

Miami Valley Regional Crime Laboratory

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Message from the Director

Ken Betz

The Miami Valley Regional Crime Laboratory analyzes approximately 20,000 cases a year involving all types of evidence. One thing all these items have in common is a paper trail. From submission sheets to analyst notes and data, paper is used to track all evidence through the Crime Lab. As you can well imagine, a lot of paper is used to track evidence and its analysis in the lab. All this case information must also be retained in a file. Currently the Crime Lab must keep three years of files on site.

Since computers are an integral part of our record keeping system, it is a logical step to begin the process of keeping all our data and notes in a digital format. This will help the Crime Lab accomplish several things. As with all government agencies, we are faced with an economic crisis in which we are being asked to do more with less. We are constantly looking for ways to improve yet save money. In a paperless system, data and notes can be kept without generating any paper, thus resulting in savings on the amount of paper used in the lab.

Another problem we have encountered is a viable storage area for the file folders that our cases require. By going paperless, all paperwork that has previously been stored in file folders will be stored electronically on our computer servers. For security purposes, these servers are backed up in two locations.

Service to our member agencies has always been a priority at the Miami Valley Regional Crime Lab. Since all data will be stored in our computer system, analysts will be able to easily retrieve information when you call with questions.

In 2009 we hope to implement procedures that will help us attain a paperless system. We will eventually offer the ability for you to submit your lab sheets electronically through a secure server. By doing so, we hope to speed you through the evidence check-in process by having the data for your case already entered into our system prior to actual evidence submission.

Another system we hope to implement in 2009 is the ability for you, our user agencies, to retrieve your reports electronically from a secure web site. This will save on mailing costs and give you the ability to retrieve your reports whenever needed!

The coming year looks to be an exciting year as our new paperless system is implemented. If you have any questions about how this will affect you, please let us know. As always, service to our agencies is our number one priority.



IMPORTANT NOTICE

As of February 1, 2009, latent print cards need to be submitted in sealed and marked envelopes. If multiple cards are collected in the same incident, they may be submitted in one envelope to be given the same case number.

If more information is required contact Ron Huston, Fingerprint Supervisor at 225-4990

Ecstasy

by: Jennifer Watson

.3,4-Methylenedioxymethamphetamine (MDMA) or 'Ecstasy' is one of the most popular drugs for rave parties. MDMA provides both stimulant and hallucinogenic effects and often reduces inhibitions, eliminates anxiety, heightens sensuality, and produces extreme relaxation. Street terms for Ecstasy may include X, Adam, hug drug, E, roll, and essence.

MDMA is synthetically manufactured in clandestine laboratories primarily in Europe. The tablets are available in a wide variety of colors and logos, thus appealing to the younger user. MDMA is most commonly seen in tablet form but may be found in capsules or as a powder. It is usually ingested orally, but it can be crushed and snorted or injected.

Signs of abuse of MDMA may include increased heart rate, blurred vision, dry mouth, increased energy, nausea, increased openness, reduced defensiveness, and an altered perception of time. One of the most common side effects is jaw muscle tension or teeth grinding. Paraphernalia associated with users can include pacifiers, lollipops, skittles®, M&Ms®, and candy necklaces or bracelets. These items can be used to help relieve the jaw muscle tension and teeth grinding or to conceal the MDMA tablets.

While 'ecstasy' is the popular name for MDMA, 'ecstasy' is any pill represented as MDMA on the street. It is important to

note that 'ecstasy' pills are notoriously unreliable in content, even more so than other street drugs. While the list is by no means all inclusive, these pills have been found to contain substances such as caffeine, methamphetamine, ketamine, procaine, 3,4-Methylenedioxyamphetamine (MDA), and piperazines such as 1-Benzylpiperazine (BZP). It's not unusual for a tablet to contain several of the above mentioned substances yet be negative for MDMA.

MDMA tablets may be packaged like other pills and powders in leak-proof and spill-proof containers. MDMA is a Schedule I controlled substance as listed in the Ohio Revised Code (ORC). Any questions regarding information or packaging of MDMA can be directed toward the chemistry section at 937-225-4990. Information on other 'ecstasy' type drugs will follow in the future.



Packaging of Syringes and Biohazards

by: Jennifer Watson

The chemistry section is again seeing the improper packaging of syringes and biohazards. The guidelines for the proper packaging of syringes and biohazards have been included as a reminder. Any questions regarding the proper packaging of these items can be directed toward the chemistry section at 937-225-4990.

1. Place syringes in puncture proof containers. A cardboard box will suffice for a puncture proof container. If no puncture proof container is available, taping the syringe to a piece of cardboard and then folding it over before placing it into an envelope is also sufficient. The syringe needs to be secured in some fashion so that it cannot poke through an envelope. A loose syringe in a plastic bag is not safe whether it has a cap over the needle or not. A syringe without a cap absolutely must be in a puncture proof container.

2. Label the outer packaging as containing a syringe. This allows individuals handling the evidence to be aware of what the package contains.

3. All syringes should be marked as biohazards. Any item that has come into contact with any bodily fluid should also be marked as a biohazard. This includes items that have been found in the mouth or ingested. We also request that you let us know what type of biohazard we're dealing with. Remember, if you don't want to touch it with your bare hands, we don't either.

Evidence Technician Classes

Slots for the 2009 Evidence Technician Classes are Full. Accepted applicants will receive notice approximately two months prior to the class.

Any further applications will be placed on the waiting list.

Applications for the 2010 Courses will be available in the October newsletter.

Field Questions:



Does it cost our department anything for the crime lab to assist with crime scenes?

There is no cost for member agencies.

Remember to e-mail your questions to duerrt@mcoho.org

Submissions of Firearms

Just some reminders:

All firearms are to be unloaded for submission to the laboratory.

When submitting firearms for examination do not place plastic ties, vials, cardboard, pens or any other objects in the barrels, chambers or cylinders. There is a possibility of damaging the firearm.

Never disassemble or field strip a firearm prior to submission. Parts may be lost

If the firearm has a trigger lock or some other mechanism it must be removed or key be supplied when submitted.

If the firearm has a magazine when recovered, the magazine **must** be submitted with the firearm for testing. The ammunition is not needed if the firearm is being submitted only for a function test.

If a firearm contains bio-hazards, all openings on a gun box (including tie down holes in bottom) and envelopes must be sealed. Containers must also be marked bio-hazard or contain a bio-hazard label.



Examples of improper securing of firearms. Just make sure it is unloaded then submit.

Crime Laboratory Phasing Out Usage of Evidence Tape

Beginning in 2009, the Laboratory will be phasing out the use of our red evidence tape. Accreditation standards require that evidence packages be sealed and marked but do not specify the use of evidence tape. The Laboratory has determined that the use of **clear** Scotch tape or book tape provides a better seal than the evidence tape. You may continue to see some packaging with the evidence tape, as we begin the "phase-out" process.



Paint Evidence

by: Laura Kiddon

Although paint evidence can occur in many different kinds of cases, it is most frequently encountered in hit and run cases. According to Lord's principle, whenever two objects come in contact, an exchange will occur. This can be very obvious and prevalent in hit and run cases.

It is important to collect all available paint evidence. One never knows the quality of the paint evidence (or number of layers present) until it is microscopically examined in the Laboratory. A two-way paint transfer is more significant and has stronger evidentiary value. Therefore, whenever possible, collect known and question paint samples from both vehicles. Use care when collecting paint samples to avoid loss or contamination. Paint should be collected using a disposable single-use razor blade to scrape down to the metal, plastic or fiberglass surface so all paint layers are present. Collect known samples near the area of damage on the same body part. (Oftentimes, layer structures can differ from one area of the vehicle to another.) The questioned paint can be collected after the known using the same blade. However, a new razor blade **must** be used for each vehicle to avoid contamination. If a car part is damaged and has foreign paint smears on it, sometimes it is easier to submit the part or a portion of it, thereby submitting both the K and Q paint samples – no scraping necessary!

Samples should be carefully collected and labeled properly. To be consistent, the samples should be labeled as follows:

K-1 = Known sample collected from Vehicle #1

Q-1 = Question sample collected from Vehicle #1

K-2 = Known sample collected from Vehicle #2

Q-2 = Question sample collected from Vehicle #2.

Also note on the container a description of the vehicle from which each sample was removed.

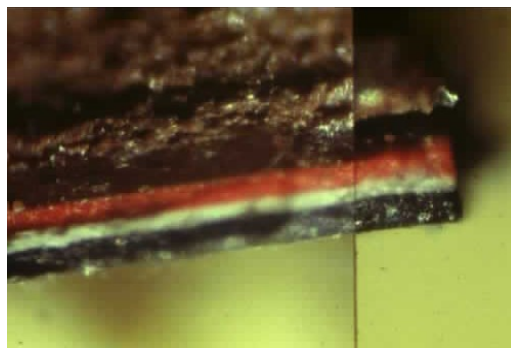
Package paint samples in leak-proof containers of appropriate size, such as a pill tin or paper packet inside an envelope. Never package paint samples in plastic or loose in taped up slide boxes or envelopes.

Don't overlook debris at the scene. Pieces of paint, glass, body filler, plastic, etc. are excellent evidence for fracture match analysis. All broken edges adjacent to the damaged area should be collected from the suspect vehicle for comparison. These left-behind auto parts may contain numbers or information that may lead to the suspect's car.

A description of the accident can be helpful to the trace analyst. On the submission sheet, please provide at least the following information: the make, model and color of each vehicle involved; a brief description of the accident; a description of the areas of damage to each vehicle and the samples collected.

In the case of a pedestrian hit and run, all of the victim's outer clothing should be collected and packaged separately in paper containers (such as paper bags). The scene should be thoroughly searched for any evidence from the suspect vehicle.

As always, if any questions arise, please contact the Trace Evidence Section.



Status/Results of a Case

When calling for results or status of a case, please ask the front office. Many times analysts are actively working on cases and unable to take phone calls. Also, front office personnel are the only ones that can provide you with the copies of reports whether faxed or mailed.

Laboratory Holidays (Laboratory Closed)

Monday	January 19th	Martin Luther King Jr. Day
Monday	February 16th	President's Day
Monday	May 25th	Memorial Day
Friday	July 3rd	Independence Day (Observed)
Monday	Sept. 7th	Labor Day
Monday	Oct. 12th	Columbus Day
Wednesday	Nov. 11th	Veteran's Day
Thursday	Nov. 26th	Thanksgiving
Friday	Nov. 27th	Day after Thanksgiving
Friday	Dec. 25th	Christmas

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Fingerprinting Services

The Miami Valley Regional Crime Lab provides two types of fingerprinting services: Web Check and Live Scan (fingerprint cards). The laboratory cannot fingerprint for Florida gun permits or any other requests that require a police officer's signature.

Fingerprinting Hours are Monday through Friday from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM.

The fees are as follows:

\$10.00 for each fingerprint card
\$40.00 for the state Web Check
\$40.00 for the FBI Web Check
\$70.00 for both the state and the FBI Web Check

Payments must be made by cash, money order or business check. The person being fingerprinted must provide a valid photo ID and the name and address of

where they need the results to be mailed.

If you have any questions, you may contact Sue Hay at 225-4990.

Crime Laboratory Web Site

www.mcoho.org/government/mvrcl

Montgomery County Coroner's Web Site

www.mcoho.org/government/coroner

Feed back on the newsletter can be sent to duerrt@mcoho.org