



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

DEPARTMENT OF FORENSIC SCIENCE

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR
A Nationally Accredited Laboratory

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NOTICE OF DFS POLICY CHANGE

To: All Law Enforcement Agencies Served by the Department of Forensic Science

From: Linda C. Jackson, Director

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Linda C. Jackson".

Date: June 10, 2020

RE: Use of Paint Cans for Trace Evidence Submissions (Fire Debris/Ignitable Liquid Analysis)

The Virginia Department of Forensic Science (DFS) recently encountered gray, epoxy-lined paint cans that were found to contain a light to medium aromatic product, which could directly interfere with the instrumental analysis of items packaged within the cans and could cause incorrect results in ignitable liquid identifications. According to the distributor's information, the cans with interferences were marketed as manufactured from recycled materials. These cans cannot be identified to a singular manufacturer or vendor so there is the possibility that multiple vendors distributed similar cans.

As a result, effective immediately, DFS requires the submission of a control can (i.e., empty, unused) of corresponding size from the same lot with each case. The results of the control can(s) will be reported on the Certificate of Analysis along with the corresponding samples. If ignitable liquids are present in the control can(s), any similar product present in any samples would be clearly reported and qualified. It is recommended that investigators mark cans with identifying information in order to document the batch, order date, and lot number, as applicable. Agencies that have cases currently in-process will be contacted regarding submission of a control can.

It should be noted that gold colored epoxy lined cans remain unsuitable for use.

For questions, please contact any of the the Trace Evidence Section Supervisors:

- Central (Richmond) - Joshua Kruger - 804.588.4009
- Eastern (Norfolk) - Brenda Christy - 757.355.5979
- Western (Roanoke) - Anthony Brown - 540.283.5936