



NOS Marine Forensics - Standard Protocol Collecting and Shipping Samples in Salt-Saturated DMSO

Please note: Contact us if you would like us to send you a DMSO collection kit. Though neither salt nor DMSO are known to be toxic, DMSO is an excellent solvent and penetrates the skin readily, potentially carrying with it any other compounds it is in contact with. You should, therefore, minimize contact with bare skin. If you do get some solution on your skin, simply rinse the affected area thoroughly with tap water.

1. Take each sample using a clean razor blade or scalpel. Aim for the sample to be about the size of a pencil eraser. If you do not have access to enough blades to use a new one for each individual, please rinse the blade well with ethanol or rubbing alcohol between samples.

2. Place each sample in a separate tube. The sample should be well-covered by the liquid and it should not be crowded in the tube. Leave some head space in the tube. Use a pencil or indelible pen to label each tube with a unique identification number.

3. *Snap the white cap firmly back onto the tube. There should be a loud click (sometimes the tube will require a second click to be fully closed) and **the cap should fit all the way down to the “ridge” at the top of the tube when the cap is completely secure.***

4a. If the samples are voucher samples, please complete a “Certification of Species Identification of Standard Sample” form for each separate species you are including, and place the form(s) in an envelope accompanying the samples. We would also like to have any sample-related metadata that you normally collect, such as collection location (lat-long or place name), date collected, sex, size, etc. You may include this in printed form, or email us a spreadsheet. We would also welcome photos of the sampled animals to file with the species certification forms. Please call if you need our account number for shipping.

4b. If the samples are evidence to be analyzed, please label each tube with the case, evidence, and/or item number, and complete the “NOS Lab evidence examination request form” from our website, <http://www.chbr.noaa.gov/habar/marfordownloads.aspx>. The form and a chain-of-custody should accompany the samples when shipped. Your agency’s chain-of-custody form may be used, or we can provide one for you.

5. Samples should be shipped by overnight courier on Monday through Thursday, as no one is available to accept shipments at the lab on Saturdays.

6. Please call or email and let Trey Knott or Kathy Moore know when evidence samples are being shipped. Contact information is below.

7. Ship samples to:
Evidence Custodian
NOS Marine Forensics Lab
219 Fort Johnson Road
Charleston, SC 29412
evidence.custodian@noaa.gov

** This protocol of standard operating procedures (SOPs)/ guidelines (SOGs) fully incorporates the NOAA/ NCCOS Environmental Management Systems (EMS) requirements and conforms to the Executive Order 13423. The SOPs/SOGs include appropriate considerations regarding evaluating and minimizing an environmental footprint, and implementing energy and water conservation directives.*



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Questions?

Feel free to contact us if you would like us to supply you with a sampling kit or if you have any questions about sampling, preserving, or shipping evidence:

Trey Knott, Forensic Biologist
specializes in finfish, lobster, and misc. species
phone: 843-762-8621
email: trey.knott@noaa.gov

Kathy Moore, Forensic Biologist
specializes in sea turtles, marine mammals, and sharks
phone: 843-762-8514
email: kathy.moore@noaa.gov

Evidence Custodian
email: evidence.custodian@noaa.gov

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