



# Tulsa Police Department

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**Policy #** 111C

**Effective Date** 12/08/2008

**Policy Name** Clandestine Laboratories

**Approved Date** 10/30/2008

**Approved by** *Wendell Franklin, Chief of Police*

**Previous Date** 08/15/2003

## PURPOSE OF CHANGE:

To update the policy format.

## POLICY:

The hazards involved in the manufacturing of illegal drugs in clandestine laboratories pose an extreme danger to law enforcement personnel, the public, and the environment. The chemicals involved in clandestine laboratories produce a number of health hazards including the possibility of a fire or explosion.

When confronted with a clandestine laboratory, the safety of officers and citizens always outweighs the desire for successful prosecution of any suspects.

Special Investigations Division (SID) will be notified immediately when a suspected clandestine laboratory is encountered. SID personnel will respond to the scene to confirm the actual presence of the laboratory.

**SUMMARY:** Procedures for investigating clandestine laboratories.

**APPLIES TO:** All police personnel

## DEFINITIONS:

**CLANDESTINE DRUG LABORATORY** – an unlicensed chemical laboratory, whether simple or complex, fixed or mobile, designed in secrecy, for the experimentation in or actual production of illegal, controlled, or dangerous substances.

**HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES** – any substance that is a physical hazard or health hazard as defined in procedure Policy 111B, *Storage and Handling of Hazardous Materials*.

## PROCEDURES:

1. When officers encounter a suspected clandestine laboratory, they shall immediately exit, secure the scene, and contact a supervisor.
2. The supervisor will respond to the scene, immediately notify SID personnel, assume the role of the Incident Commander (IC), and evaluate:
  - a. Whether an area evacuation is required.
  - b. The need for fire and/or ambulance services.
  - c. The need for additional personnel.

3. If there are no SID personnel on duty, the supervisor will notify Public Safety Communications (PSC) and instruct them to contact the on-call laboratory team.
4. The supervisor or responding officers should try to obtain a search waiver before the arrival of SID personnel.
5. The IC, or designee, will establish a staging area that is upwind from the scene and will coordinate with SID personnel when they arrive. If the following information can be obtained without reentering the scene, determine:
  - a. If hazardous chemicals are present.
  - b. If suspects are present. If so, detain them at the scene.
  - c. If additional officers are needed to secure the area.
  - d. If children live in or have otherwise been exposed to the lab site. If children are present, do not release them. Take them into protective custody and notify PSC to contact a Child Crisis detective.
  - e. If responding officers are exposed to hazardous chemicals, have them complete on-duty injury reports according to Policy 302B, *Line of Duty Injury Reporting/Leave*. Also, make sure that the SID supervisor lists the exposed officers on the Exposure Report form.
6. All officers must observe the following safety precautions:
  - a. Avoid physical contact with hazardous substances.
  - b. Avoid breathing vapors from hazardous substances.
  - c. Do not smoke, eat, or chew gum at the scene of a clandestine laboratory.
7. The responding officers will brief SID personnel when they arrive at the scene. They will provide specific details of the exact location, observations, and information that leads the officers to believe a clandestine laboratory exists.
8. SID personnel will respond to the scene when notified of a suspected clandestine laboratory. SID personnel will:
  - a. Evaluate available information and determine if a clandestine laboratory is present.
  - b. Obtain a search warrant or secure a search waiver if not already done by field officers.
9. Uniformed officers will secure any suspects, and if arrested, complete the booking process.
10. Only SID personnel who have been properly trained and equipped will make entry to a clandestine laboratory and evaluate the hazards.
11. Once the laboratory has been rendered safe, the SID laboratory team will dismantle the laboratory and gather necessary samples.

## **REGULATIONS:**

1. Chemicals seized from a clandestine laboratory shall be removed in compliance with prescribed Environmental Protection Agency guidelines.
2. Uniform officers at the scene of a clandestine laboratory shall not stop or alter any power or water sources, dismantle any equipment, or handle any chemicals, containers, or apparent finished products, without the direction of the SID laboratory team.

## **REFERENCES:**

111B, *Storage and Handling of Hazardous Materials*  
302B, *Line of Duty Injury Reporting/Leave*