



NOS Marine Forensics - Standard Protocol

Sampling of blood and trace evidence

Please note: Contact us if you would like us to send you a sampling kit with gloves, razor blades, blotting paper, swabs, tubes, and envelopes.

General shipping and collection instructions for all evidence types

1. **If sampling multiple blood spots or from multiple sites**, try to use new gloves, razor blades and envelopes/tubes for each sample. If you do not have enough razor blades, please wipe your blade off with rubbing alcohol or ethanol between samples.
2. Package all samples in sealed evidence bags/containers.
3. Package **frozen bloody water** in a cooler with plenty of “blue ice” or dry ice. **Dried samples** may be shipped in an envelope at room temperature.
4. A signed chain-of-custody should accompany the samples.
5. Please call or email and let Trey Knott or Kathy Moore know when samples are being shipped. Their contact information is below.
6. Ship samples to:
Evidence Custodian
NOS Marine Forensics Lab
219 Fort Johnson Road
Charleston, SC 29412
evidence.custodian@noaa.gov

Weapons

7. Make sure any **weapons** are completely dry, then bag or box them. Spear guns will often fit in a poster tube or triangular FedEx tube.
8. If you cannot package a **weapon** for shipment, call Kathy Moore (843-762-8514) at the Marine Forensic Lab before proceeding. If field sampling is agreed upon,
 - a. Use a scalpel or razor blade to gently flake dried blood/tissue into a small tube or coin envelope.
 - b. Label the tube/envelope with the location of the spot on the weapon (handle, blade, etc.). Labeled photographs of the weapon and sampling site are welcomed.
 - c. Use a separate razor blade and tube for each new location on the weapon. If there are multiple blood spots, please **DO NOT** pool these into one tube.

** 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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Wet blood spatter or fish slime:

7. Wipe up each spot with a separate clean, white piece of paper, cloth, or cotton swab. Dyed cloth/paper are discouraged, as dyes can interfere with DNA analysis. Regular office paper, paper towels or napkins, gauze, handkerchiefs, etc. work well.
8. Let the sample dry thoroughly.
9. Put each sample in a labeled white envelope.

Other trace evidence

7. **Dried blood** spots can be scraped into tubes or small paper envelopes with a clean knife or single-edged razor blade. One blood spot per envelope!
8. **Fish scales** should be allowed to dry thoroughly, then place in a labeled paper envelope.
9. Collect **bloody water** from the fish hold or bilge by scooping it into a clean, labeled jar or tube. Freeze ASAP.

If you have questions

If you have questions about how to sample, package, and/or ship specific items, please call or email:

Kathy Moore, Forensic Biologist
specializes in sea turtles, marine mammals, and sharks
NOS Marine Forensics Lab
219 Fort Johnson Road
Charleston, SC 29412
843-762-8514
kathy.moore@noaa.gov

Trey Knott, Forensic Biologist
specializes in finfish, lobster, and misc. species
NOS Marine Forensics Lab
219 Fort Johnson Road
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