



The Lab Report

Volume 6, Issue 2

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Nebraska State Patrol Crime Laboratory Mission Statement

The mission of the Nebraska State Patrol Crime Laboratory (NSPCL) is to serve as a state leader in the field of forensic science; to provide scientific and technical assistance and service to the Nebraska State Patrol and other law enforcement agencies; and to educate and disseminate scientific information to state and local agencies regarding forensic science matters.

Analytical services are provided FREE to all submitting agencies.

Please Note....

Publication of the July issue of *The Lab Report* was delayed so that we could include important new information regarding a change in our toxicology testing policy. The new policy has now been finalized and is included on pages 2-4 of this special issue. The revised policy will allow us to focus our resources on required testing with the goal of providing the timely services our customers need. We anticipate the next issue of *The Lab Report* will be published on our normal schedule, at the end of the third quarter.

NSPCL Frequently Asked Questions

<http://statepatrol.nebraska.gov/vimages/shared/vnews/stories/56a799f237860/Crime%20Laboratory%20FAQs.pdf>

The Backlog Corner

*** average turnaround time (TAT) is the average number of days that cases are turned around – this number includes Rush and Routine cases. The number is calculated by our LIMS system**

Biology Unit: 307 assignments – average TAT: 161.20 days

Physical Sciences Unit:

Latent Fingerprints: 219 assignments – average TAT: 174.66 days

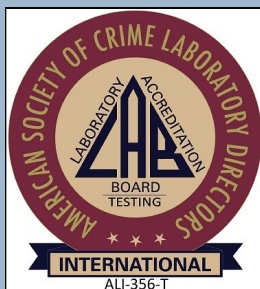
Firearm/Toolmark/Footwear/Tire: 38 assignments – average TAT: 86.00 days

Chemistry Unit:

Controlled Substances: 668 assignments – average TAT: 77.08 days

Toxicology: 231 assignments – average TAT: 136.84 days

Trace: 14 assignments – average TAT: 48.50 days



ASCLD/LAB accredited since 2004.



Toxicology Section Backlog Reduction Information

As part of the ongoing effort to reduce the turnaround for toxicology cases, while still providing necessary testing, the Nebraska State Patrol Crime Laboratory (NSPCL) has consulted with a number of other forensic toxicology laboratories around the country regarding their submission and testing policies. Based upon the information obtained from these laboratories and consultation with key individuals in our state, the NSPCL is implementing the following submission and testing policies effective immediately.

Toxicology Submission Policy

For all submissions where a DRE evaluation was performed:

- ◆ The **DRE Face Sheet** must be included with the Laboratory Submittal Form (NSP 750)
- ◆ Indicate on the NSP 750 what classes of substances were indicated by the DRE evaluation.
 - ⇒ If the DRE evaluation was performed by someone other than the submitting officer, the DRE is responsible for ensuring the Face Sheet and impairment information are included for submission.

Chemistry Unit Manager

Celeste Laird

Toxicology Section

Brad Rutledge (Tech Lead)

Debra Davis

Abbey Dodds



Toxicology Section Backlog Reduction Information

Toxicology Testing



Samples where a DRE evaluation was done and there was evidence of specific impairment:

- ◆ Screening procedures will be performed as always
- ◆ Drug/ drugs which fall into the category/categories identified by the DRE will be confirmed
- ◆ Results for any additional drugs found will be reported as screened.
- ◆ In the event the laboratory receives correspondence from a county attorney's office that a case does not need to be worked:
 - ⇒ **If the case includes a DRE Face Sheet**, screening will still be performed to provide the needed log information for the DRE.
 - ⇒ **If the case does **not** include a DRE Face Sheet**, no testing will be performed.

Samples where no DRE evaluation was done, the evaluation was inconclusive, fatalities and any other "non-standard" urine submissions:

- ◆ Samples will be screened and contacts will be made regarding confirmation testing needed.

Toxicology Evidence Packaging

The NSPCL requests that all urine samples be submitted in urine evidence cups with accompanying boxes only. Please do not put the urine box in a larger box, plastic bag or envelope.

- ◆ Wrap the standard mailing envelope around the urine box and tape securely.

Packaging in this manner assists greatly in storage of the many samples received at the laboratory!





Toxicology Section Personnel Updates

In addition to the new toxicology policies, our toxicology section technical lead – Brad Rutledge – has announced his plans to retire from the crime laboratory at the end of 2016. Brad has provided more than 30 years of dedicated service to the citizens of Nebraska, many of those as a toxicologist for the Nebraska State Patrol Crime Laboratory!

In preparation for Brad's departure, and in response to the increase in case submissions in the toxicology section, Abbeyle Dodds has changed roles at the Nebraska State Patrol Crime Laboratory. Abbey is moving from the technical lead/supervisory position in drug chemistry to performing that same function in our toxicology section. We have also added an analyst position in the toxicology section which is being filled by Debra Davis. Deb was most recently a laboratory technician in our DNA Databank/CODIS section. Both Abbey and Deb are in the midst of the toxicology training program so they will be prepared to take over the analyses when Brad retires.

Chemistry Unit Manager

Celeste Laird

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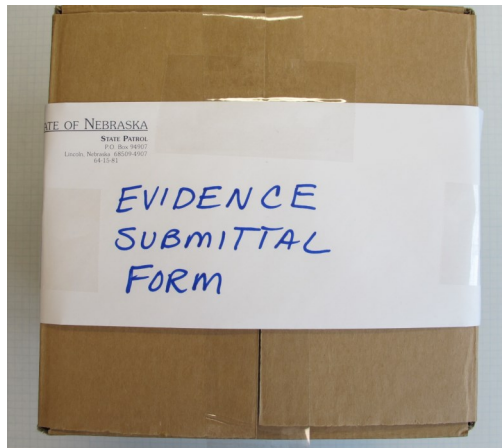
Abbey Dodds

The Nebraska State Patrol is committed to providing accurate, timely service to our submitters. We believe these changes will result in a positive impact to the backlog and turnaround times in the toxicology section.



Helpful Hints on Evidence!

- ◆ The NSPCL evidence technicians **DO NOT** routinely open evidence when it is received at the laboratory. If you mail evidence submissions to the laboratory, please place the appropriate submittal forms for the submitted evidence in a sealed envelope on the outermost portion of the packaging.



- ◆ **Controlled Substances Evidence Packaging:** unnecessary and/or oversized boxes that DRUG evidence is mailed in causes inventory and storage issues for lab analysts. If it is not breakable, please attempt to use an appropriately sized envelope. If it is breakable, please attempt to use the smallest appropriately sized box.
- ◆ **DUI Urine Kit Packaging Concerns:** we are asking that agencies refrain from placing DUI Urine Kit boxes in another external package when mailing kits to the crime laboratory. Seal the bottom of the DUI Urine Kit box and place the submittal in an envelope around the outside. This will greatly assist the mass processing of toxicology cases and reduce the back log.



Evidence Section

Vicki Hopkins (Mgr.)

Jan Johnson (Sup.)

Margaret Wiesen



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9am-4pm

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<http://statepatrol.nebraska.gov/>