



Criminalistics Section

Louisiana State Police Crime Lab

Crime Scene Investigation

CSI Unit

WHAT

Crime Scene Investigation is the act of identifying, documenting, preserving, and collecting physical evidence from a scene.

HOW

Crime scenes are processed by crime scene investigators who are trained and responsible for documentation, identifying and collection of evidence, latent print development, impression evidence development, DNA collection, presumptive testing, Trajectory Analysis, Latent Blood Enhancement, Bloodstain Pattern Analysis, and Fracture Comparison Analysis.

Documentation is performed first and can include a combination of note taking, sketching, photography, and videography. A series of overall, evidence-establishing, and close up photographs, accompanied by notes help walk the viewer through the scene and relate probative items of evidence. Videos and sketches can help show spatial relationships between items of interest and the extent of the scene itself.

Probative items of evidence, such as biological fluids, prints/impressions, hair, fibers, weapons, etc. are identified, documented, and collected and/or processed on scene. If these items are not processed on scene, they are brought back to the laboratory for processing or returned to the agency. Additional analysis can be performed on scene to aid in the investigation, such as Trajectory Analysis, Bloodstain Pattern Analysis, Latent Blood Enhancement, and Fracture Comparison Analysis.

Presumptive testing can be performed on scene for the presence of biological fluids that can be collected for DNA evidence.

Vehicles can be seized and transported to the crime laboratory for additional processing or processed at a secure location.

WHY

The crime laboratory CSI Team aids state and local law enforcement agencies in investigations by responding to and processing crime scenes, processing vehicles, and assisting with unique evidence collection. This aids the investigation by showing events that possibly took place and potential individuals present, during the event of a crime. The crime laboratory has individuals on call around the clock to respond to scenes and answer questions for law enforcement agencies.

Crime Scene Investigation Analysis



Staffing

Six analysts are currently authorized for primary scene response and processing assigned to the CSI Unit. There are an additional fourteen analysts from multiple disciplines throughout the lab that are currently authorized for secondary scene response and processing.

Case Load

While there is fluctuation in the call-outs, the unit handles any request for assistance in a major criminal investigation statewide. Approximately 60 crime scene and vehicle exam requests are conducted per year by the laboratory's CSI Team for law enforcement agencies across the State of Louisiana. Many items collected routinely involve other units across the lab.

Generally, the laboratory's CSI Team responds to scenes and processes vehicles related to major crime scenes, including homicides, attempted murders, shootings, officer involved shootings, questioned suicides, death investigations, and aggravated assaults.

Interesting Facts

When the laboratory's CSI Unit testifies in court, they usually get qualified as an expert in crime scene investigation, where they can render their opinions as well as testify to what was done on scene. If testifying in crime scene investigation and in an additional process that was performed in the case such as Fracture Comparison Analysis or Bloodstain Pattern Analysis, the analyst may also get qualified as an expert in the additional discipline.

