



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

**DEPARTMENT OF FORENSIC SCIENCE**

CENTRAL LABORATORY  
A Nationally Accredited Laboratory

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TO: ALL LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES  
FROM: Linda Jackson, Director  
DATE: April 17, 2013  
SUBJECT: Safe Packaging of Syringes to Minimize Risk of Needle Stick Injuries

**Syringes collected at crime scenes pose a risk of exposing both law enforcement and Department of Forensic Science (DFS) staff to serious infectious diseases. To minimize this risk, it is necessary that syringes be properly packaged when submitted for examination. Please observe the following requirements:**

1. The syringe must be properly enclosed in a plastic safety tube (PST) that is designed specifically for the safe transport of syringes, and
2. A "BIOHAZARD" label must be affixed to the outer evidence container and that container must be labeled clearly with the words "CONTAINS A SYRINGE," and
3. The item description on the RFLE must clearly identify the item as a syringe.

If submitted evidence includes a syringe that is not properly packaged, the evidence may be returned to the submitting officer for re-packing consistent with these requirements.

**Syringes should be submitted only when they are, or may be, of significant probative value. Please consider whether a syringe meets the following criteria:**

1. It is the only item of evidence in a case, or
2. It may be essential for determining the cause of death in a death investigation, or
3. Possession of the contents of the syringe may be a significantly more serious offense than possession of the other items in a case (e.g., a syringe of heroin vs. a bag of marijuana).

PSTs suitable for the submissions of syringes may be purchased from:

- Crime Sciences Inc., 866-803-5133, [Catalog # FI-02029](#)
- W.W. Grainger Inc., 800-Grainger, [Catalog # 3UTE1](#)
- SIRCHIE Finger Print Laboratories, 800-356-7311, [Catalog # ECT2](#)
- Cops.Plus.com, 800-330-6422, [Catalog # LP-3-3872](#)

Note: This list is not intended to be exclusive nor does it imply an endorsement of the vendors or products by DFS.

Please direct any questions about these instructions or packaging products to Fred Frederick (804-588-4111), DFS Safety Coordinator, or to the supervisor of the Controlled Substances Section in any regional DFS laboratory.