

6-8 Clandestine Laboratories

NARCOTICS BUREAU

DETECTIVE DIVISION

LOS ANGELES COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

Bureau Order Number: **6-8**

Subject: **CLANDESTINE LABORATORIES, SAFE HANDLING**

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| Effective Date: 03/15/2009 | Last Date Revised: 10/15/2019 |
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I. CONCEPT AND ISSUES

A. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to ensure that all bureau personnel are thoroughly familiar with handling clandestine labs and any other hazardous materials situation associated with narcotic investigations.

B. Background

One of the major problems facing personnel assigned to Narcotics Bureau over the last several years is the ever increasing frequency of illegal clandestine labs (Methamphetamine, PCP and BHO Labs) and other

hazardous materials situations (dumps) encountered while conducting narcotics investigations.

C. Scope of Policy

This policy applies to all bureau personnel and is designed to delineate the handling requirements at clandestine labs and other hazardous materials situations.

D. Accountability

All bureau personnel are responsible for being aware of and adhering to this policy. All bureau supervisors are responsible for ensuring their subordinates are trained in the provisions of this policy. Narcotics Bureau personnel's role in clan lab and hazardous materials situations is to investigate and prepare the case for prosecution.

E. Training

Familiarization with this policy shall be part of the orientation training for all newly assigned personnel. Additionally, personnel shall be familiar with recognizing the materials and apparatus associated with clandestine labs.

F. Conclusion

This policy is designed to identify how bureau personnel will deal with clandestine labs and hazardous materials situations encountered while conducting narcotics investigations. Emphasis shall be given to

ensuring the utmost safety of our personnel and the community.

II. POLICY

A. Clandestine Lab and Hazardous Materials Recognition

Narcotics bureau personnel shall be familiar with and be able to recognize the various apparatus and materials associated with clandestine labs and hazardous materials situations. This recognition must take place from a safe distance that can only be determined at each individual situation.

In some cases, the recognition of a hazardous situation may be determined from information received from personnel (patrol deputies, neighbors, suspects, etc.), already at the scene. The recognition does not have to be "sight" recognition unless that can be accomplished from a safe environment.

In most instances, narcotics bureau personnel will respond to a scene wherein the determination that a clandestine lab or hazardous materials situation has already been determined prior to their arrival. In these instances, Narcotics Bureau personnel will ensure that a safe area has been established and notify the appropriate Allied Lab Emergency Response Team (ALERT). An inquiry of the location and/or suspects with LA CLEAR should be initiated in an effort to determine if there is an ongoing investigation.

If additional information is requested by the ALERT investigator, it may only be obtained from trained personnel (Fire Department personnel with Self Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) equipment), who can enter the scene. These personnel can take digital or video pictures for the investigator to review and relay to the ALERT Team. **Narcotics Bureau personnel shall not enter a known clandestine lab site until it is deemed safe.**

If Narcotics Bureau personnel should happen to come across a clandestine lab or hazardous materials

situation during an investigation, they shall immediately vacate and secure the premises, establish a safe zone, and notify the local fire department and ALERT Team.

Notifications:

1. LASD Lab Crew (Group12) On File

2. LA IMPACT ALERT Task Force office On File

LA CLEAR – On File

3. County of Los Angeles Fire Department, Health Hazardous Materials Division, Emergency Operations Section.

Weekdays (0830-1700) On File

Nights/Weekends/Holidays: On File

(LA County Fire Dispatch) On File

***If the LASD Lab Crew is unable to respond, contact the State DOJ**

Command Post: On File

***For out of county clandestine labs, notify the county of jurisdiction's hazardous response team**

B. Search Warrants at Known Clandestine Labs

When information is received about a **KNOWN** clandestine lab or hazardous materials situation, and that information results in the preparation of a search warrant, the search warrant **will only** be served by members of a team which is trained and outfitted with the approved SCBA safety gear (e, g, **ALERT or other certified clandestine lab team**).

It will be the responsibility of the ALERT team to make the entry, detain any suspect(s), and conduct a preliminary investigation regarding the information contained in the search warrant. The overall handling of the investigation and subsequent prosecution remains with the Narcotics Bureau investigator assigned to handle the investigation.

C. Clandestine Lab and Hazardous Materials Investigations

The overall investigation at a clandestine lab or hazardous materials dump rests with the handling detective. During these investigations the handling detective will be assisted by a variety of personnel associated with the collection of evidence, subsequent clean up and disposal of a clandestine lab or hazardous materials dump.

1. The local fire department should be requested to respond to the scene in order to identify any potential hazards to law enforcement personnel or the community.

2. The ALERT Team shall be notified and will respond to the site. ALERT personnel will subsequently enter the scene, make an assessment, remove materials that will be deemed evidence for the case, and prepare their report and inventory relative to their investigation. The ALERT Team will notify the County Hazardous Materials Team.

3. The County HazMat Team will respond to deal with any environmental issues or hazards. The HazMat Team is responsible for notifying a private disposal company who will respond to remove all of the

materials associated with the clandestine lab or hazardous materials dump.

4. Personnel from Scientific Services Bureau (SSB) MAY also respond to the scene and assist the ALERT Team investigators with the identification and collection of evidence and samples for future analysis. Scientific Services investigators will also prepare a supplemental report(s) indicating their observations and findings.

5. The contracted clean up or “disposal-company” will respond and remove any and all hazardous materials associated with the investigation.

6. The handling detective and at least one other sworn member will remain on scene until the investigation is complete. At no time should a Narcotics Bureau investigator be left at the scene of a clandestine lab or hazardous materials dump alone.

ORIGINAL SIGNED

LOY L. MCBRIDE, CAPTAIN

NARCOTICS BUREAU
