



San Diego County Sheriff

Training Bulletin

William D. Gore, Sheriff

August, 2019



## Updated Drug Field Testing Procedures

### Update on drug testing:

For the past several months the San Diego District Attorney's Office has not been issuing drug possession cases without an expert opinion, presumptive test, or other extenuating circumstances. The SDSD Fentanyl Working Group has worked with the San Diego Sheriff's Crime Lab and the DA's Office to find a solution to ensure cases get issued and our employees remain safe. The working group has identified and recommended a device that can conduct presumptive tests in the field while keeping the substance sealed in an evidence bag. That device is called TruNarc and is manufactured by Thermo-Fisher Scientific. The TruNarc device will help deputies obtain presumptive results in the field allowing for quicker case issuance. While the TruNarc will help in identifying some fentanyl drug evidence, the main purpose of this technology is to presumptively identify a controlled substance, so the DA's Office can issue the case.

Another safety measure has been recommended and purchased to assist in field testing of drugs as well. A desktop ductless fume hood will be available for deputies to safely conduct presumptive drug tests at a Sheriff's Station. Subsequent testing may be conducted by the Sheriff's Crime Lab should the case go to trial.

### EQUIPMENT

#### Ductless Fume Hood:

The ductless fume hoods are desk top models and do not require any special venting. The fume hood draws air up into a replaceable filter capturing any particulates that may be harmful. These are very similar to the fume hoods used by the Sheriff's Crime Lab. **The locked front compartment containing the filters shall not be opened by anyone other than a designated service technician.**

(Picture below)



Ductless Filtering Hood



## PROCEDURES

### Field Testing of Drugs:

With the purchase and implementation of the fume hoods and TruNarcs, the Sheriff's Department will now utilize the following field testing methods:

1. Don appropriate PPE before conducting any test or scan
2. If the substance in question can be scanned by the TruNarc, use it first
  - a. **Minimum PPE shall be nitrile gloves and laser filtering glasses**
3. If the substance in question is packaged in dark packaging, utilize the fume hood at a station to manipulate the packaging so a scan can be conducted by the TruNarc (clear, opaque, white substances only)
  - a. **Minimum PPE shall be two layers (two pairs) of nitrile gloves, a P-100 dust mask, goggles, and a Tyvek lab coat should be worn when performing this procedure**
4. If the substance in question is dark in color (tar heroin), utilize the fume hood and conduct a presumptive test using a NIK kit
  - a. **Minimum PPE shall be two layers (two pairs) of nitrile gloves, a P-100 dust mask, goggles, and a Tyvek lab coat should be worn when performing this procedure**
5. Dispose of used PPE in a burn box. It is important to assemble the burn box correctly—cardboard flap on outside. Do not allow accumulation of disposed PPE to overflow in a burn box. Close and tape secure burn boxes when they are ready for destruction by Sheriff's Property and Evidence. The lid's cardboard flap is used a barrier when closing the burn box.

**Important note: anyone intending to use a P100 dust mask must be fit tested prior to use.**

### Using the TruNarc:

The TruNarc is very easy to use and has been found to be very accurate when used properly.

**Before using the TruNarc analyzer, the trained operator must put on the supplied laser filtering safety glasses.**

Conducting a scan:

- Press and hold the power button for 2 seconds to power on the device
- Enter the passcode to unlock the device (provided after completing on-line training)
- Conduct a self-check (this ensures the laser is working properly)
- Position the TruNarc's laser aperture onto the clear evidence bag that contains suspected drugs. Press firmly to get the laser as close to the substance as possible.
- Ensure the TruNarc is at the proper distance from your eyes and pointed in a safe direction
- Press the "Scan" button, after the "Scan Ready" CAUTION screen, press the "Scan" button again
- Wait until the scan is completed, maintaining a safe eye distance from the device. The "Scan Result" screen will indicate the results of the analysis.
- Record results (photograph of the screen is recommended)
- Conduct another self-check

The information in this Training Bulletin was provided by HIDTA Det. Jake Booher and Criminalist Jeff Salamat. If you have expertise in a particular subject and would like to write a training bulletin, please contact Corporal Brent Longfellow at In-Service Training, [REDACTED]

### **Using the TruNarc continued:**

- Power off the device by pressing and holding the power button for 9 seconds (a screen countdown will begin after about 4 seconds of pressing the power button; to power off, continue pressing the power button until the countdown completes)



The Fentanyl Working Group recommends scanning the substance in question a maximum of three times if the first two scans are inconclusive. An inconclusive result may be due to fentanyl and other drugs having "hot spots." The TruNarc cannot separate components in mixtures for analysis. Each scan should be performed on a different spot of the packaged substance while also safely manipulating the packaged substance in an attempt to obtain the best scan possible.

If after three scans the results are still inconclusive, a NIK kit may be used in the hood with minimum PPE and if the procedure can safely be performed. If no presumptive result can be established using the above methods, the substance should be submitted to the crime lab for further analysis.

The arresting deputy and shift sergeant should determine whether the suspect should be booked, cited, or released depending on the totality of the circumstances and any other indicia that would lead the deputy to believe the substance is in fact a controlled substance (paraphernalia, other drugs present, text messages related to drugs, etc.).

If a result other than inconclusive is obtained using the TruNarc, a photo should be taken of the TruNarc screen to be included with the case file. Analysis data from the TruNarc can also be downloaded onto a Sheriff's computer and the results can be printed out. At this time the DA's Office is not requiring the printed TruNarc results for case issuance. A sentence in the PCD and report stating the testing method (TruNarc/NIK), deputy doing the test, and the results is sufficient.

### **Packaging and Labeling Drug Evidence:**

- Any suspected fentanyl must be packaged in two sealed, clear evidence bags (Kapak-type bags). Indicate on the outer evidence label that fentanyl is suspected. "SUSPECTED FENTANYL" stickers may be applied and are a good way to caution anyone handling the evidence.

### **Lab Requests:**

- When creating drug Lab Requests (11 – Narcotics) in NetRMS, indicate in the notes section whether the submission was "Tested using TruNarc" and/or "Tested using NIK kit" and include the results of the test(s).

The information in this Training Bulletin was provided by HIDTA Det. Jake Booher and Criminalist Jeff Salamat. If you have expertise in a particular subject and would like to write a training bulletin, please contact Corporal Brent Longfellow at In-Service Training, [REDACTED]

## **TruNarc Implementation:**

Fifteen TruNarc devices have been purchased and will be distributed throughout the county for field testing. Each station that receives a TruNarc device will be responsible for training all operators before using the device. Training will be completed through a web-based training program developed by the manufacturer. A certificate of completion will be provided once the training is completed.

**This training is mandatory before anyone may use the TruNarc device.** The training will cover operating the device itself and associated safety precautions that should be followed while using the TruNarc. Additional hands-on training may be necessary—check with your designated TruNarc Trainer. The TruNarc uses a powerful laser. **Specific laser filtering glasses must be worn during use of the TruNarc to prevent potential harm to one's eyes.**

## **Troubleshooting and example scenarios:**

- On self-check scan displays "Fail"
  - Check that the self-check standard cap is closed. Redo the self-check.
  - If the self-check fails even after making sure the self-check cap is closed, redo the self-check. If the self-check passes, continue using the device. If the self-check fails 2 consecutive times, put the device out of service and contact the manufacturer for service.
- Scan displays "Warning (Polystyrene)"
  - Check that the self-test standard cap is not closed. Re-scan the substance
  - After making sure that the standard cap is open for analysis and the scan still displays "Warning (Polystyrene)," this is likely an indication that the packaging is not suitable for TruNarc analysis. Submit the item to the crime lab for further testing.
- Scan displays an inconclusive result
  - Safely manipulate the substance through the clear evidence bag and reposition the TruNarc laser onto a different spot on the substance. Re-scan the substance.

- [REDACTED]
  - [REDACTED]
  - [REDACTED]
  - [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
  - [REDACTED]
  - [REDACTED]
  - [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
  - [REDACTED]

The information in this Training Bulletin was provided by HIDTA Det. Jake Booher and Criminalist Jeff Salamat. If you have expertise in a particular subject and would like to write a training bulletin, please contact Corporal Brent Longfellow at In-Service Training, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]