

Evidence Unit Safety Protocols in Light of Fentanyl Concerns



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Prologue

- By now, we have all heard of issues being experienced by law enforcement practitioners in handling drug items that could have been cut, contaminated or laced with Fentanyl or Carfentanil.
- Locally, OPD Officers were hospitalized due to Fentanyl exposure.
<http://www.wftv.com/video?videoId=572497909&videoVersion=1.0>
- SCSO Evidence Specialists experienced symptoms after handling an Opioid package. Earlier last year, another Evidence Specialist was out for months due to inhaling fumes caused by the “venting” of a package of pure heroin.



Law Enforcement Agencies are Changing Policies on How Officers Handle Drug Cases Due to the Current Threat

- DEA and other agencies are not field testing suspected Fentanyl contaminated drugs.
- Guidelines for OPD changed after the aforementioned exposure.
- PPE has been issued for the handling, testing and packaging of drugs at our agency.
- A fume hood has been purchased and will be made available for deputies to better safely handle and package drugs for submission to evidence.
(Training is Forthcoming)
- New protocols have been established in performing the intake and drug storage functions in the Evidence Unit due to recent events and in light of the current threat.

FDLE Guidelines Correspondence June 16, 2017



- Florida Department of Law Enforcement Crime Laboratory Safety Notice:
- In an effort to protect the safety of personnel handling seized drug evidence during the investigative, analytical, and judicial process, FDLE laboratories will be incorporating the use of a “Fentanyl Compound Indicated” label.
- If the analysis of seized drugs indicates or confirms the presence of fentanyl compounds, whether verifiable or not, the crime laboratory analyst will seal the original packaging as normal and will then place the entire exhibit into a clear plastic zip lock bag. This bag is being used as a safety container only and therefore will not be sealed with evidence tape. The laboratory will affix a “Fentanyl Compound Indicated” label as a safety precaution for personnel who may come into contact with the evidence as the case makes its way through the criminal justice system.
- This label should not be considered laboratory results for an item of evidence. The results of the analysis will be in the FDLE Laboratory Report.

New Evidence Submission Guidelines to SCSO Evidence Unit



To All Personnel Who Submit Evidence

Due to recent publicized events regarding law enforcement exposures to dangerous elements in drugs, we find it is now necessary to segregate drug evidence from other items of evidence in cases submitted to evidence lockers.

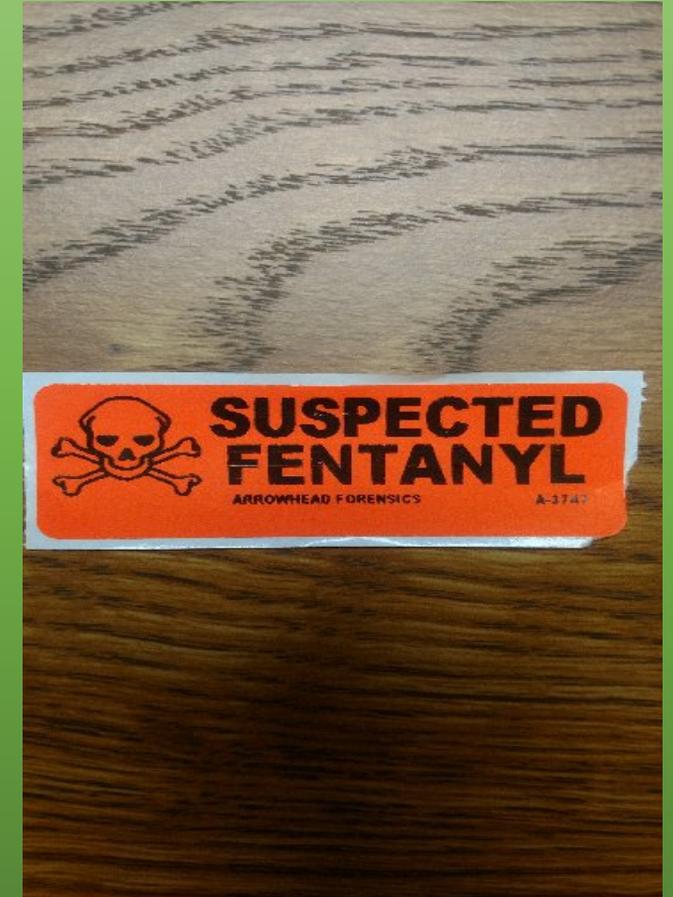
If you are submitting drugs that are powder, pills, or capsules into evidence, (not including prescription medications for destruction), please utilize an individual locker for that package, keeping it separate from other items you may be submitting to the mailbox or other lockers.

DO NOT put these drugs in the green mailbox or the blue latent prints box in the evidence drop off room.

We are now emptying lockers utilizing enhanced safety protocols, including PPE, to minimize cross contamination to other items. This helps us to better, safely obtain and secure the items for storage.

Affix a Warning Sticker (pictured) to the package.

There will likely be additional changes coming to better meet our need to segregate drug evidence as we enhance our facility. We therefore ask for your patience and attention as these are announced.





New Protocols for Performing the Evidence Intake Function at SCSO

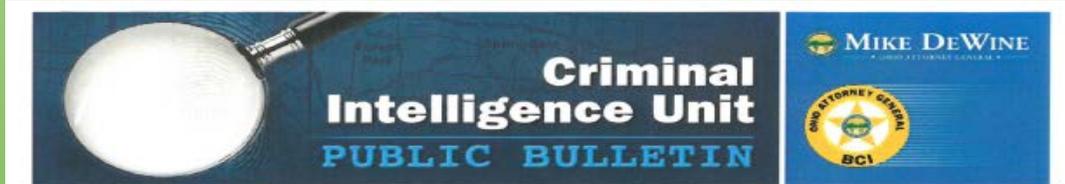
- No one will perform the evidence intake function alone.
- PPE will be worn as prescribed in this procedure when performing the evidence intake function. PPE will include: Nitrile Gloves x 2 pairs, N-95 or higher protection mask; eye protection (Goggles); paper coveralls or sleeves to cover the arms (Black gloves are recommended to better observe powder).
- NARCAN will be immediately available in the event of an exposure. An AED is now located inside the Forensic Laboratory Services Division.





New Protocols for Performing the Evidence Intake Function at SCSO

- Decontamination solution will be pre-mixed and readily available as the intake function is undertaken.
- The recommended decontamination solution is a solution made with OxiClean™.



Cleaning Fentanyl Spills with OxiClean™ August 17, 2017

Law enforcement in Ohio who face opiate encounters are now being presented with a new option of what to do with a fentanyl spill. Previous research has shown the chemical sodium percarbonate (SPC)¹ oxidizes and breaks down fentanyl. Scientists with the Department of Chemistry and the Ohio Attorney General's Center for the Future of Forensic Science at Bowling Green State University performed an experiment with a household product, OxiClean™ Versatile Stain Remover, which contains the same chemical agent. The BGSU study, currently in preparation for publication, was designed to model a chemical spill and use OxiClean™ and a scrubbing action with a paper towel². It was found and verified through instrumental analysis that OxiClean™ can be used to effectively clean fentanyl spills. Although other brand name detergents and generic versions of OxiClean™ were not tested, any detergent with SPC should work in similar fashion.

Instructions for Making OxiClean™ Cleaning Solution²

Please Note: Time studies have not been completed, so the OxiClean™ solution should be prepared fresh before use.

Supplies Needed:

- OxiClean™ Versatile Stain Remover
- Spray bottle with gradients up to 500 mL
- Water

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):

- Double gloves
- Disposable lab coat
- Particulate mask and goggles

Spill Clean Up Instructions

1. Wear appropriate PPE (referenced above).
2. Add one teaspoon full of powder OxiClean™ to 500 mL water.
3. Shake gently until all powder is in solution.
4. Completely cover spill with spray.
5. Within 15 minutes, scrub with a paper towel until dry (solution evaporates over time and this decreases the effectiveness of decontamination).
6. All PPE (except goggles) and paper towels must be disposed of in a biohazardous waste bin.



Source:
¹Qi, Lirong; Chang, Zhiming; Jiao, Guimin; Li, Shaomin and Fan, Qiang. Dissolved Degradation of Fentanyl in Aqueous Solutions of Peroxides and Hypochlorites. Defense Science and Technology Journal, 2015, 19(1): 30-35.
²Prevention of Occupational Exposure to Fentanyl and Fentanyl-like compounds: Chloroxone and OxiClean™. Travis Wood, PhD, Department of Chemistry, Bowling Green State University; Leah M. Frazier, Department of Chemistry, Bowling Green State University; Jon E. Sprague, PhD, Ohio Attorney General's Center for the Future of Forensic Science, Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, Ohio. Submitted to the American Academy of Forensic Science 2016 annual meeting, pending acceptance.

Disclaimer: As a matter of public safety, these findings are being shared prior to the official publication of the research by the Ohio Attorney General's Center for the Future of Forensic Science at Bowling Green State University. Please remember that fentanyl and related compounds are extremely dangerous and should always be handled with extreme caution.



About BCI CIU

The Criminal Intelligence Unit consists of Criminal Intelligence Analysts and a Criminal Intelligence Analyst Supervisor. Analysts are located in BCI London headquarters, as well as regional offices in Youngstown, Bowling Green and Richfield. The members receive and fulfill requests from BCI Agents, local, state, federal law enforcement agencies and task forces. Our mission is to predict and expose criminal activity in order to prevent, eliminate or neutralize the activity.

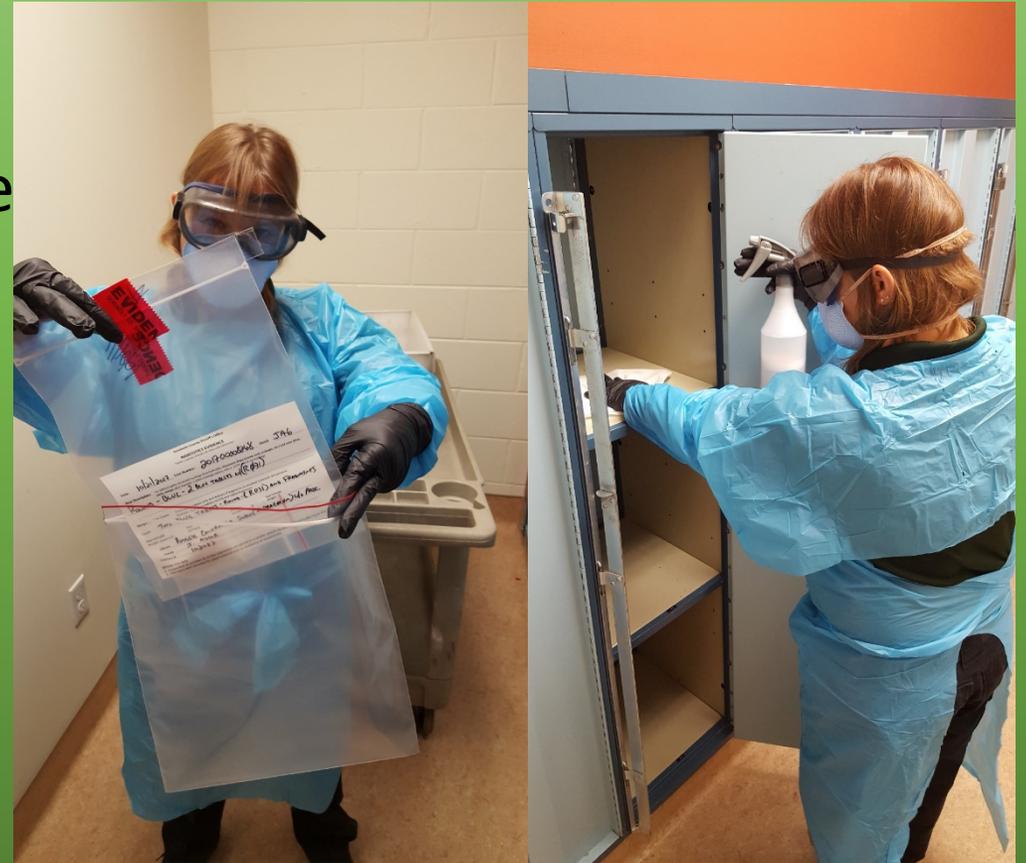
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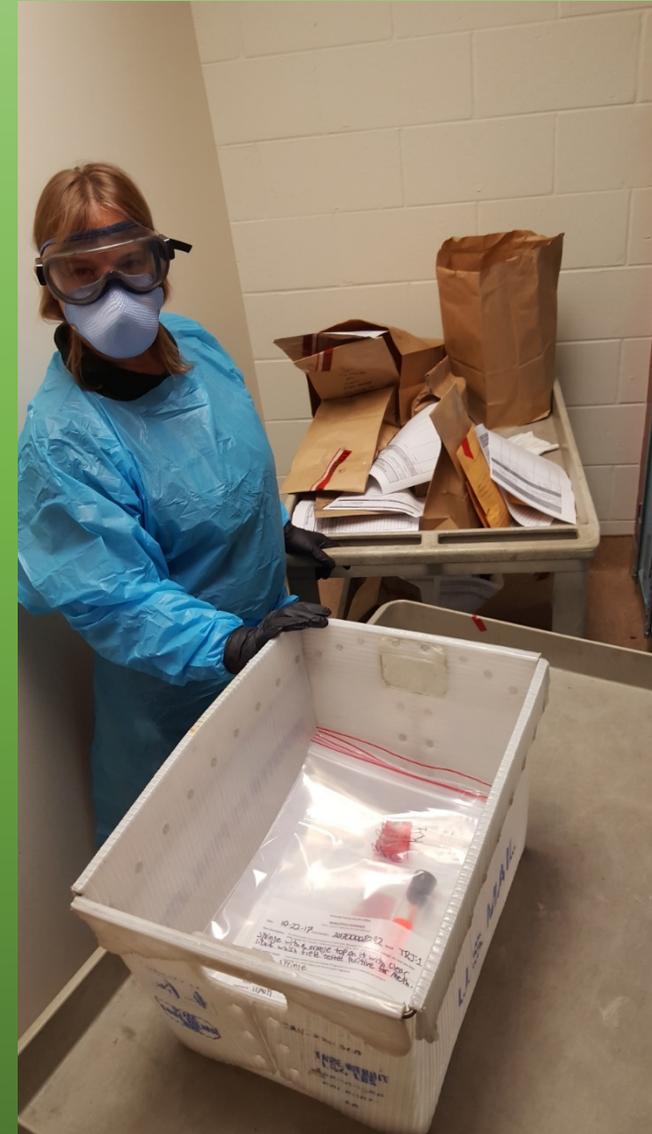
- If a package with powders, pills or capsules is in a locker, the package will be placed in a larger plastic bag for safe storage and transport. It is not considered part of the evidence packaging.
- If other items are also in this locker, all items will be treated as contaminated.
- The locker will be sprayed and decontaminated with the OxiClean Solution.





New Protocols for Performing the Evidence Intake Function at SCSO

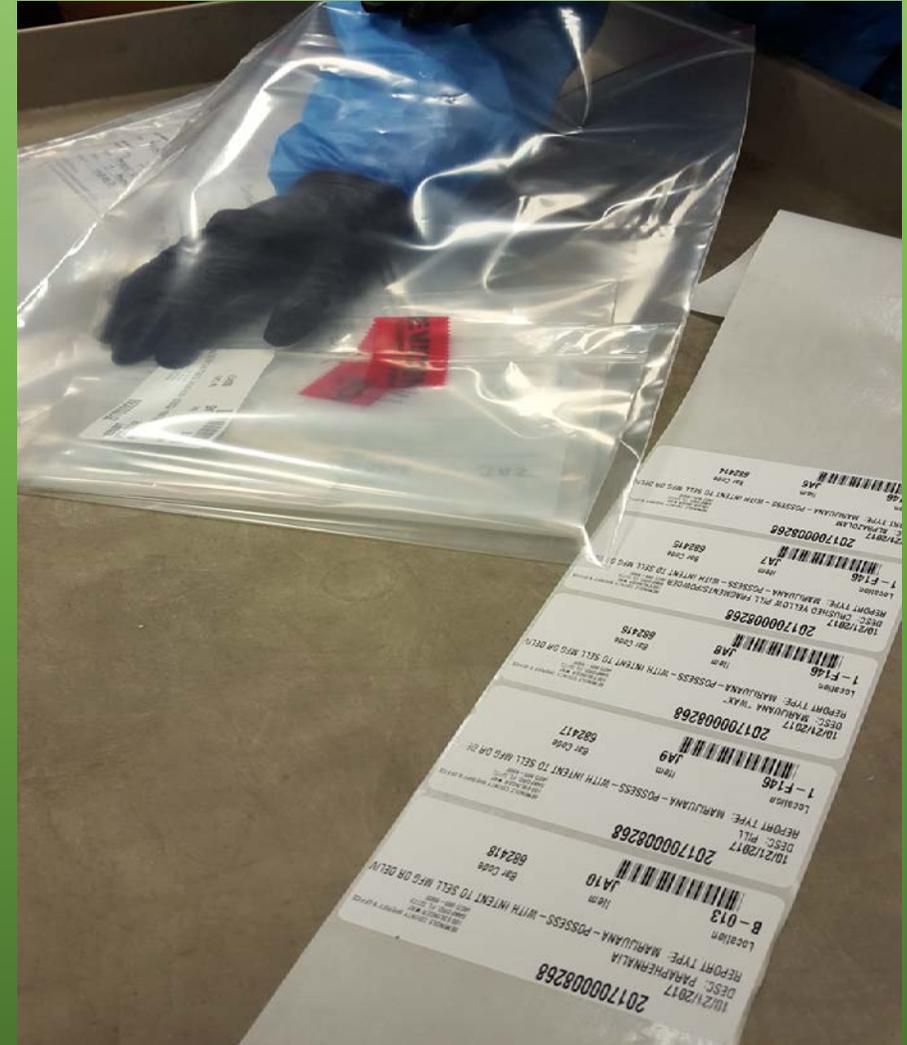
- Other evidence items (not contained in the same lockers with pills, powders, and capsules), will be collected by a secondary evidence specialist not wearing PPE or by the first evidence specialist after removing contaminated gloves.
- Items removed from lockers that potentially have Fentanyl will be placed on a separate cart or in a separate bin, to keep them isolated from other items of evidence.





New Protocols for Performing the Evidence Intake Function at SCSO

- A second Evidence Specialist will enter the information into the barcode system and print the barcode labels.
- The first Evidence Specialist can remove PPE, enter information and print barcode labels, but will need to dawn PPE again to affix the labels.
- The Evidence Specialist wearing PPE, will affix the barcode label to the primary package, inside the outer package, and zip close.
- Now the package is ready for permanent storage.





New Protocols for Performing the Evidence Intake Function at SCSO

- Carts and bins utilized to collect evidence from the lockers with potential Fentanyl will also be decontaminated.





New Protocols for Performing the Evidence Intake Function at SCSO

- PPE will then be removed.
- Outer gloves will be removed first and placed in bio-hazard bin for disposal.
- Goggles will be removed and decontaminated.
- Gowns and Sleeves will then be removed and placed in bio-hazard bin for disposal.
- Mask will be removed next, then the interior gloves and placed in bio-hazard bin for disposal.





There will be Resistance

- As we implemented these protocols and shared them with colleagues from other agencies, immediately these recommendations met with resistance, such as:
 - It's too expensive
 - It's too much trouble
 - It takes too much time
 - It is too uncomfortable
 - We haven't had any issues
- As with any change, once protocols are established, practiced, and repeated, and maybe some attrition occurs, time will pass and people will not remember what it was like not to take the time to protect themselves.
- This is the NEW NORMAL!





What happens if symptoms of an exposure are exhibited?

- Get the victim out of the environment; if possible to fresh air.
- Call EMS.
- Have NARCAN (more than one dose) and an AED ready.
- Evacuate other workers from the contaminated area.
- Enter with appropriate PPE to secure the item, or if serious enough have HAZMAT do it.
- Consider HVAC issues in the event of a major spillage of powder.





Future Plans

- A Fume Hood has already been purchased and will be installed where deputies can access it to better protect themselves while packaging, opening, or handling potentially dangerous materials.
- Designated lockers for pills, powders and capsules is also forthcoming and submitters will be required to utilize these for potential Fentanyl items. These will also have to be cleaned after each use.

Purair SafeSEARCH

Package and Mail Inspection Workstation 24 • 36 • 48
"Ductless Fume Hood with Carbon and HEPA Filtration."

— Purair® PS-24 SafeSEARCH shown with optional air volume

Provides Added Protection from Vapors and Particulates During Package Inspection
Meets or Exceeds OSHA, ANSI and other International Standards

Air Science

GSA Schedule

The advertisement features a blue and white Purair workstation against a background of a blue sky with clouds and a green horizon. A molecular model is visible on the left side. The workstation is a boxy unit with a glass front and a control panel on top. The text is arranged in a clean, professional layout with various font sizes and weights.



Resources

- www.airscience.com
- <https://www.fentanyl-safety.com/>
- HealthAffairs@hq.dhs.gov
- DHS OHA Naloxone guidance documents <https://go.usa.gov/xRfFm>
- InterAgency Board's "Recommendations on Selection and Use of Personal Protective Equipment and Decontamination Products for First Responders Against Exposure Hazards to Synthetic Opioids, Including Fentanyl and Fentanyl Analogues" (August 2017). <http://bit.ly/2xd92PT>
- Ohio BCI Criminal Intelligence Unit Bulletin "Cleaning Fentanyl Spills with OxiClean TM" (August 17, 2017) www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov
- Florida Department of Law Enforcement Correspondence DeborahHahn@fdle.state.fl.us August 16, 2017
- US DOJ DEA Briefing Guide for Law Enforcement www.dea.gov

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Questions?



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