



# GENERAL POLICE ORDER CLEVELAND DIVISION OF POLICE



EFFECTIVE DATE: <b>MARCH 1, 2002</b>	REVISED DATE: February 1, 2010	NO. PAGES: 1 of 4	NUMBER: 4.2.01
SUBJECT: <b>CLANDESTINE LABORATORIES</b>			
ASSOCIATED MANUAL:		RELATED ORDERS:	
CHIEF OF POLICE: <i>Michael McGrath, Chief</i>			

*Substantive changes are in italics*

**PURPOSE:** To establish guidelines to search a clandestine laboratory where volatile chemicals and/or illicit drugs are or may be *grown or manufactured*.

**POLICY:** Due to the potential hazard of bodily harm and property damage, the Cleveland Division of Police shall use extreme caution when a clandestine laboratory is discovered. Only qualified *Hazmat and Bomb Squad Technicians* shall handle suspected chemicals/volatile substances.

**DEFINITIONS:** *A clandestine laboratory is any location (particularly an enclosed space) that is used for the production of marijuana, methamphetamine, or other dangerous narcotic where the manufacture or growth of the narcotics is a hazard to human health. A clandestine laboratory also includes any building, site, or vehicle where explosives (including fireworks) or chemical/biological weapons are manufactured.*

*A clandestine laboratory may be identified by the large presence of flasks, beakers, test tubes, filters, jars, funnels, rubber gloves, propane tanks, as well as drug recipes and cooking information, and strong chemical odors. In addition, officers are cautioned that ordinary household and consumer product items such as pots & pans, coffee pots, and 2-liter bottles may be used as vessels in the manufacture of narcotics. Chemicals to look for include pseudoephedrine (cold tablets and nasal decongestants), reagent chemicals (red phosphorus, iodine crystals, iodine tincture), solvents (acetone, denatured alcohol, ether, lighter fluid, methanol), and other chemicals such as antifreeze, lye, muriatic and sulfuric acids.*

**PROCEDURES:**

- I. Inadvertent Discovery of a Clandestine Laboratory - Officers shall use extreme caution and treat the scene as if it were a bomb scene. Officers shall ensure that:

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- A. No radio transmissions are initiated within 300 feet of any suspected hazardous/explosive/volatile substances.
- B. No persons are to smoke *or cause an open flame or spark at or near the premises. Officers shall also be particularly mindful of the potential of creating static electricity either by contact with carpeted surfaces or the wearing of woolen articles of clothing such as sweaters or scarves.*
- C. No light switches (*flashlights are O.K.*) or other electrical apparatus are turned on or activated in the area. *Only the Bomb Squad and Hazmat Technicians are qualified to do so.*
- D. *The Communications Control Section (CCS) is notified to contact a supervisor to respond to the scene if one is not already there. If the officer's responding supervisor is assigned to a unit other than a district unit, a sector supervisor shall also be dispatched to the scene to receive a full briefing.*
- E. The scene is evacuated *to a perimeter of 300 feet*, as if live explosives are involved. *Reassess need for evacuation upon arrival and consultation with Cleveland Division of Fire (CDF).*
- F. *The supervisor in control of the scene shall contact the Bomb Squad OIC via CCS who in turn shall determine the level of response, if any, to the scene.*
- G. *The on-scene supervisor shall request through CCS that the CDF dispatch appropriate apparatus to standby at the scene. The on-scene supervisor shall also request CCS to contact the Bomb Squad OIC who shall in turn determine the continuing level of response. The CDF supervisor shall be consulted and directives followed relative to any need for evacuation.*
- H. *If the investigation reveals the existence of a viable Clandestine Lab, the on-scene supervisor shall request that the appropriate district Vice Unit OIC respond to the scene to handle the follow-up investigation and charging.*
- II.** *When a suspected Clandestine Laboratory is the subject of a tactical entry, with a search warrant (or when exigent circumstances exist, without a warrant), the OIC of the Narcotics or District Vice Unit shall:*
- A. *Contact the SWAT Unit OIC who will arrange a tactical entry by a SWAT Team that is trained and equipped to handle a potential hazmat situation.*

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*For purposes of deconfliction, District Vice Unit OIC's shall contact the OIC of the Narcotics Unit at least 48 hours prior to executing a Clandestine Lab entry.*

- B. *Ensure that all the necessary arrangements are made:*
- 1. Trash Pulls: Trash pulls on suspected Clandestine Laboratory sites shall be conducted in concert with the OIC of the Bomb Squad. The Bomb Squad OIC shall direct and maintain discretion to have bomb technicians assist in the proper handling of seized hazmat evidence.*
  - 2. To have the Bomb Squad attend the pre-entry briefing and respond to the scene with the entry detail. (The Bomb Squad shall standby at the scene while the Hazmat SWAT team clears the location of suspects. The Bomb Squad will then conduct the evidence search).*
  - 3. To have a Fire Rescue Squad with Hazmat Rescue capabilities on scene at entry time along with CDF firefighting equipment. When available, a SWAT Tactical Emergency Medical Paramedic will attend the briefing and liaison with CDF on scene.*

**III.** *The Bomb Squad shall respond to suspected Clandestine Labs.*

- A. *The Bomb Squad shall be responsible for searching these sites after a warrant is obtained by the investigating Division entity. The Bomb Squad will handle, remove, preserve, or order evidence destroyed per established unit protocols.*
- B. *The Bomb Squad shall remove any suspected hazardous Clandestine Lab materials that are found in plain view.*
- C. *Where well articulated exigent circumstances exist indicating an immediate risk of serious physical harm to officers or the community, the Bomb Squad may conduct a search for hazardous materials without a search warrant.*

*Example: Strong odors of caustic chemicals emanating from the suspect address and putting officers and citizens at risk and evacuation is either not recommended for safety reasons or would overwhelm the personnel resources available; armed suspect barricaded in an area where volatile/hazardous chemicals/substances are suspected to be present.*

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- D. *The Bomb Squad shall arrange for the response of an approved contractor to respond for site cleanup and disposal of hazmat materials.*
- IV. *Under no circumstances is a clandestine drug laboratory to be transported to the Crime Scene and Records Unit/ Forensic Laboratory.*
- V. *The on-scene supervisor shall ensure that Children and Family Services is notified if it is believed that any children may have been exposed to the hazardous environment. If circumstances warrant, the supervisor shall ensure that an Endangering Children RMS report is completed.*
- VI. *Clandestine Labs (other than those used exclusively to manufacture drugs or fireworks) suspected of being used in the manufacture of chemical, biological or explosive weapons shall require notification of the Intelligence Unit OIC.*
- VII. *Investigative responsibilities of Clandestine Labs used for the manufacture of fireworks shall be the responsibility of the District Vice Units.*
- VIII. *RMS and investigative reports involving drug manufacturing/growing Clandestine Labs shall be forwarded to the Narcotics Unit OIC within 7 days of the incident. The Narcotics OIC shall ensure that all notifications are made, including the El Paso Intelligence Center (EPIC) and the Ohio Attorney General's Office's Bureau of Criminal Identification and Investigation (BCI).*
- A. *All RMS reports involving an actual or suspected clandestine lab shall contain "Clandestine Lab" in the RMS title. Example: VSDL/Clandestine Lab/Arrest/Contraband seized.*
- B. *At the direction of the Chief of Police, Deputy Chief of Special Operations or the Commander of Special Services the Narcotics Unit may assume all or part of a Clandestine Lab investigation.*