

RECORD OF EVIDENCE AND REPORT-STEP SEVEN

To make certain that all evidence is accounted for, an inventory log should always be created and use a unique identifying number system for each recorded piece of evidence. The descriptions recorded into the log must match the photo of the evidence taken at the scene and the description included in the scene report. This paper trail establishes the chain of custody that will follow the evidence throughout the lifecycle of the case.

The scene investigator or evidence recovery technician should document what he/she sees, not what he/she thinks. The final report should tell a descriptive story. A detailed description of the scene should be given just as the investigator sees it when he/she does the initial walk through of the scene and any follow up surveys and documentation.

The final results of a properly documented investigated scene is the ability of others to take the finished product to use in either reconstructing the scene or the chain of events in an incident and/or supporting evidence presentations. In documenting the scene there are actually three functions or methods used to properly document the investigated scene. Those methods consist of written notes which will ultimately be used in constructing a final report, scene photographs, and a diagram or sketch. Consistency between each of these functions is paramount.

Each method is important in the process of properly documenting the investigated scene. The notes and reports should be done in a chronological order and should include no opinions, no analysis, or no conclusions. Just the facts!!!!

Each department or agency included in the investigation may have a different method which they use for written documentation of the investigation scene. These additional investigator/technicians should follow his/her departments assigned procedures for written documentation, but they must also have an understanding that information must be shared to complete a final report. The importance of sharing information can never be over-looked.

The final report should use a narrative section consisting of six sections. The sections are summary or introduction, scene (all detailed descriptions of the investigation), processing, evidence collected, evidence results, and conclusion.