



July 2016

## FLSB Update July 2016

### DNA

Numerous forensic DNA-related bills were introduced in the 2015 legislative session with three signed into law and effective July 24, 2015. The new laws will have a significant impact on the operations of the Crime Laboratory Division (CLD) and/or our law enforcement partners.



Photo Courtesy of Mitch Lant

SHB 1068 requires law enforcement agencies to submit a Request for Laboratory Examination (RFLE) form within thirty days to the CLD on all sexual assault kits (SAKs) where consent has been given by the victim or if the victim is under the age of eighteen and not emancipated. This requirement applies to sexual assault kits collected on or after July 24, 2015.

Due to the large increase in SAK submissions anticipated, the CLD has established a “triage” system for processing sexual assault submissions:

- Highest priority-continues to be current, active investigations where the LEA indicates that forensic DNA analysis is important for public safety and case resolution.
- Second priority-SAKs collected on or after July 24, 2015, where the submission would not have previously occurred, but is now required by SHB 1068. Since the CLD does not have the evidence storage capacity to hold these SAKs, only a RFLE should be submitted initially. The submitting agency will be notified to submit the SAK at a later date when the CLD has the resources available to process the evidence.
- Third priority-applies to the inventory of SAKs stored by our agencies which were collected prior to July 24, 2015, and not previously submitted to the CLD. Submission of RFLEs for testing this category of SAKs is approved on a limited basis. Please contact the DNA supervisor in your local lab for further information.

**DNA/Latent Prints and Cartridge Cases**—The Crime Lab has revised the evidence procedures regarding the analysis of cartridge cases. Please see the information located at the CLD website under Crime Lab Division Documents: <http://www.wsp.wa.gov/forensics/crimlabs.htm>

**DNA:** When purchasing swabs for DNA evidence collection, make sure to order swabs labeled “DNA Free.” Do not use swabs only labeled as “Sterile” as these have been shown to be potentially contaminated with human DNA.



Request for Laboratory Examination (RFLE)

Link: [RFLE](#)

Authorization of Consumption of DNA Evidence:

[Consumption](#)

DNA Case Supplemental Information:

[Supplemental](#)

Consent for Family Reference Sample Collection, Testing, and CODIS Entry

[Family Reference](#)

Each of these forms can be found at the CLD Website:

[Crime Lab](#)

Toxicology Request forms can be found at the Tox Lab Website:

[Toxicology Lab](#)

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#### SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- DNA and Sexual Assault Kit legislation
- Marysville, DNA, and LEAN lead to success
- Marijuana and legislation
- BATF and Crime Lab team up to battle gun crime

## PUTTING LEAN INTO PRACTICE!

LEAN transformation/Continuous improvement is a process used to maximize customer value while minimizing waste. Basically, the adage “doing more with less” holds true in our attempts to maximize value with our work.

**Forensic Scientist 3 Kristina Hoffman** from Marysville is the CLD LEAN Coordinator. As part of her Master’s degree program at WSU, the DNA section in the Marysville Lab completed a comprehensive LEAN project involving DNA casework organization and time saving practices.

As a result of the transformational work by the Marysville DNA analysts, the DNA section received the WSP Exemplary LEAN Project award earlier this year and is a featured LEAN case study on the Results WA webpage.

The results achieved with this project are being shared with the other labs in the division, looking for ways each lab can incorporate LEAN values and approaches to casework.

On April 17, Chief John Batiste presented the Marysville DNA section and lab with certificates of appreciation and accomplishment for incorporating

LEAN practices to increase efficiency and effectiveness of casework and meet the growing demand for services.

As Ms. Hoffman noted, “Although the DNA unit’s work is conducted in a scientific setting, most of the improvements targeted administrative and management processes.

For example:

- Cut 18 days off the average turn-around time for a DNA testing request.
- Number of samples processed annually rose 18%.
- Backlog of cases for testing was reduced by 10%.
- Staff overtime dropped 56% for the year.

Excellent work, Kristina and Marysville!



*“Adopting LEAN principles in forensic science laboratories can be an effective way to better meet the growing demand for services. We showed we can deliver accurate and reliable results to customer faster, which helps enhance public safety.”*

*— Kristina Hoffman*

## CRIME SCENE UPDATE

The FLSB Crime Scene Response Team had a very busy 2015, and 2016 has been continuing in the number and complexity of crime scene responses.

The CSRT responded to 128 crime scenes in 2015, almost all related to violent crimes against persons.

The CSRT has 8 full time responders and approximately 12 part-time/volunteer members of the team.

The CSRT also offers **3-D scanning** of crime scenes and can provide detailed diagrams (both 2-D and 3-D) and animations of scanned scenes.

**CSRT 24-Hour Line**  
**(253) 255-3064**

## MARIJUANA

### Marijuana Updates

As of July 24, 2015, it is no longer necessary to determine THC percentage in possession cases for people under 21. The CLD can thus examine plant material, marijuana concentrates AND infused products for minors. For “intent to deliver” cases, in which the suspect is under 21, THC quantitation MAY be needed depending on your local prosecutor.

The CLD does not perform THC quantitation on suspected marijuana infused products. The LCB (Liquor Cannabis Board) maintains a list of approved analytical labs should you choose to submit your infused products to them for testing:  
<http://www.liq.wa.gov/publications/Marijuana/Labs/Lab%20List%2003112016.xlsx>

Rather than submitting an excessive amount of suspected marijuana, if appropriate for the case, submit a small portion of the material (1-2 grams) . Baby plant sprouts from grow cases will likely not test positive for marijuana as the THC content is likely not going to be above 0.3%. If agency policy allows, consider securely keeping the plants alive for a few days to weeks to allow the plants to mature and develop some THC.



Photo Courtesy of Mitch Lant

**Check out the WSP on both Facebook and Twitter!**

**Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/WashingtonStatePatrol>

**Twitter:** <https://twitter.com/wastatepatrol>

## CODIS Update

Thanks to the hard work in 2015 by the partnership of law enforcement agencies and the CODIS Lab, the WSP Crime Lab generated **420 DNA hits in 2015!** This means that there have been 420 investigative leads for unsolved crimes due to DNA matches among convicted offender and crime scene samples.

Contact us to order more Convicted Offender kits (provided at no cost).

**confel@wsp.wa.gov Phone: (206) 262-6152**

Remember that the offense listed on the collection card must be a **conviction**, not an arrest charge.

We recommend DNA collections upon **intake**, not release. The offender will then likely be in custody in case a re-collection is needed (due to a weak DNA sample or poor fingerprints).

### Did You Know ??

- The Washington State Patrol CODIS Lab receives convicted offender DNA samples from over 100 agencies statewide.
- The Lab receives about 1,000 samples every month.
- There have been over 250,000 samples from Washington state entered into CODIS since the early 1990s.

Check out the CODIS Newsletters at the CLD website!:

<http://www.wsp.wa.gov/forensics/crimlabs.htm>

## MATERIALS ANALYSIS

Materials Analysis (MA) is a combination of our Chemical Analysis and Micro-analysis (Trace Evidence) Sections in the lab division. These scientists are involved in the analysis of drug evidence, clandestine lab evidence, post-blast explosives, flammable materials, and a myriad of other trace types (fibers, impressions, clothing damage, glass, paint, soil, etc.). Any questions about the services the MA staff offer, please contact any of the labs. Some updates from Materials Analysis:

- \* The Materials Analysis Unit accepts requests for all kinds of cases with no limitations based on severity of the crime. Analysis of trace evidence can be especially helpful in property crimes, as well as investigations in more violent crimes.
- \* The analysis of **glass** evidence had been discontinued for several years, but we now offer this service in several labs. Please contact the labs for more information.
- \* Marijuana laws have changed over the past few years, so there is constant updating of information. See page 2 of this newsletter for more information.
- \* The SICAR (Shoeprint Image Capture and Retrieval) Database contains manufacturer information including outsole patterns to aid in identifying potential make/model of footwear impressions. Any questions of this service can be directed to the MAT sections of the division.
- \* Please refer to the Forensic Services Guide on the FLSB website for information related to the services offered by the Materials Analysis Section.
- \* Check out the MA newsletter which has additional information on their services. The newsletter is posted at the CJTC website (see page 4).



Photo courtesy of Ava Mae

## LATENT PRINTS

The CLD has latent print analysis available in the Olympia and Spokane laboratories. The Spokane lab accepts cases from all of eastern Washington, while Olympia takes cases from the west side of the state.

With additional staffing, case completion has increased by 25% and the backlog is reducing. We continue to work with our customers identifying cases that demand more immediate attention.

In general, cases are prioritized by crime type (crimes against persons generally taken over property crimes). Any case, though, can rise in priority due to court dates, deadlines, or other circumstances.

Any questions, please call

- Don Brannan (Olympia) (360)596-4502
- Brett Bishop (Spokane) (509) 625-5423

## QUESTIONED DOCUMENTS

The Questioned Documents (QD) section in Cheney provides analytical services to agencies in all counties across the state. QD requests include the examination of handwriting and documents such as threat notes, letters, checks, and identity theft documents. The QD analysts are committed to providing the highest quality casework, training, and customer service while remaining active with forensic science organizations such as the American Board of Forensic Document Examiners and NIST Organization of Scientific Area Committees Physics and Pattern Subcommittee. This past year, we provided training and advised law enforcement and legal personnel, investigators, licensing, and election workers. If you interested in training or receiving additional information please contact the Spokane



Photo courtesy of Leo

## FIREARMS/TOOL MARKS NATIONAL INTEGRATED BALLISTIC INFORMATION NETWORK (NIBIN)

The ATF-Seattle Crime Gun Intelligence Center (CGIC) has partnered with WSP, among other agencies, to establish the Puget Sound Regional Crime Gun Task Force to combat gun related violent crime. The partnership enables law enforcement agencies to discover links between firearms related crimes in the region, using NIBIN.

NIBIN success within the WSP Crime Lab:

- Recover cartridge cases at all crime scenes and submit for imaging
- Ensure that all weapons recovered in your cases are test-fired and imaged into NIBIN
- Follow up on the investigative leads that NIBIN discovers

To request NIBIN service:

- ◇ Submit a RFLE with a request for NIBIN entry
- ◇ Submit sealed and packaged evidence and test fired cartridge cases only
- ◇ Test fired cartridge cases will need to include firearm information (make, model, caliber, and serial number if present)
- ◇ Only 2 test fired cartridge cases are required
- ◇ Cartridge cases from derringers and revolvers are not entered
- ◇ Bullets are not entered

Consider "Walk-in Wednesday" where detectives can maintain custody of the evidence and bring in items right after a shooting occurs; those cartridge cases are then entered immediately into NIBIN.

**Fact:** In April 2015, the NIBIN caseload in Seattle and Tacoma was 2117 cases; at this time, the total is 316! Quite an accomplishment from our IBIS/NIBIN Unit!

The Forensic Services Guide, our guide to evidence, evidence handling and submission can be located at the FLSB website: <http://www.wsp.wa.gov/forensics/docs/bureau/>

### WSP Forensic Laboratory Services Bureau

<http://www.wsp.wa.gov/forensics/flsbhome.htm>

**Crime Lab:** (206) 262-6020

**Toxicology:** (206) 262-6100

**Impaired Driving:**  
(206) 720-3018

Contact: George Johnston  
(206) 262-6005  
[george.johnston@wsp.wa.gov](mailto:george.johnston@wsp.wa.gov)

We need your input! Please take a few minutes to complete our lab survey:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2016WSPCrimeLabSurvey>

The CLD now has material posted on the CJTC website: Check the resources tab at [https://fortress.wa.gov/cjtc/www/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=438&Itemid=78](https://fortress.wa.gov/cjtc/www/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=438&Itemid=78)

Crime Lab Technical and Training  
Manuals online!

Check the link on the Crime Lab website:  
[http://www.wsp.wa.gov/forensics/crimelab\\_docs.php](http://www.wsp.wa.gov/forensics/crimelab_docs.php)

**HTCU:** The WSP High Tech Crime Unit (HTCU) provides technical investigative support both within the State Patrol and to outside agencies. One of the fastest growing areas is computer seizure and forensic processing. Specific cases related to homicide, child pornography, embezzlement, telephone and credit card fraud, narcotics, and internal affairs investigations have been assisted and investigated by the HTCU.

**To contact HTCU:** (360) 704-4242

**Email:** [htcu@wsp.wa.gov](mailto:htcu@wsp.wa.gov)

**Mailing Address:**

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