

**SENECA FALLS POLICE DEPARTMENT  
GENERAL ORDER**

<b>General Order:</b> 455	<b>Rescinds:</b> New Issue
<b>Subject:</b> Evidence Technician and Reporting Procedures	<b>NYS Accreditation:</b> 51.1, 51.2, 51.3, 51.6
<b>Effective Date:</b> 07/01/13 <b>By Order Of:</b> Stuart W. Peenstra, Chief of Police	

**I. PURPOSE**

- A. To establish the responsibilities and procedures for processing the scene of an incident.
- B. To establish procedures for completing the Technician's Evidence and Photo Report.

**II. POLICY**

- A. It is the policy of the Seneca Falls Police Department to judiciously use all of its resources to bring all investigations to a successful conclusion. An Investigator or the supervising officer in charge of an incident will determine when it is necessary to have the scene processed by an Evidence Technician.
- B. Evidence Technicians are responsible for the documentation, and the developing, securing and preserving of physical evidence at an incident scene.
- C. It is not the intent of this order to preclude any officer from discovering and taking evidence or property into custody when investigating an incident that does not require the specialized resources of the Evidence Technician.
- D. It is the policy of the Seneca Falls Police Department to utilize the NYSP Accident Reconstruction Team, and Crime Scene Technicians on major incidents or

**III. PROCEDURE**

- A. The Evidence Technician shall be available for the processing of scenes in accordance with the daily duty schedule. The on-duty technician shall be called to process a scene. If no technician is on-duty, or if the on-duty technician is not available, the supervising officer will determine if an off-duty technician will be notified to respond to the crime scene.
- B. When the Evidence Technician is summoned to a scene, he shall respond with practical immediacy. The Technician shall respond with the equipment required to facilitate the investigation.
- C. The Evidence Technician shall, upon his arrival, obtain a thorough briefing from the investigating officer. This briefing shall contain as complete a description as is currently available of the chronology of the incident and should include:
  - 1. Victim information and status
  - 2. Suspects apprehended
  - 3. Suspect descriptions
  - 4. Points of entry and exit
  - 5. Property known to have been stolen
  - 6. Property recovered
  - 7. Vehicles used
  - 8. Weapons used

9. Physical evidence discovered thus far
  10. Dimensions of the crime scene
  11. Any other pertinent details which may assist the Technician in the carrying-out of his subsequent duties, to include an on-going appraisal of facts which are developed by investigative personnel while the crime scene processing is being accomplished.  
*\*NOTE - After assessment of the scene, if the Evidence Technician determines that the scene will not be processed, the Evidence Technician will document the reason(s) in Spillman why the scene was not processed.*
- D.** The investigating officer will conduct the preliminary investigation and complete the proper investigative report. (When possible, the investigating officer and the Evidence Technician will not be the same person.)
- E.** The Evidence Technician shall document the scene thoroughly in accordance with his training. Such documentation shall depict the scene accurately and in an orderly manner. This documentation may include photographs, video, diagrams, etc.
1. The Evidence Technician shall turn his attention first to the recording and preservation of perishable evidence which may be rapidly destroyed by prevailing meteorological conditions, evaporation, sublimation, melting or other natural processes, and then to more stable and enduring subjects.
  2. The Evidence Technician shall document photographs taken and enter this data on the Spillman Report.
  3. The Evidence Technician will generally document a scene in the following manner:
    - a. Exterior scenes:
      - i. Establish the location and size of the scene by taking photographs from a distance to include a landmark.
      - ii. Take medium distance photographs to record the relative positions of closely related items of evidence.
      - iii. Take close-up photographs of individual items of evidence.
    - b. Interior scenes:
      - i. Establish the location of the building through photographs.
      - ii. Photograph rooms and other interior areas from typical observation points, usually at eye-level, using a wide-angle lens when necessary to show the relative positions of all items within the area.
      - iii. Take medium distance photographs to show the relative positions of closely related items of evidence.
      - iv. Take close-up photographs of individual items of evidence.
    - c. All items of evidence discovered or developed at a scene shall be photographed in place before they are removed. Photographs must show the evidence in detail.
    - d. Photograph shoe, tire, and similar impressions which can be recorded or preserved in no other way.

shoe impressions, etc.) shall be shot from 90 degrees above the subject, shall include a scale and shall be so oriented as to make the most use of available film frame area.

- F.** The Evidence Technician shall examine the entire scene for the purpose of securing physical evidence. This search may include but not be limited to the following:
1. Latent fingerprints
  2. Shoe, tire or tool impressions
  3. Hairs and fibers
  4. Soil and dust
  5. Weapons and ammunition
  6. Blood and bloodstains
  7. Other body fluid evidence
  8. Glass, building materials
  9. Fabric, clothing, rope
  10. Plant material, wood
  11. Animal hair, feathers
  12. Drugs
  13. Safe insulation
  14. Vehicle paint and fragments
  15. Handwriting and document evidence
  16. Any other object, substance or material which a suspect leaves at or takes from a crime scene or which may otherwise be connected with a crime.
- G.** The Evidence Technician shall gather, package, label and otherwise account for the physical evidence gathered at a scene in accordance with the accepted practices and techniques outlined in his training and following the rules and procedures of the Seneca Falls Police Department which govern the submittal of evidence to the Property Clerk.
1. Forms to be utilized for this purpose include:
    - a. Spillman Report
    - b. Property Custody Report
    - c. Property Tags
  2. Evidence shall be handled in such a manner as to insure its integrity by minimizing the number of officers to whom it is transferred.
  3. Any time evidence is transferred from one officer to another or from the Seneca Falls Police Department to another law enforcement agency, prosecuting or analytical agency, the nature and date of such transfer along with personal signatures shall be recorded on the Property Custody Report.
- H.** The Evidence Technician shall, under circumstances where it is advisable, make a scene diagram in accordance with his training. A diagram will be made at the scene of the following incidents:
1. Homicide Investigations
  2. Any incident at the discretion of the Technician or supervising officer. A diagram may

be made of any crime or incident scene where the Technician, supervisor, or Investigator deems it appropriate to reconstruct the incident and/ or document the location of physical evidence.

- I. The Evidence Technician shall process the scene in a thorough, precise manner. The Evidence Technician will ensure the integrity of the scene until such processing is complete. In addition to his written reports he shall make the investigating officer aware of his various investigative activities and findings.
- J. The Evidence Technician shall, following the completion of his responsibilities, return to the Seneca Falls Police Department with any and all evidence he has collected. Before securing from his duty, he shall secure all evidence and deposit same in evidence lockers or secure areas in accordance with established procedures. All written reports will be turned in to the on-duty supervisor. SD Cards and other pertinent materials will be turned in to the designated secure location at the Seneca Falls Police Department.

#### **IV. EVIDENCE TECHNICIAN REPORT**

- A. Evidence Technicians shall utilize Spillman for documenting their activities.