refrigerate if unable to freeze.

- Low temperatures will retard the bacterial action in the soil can destroy petroleum-based products.

h. Gloves, shoes, pants and other clothing are likely to have flammable liquid stains and spills on them.

- Package in the same manner as flammable liquid evidence except,
    - Do not stuff garment into the can, leave at least one-third of the can empty.
    - If necessary the garment may be cut to fit in the can.

i. Package explosive and solid accelerants in plastic or paper bags.

- They can be packaged while damp.
- If the explosives are found with petroleum products, call the crime lab for handling and packaging instructions.

5. Packaging:

a. It is important that the correct container is used to package evidence.
b. Flammable liquid residue evidence should not be stored in plastic containers or containers with plastic lids.

- Kapac bags are an exception when properly sealed.

c. Small clean paint type cans are preferable for storing liquid residues.

- Screw-top vials with teflon-lined caps may gradually lose the sample through evaporation.

d. Unused, clean paint cans should be filled between one-third and two-thirds full.

- **Never fill the can completely.**
- Do not use cans that are lined with a gray Teflon coating.
- Use unlined or green epoxy-lined cans.
- Use a mallet to tap around the circumference of the lid for a proper seal.
    - Inspect the seal and keep debris out of the sealing groove.

e. Glass jars are not recommended.

- Jars are breakable, difficult to store and may not provide a good seal.

6. Controls:

   a. A control sample of material from the fire scene which is identical to the evidence submitted but does not contain any accelerant is necessary.
   b. This sample is collected from an area adjacent to the area where the evidence is collected and must be uncontaminated by the suspected flammable liquid.
   c. The sample should be taken from a protected area in the same room as the fire origin, from the room next to fire origin, and outside a clearly defined pour pattern.
   d. A control sample is easily contaminated by:

      - Walking through a pour area and then through the control area.
      - Water run-off.
      - Condensation of a volatile substance which evaporated from another area of the scene.
      - By using contaminated gloves, tools, or utensils to collect the control.

8.01.080
COMPUTER EVIDENCE: 02/21

1. Introduction:

   The likelihood of encountering and having to deal with a computer system, smartphone or other electronic device should be a consideration when conducting any criminal investigation or searching a crime scene.

   a. If possible NEVER ALLOW ANYONE TO TOUCH THE COMPUTER OR OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICE.
   b. If the computer or other electronic device is on DO NOT turn it off.

2. Precautions:

   a. If possible NEVER ALLOW ANYONE TO TOUCH THE COMPUTER OR OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICE.
   b. If the computer is on DO NOT turn it off.

3. Collection and Preservation:

   - Secure the scene and contact Digital Forensics in the Major Crimes Unit.

8.01.085
VEHICLE LAMP EVIDENCE: 05/07

1. Introduction:

   Vehicle lamps can be submitted to the WSPCL or the MARR Unit when the question of whether a vehicle's lamps were on or off at the time of an impact. This information may be critical to establishing the at fault driver.

2. Precautions:

   a. Never turn on a vehicle's headlamps after an accident. If the glass envelope of a bulb has fractured, the filament can burn out when energized and show indications of being incandescent at impact.
   b. The evidentiary value of vehicle lamps can be lost if the lamps are not collected,

packaged, and transported using the correct procedures. Lamp filaments are often fragile after an impact.

- Lamps should always be hand carried to the MARR Unit or the WSPCL rather than mailed or shipped.

3. Collection and Preservation:

   a. Prior to removing a lamp, mark the 12 o'clock or "up" position.
   b. Avoid breaking any filaments during handling or transporting lamps. If a filament is accidentally broken, make note of the fact and submit the information with the lamp.
   c. Whenever possible, submit all of the lamps from the vehicle in question.
   d. If a lamp is intact and easily removed from its socket, it can be removed as normal for replacing the lamp.
   e. Broken lamps should be removed with the lamp base and packaged to protect the filaments.
   f. Check the lamp housings and surrounding areas for loose filament fragments. Use tweezers or "Post-it" notes to collect any fragments of loose filaments present.
   g. Do not place packaging materials around the **filaments of broken lamps.**
   h. When the lamp is removed from the vehicle, label with the exact location, usage, and vehicle information (year, make, model, license number).

4. Packaging and Transporting:

   a. Ensure that the lamps are protected from shock and that all packaging materials are well sealed.
   b. Hand carry all vehicle lamps to the MARR Unit or the WSPCL.