



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF FORENSIC SCIENCE

EVIDENCE HANDLING & LABORATORY CAPABILITIES GUIDE

TRACE EVIDENCE: FRACTURE MATCH

Contact Information

If you have any questions concerning the Trace Evidence laboratory examination capabilities or evidence handling procedures, please call the Training Section or the Trace Evidence Section at the Forensic Laboratory that services your area.

<u>Laboratory</u>	<u>Section Contact</u>	<u>Phone Number</u>
Central	Mary Keehan	(804) 588-4040
Eastern	Brenda Christy	(757) 355-5979
Western	Anthony Brown	(540) 283-5936

FRACTURE MATCH EXAMINATIONS OVERVIEW

Fracture matches involve physically fitting items of evidence back together. A positive fracture match is a conclusive result that means that the fractured materials were at one time a portion of a single unit.

The Trace Evidence Section typically conducts fracture matches on the types of evidence that would normally be examined by the section. This would include, but is not be limited to: plastic, vehicle parts, paint, tapes, glass, fabric, ropes and cordage.

CAPABILITIES AND SERVICES

Determination as to whether or not one or more items were at one time a portion of a single unit.

COLLECTION GUIDELINES

ITEM – Fractured (Broken) Items

METHOD – Protect the broken items from further damage. Package in plastic or paper bags or boxes and cushion with tissue. Cardboard “sandwiches” may also assist in protecting from further breakage. If the item is particularly fragile, placing the item in a box cushioned with tissue is preferred.

DISCUSSION –DO NOT attempt the fracture match in the field. If a fracture match attempt is successful, the examiner will call or e-mail asking if any remaining examinations are necessary. Oftentimes the conclusive nature of the fracture match precludes the need for further testing.

SUBMISSION REMINDERS

Protect evidence from further damage.