



STATE OF WISCONSIN
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Dear Law Enforcement Colleague:

With increasing frequency, law enforcement officers are exposed to potentially dangerous unidentified powders. The influx of fentanyl, fentanyl derivatives, and other synthetic drugs into our state is troubling because a small amount of the drug has the potential to cause great harm. Recently, a police officer in Ohio overdosed on fentanyl after brushing the substance off his uniform. You and your brothers and sisters step into the unknown at the start of every shift so we must minimize risks and whenever possible, provide certainty that can save lives.

To assist law enforcement in quickly identifying unknown powders, the Wisconsin State Crime Laboratory (WSCL) Bureau will now be permitting law enforcement officers to perform their own field tests at the WSCL, instead of at an uncontrolled location, such as a crime scene or agency evidence storage room.

Under the supervision of WSCL analysts, participating officers will open the unidentified powder in a fume hood; remove a sample with WSCL disposable pipettes; conduct the field test; reclose the sample in the hood; and securely double-bag the sample. The WSCL requires officers to bring a personal protective medical mask or respirator with a minimum "N95" rating, latex gloves, protective eye goggles, packaging supplies, and field test kits. The WSCL maintains an inventory of emergency doses of Narcan® for laboratory emergencies. After law enforcement officers complete their field test, their agency may submit the sample for further testing. If a sample tests negative for fentanyl, the laboratories will not accept it as a rush case.

The three WSCL locations will make time available each Tuesday and Friday for field testing. To schedule an appointment to conduct a field test with a WSCL analyst, or if you have any additional questions, please contact the laboratory in your service area.

Very truly yours,

Brad D. Schimel
Wisconsin Attorney General