

FIREARM and Toolmark Section

SERIAL NUMBER RESTORATION

- **POSSIBLE EXAMINATIONS**

- What is a serial number:
 - A unique identifier for an item, assigned by the manufacturer.
 - Must be stamped on the frame or receiver of any firearm bought or sold in the United States after 1968.
- If the serial number or vehicle identification number (VIN) has been obliterated (Scratched off, rusted over, etc), it may be possible to restore it to a visible condition.
- Even if the serial number plate is completely removed, there may be duplicate characters to help with tracing.
- Tracing can be completing with full or partially restored serial numbers.

- **FIREARM COLLECTION**

- Photograph the firearm in place prior to handling. Note:
 - Location found
 - Safety position
 - Loaded / Unloaded, Cocked
- If possible, render the firearm safe
 - Remove any magazines
 - Remove cartridges from the chamber
 - Revolvers: Open or remove the revolver cylinder, or unload each chamber
- If the firearm cannot be made safe (e.g., firearm is jammed, too corroded, or too rusted)
 - Put the safety on if possible
 - Secure only the firearm in a box
 - Indicate on the outside of the box:
 - Muzzle direction
 - That the firearm is UNSAFE

- Notify the Crime Laboratory that the firearm is LOADED before or immediately upon arrival
 - During firearm submission, request a consultation with a firearms examiner
- Document all changes made to the firearm once it is collected and notify the lab via photos and/or notations
- **PACKAGING AND LABELING**
 - Firearm(s)
 - Place the unloaded* firearm in a handgun or long gun box, with the slide locked back, if possible
 - Note: See above regarding loaded firearms.
 - Use cable ties to secure the grip and barrel of the firearm to the box
 - Keep cable tie knot inside of the box. Do not cut cable tie
 - DO NOT place a cable tie through the trigger guard, or through the barrel
 - If a magazine was recovered with the firearm:
 - Secure the magazine inside the same box with a cable tie
 - Magazines do not have to be unloaded
 - If cartridges were recovered with the firearm:
 - Unfired cartridges can be retained in the magazine, or packaged in a separate envelope inside the same box
 - Tape Seal the envelope, Initial and Date the tape seal, and Label the envelope with contents
 - Ex) Three (3) unfired 40 S&W cartridges from magazine
 - Ex) One (1) unfired 40 S&W cartridge from chamber
 - On the outer packaging, indicate clearly, with an arrow, which direction the muzzle is pointing inside the box
 - Tape Seal the box, covering any holes created from the cable ties, Initial and Date the tape seal, and label the box with contents
 - Ex) One (1) 9mm Luger Glock model 19Gen5 semi-automatic pistol with serial number: unknown, one (1)

magazine, three (3) 9mm Luger cartridges, recovered from
backseat of vehicle driven by John Doe, Placard A

- **ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS**

- If the firearm is found submerged in water:
 - Place the firearm in a leak proof container
 - Cover with water from the location the firearm was found
 - Keep it in that water and package in a leak proof container with water from where it was found
- If the firearm is found in rain or snow:
 - Air dry before packaging
- If the firearm is at potential risk for severe rust or has tissue putrefaction on it:
 - Package in a box and place in a freezer as soon as possible
- Contact the Crime Laboratory as soon as possible

- **VEHICLE, MOTORCYCLE, ATV, SNOWMOBILE, ELECTRIC BIKE /
SCOOTER COLLECTION**

- Photograph. Note:
 - Location found
 - Condition

- **PACKAGING AND LABELING**

- Notify Crime Laboratory to submit entire item.