

EV 9.0 Evidence Packaging



**LAKE COUNTY CRIME LABORATORY**

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## **EVIDENCE PACKAGING AND ACCEPTANCE PROCEDURES**

Depending on the examinations required, evidence items should be packaged in a specific manner.

- 1. DNA/SEROLOGY/BLOOD/BODY FLUIDS:** Paper bags or envelopes are recommended. Never package in plastic bags unless the evidence items are wet. Wet evidence items must be allowed to dry or delivered to the laboratory immediately to prevent degradation of the biological materials. Paper bags should not be folded down to make the package as small as possible. A single fold to close any opening is sufficient. Packaging should have extra room to allow for removal of the item and repackaging without destroying the packaging. Do not wrap an item like a gift as this can cause friction between the item and the packaging, causing biological materials to be wiped away. Evidence items should be packaged individually, when practical, to prevent cross contamination.
- 2. FINGERPRINT EXAMINATION:** Paper bags or envelopes are recommended. Never package in plastic bags. Paper bags should not be folded down to make the package as small as possible. A single fold to close any opening is sufficient. Packaging should have extra room to allow for removal of the item and repackaging without destroying the packaging. Do not wrap an item like a gift as this can cause friction between the item and the packaging, causing biological materials to be wiped away. Evidence items should be packaged individually, when practical, to prevent cross contamination.
- 3. FIREARMS:** Gun boxes are recommended. These can be purchased from a Forensic Supplier. See list below. Firearms must be secured and unloaded, with the packaging labeled as unloaded. If it is necessary, due to the condition of the firearm, to submit a loaded firearm to the laboratory or if the status of the firearm is unknown, the laboratory must be contacted prior to submission to ensure that a Firearms analyst will be available to accept the firearm.
- 4. ARSON & EXPLOSIVE DEBRIS:** Package in fire debris bags (preferred) or clean (never used) paint cans. These can be obtained from the Crime Laboratory or purchased from a Forensic Supplier. See list below.

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- 5. TRACE & CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES:** Can be packaged in any type of container. Powders for controlled substance testing must be packaged in an exterior heat sealed plastic bag.
- 6. TOXICOLOGY:** Package in designated Toxicology boxes as provided (Blood and Urine Separate). Call with any questions.

**NOTE: The yellow seal provided with toxicology boxes is for ODH requirements only and does not meet the laboratory standard for a proper seal. An additional seal is required for submission. Do not obliterate the yellow seal. Cover it with one piece of clear sealing tape and initial over the tape and onto the box.**

**EXCEPTIONS:**

Certain items of evidence may be too large to wrap, or the evidence may be destroyed by attempting to wrap the item. In these instances, notify the Laboratory. The Laboratory will assist you.

**UNUSUAL SITUATIONS:**

Items which may be hazardous to the employees of the Lake County Crime Laboratory must be clearly identified as hazardous by the submitting agency. Please provide as much information as possible concerning the hazardous item. An example of this is "suspected cyanide". If you have any questions please call the Crime Laboratory, we will assist you. Some types of evidence cannot be tested by the Lake County Crime Laboratory. For example, we cannot accept suspected anthrax. On items such as this, please call the Crime Laboratory and we will provide you with information on where to send the item.

**PROPER PACKAGING:**

When possible, each item should be separately wrapped in a paper bag, or envelope, which is large enough to cover the item. Make sure to place items in a package which is **large enough** to re-package the item, once the scientist has completed the examination.

**PROPER SEAL:**

A proper seal is one which is tamper evident, such as friable evidence tape that breaks upon opening, or evidence tape that will leave a mark upon removal. There must be no openings which would allow anything to enter or escape the package.

Initial the evidence tape, over the edge of the tape. Your initials should crossover the evidence tape and onto the package.

If the evidence is not properly sealed and marked, the person submitting the item must correct the situation before it will be accepted.

**IMPROPER SEAL:**

Examples: Cellophane tape on a metal can, or cellophane tape on a plastic bag, because these may be removed and replaced without detection. Never seal with staples.

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## SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

Special care should be taken with the following items:

**SHARP OBJECTS:** Special care must be used when packaging sharp objects, in order to protect anyone transporting or handling the evidence. Sharp objects must be labeled as “sharp”, and placed into a puncture proof package. If not possible, notify the laboratory at the time of submission that there is a “sharp” object. The Laboratory will assist you.

**SYRINGES:** Syringes must be placed into puncture proof containers, which can be purchased from a supplier of Forensic items. Alternatively, place the syringe into a puncture proof container, and label it as “sharp”.

**BIOHAZARDS:** Any items that have suspected blood or body fluids must be marked as a biohazard.

**EXPLOSIVE DEVICES:** Under no circumstances will Un-detonated, explosive devices be accepted at the LCCL.

**LIST OF FORENSIC SUPPLIERS:**

Forensic Source 1-800-347-1200  
Evident 1-800-576-7606  
Spex Forensics 1-800-657-7739

COPS Plus 1-800-330-6422  
Lynn Peavey 1-800-255-6499