



City of Racine Police Department
Policy and Procedure

Number: 1201

Subject: Property Inventory – Excluding Motor Vehicles		
Date Issued: 08-04-95	Date Revised: 3/30/20	Revision Number: 7

POLICY

All property recovered by the Racine Police Department will be safeguarded in such a manner that the interests of the owners are protected as well as the integrity of the department.

PROCEDURE

When any department member or employee recovers property as the result of a crime (excluding on-site shoplifting cases), property removed for safekeeping, found item on the street or items brought into the Public Service Counter by citizens, the following steps will be taken:

MEMBER

1. Upon recovery of any items whether considered evidence, contraband, or found items, these items shall be inventoried.
 - a. Obtain a complaint number from Racine County Communications Center.
 - b. Complete a property receipt (Form PP122) if the items are retrieved from a person.
 - c. Provide the “gold” copy to the citizen.
 - d. Forward “white” original to Records.
2. Take control of the property and safeguard it from loss or damage; in the case of a weapon, ensure it has been rendered safe.
3. Found items should be inventoried in the BEAST system even in cases where it is believed that the member can return non-evidentiary items to the rightful owner within that work-shift.
 - a. Non-evidentiary items may include wallets, DLs, ID cards, credit cards, etc.
 - b. Thoroughly describe all recovered items. Include make, model number, serial number and color.
 - c. If the found item is of no tangible value, the Shift Commander can make the decision to properly dispose of the item rather than inventory it.
4. Document the recovery of found property and its’ inventory, return or disposal on an incident report or supplement as appropriate. Attention all reports of recovered firearms (including those as found items) to Investigations Supervisor.

NOTES

Because items of evidence may have different destinations (i.e., drugs to the chemical lab, shell casings to the department criminalist for fingerprinting and then to the Crime Lab for “Drugfire” analysis), they need to be packaged separately.

EXAMPLE #1: Fired casings found at a scene must be individually packaged in envelopes or paper bag(s). Mark and place in a sealed envelope or paper bag. For convenience, numerous item numbers can be placed into an open paper bag with a BEAST label attached, and placed in a locker. This will preserve the casings/rounds for any forensic evidentiary value as well as permit the separate handling if necessary by follow-up personnel. Rounds in a loaded magazine may remain in the magazine. (The magazine must be removed from the weapon and will now be inventoried with the gun).

EXAMPLE #2: Similar items located in the same place are listed as one item with the quantity listed. (i.e. - Six rocks of cocaine found in the right front pants pocket would be entered as Item #1, Quantity 6.) Each package must be weighed separately and indicate

on the BEAST system the gross weight of the package listed. Rounds or casings found together in a grouping can be packaged as a single item with the quantity listed, but must be in separate envelopes or paper bags within the sealed package. If unable to determine the number of rounds in a magazine, remove and package the magazine with the rounds inside as a separate item.

Under no circumstances will multiple items be packaged together in plastic.

EXAMPLE: A cell phone, ammunition, ID card, and drugs are confiscated or found. These items will be individually identified and packaged. They will not be strung together in one long sheet of plastic. **Each item number is a separate package.**

5. Utilize the BEAST system to enter items for inventory:

a. Specific types of evidence must be packaged separately due to its unique routing:

1) Drugs:

a) For felony charges:

(1) Controlled substances shall be photographed before recovery in the location found except:

(a) Items found in a person's mouth or area of the body which would qualify as a strip search per Policy and Procedure 1103.

(b) Inside the clothing the suspect is wearing (pockets, socks, etc.)

(c) Any location where the controlled substances would have to be moved to be photographed.

(2) Controlled substances shall be photographed after recovery before any further handling of the evidence, showing overall views, packaging and scaled views.

b) Document the location controlled substances were found (such as mouth, groin area, etc.) as it will help determine if they are suitable for DNA testing.

c) A supervisor must witness the weighing or counting of suspected controlled substances.

d) All weighing and testing within the building must be conducted in the evidence packaging room utilizing the containment hood device.

e) The weight of drug substances (before and after testing) must be recorded in the BEAST system.

f) Describe in as much detail as possible, the type of controlled substances as well as the quantity.

g) Record the exact count of pills, capsule, etc... by type.

h) Be specific about containers the substance was weighed in (i.e. plastic baggie, glass vial, and jeweler's gem zip-loc baggie).

i) Record the description of paraphernalia and package it separately from the actual suspected controlled substances.

j) Make sure that all suspected controlled substances are packaged separately from other types of evidence or contraband.

k) Controlled substances shall be packaged in paper to preserve it for possible DNA testing.

l) When controlled substances are to be fingerprinted or sent for DNA testing,

(1) Submit a request to the criminalists via the chain of command on a supplement to have the controlled substances separated as necessary for that purpose.

(2) Complete a "Pull Request."

2) Money:

a) Place currency and coins within 9 X 12 manila envelopes located in the Packaging Room, place the BEAST main label and the Beast currency label on the envelope.

(1) Seal both flaps of the money envelope with tamper proof evidence tape.

(2) Place your initials, payroll number, and the current date on the sealed flaps in such a manner that the writing overlaps both the envelope flap and the evidence tape.

- b) When the face value of the money exceeds \$1000, a second person must provide a verification of the count and inventory. The second person's signature shall be noted on the money envelope.
 - c) **Should the money have any unique features (trace evidence or contaminants) on it, note in the BEAST system and on the money envelope "Do not deposit – save for forensic testing." Ensure a specific item number is listed. EXAMPLE: Do not deposit Item #3 – save for forensic testing.**
- 3) Unique Currency (i.e. silver certificates, etc.):
- a) Money that poses a biohazard should be packaged separately in a money envelope after drying (if needed) and marked with biohazard stickers.
 - b) The BEAST system entry should reflect the uniqueness of the currency to alert the Property Clerk. The unique value may be the type of money, or features or characteristics that make regular U.S. currency or coin unique to the situation such as potential trace evidence or contaminants.
 - c) If the uniqueness is attributed to the circumstances of the incident in which it was recovered, rather than the production origin of the money, **note in the BEAST system and on the money envelope "Do not deposit – save for forensic testing." Ensure a specific item number is listed. EXAMPLE: Do not deposit Item #3 – save for forensic testing.**
 - d) Place unique currency and coins within the money envelope (located in the Packaging Room), completing the main beast label and the currency beast label.
 - (1) Seal both flaps of the money envelope with the tamper proof evidence tape.
 - (2) Place your initials, payroll number, and the current date on the sealed flaps in such a manner that the writing overlaps both the envelope flap and the evidence tape.
 - e) When money is recovered that is found to contain "operational fund" moneys used as part of an investigation, i.e. buy operation, that money may be separated from other recovered money.
 - (1) The supervisor of the unit involved and/or the investigator may determine if the "operation funds" money is to be used as evidence or returned to the operational fund of the unit.
 - (2) Money used as evidence should be inventoried using the normal procedure.
 - (3) When "operations fund" money is returned to the operational fund instead of using as evidence:
 - (a) Document the total amount of money recovered, noting the amount inventoried and the amount returned to the operational fund. Describe the reason for separating the money.
 - (b) The total inventoried plus the amount returned to the operational fund must equal the total amount recovered.
- 4) Blood Samples:
- a) Placed in a styrofoam box (kit is provided by State Hygiene Lab).
 - b) Prior to placing the mailing label on the package, seal by wrapping the box in tamper proof evidence tape and marking it in a similar fashion to the gun box process below under "Firearm" [b)(4)].
 - c) Place the kit-provided mailing label on the front of the styrofoam box. (The mailing label may cover evidence tape. Do not cover any portion of the mailing label.)
 - d) Place a minimum of two (2) biohazard stickers conspicuously (one each) on at least two (2) different sides of the styrofoam box.
 - e) Place in the refrigerator.
- 5) Sexual Assault Kit:
- a) The dry kit is for victims.
 - (1) Seal the cardboard box with a wrap of the tamper proof evidence tape.
 - (2) Place the box into a regular locker like other evidence.
 - b) The blood kit is for offenders.
 - (1) Refer to blood handling instructions in #4)
 - (2) Place the styrofoam blood kit in the refrigerator.

- c) Place a minimum of two (2) biohazard stickers conspicuously on at least two (2) different sides of each of the boxes.
 - d) Write your initials, payroll number and the current date on the tape and ensure the marking overlaps onto each box itself.
 - e) **Do not wrap either of the two boxes in plastic under any circumstances.**
- 6) Firearm:

NOTE

Package all weapons that look like firearms (AirSoft, BB and pellet guns) in a gun box. Do not complete the ATF "National Tracing Center Trace Request Form" for non-firearms.

- a) All firearms and firearm related evidence (ballistic evidence; magazine or live cartridge case(s) removed from chamber/cylinder) including found items, shall be handled and packaged for fingerprint recovery and DNA processing.

NOTE

Ammo recovered elsewhere, i.e. not in magazine or cylinder shall be inventoried separately.

- b) Handgun:
 - (1) Ensure the handgun is unloaded. Place a zip tie through the magazine well and out the ejection port on semi-automatic handguns, place zip tie through cylinder on revolvers to show gun is safe. **NEVER** place zip tie through the barrel.
 - (2) Do not remove live ammunition from the magazine.
 - (3) Place the live ammunition from the chamber on a semi-automatic or the cylinder of a revolver in an envelope or small paper bag and include it in the gun box.
 - (4) Place gun, magazine, and live ammunition removed from handgun into a gun box (supplied in the Packaging Room) and secure it with straps. (Weapons do not have to be engraved.) Envelope/paper bag containing the live ammunition can be taped inside the box. The contents of the gun box are one item in BEAST. It should be entered as handgun and item description will note if magazine or live ammunition is also included.
 - (5) Seal the box by wrapping it with tamper proof evidence tape. (Avoid covering the straps holding the weapon in the package when possible.)
 - (6) Write your initials, payroll number, and the current date on the tape. Ensure your initials overlaps onto the box itself.
- c) Rifle/Shotgun:
 - (1) Ensure the rifle/shotgun is unloaded. Place a zip tie through the magazine well and out the ejection port if applicable.
 - (2) Place rifle, magazine if applicable, and live ammo removed from rifle into a rifle box (supplied in the Packaging Room) and secure it with straps.
 - (3) Place the live ammunition removed from the chamber in an envelope or small paper bag and include it in the rifle box. The contents of the rifle box are one item in BEAST. It should be entered as rifle and item description will note if magazine or live ammunition is also included.
 - (4) Seal the box by wrapping it with tamper proof evidence tape. (Avoid covering the straps holding the weapon in the package if applicable.)
 - (5) Write your initials, payroll number, and the current date on the tape. Ensure the initials overlaps onto the box itself.
- d) Ensure the following information is entered into the BEAST system:
 - (1) Make
 - (2) Country of origin
 - (3) Model
 - (4) Serial number
 - (5) Caliber
 - (6) Magazine or cylinder capacity

- (7) Barrel Length
 - (8) Finish
 - (9) Action type
 - (10) Other identifying marks or features
 - e) **Complete the ATF “National Tracing Center Trace Request Form in the Beast inventory system”. ATF tab is on bottom of beast inventory page for firearm inventory and should be filled out. Crime code must be filled out in this section, along with the gun information as above.**
- 7) Vehicle Parts:
- a) Mark the part with an informational sticker, tape, or hangtag with the following:
 - (1) Complaint number
 - (2) Initials and payroll number of recovering officer
 - b) Place large car parts in Cage #1 (located in the garage).
 - c) If the vehicle parts are small enough and not dripping fluids or debris, they may be placed in the blue lockers within the Packaging Room.
- 8) Fireworks:
- a) If the fireworks are dry, seal the fireworks in plastic in accordance with the instructions for “heat sealed packages.”
 - b) If the fireworks are damp or wet, seal the fireworks in paper bags in accordance with the instructions for “paper bags.”
 - c) Upon completion of the packaging process, attach a BEAST barcode label to the package and place the package in the Bomb Room (located in the department garage area).
 - d) **During the Fourth of July holiday, and other special events designated by the Chief’s Office, when large quantities of fireworks are confiscated this exception should be followed for fireworks citations. (Criminal arrests should follow the normal inventory process):**
 - (1) Photograph the fireworks
 - (2) Place the fireworks in the PD bomb room.
 - (3) Note the photographs and placement of the fireworks on the citation narrative.
- 9) Flammable Liquids:
- a) Ensure the container can be sealed to prevent leakage.
 - b) If the container cannot be properly sealed to prevent leakage, place the container within another container (paint can, etc...) and seal that, to prevent leakage. (The Fire Department may provide a container that can be sealed.)
 - c) Tag the container or attach an informational sticker identifying the container by completing all of the required blanks on the tag or informational sticker.
 - d) Attach a BEAST label to the container and place the sealed container in the Bomb Room (located in the department garage area).
- 10) Video Tapes:
- a) If the tape is to be viewed to see if it has evidentiary value:
 - (1) Remove the tab on the tape to prevent the tape from being erased.
 - (2) View the tape on the equipment it was recorded on if possible.
 - (a) View the tape at normal speed only.
 - (b) Do not attempt to freeze the tape to view individual frames on the original tapes.
 - b) If the tape is brought to the department for review or as evidence:
 - (1) Make a copy of the original at normal speed if the tape is to be reviewed prior to the Identification Unit processing the original.
 - (2) Inventory the original tape and document that a copy was made of the original.
 - (3) Use the copy for review and obtaining still frames.
 - (4) Submit a request to the Identification Unit to have the tape processed if needed.
 - c) If immediately necessary to use the original for any purpose other than making a copy:

- (1) Hand deliver the tape to a Criminalist.
- (2) The tape will be digitized and returned to the member to be inventoried.
- (3) If a Criminalist is not available to process the tape immediately contact the Shift Commander to determine if a Criminalist will need to be called in to process the tape.
- (4) If the Shift Commander determines there is not an immediate need to process the tape or a Criminalist is not available:
 - (a) Inventory the tape using the normal inventory process.
 - (b) Submit a request to the Identification Unit to have the tape processed.
- d) Normal video enhancement requests should be forwarded to the Identification Unit and the tape inventoried using the normal inventory procedure.
- 11) CD's, DVD's and Blu-Ray disc's of evidentiary value will no longer be inventoried in the static free tubing (pink tubing). They shall now be inventoried in 6X9 manila envelopes provided in the PI room.
 - (a) Place each individual CD/DVD/Blu-Ray Disc in an individual CD/DVD/Blu-Ray sleeve, then place the CD/DVD/Blu-Ray in the sleeve into a 6X9 manila envelope. The manila envelope opening will be secured with evidence tape, and then the inventorying officer's initials and payroll number placed on the tape and envelope. The Beast label will then be adhered to the 6X9 manila envelope on the indicated space of the envelope.
 - (b) Examples of CD/DVD's to inventory this way are the following: surveillance video, interviews, audio recording, data captured on a CD/DVD/Blu-Ray.
 - (c) Multiple Cd/DVD/Blu-Ray discs may be inventoried in the same manila envelope if it is considered one item in beast. If the two CD/DVD/Blu-Ray discs are separate items, then it would require 2 manila envelopes.

NOTE

Music CD's and movie DVD's recovered as general evidence are still to be packaged per policy 1201. Examples would be multiple music CD's in a case. An example manila envelope will be placed in the PI room.

- 12) When taking sworn statements from victims or witnesses prepare an original copy and a photocopy.
 - a) Inventory the original copy.
 - b) Note the Racine Police Department complaint number in the upper right-hand corner of the photocopy and forward to the Records Section, so that a copy of the statement will be included with the packet of reports sent to the District Attorney's office.
6. Package each item in accordance with training:
 - a. Heat sealed packages:
 - 1) Seal the item within the package at both ends to prevent it from falling out.
 - 2) Place the packaging officer's initials, payroll number and the current date inside the plastic (outside of the initial seal) at each end with a permanent marker.
 - 3) Heat seal directly over the initials/payroll number/date markings, creating a second seal to protect the item(s).
 - b. Paper bags:
 - 1) Fold over the top of the bag.
 - 2) Wrap the folded flap with tamper proof evidence tape.
 - 3) Place your initials, payroll number, and the current date on the tape. Ensure the markings overlap onto the bag.
7. Place package(s) in the appropriate storage container:
 - a. Lockers in the PI room, including the mailbox for small items (T-32).
 - b. Permanent lockers (on second floor).
 - c. Drying lockers (on second floor).
 - d. Bomb Room located in the garage near three-door
 - e. Cage #1 in the garage near one-door
 - f. Refrigerator located in the PI room #F-1A (keys are in the Sergeants' Office).
8. Turn in the BEAST inventory record with all other paperwork to your supervisor.

9. Attach BEAST label to each inventoried item.
10. The chain of custody must be maintained and thoroughly documented on each item recovered by the Racine Police Department.
11. All property must be entered into the property system by the end of the tour of duty, or with Shift Commander approval, property may be secured in a locker, to be inventoried the next day, with the officer inventorying the property retaining the key.
12. With approval from the Shift/Unit Commander, some items may be checked out and held by the member who inventoried the property once the property is logged into the system (i.e. photo lineups, security video tapes).
13. Official reports must document each person that had custody or control of the item from the time it was collected until its court ordered disposition.
14. If it is necessary to open a sealed container to examine the contents:
 - a. DO NOT damage the original signature area.
 - b. Cut the bag or plastic to remove the item away from the security seal.
15. To repackage:
 - a. Place the first package in a new package.
 - b. Reseal the new package in the same prescribed manner as the original.
 - c. Gun boxes may be resealed by using fresh tamper proof evidence tape on the box in a different location on the box.

NOTES

- Wet items must be dried in the drying lockers and packaged as soon as possible after the drying is complete.
- Evidence containing dried blood or any other DNA must be placed in paper, not plastic. Evidence containing blood must also display at least one biohazard sticker on the front and back of each package.
- If a package has been identified with stickers as a “biohazard” enter a “Biohazard” note in the BEAST system.
- Serial numbered items must be checked both NCIC/CIB as well as on the in-house system at the time they are inventoried.
- Jewelry must be accurately described and individually listed.
- When searching individuals and/or packaging sharp items and items tainted with suspected body fluids, follow the guidelines spelled out in Procedure #115 (under “Member 5c-d”).

PUBLIC SERVICE COUNTER

1. Upon taking custody of a found item from a citizen at the Public Service Counter:
 - a. Obtain a complaint number from Racine County Communications Center.
 - b. Complete a property receipt (Form PP122).
 - c. Provide the “gold” copy to the citizen.
 - d. Attach the “white” original to the item.
2. Determine the approximate value of the item.
 - a. If the value of any item exceeds \$25.00 or the item is cash, jewelry, a credit card, or any item that can easily be converted to cash:
 - 1) Notify Communications to send an officer to process the found item.
 - 2) Retain control of the item until retrieved by an officer.
 - b. If the value is less than \$25.00 (and is not one of the above items, i.e. cash):
 - 1) Place the item in a blue locker in the PI room.
 - 2) Complete an incident report detailing the recovery.
 - c. If the item is of no tangible value, the Shift Commander can make the decision to properly dispose of the item brought into the Public Service Counter, rather than inventory it.

SUPERVISOR

1. Ensure that all counting or weighing of suspected controlled substances is done in your presence or that of another supervisor.
2. Review the BEAST inventory record for completeness and accuracy.
3. Sign approved BEAST inventory record and forward to Records.

INVESTIGATIONS SUPERVISOR

1. Review firearm recovery reports.
2. Identify recovered firearm(s) to be processed for evidence (fingerprint/DNA).

EVIDENCE CLERK

1. Maintain an organized inventory record system that facilitates the storage and collection of inventoried items.
 - a. Record any transfers of property in the BEAST system.
 - b. Place monies that are not unique, in a secure environment until arrangements have been made to turn them over to the City Treasurer's office.
 - c. After the monies have been turned over to the City Treasurer's Office: Forward a copy of BEAST receipt, cash receipt and money envelope to Records for filing.
 - d. Monies identified on the BEAST system as unique based on the requirement to test for forensic evidentiary value, place in storage pending the testing process.
 - e. Monies that are unique based on their production origin, place in HOLD BIN storage pending their ultimate release to the owner, or use in court proceedings.
 - f. Properly dispose of items at the direction of the Court, the DA's Office, local laws and ordinances and Policy and Procedure 2100.
 - g. Record the disposal in the BEAST system.
2. Ensure arrangements are made (per the normal practice) to ship controlled substances to be tested to the Kenosha Health Department or Wisconsin Crime Lab (whichever is appropriate for the circumstances). Upon the return of the suspected controlled substances to the PI room, replace them in storage documenting the return of the items in the BEAST system.
3. When the Public Service Counter personnel place items into a blue locker accompanied by a property receipt:
 - a. Inventory the item(s) into the BEAST system using the same complaint number as that on the property receipt.
 - b. Store the items in a manner consistent with those inventoried by officers.
4. Prior to releasing any property to a person:
 - a. Obtain identification from any person requesting the release of property
 - b. Ensure a "Property Release of Liability" form has been signed off by the person requesting the property if the property contains unknown substances or has been marked with "biohazard" stickers.
 - c. The original of the Property Release of Liability form should get forwarded to Records upon release of the property.

COURT SUPERVISOR

Conduct random monthly audit of the property function. Once complete forward report to the division commander.

RELATED PROCEDURES

- [115 – Communicable Disease Prevention](#)
- [1103 – Strip Searches](#)
- [1204 – Use of Police Department Refrigerated Storage](#)
- [Table of Contents](#)

REFERENCES

Physical Evidence Handbook (5th Edition), 1993