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NEWS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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AG Kaul Releases New Report and Data on State Crime Laboratories

MADISON, Wis. – Attorney General Josh Kaul today released the [2019 Annual Report](#) for the Wisconsin Department of Justice (DOJ) Division of Forensic Sciences (DFS) crime laboratories and an [update](#) on the division’s progress in implementing recommendations identified in a 2018 Needs Assessment by the National Forensic Science Technology Center. Also released today are new [county-by-county data](#) on drugs identified by the DFS Controlled Substances units.

“The Wisconsin State Crime Labs provide critical tools for investigating crimes and getting justice. The work done by crime lab employees supports the criminal justice system across the state,” said Attorney General Kaul.

2019 Annual Report

Every year an annual report is released on the crime laboratories work. Highlights from this year’s report:

- The crime laboratories receipted more than 10,000 cases in 2019.
- Controlled substances accounted for 43% of the labs’ receipted cases.
- Nearly 25,000 DNA Samples were added to the Combined DNA Index System (CODIS) which allows federal, state, and local forensic laboratories to share DNA profiles, thereby linking crime scenes to each other or to a reference DNA sample collected from a known arrestee or convicted offender.
- Fentanyl accounted for six percent of the drugs identified by the Controlled Substances Unit, up from zero in 2015.

Needs Assessment Update

In September 2018, the National Forensic Science Technology Center (NFSTC) released a [comprehensive report](#) to improve the productivity and efficiency of analytical operations at the three state crime laboratories in order to address backlogs of evidence to be tested and increasing turnaround times. The recommendations are based on a detailed analysis of workflows and assessments of substantiated observations. The compensation and staffing recommendations require legislative action, via DOJ's budget request, to implement.

Since that time, DFS has worked with staff and customers to make changes to the laboratories that will ensure quality, unbiased forensic science testing in the state and will benefit Wisconsin residents.

Read about DFS' progress in implementing the NFSTC's recommendations [here](#).

Drug Cases Data

Interactive data dashboards have been updated to include drugs identified by the DFS Controlled Substances Unit. The Controlled Substance Unit analyzes evidence for the presence (or absence) of controlled substances as defined in the Unit Controlled Substance Act.

The dashboards include county-level data on submitted evidence that identified drugs (benzodiazepines, cocaine, fentanyl, heroin, hydrocodone, hydromorphone, ketamine, methamphetamine, NBOMe, oxycodone, pregabalin, prescription opioids, THC, and tramadol), starting in 2008.

About DFS

The Division of Forensic Sciences contains three crime laboratories that test evidence submitted by law enforcement agencies, coroners, medical examiners, district attorneys, wardens or superintendents of any state prison, state agency heads, the attorney general, or the governor, at no charge to the submitting official. The crime labs also conduct analysis upon request of a defendant in a felony action that is approved by the presiding judge. The crime labs provide the following services: crime scene response, toxicology, drug identification, DNA analysis that includes the DNA Databank, trace evidence analysis, firearms and tool marks analysis, fingerprint and footwear analysis, ten print comparison, photo work, and forensic imaging.

The labs are staffed by approximately 180 managers, forensic scientists, and technicians at facilities in Madison, Milwaukee, and Wausau. The Madison lab serves 24 southern counties, the Milwaukee lab services eight counties in the metro area, and the Wausau lab serves 40 northern Wisconsin counties.

The state crime laboratories are the only full-service crime laboratories in Wisconsin and provides testing and analysis of evidence for every community in the state.

[Read the 2019 Annual Report.](#)

[Read the Needs Assessment Update.](#)

[View the data dashboards.](#)