

JMA 2-2-20

Coroner Report Santa Barbara County Sheriff

19-11423

Supplement No
ORIG



4434 Calle Real

Reported Date
09/02/2019

Santa Barbara, CA 93110-1002
Report Type
CORONER

Officer
CARLSON, M

(805) 681-4100

Administrative Information							
Agency Santa Barbara County Sheriff		Report No 19-11423		Supplement No ORIG	Reported Date 09/02/2019	Reported Time 04:43	Status Incident
Report Type Coroner's investigation			Location PLATTS HARBOR 34.02858 N X 119.44172 W				
City SNT CRUZ ISL	Rep Dist 101	Area 1	Beat 10	From Date 09/02/2019	From Time 03:35		
Officer 2726/CARLSON, M			Assignment CORONER BUREAU		Entered by 2726	Assignment CORONER BUREAU	
RMS Transfer Pending	Report Title Coroner Report		Approving Officer 3768		Approval Date 02/21/2020		
Approval Time 11:42:25							
Cause of death (COR only) SMOKE INHALATION		Due to (COR only) FIRE		Manner of death (COR only) ACCIDENT		Date/Time of death pronounced 09-02-2019 / 0443	
Determined by (COR only) INVESTIGATION		Dr. will sign N		Hospitalization N		Mortuary CORONER REMOVAL	
Removal Status CORONER REMOVAL		NOK relation to decedent [REDACTED]					
Person Summary							
Invl	Invl No	Type	Name	MNI	Race	Sex	DOB
COR	1	I	SANDHU, SUNIL SINGH	989138	A	M	[REDACTED]
Summary Narrative							
On 09-02-19, at approximately 0443 hours, 45 year-old, Sunil Sandhu died from traumatic injuries sustained when the vessel he was on caught fire, burned to the water line and sank. Sandhu had been a passenger on the chartered dive boat, Conception.							

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Santa Barbara County Sheriff

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Decedent - Coroner Investigation 1: SANDHU, SUNIL SINGH									
Involvement Decedent - Coroner Investigation				Invl No 1	Type Individual				
Name SANDHU, SUNIL SINGH			MNI 989138	Race Other Asian	Sex Male	DOB [REDACTED]	Age 45		
Juvenile? No	Height 5'10"	Weight 150#	Hair Color Black	Eye Color Black					
Type Home	Address [REDACTED]			City [REDACTED]		State [REDACTED]			
ZIP Code [REDACTED]		Date [REDACTED]							
Type Operator License	ID No [REDACTED]			OLS [REDACTED]					
Relationship [REDACTED]	Name [REDACTED]		Race [REDACTED]		Sex [REDACTED]	DOB [REDACTED]			
Address [REDACTED]			City [REDACTED]		State [REDACTED]		Phone Type [REDACTED]		
Phone No [REDACTED]									
Medical									
Citizenship UNITED STATES			Place of Birth Foreign country not listed			Occupation SCIENTIST			
Coroner Case No 19-11423	NOK Notified? Yes	Premise Sealed? No	Property? No	Vehicle? No	Legal Document No	Other Documents? No			
NOK Name [REDACTED]			Mortuary Name TED MAYR FUNERAL HME			On Call? No	Family Request? Yes		
Nature of illness NOT RELEVANT									
Injury Place PLATTS HARBOR ABOARD DIVE BOAT				Injury Date 09/02/2019	Injury Time 03:32:00				
Injury Premise THE DECEDENT WAS A PASSENGER ABOARD A CHARTERED DIVE BOAT WHICH CAUGHT FIRE.									
How Injured THE DECEDENT WAS A PASSENGER ABOARD A BOAT WHICH CAUGHT FIRE RESULTING IN DEATH.									
Decedent Passenger Yes									

Narrative

Continuations:
 unil Sandhu is the decedent.

Narrative:

On 09-02-19, at approximately 0516 hours, the Santa Barbara Sheriff's Office was notified by the Ventura Fire Department of a vessel on fire in the Channel Islands off the coast of Santa Barbara County. The Coast Guard responded along with Ventura Fire Department and Santa Barbara County Fire Department. Upon arrival at the scene the vessel was found to be fully engulfed in fire. The call had originally come into the Coast Guard at 0332 hours, on 09-02-19.

Reports to the Coast Guard said there were possibly be 34 subjects trapped below the water line, in the vessel.

The vessel was identified as the "Conception" and it was in jurisdiction of the Santa Barbara Sheriff's Office near Santa Cruz Island, not in Ventura Sheriff's Department jurisdiction. The location was later found to be 300 yards shore of Platts Harbor on Santa Cruz Island. See Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Department case number 11415 for full details.

Sergeant Morris was notified of the incident by Sergeant Valencia. Sergeant Morris requested the response of Detective Henslin, Detective Biedinger, and Detective Carlson to the Coroner's Bureau to assist in the incident at approximately 0525 hours.

Detective Baisa was also called at that time and asked to respond to Ventura Harbor to act as the liaison for the

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Narrative

Sheriff's Office.

It was later found the vessel, the "Conception" contained 33 passengers and six crew members. Five of the crew members were rescued, but none of the 33 passengers had been found.

During the course of the morning four deceased passengers had been located by Coast Guard personnel. The Coast Guard transported the decedents to the Santa Barbara Harbor.

At 1150 hours, on 09-02-19, Sgt. Morris, Detective Henslin and Detective Biedinger responded to the Santa Barbara Harbor to retrieve decedents documented as 1 through 4.

At 1220 hours, on 09-02-19, the decedents were brought to Santa Barbara Harbor. Detective Henslin and Detective Biedinger transported two decedent's each to the Santa Barbara Coroner's Bureau, where physical examinations were later conducted on them.

At that time digital photographs were taken of the decedents along with samples collected for DNA analysis identification and for an expanded toxicology panel. All of the decedents retrieved on 09-02-19, were found to have significant thermal burns to their bodies with limbs missing due to the intensity of the fire. None of the decedents could be identified by physical characteristics.

At 2030 hours, on 09-02-19, Sgt Morris, Det. Biedinger, Det. Henslin, Det. Carlson, Det. Baisa, Deputy Bruening and staff from the Los Angeles County Coroner's Office responded to the Santa Barbara Harbor for retrieval of 16 additional bodies recovered from the Conception, documented as decedents 5 through 20.

The decedents were then transported to Coroner's Bureau for examinations, drawing of fluids for toxicology and DNA analysis, and collection of personal property.

At approximately 2330 hours, on 09-02-19, all the examinations of the decedents were completed and the decedents were placed in a portable morgue provided by the Los Angeles County Coroner's Office.

On 09-03-19, at 1930 hours, Sgt Morris, Det. Biedinger, Det. Henslin, Det. Carlson, Det. Baisa, Deputy Bruening and staff from the Los Angeles County Coroner's Office responded to the Santa Barbara Harbor for retrieval of 13 more remains recovered from the Conception, documented as decedents 21 through 33.

The decedents were then all transported to the Santa Barbara Coroner's Bureau, where physical examinations, digital photographs, and fluid samples for DNA analysis and toxicology where conducted on each recovered decedent.

All of the decedents recovered on 09-03-19 were placed on portable coroner racks and secured in the Santa Barbara Coroner's Bureau morgue.

On 09-09-19, at approximately 1400 hours, Pathologist Dr. Manny Montez, Detective Henslin, Detective Baisa, and Sgt. Morris, along with representatives from the FBI and ATF performed tracheal examinations of the remaining decedents at the Coroner's Bureau.

09-10-19, at approximately 1830 hours, Detective Baisa met with Santa Barbara Sheriff's Department Sgt. Nelson, at the National Park Service, 1901 Spinnaker Drive in Ventura, Ca. Sgt. Nelson provided Detective Baisa with a bag of suspected human flesh, a backpack and an air vent from the Conception that had suspected human hair embedded in it. The suspected human tissue and other items were found in the bow of the Conception.

The items later numbered 35 and 36 were transported to the Santa Barbara Coroner's Bureau where digital photographs were taken of the suspected human tissue and suspected human hair, which was removed from the vessel air vent.

The suspected human tissue and hair were later flown to the Sacramento County Coroner's Office in Sacramento, Ca., under the care of Sgt. Morris and Deputy Bruening for DNA analysis.

At approximately 1330 hours, on 09-11-19, Detective Henslin and Detective Biedinger responded to Santa Barbara Harbor, after Divers from the Los Angeles Police Department located the remains of a decedent, near the location of the Conception fire. The Los Angeles Police Department collected the remains, with a section of hair,

Report Officer
2726/CARLSON, M

Printed At
02/27/2020 11:47

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Santa Barbara County Sheriff**

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Narrative

documented as numbers 37 and 38.

The decedent and the remains were then transported to the Santa Barbara Coroner's Bureau, where a physical examination, digital photographs, and fluid samples for DNA analysis and toxicology were conducted on the recovered decedent.

The sample of collected hair was packaged and sent along the DNA samples of decedent number 37 for DNA analysis in Sacramento California, under the care of Detective Henslin, who flew to the Sacramento Airport and provided the samples to Sgt. Morris who was still in Sacramento.

The samples were then taken to the Sacramento County Coroner's Office, for DNA analysis.

Physical evidence:

A series of digital photographs were taken of the decedent at the Coroner's Bureau by Forensic Personnel from the Santa Barbara Sheriff's Department. The photo card was later downloaded for storage at the Coroner's Bureau.

Identification of decedent:

The decedent was positively identified by a DNA comparison, with samples submitted by the decedent's sister, Sunita Sandhu. The DNA comparison was conducted via the Sacramento County Coroner's Office.

Examination of decedent:

Once the decedent was received at the Santa Barbara County Coroner's Morgue, a physical examination was conducted at the Coroner's Bureau. The decedent was received partially clothed and supine within a black colored body bag. A tag with case #19-11423 was attached to the body bag.

The decedent was not identifiable due to extensive and severe postmortem thermal injuries. Severe 4th degree thermal burns were present. There were no recognizable facial features. The top of the skull was compromised revealing the intracranial space. The decedent was clothed in green and blue pattered pajama bottoms and a black t-shirt. This clothing was cut from the body.

The chest and abdomen were charred from extensive 4th degree thermal burns. The burns extended through muscle and fatty tissue.

The upper legs displayed 4th degree burns. Both legs were burnt over their entirety, with the lower legs and foot displaying third degree burns.

The arms displayed extensive 4th degree burns with charring at the ends. Both arms and hands exhibited 4th degree burns. A yellow metal band was located on the decedent's left ring finger.

The decedent was rolled to his side and the rear of the body was examined. The entirety of the back of the torso and buttocks displayed 4th degree burns. The tissue was cracking and displayed fatty tissue beneath the skin. There were no indications of a struggle or defensive wounds to the decedent, specifically the hands, arms, and chest.

1 tube of heart blood was submitted to Alere Forensics for toxicology analysis. The remaining fluid samples were refrigerated at the Coroner's Bureau pending a need for toxicology analysis.

Post mortem examination:

Due to the severity of the decedent's injuries and in consideration of the circumstances associated with this tragic incident including: Extensive vessel fire which consumed the craft below the water line resulting in all decedents being submerged with the wreckage. All decedents were recovered by open water and confined space divers. Following a review of these circumstances and a physical examination of all decedents, a post mortem examination was deferred.

Forensic toxicology:

On 09-12-2019, a toxicology report was received from Alere Forensics regarding the decedent's carbon monoxide saturation. The report indicated the following:

Report Officer 2726/CARLSON, M	Printed At 02/27/2020 11:47	Page 4 of 5
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Narrative

Carbon monoxide 69%

On 9-15-19, a toxicology report was received from Alere Forensics regarding the decedent's cyanide saturation. The report indicated the following:

Cyanide < 2 mcg/mL

The reports were reviewed with Dr. Manny Montez and found to be contributive to the decedent's death.

On 9-28-19, a toxicology report was received from Alere Forensics regarding a toxicology screen. The report indicated the following:

Expanded Drug Screen Positive Findings:

Meclizine 9.1 ng / mL

Volatiles

(EtOH, IPA, MeOH, Acetone) None Detected

The report was reviewed with Dr. Manny Montez and found to be non-contributive to the decedent's death.

Consultations with Forensic Pathologist:

I reviewed the circumstances surrounding this death with Dr. Manny Montez. Dr. Montez opined that the decedent died as a result of smoke inhalation due to boat fire.

In review of the circumstances of this death:

On 09-02-19, at approximately 0443 hours, 45 year-old, Sunil Sandhu died from traumatic injuries sustained when the vessel he was on caught fire, burned to the water line and sank. Sandhu had been a passenger on the chartered dive boat, Conception.

Cause of Death:

It was determined that the decedent (SANDHU) died as a result of the following cause;

SMOKE INHALATION (MINS)

Due to:

BOAT FIRE (MINS)

Manner of death:

The manner of death will be certified by the Office of the Coroner as ACCIDENTAL.

Final Disposition:

The decedent was released to representatives of Ted Mayr Funeral Home in Santa Barbara, Ca. The decedent's property was released to the family via the mortuary.

Case closed

Santa Barbara County Sheriff



4434 Calle Real
 Santa Barbara, CA 93110-1002
 Report Type
 FORENSICS

(805) 681-4100

19-11423

Supplement No
 0001

Reported Date
 09/19/2019

Officer
 FABELA, N

Administrative Information						
Agency	Report No	Supplement No	Reported Date	Reported Time	Status	
Santa Barbara County Sheriff	19-11423	0001	09/19/2019	12:24	Incident	
Report Type	Location					
Forensics BOC	PLATTS HARBOR 34.02858 N X 119.44172 W					
City	Rep Dist	Area	From Date	From Time		
SNT CRUZ ISL	101	1	09/02/2019	03:35		
Officer	Assignment	Entered by	Assignment	RMS Transfer		
2901/FABELA, N	FORENSICS	2901	FORENSICS	Pending		
Approving Officer	Approval Date	Approval Time				
2901	09/19/2019	12:24:58				

Summary Narrative

This report contains information pertaining to the Forensics photo-documentation of unknown male body #5 on Monday, 09/02/19, in Case#:19-11423.

Narrative

E-FILE ATTACHMENTS:
 None

NARRATIVE:

On Monday, 09/02/19, Sgt. Jarrett Morris advised that our assistance was requested at the Coroner's Office for the mass casualty that had occurred earlier in the morning off the Santa Cruz Island. They were requesting assistance with photo documenting the recovered bodies from the Conception boat fire, and if possible, rolling fingerprints for identification purposes.

PHOTO DOCUMENTATION (Body #5, male):

On Monday, 09/02/19, the recovered bodies were transported to the Santa Barbara County Coroner's Bureau. The Forensics Unit assisted Coroner's Detectives with photo-documentation of the recovered bodies.

I began photo documentation on a body bag labeled #5. Its contents were that of a male body #5. The decedent's entire body was badly burned. The decedent was wearing a T-shirt, a pair of plaid pajama pants, Calvin Klein boxers, blue/white Adidas socks, and a pair of brown sandals (Keen). No items were collected. The clothing described above remained inside the body bag with the body.

No visible scars or tattoos were noted and no fingerprints were available.

A total of 100 digital photographs were later uploaded into the Forensic Unit's digital imaging computer under Case#:19-11423 for future reference.

-END OF REPORT-

Santa Barbara County Sheriff



4434 Calle Real

Santa Barbara, CA 93110-1002
Report Type
FORENSICS

(805) 681-4100

19-11423

Supplement No
0002

Reported Date
09/19/2019

Officer
FABELA, N

Administrative Information							
Agency	Report No		Supplement No	Reported Date	Reported Time	Status	
Santa Barbara County Sheriff	19-11423		0002	09/19/2019	13:22	Incident	
Report Type	Location						
Forensics BOC	PLATTS HARBOR 34.02858 N X 119.44172 W						
City	Rep Dist	Area	From Date	From Time			
SNT CRUZ ISL	101	1	09/02/2019	03:35			
Officer	Assignment		Entered by	Assignment	RMS Transfer		
2901/FABELA, N	FORENSICS		2901	FORENSICS	Pending		
Approving Officer	Approval Date	Approval Time					
2901	09/19/2019	13:25:31					

Summary Narrative

This report contains information pertaining to the trachea photo-documentation of male decedent #5 on Monday, 09/09/19, in Case#: 19-11423.

Narrative

E-FILE ATTACHMENTS:

None

NARRATIVE:

On Monday, 09/09/19, Coroner's Sgt. Jarrett Morris requested additional Forensic assistance with photo-documentation in the mass casualty that had occurred in Santa Cruz Island on 09/02/19.

PHOTO DOCUMENTATION (Body #5, male):

On Monday, 09/09/19, the Forensics Unit assisted Coroner's Detectives with photo-documenting the tracheas of the recovered bodies. The examination was conducted by SBSO Dr. M. Montez.

I assisted by taking digital photographs of the tracheal examination conducted on male decedent #5. Photo-documentation began at 1503 hrs and was completed at 1509 hrs on Monday, 09/09/19.

A total of 9 digital photographs were later uploaded into the Forensic Unit's digital imaging computer under Case#: 19-11423 for future reference.

~END OF REPORT~

Santa Barbara County Sheriff



4434 Calle Real
Santa Barbara, CA 93110-1002
Report Type
FORENSICS

(805) 681-4100

19-11423

Supplement No
0003

Reported Date
09/24/2019

Officer
SANDOVAL, M

Administrative Information						
Agency	Report No	Supplement No	Reported Date	Reported Time	Status	
Santa Barbara County Sheriff	19-11423	0003	09/24/2019	09:33	Incident	
Report Type	Location					
Forensics BOC	66 S SAN ANTONIO RD					
City	ZIP Code	Rep Dist	Area	Beat	From Date	From Time
Santa Barbara City	93110	137	1	40	09/02/2019	03:35
Officer	Assignment		Entered by	Assignment	RMS Transfer	
3703/SANDOVAL, M	FORENSICS		3703	FORENSICS	Pending	
Approving Officer	Approval Date	Approval Time				
2901	09/24/2019	11:38:30				

Summary Narrative

Additional photo-documentation of Decedent #5.

Narrative

E-FILE ATTACHMENTS:

None

CORONER'S EXTERNAL EXAMINATION AND PHOTO DOCUMENTATION :

At 1518 hours, on Tuesday 09/03/19, while at the Santa Barbara Coroner's Office, Doctor Manny Montez conducted an external exam on Decedent #5 and observed foam exiting his mouth. Per Doctor Montez's request, photographs were taken and later uploaded to the Santa Barbara Forensic Unit's digital storage under case 19-11423 for future reference.

~ END OF REPORT ~



ALERE FORENSICS AT REDWOOD TOXICOLOGY LABORATORY

3650 Westwind Blvd. Santa Rosa, CA 95403
Phone 866-584-0887 FAX 707-703-1319

Agency # 19-11423

FORENSIC LABORATORY REPORT

AF # 2019-003247

To: Brice Bruening
Santa Barbara County Sheriff-Coroner

Sample Collection Date: September 2, 2019

Decedent: Sunsil Sandhu

The following evidence was submitted to the Laboratory by a representative of the Santa Barbara County Sheriff-Coroner on 9/5/2019 via FedEx:

Submission 01: One tape sealed and initialed screw top metal canister containing a second screw top metal canister containing one tube of blood with paperwork marked in part "#5 Doe John". The name "Sandhu, Sunsil" was supplied on 9-9-19.

Item # 01-A: One gray top tube with approximately 10 mL of peripheral blood collected at 2330 hours.

Service Request:

FP760B - Carboxyhemoglobin/Carbon Monoxide - Blood

Confirmation/Screen Results

Analyte Name	Concentration	Method	Sample Type
Carbon Monoxide	69 %	AVOXimeter 4000	Blood



2019-003247-0002

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lauren J. Marinetti". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a small flourish at the end.

Laureen J. Marinetti, Ph.D., F-ABFT
Laboratory Director

Date of Report: September 15, 2019

Alera Forensics at Redwood Toxicology is accredited by The American Board of Forensic Toxicology (ABFT) and is recognized by the State of California as a Title 17 Forensic Alcohol Laboratory.

All samples, including the sample packaging, will be retained at the laboratory for one year after the date of report. After one year, the samples and packaging will be destroyed unless the client requests that the samples be returned or an alternate retention policy has been set up with the laboratory. The laboratory cannot ship controlled substances.

Comments

None



ALERE FORENSICS AT REDWOOD TOXICOLOGY LABORATORY

3650 Westwind Blvd. Santa Rosa, CA 95403
Phone 866-584-0887 FAX 707-703-1319

Agency # 19-11423

FORENSIC LABORATORY REPORT

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To: Brice Bruening
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Submission 01: One tape sealed and initialed screw top metal canister containing a second screw top metal canister containing one tube of blood with paperwork marked in part "#5 Doe John". The name "Sandhu, Sunsil" was supplied on 9-9-19.

Item # 01-A: One gray top tube with approximately 10 mL of peripheral blood collected at 2330 hours.

Service Request:

F1048B - Misc. Chemicals (Qualitative) - Blood

Confirmation/Screen Results

Analyte Name	Concentration	Method	Sample Type
Cyanide	< 2 mcg/mL	Color Screen	Blood



2019-003247-0003

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Laureen J. Marinetti".

Laureen J. Marinetti, Ph.D., F-ABFT
Laboratory Director

Date of Report: September 15, 2019

Alere Forensics at Redwood Toxicology is accredited by The American Board of Forensic Toxicology (ABFT) and is recognized by the State of California as a Title 17 Forensic Alcohol Laboratory.

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Comments

The limit of detection for the cyanide color screen is 0.5 mcg/mL.



ALERE FORENSICS AT REDWOOD TOXICOLOGY LABORATORY

3650 Westwind Blvd. Santa Rosa, CA 95403
Phone 866-584-0887 FAX 707-703-1319

Agency # 19-11423

FORENSIC LABORATORY REPORT

AF # 2019-003247

To: Brice Bruening
Santa Barbara County Sheriff-Coroner

Sample Collection Date: September 2, 2019

Decedent: Sunsil Sandhu

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Submission 01: One tape sealed and initialed screw top metal canister containing a second screw top metal canister containing one tube of blood with paperwork marked in part "#5 Doe John". The name "Sandhu, Sunsil" was supplied on 9-9-19.

Item # 01-A: One gray top tube with approximately 10 mL of peripheral blood collected at 2330 hours.

Service Request:

FP222B - Expanded Pnl (Confirm) - Blood



2019-003247-0001

Drug Screen Results - ELISA

<u>Drug Screen Classification</u>	<u>Result</u>	<u>Limit of Detection</u>
Amphetamine	Not Detected	20.0 ng/mL
Barbiturates	Not Detected	1.0 mcg/mL
Benzodiazepines	Not Detected	25.0 ng/mL
Buprenorphine	Not Detected	1.0 ng/mL
Carisoprodol	Not Detected	500.0 ng/mL
Cocaine Metabolite	Not Detected	50.0 ng/mL
Fentanyl	Not Detected	1.0 ng/mL
Marijuana Metabolite	Not Detected	10.0 ng/mL
Methadone	Not Detected	25.0 ng/mL
Methamphetamine	Not Detected	20.0 ng/mL
Opiates	Not Detected	10.0 ng/mL
Oxycodone \ Oxymorphone	Not Detected	5.0 ng/mL
PCP	Not Detected	5.0 ng/mL
Tramadol	Not Detected	50.0 ng/mL
Zolpidem	Not Detected	5.0 ng/mL

Confirmation/Screen Results

<u>Analyte Name</u>	<u>Concentration</u>	<u>Method</u>	<u>Sample Type</u>
Mecizine	9.1 ng/mL	LC-MS-MS	Blood
Volatiles (EtOH, IPA, MeOH, Acetone)	Not Detected	GC-Headspace	Blood



Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lauren J. Marinetti".

Laureen J. Marinetti, Ph.D., F-ABFT
Laboratory Director

Date of Report: September 28, 2019

Alere Forensics at Redwood Toxicology is accredited by The American Board of Forensic Toxicology (ABFT) and is recognized by the State of California as a Title 17 Forensic Alcohol Laboratory.

All samples, including the sample packaging, will be retained at the laboratory for one year after the date of report. After one year, the samples and packaging will be destroyed unless the client requests that the samples be returned or an alternate retention policy has been set up with the laboratory. The laboratory cannot ship controlled substances.

Comments

EtOH - ethanol, IPA - isopropanol, MeOH - methanol