



AGENDA

JOINT MEETING OF THE LITTLE CHUTE AND KIMBERLY VILLAGE BOARDS

PLACE: Little Chute Village Board Room
DATE: Wednesday, January 22, 2025
TIME: 6:00 p.m.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88400626016>

Meeting ID: 884 0062 6016

1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

REGULAR ORDER OF BUSINESS

- A. Invocation
- B. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag
- C. Introductions/Roll Call
- D. Public Appearance for Items Not on the Agenda
- E. Discussion/Action—Evidence Storage Needs
- F. Discussion/Action—Joint Department Administrative Cost Analysis
- G. Adjournment

Fox Valley Metro Police Department

Property and Evidence Storage Needs



January 10, 2025

Daniel M. Meister, Chief of Police



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As part of its public safety and law enforcement mission, the Fox Valley Metro Police Department investigates law violations and incidents that are reported to us. As part of those investigations, we often come into possession of items of physical property that we take into our custody. When we take possession of that property, we have to store it in a certain manner based on its classification.

Property Control and Management

Types of Property

Property that we take possession of can fall into the following categories:

- Evidence
- Contraband (illegal for someone to possess)
- Lost and Found
- Safekeeping

Evidence

Evidence is property (physical or digital) that we take custody of to support an allegation of a crime being committed. Evidence may be used to further an investigation and/or be needed in a legal proceeding such as a jury trial.

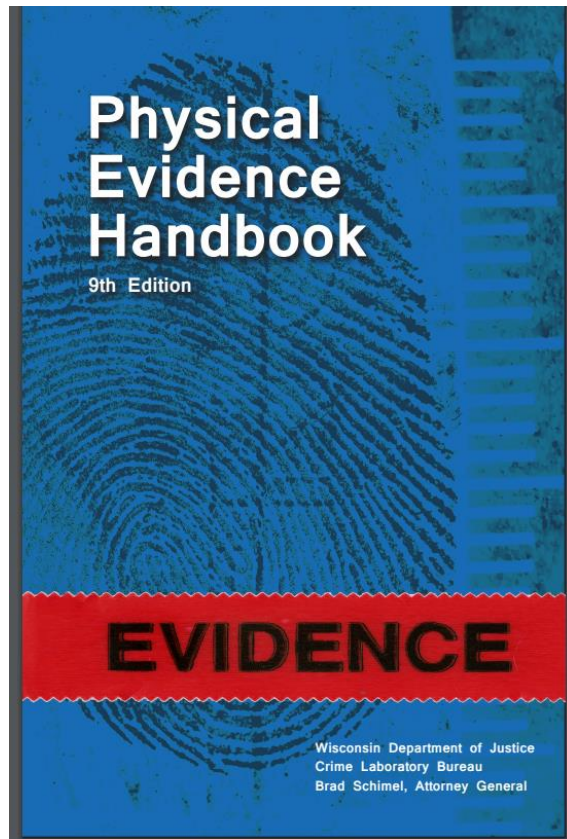
Because evidence can be called into question in court, it has to be handled within professional standards and common rules of evidentiary processing. Who has handled the evidence, when, where and why needs to be documented and accounted for.

Depending on the type of evidence and what it is needed for, the physical property may have to be stored in a climate-controlled manner.

Evidence had to be held in our custody for a certain amount of time based on the nature of the case, the prosecutorial timeline, potential case appellate options and any other court ordered specifications. Some evidence has been in our possession for over a decade.

The Wisconsin Department of Justice has created guidelines and standards of evidence handling for law enforcement agencies. To preserve the physical characteristics and the integrity of items of evidence, law enforcement agencies adopt this document as part of their standard operating procedures.

The document is the *Physical Evidence Handbook* and is available on their website...



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Contraband

Contraband may be seized as evidence but may also be seized with no case or arrest affiliated with it. Contraband may just be seized to prevent public access to it because it is illegal to possess or unsafe to possess. . More than likely, items of contraband will not be held as long as evidence.

Lost and Found

These are items of property that come into our possession through a variety of ways but typically are reported to us or brought to us by someone in the public. We hold the item while we attempt to locate the lawful / rightful owner of the property. Based on the type of property and its value, we hold onto it for a certain period of time and will eventually dispose of it when no owner is located.

Safekeeping

Property that is acquired and held for safekeeping reasons is similar to lost and found but in this instance, the owner is usually known. The property is held until the owner is notified and it is returned to them. The retention time of this type of property is typically less than that of evidence or lost and found.

Regardless of the category or nature, all property that comes into our possession must be accounted for. Some type of report is filed, and the property is electronically logged into our property control software system. Once logged into the system, the property is stored in a variety of manners and locations based on its classification and physical characteristics.

Property Control

The department uses a software system to keep track of all the property that comes into our possession. This system uses a combination of physical hardware and electronic software and computers to do the following:

- Create physical labels for the property.
- Enter the property information into the software system.
- Maintain property data in an organized manner.
- Allow staff to search for items of property and identify their location.
- Identify a corresponding incident in our records management software system.
- Log any changes to the status or location of the property.
- Provide for inventory audits.
- Log the final disposition of the property when it is disposed of or returned to another person.
- Maintains legal chain of custody.
- Maintain all this information after the property has left our possession.

Property Control Procedures

In addition to following the guidelines and standards in the *Physical Evidence Handbook*, the department has a policy that guides members in the handling of property and evidence.

Policy Section 802, Property and Evidence contains language that identifies the proper manner for handling, retaining, storing and disposing of property and evidence.

Policy

802.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

- ❗ This policy provides for the proper collection, storage, security and disposition of evidence and other property. This policy also provides for the protection of the chain of custody and those persons authorized to remove and/or destroy property.



802.1.1 Property Control Section SECURITY

The Property Control Section shall maintain secure storage and control of all property necessitating custody by the Department. The property and evidence technician reports to the Investigation Bureau supervisor and is responsible for the security of the Property Control Section. Property Control Section keys are maintained only by the property and evidence technician and the Investigation Bureau supervisor. An additional key is in a sealed and initialed envelope maintained in the safe in the Chief of Police's office. The property and evidence technician and the Investigation Bureau supervisor shall not loan Property Control Section keys to anyone and shall maintain keys in a secure manner. Any individual entering the Property Control Section other than the property and evidence technician must be accompanied by the property and evidence technician or the Investigation Bureau supervisor and must sign in and out on the logbook, giving the date and time of entry and exit, and the purpose, including a specific case or property number (if applicable). The entry shall be initialed by the accompanying individual. The Property Control Section shall maintain additional physical security or physical barriers to properly secure high value, sensitive, or high-risk property, such as currency, jewelry, narcotics, firearms, or those items identified by the Wisconsin Department of Justice Physical Evidence Handbook guidelines.

802.2 DEFINITIONS

Definitions related to this policy include:

Evidence - Includes items taken or recovered in the course of an investigation that may be used in the prosecution of a case.

Explosive – Any chemical compound, mixture, or device where the primary or common purpose of which is to function by explosion, i.e., with substantially instantaneous release of gas and heat.

Explosive Device – A device that is not readily available for purchase and use by the general public.

Found property - Includes property found by a member or citizen where the owner cannot be readily identified or contacted and has no apparent evidentiary value.

Property - Includes all items of evidence, items taken for safekeeping and found property.

Safekeeping - Includes the following types of property:

- Property obtained by the Department for safekeeping, such as a firearm
- Personal property of an arrestee not taken as evidence
- Property taken for safekeeping under authority of a law
-

Wisconsin Department of Justice Physical Evidence Handbook - A book of recommended best practices that is periodically updated and maintained by the Wisconsin State Crime Laboratories and is available to view on <https://wilenet.widoj.gov/>

802.3 PROPERTY HANDLING

Any member who takes custody of seized or recovered evidentiary property, property held for safekeeping, or found property shall be responsible for safeguarding the property until it is returned to the owner or placed in the custody of the Property Control Section. Any member who first comes into possession of any property shall retain such property in his/her possession until it is properly tagged and placed in the designated property locker or storage room, returned to its rightful owner, or turned over to another member. Care shall be taken to maintain the chain of custody for all evidence and property. Any property seized by an officer with or without a warrant shall be safely kept for as long as necessary for the purpose of being produced as evidence. Seized property held as evidence shall be returned to its rightful owner unless subject to lawful detention or ordered destroyed or otherwise disposed of by the court (Wis. Stat. § 950.04(1v)(s)). Where ownership can be established as to found property that has no apparent evidentiary value, excluding contraband, such property may be released to the owner without the need for booking. The property documentation must be completed to document the release of property not booked. Documentation of this can be accomplished by adding a narrative to their report.

802.3.1 PROPERTY BOOKING PROCEDURE

All property should be booked prior to the member going off-duty. If not booked prior to going off-duty, at minimum the property shall be secured in a manner that restricts access by others. Members booking property shall observe the following guidelines:

- A) All property is to be booked into the electronic property tracking database as soon as practicable, except as detailed in section 802.3. Each package or item, if not packaged, will be assigned a unique item number that will be associated with the incident number that item was collected as a part of.
- B) All fields in the electronic property tracking database should be filled out if the requested information is available.
- C) A property label matching the corresponding item in the electronic database shall be affixed to each item entered in the electronic database. There should only be one label for each item in the database.
- D) Property that is too large to be secured in a temporary locker shall be placed in a designated area in a manner to restrict unauthorized access to said property.
- E) A T.I.M.E system query shall be conducted on all firearms with serial numbers and should be conducted on all other items containing serial numbers to see if they are listed as stolen.

802.3.3 EXPLOSIVES

Officers who encounter a suspected explosive device shall promptly notify an on-duty supervisor or the duty command. The bomb squad will be called to handle explosive-

related incidents and will be responsible for the handling, storage, sampling and disposal of all suspected explosive devices.

Only explosives that are considered stable and safe, i.e., fireworks, road flares, ammunition, gun powder, etc., may be logged into property.

All such items shall be stored in proper containers and in an area designated for the storage of flammable materials. Any fireworks or signaling devices not retained as evidence will be disposed of properly.

802.3.4 EXCEPTIONAL HANDLING

Certain property items require a separate process. The following items shall be processed in the described manner:

- a. Any evidence collected which may contain biological samples, should be properly labeled as such.
- b. Property stained with bodily fluids, such as blood or semen, shall be air-dried in a secure location (e.g., locked drying cabinet) prior to processing.
- c. All cash shall be counted in the presence of another officer and both officers shall record said counting on their PVR.. Both officers shall also initial the printed currency label.
- d. All evidence collected by personnel processing a crime scene requiring specific storage requirements shall store said items in a manner consistent with the Wisconsin Department of Justice Physical Evidence Handbook guidelines.
- e. Items that are potential biohazards shall be appropriately packaged and marked to reduce the risk of exposure or contamination.

Village property, unless connected to a known criminal case, should be released directly to the appropriate Village department. No formal booking is required. In cases where no responsible person can be located, the property should be booked for safekeeping in the normal manner.

802.4 PACKAGING OF PROPERTY

All property should be packaged in compliance with Wisconsin Department of Justice Physical Evidence Handbook guidelines or standards set by this department.

Consider separately packaging any original container or packaging, including controlled substances packaging, to permit latent print or other evidence recovery if the facts of the case indicate additional evidence collection methods are desirable. All firearms shall be unloaded and rendered safe prior to packaging.

802.4.1 PACKAGING CONTAINER

Members shall package all property, except controlled substances, in a suitable container that is appropriate for its size. Sharp items, such as knives, shall be packaged in a manner that reduces the risk of the item causing injury to those who come in contact with it.

Syringe tubes should be used to package syringes and needles.

802.4.2 PACKAGING CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES

The officer seizing controlled substances or prescription medications shall retain such property in the officer's possession until it is properly weighed, packaged, tagged, and placed in the designated narcotics locker. Prior to packaging and if the quantity allows, a presumptive test should be made on suspected controlled substances as is necessary to support the most severe corresponding criminal charge per state statute. The test shall be conducted in the presence of another officer and the result of this test shall be included in the officer's report. In the case of prescription medications, an effort should be made to identify the medication and a pill count shall be conducted and verified by another officer in lieu of weighing the prescription medications.

Controlled substances shall not be packaged with other property.

The booking officer shall weigh the suspected controlled substance without the container in which it was seized. In those cases where it would be unsafe or impracticable to separate or remove the substance from its original container, the booking officer may weigh the substance with it in the original container. This weight shall be entered into the electronic property control system and noted in any applicable reports. When logging the weight, the booking officer shall also note whether the weight is with the original container or without.

After packaging and sealing the suspected controlled substance and its original container / packaging, the entire package will be weighed and the Gross Package Weight (GPW) will be written on the outside of the package, initialed, and dated by the packaging officer.

The GPW will be verified every time the package is checked in or out of the Property Control Section or prior to disposal or release. Any discrepancies shall be noted on the outside of the package with the new weight, officer's initials and badge number, and the date. Any change in weight should be immediately reported to a supervisor.

The booking officer should consider using a separate area, wearing personal protective equipment, utilizing the vent hood, having Narcan readily available and having an additional officer present as a safety officer, to reduce the likelihood of exposure and cross-contamination.

802.4.3 RIGHT OF REFUSAL

The property and evidence technician has the right to refuse any piece of property that is hazardous or that has not been properly documented or packaged. Should the property and evidence technician refuse an item of property, he/she shall notify the responsible member of the issue and request that corrective action be taken. If the responsible member does not make the proper corrections within a reasonable timeframe, the property and evidence technician shall notify the responsible member's supervisor of the issue.

802.5 RECORDING OF PROPERTY

Property shall be recorded using the current approved system.

802.6 PROPERTY CONTROL

Each time the property and evidence technician receives property or releases property to another person, he/she shall enter this information in the electronic property tracking database. Officers desiring property for court shall contact the property and evidence technician at least one day prior to the court day.

802.6.1 RESPONSIBILITIES OF OTHER PERSONNEL

Every time property is released or received, an appropriate entry shall be made in the electronic property tracking database to maintain the chain of custody. No property or evidence is to be released without first receiving authorization from the appropriate individual, i.e., the case officer, District Attorney's Office, Supervisor, etc.

Request for analysis of items other than controlled substances shall be submitted to the property and evidence technician. This request may be filled out anytime after booking of the property or evidence.

802.6.2 TRANSFER OF EVIDENCE TO CRIME LABORATORY

The transporting member will check the evidence out of property, indicating the date and time in the electronic property tracking database for laboratory analysis.

Any transfer of evidence to the crime laboratory requires:

- a. The name and contact information of the person submitting the evidence.
- b. Appropriate packaging, conveyance, and/or mailing of evidence to the laboratory.
- c. Necessary documentation accompanies evidence at time of transmittal.
- d. Adequate receipts and signatures to support chain of evidence.
- e. Who the lab results are to be forwarded to.


802.6.3 STATUS OF PROPERTY

Each person receiving property will make the appropriate entry to document the chain of custody. Temporary release of property to officers for investigative purposes, or for court, shall be noted in the electronic property tracking database stating the date, time and to whom it was released.

. Any member receiving property shall be responsible for such property until it is returned to the Property Control Section or released to another authorized person or entity.

The return of the property should be recorded in the electronic property tracking database, indicating date, time and the person who returned it.

802.6.4 AUTHORITY TO RELEASE PROPERTY

 The property and evidence technician shall not release any property without first receiving authorization from the appropriate individual, i.e., the case officer, District Attorney's Office, Supervisor, etc.

. The Investigation Section shall authorize the disposition or release of all evidence and property coming into the care and custody of the Department.

For property in custody of the Department for investigatory or prosecutorial purposes and owned by a victim or witness, a property and evidence technician shall, upon the request of the owner:

- a. Contact the prosecuting attorney and inquire if the property being held as evidence of a crime may be photographed and released to the owner.
- b. Return the property expeditiously, unless the property is contraband or required as evidence.

Upon the direction of a prosecuting attorney, property held as evidence of a crime may be photographed and released to the owner.

802.6.5 RELEASE OF PROPERTY


A reasonable attempt shall be made to identify the rightful owner of found or stolen property or evidence not needed for an investigation.

Members shall be mindful that property belonging to a crime victim shall be promptly released to the victim unless needed for evidence within 10 days of being taken unless the property is weapons, contraband or is otherwise excluded (Wis. Stat. § 950.04(1v)(s)).

With the exception of firearms and other property specifically regulated by statute, found property and property held for safekeeping shall be held for a period of up to 90 days in which the owner may come forth to claim said property.. During such period, property personnel shall attempt to contact the rightful owner by telephone and/or mail when sufficient identifying information is available. Property not held for any other purpose and not claimed within 30 days after notification (or receipt, if notification is not feasible) may be auctioned to the highest bidder at a properly published public auction (Wis. Stat. § 66.0139(2)). If such property is not sold at auction or otherwise lawfully claimed, it may thereafter be destroyed or donated. The final disposition of all such property shall be documented.

A property and evidence technician shall release the property to the owner or finder, upon valid identification and proper documentation presented by the owner or finder, for which an authorized release has been received. A signature of the person receiving the property shall be recorded on a receipt listing said property - except as noted in Sec. 802.3

802.6.6 DISPUTED CLAIMS TO PROPERTY

 Occasionally more than one party may claim an interest in property being held by the Department, and the legal rights of the parties cannot be clearly established. Such property shall not be released until one party has obtained a court order or otherwise establishes undisputed right to the property.

All parties should be advised that their claims are civil. In extreme situations, legal counsel for the Department may be asked to file an interpleader in court to resolve the disputed claim.

802.6.7 CONTROL OF CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES

The Property Control Section will be responsible for the storage, control, and destruction of all controlled substances coming into the custody of this department, including paraphernalia as described in Wis. Stat. § 961.571(1)(a).

802.6.8 RELEASE AND DISPOSAL OF FIREARMS

A firearm may not be released until it has been verified that the person receiving the weapon is not prohibited from receiving or possessing the weapon by 18 USC § 922(d) or Wis. Stat. § 968.20(1m).

The Department shall make best efforts for a period of 90 days after the seizure of an abandoned or stolen firearm to protect the firearm from harm and return it to the lawful owner. At the expiration of such period, the firearm or other deadly weapon may be processed for disposal in accordance with Wis. Stat. § 66.0139, Wis. Stat. § 165.81 and Wis. Stat. § 968.20(3)(b) and consistent with this policy

802.7 DISPOSITION OF PROPERTY

All property not held for evidence in a pending criminal investigation or proceeding, and held for 90 days or longer where the owner has not been located or fails to claim the property, may be disposed of in compliance with existing laws upon receipt of proper authorization for disposal (Wis. Stat. § 66.0139(2)).

If the owner is known, the Property and Evidence Custodian will notify the owner by certified mail at the owner's last known address. A 30-day waiting period will commence on the date the letter is mailed. If no response is received at the end of the 30-day period or the certified letter is returned to the department, the property may be disposed of accordingly.

Upon any release or sale of any property, the proper notation shall be made in the electronic property tracking database.. Proceeds from the sale of unclaimed property shall be distributed in accordance with any applicable state statutes.

802.7.1 EXCEPTIONAL DISPOSITIONS

The following types of property shall be destroyed or disposed of in the manner and at the time prescribed by law or by a court of competent jurisdiction:

- Weapons declared by law to be nuisances
- Animals, birds and equipment related to their care and containment that have been ordered forfeited by the court
- Counterfeiting equipment
- Gaming devices
- Obscene matter ordered to be destroyed by the court
- Altered vehicles or component parts
- Controlled substances
- Unclaimed, stolen or embezzled property
- Destructive devices
- Any property used in the commission of a crime
-

802.7.2 RETENTION OF BIOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

The property and evidence technician shall ensure that no biological evidence collected in a criminal investigation that resulted in a conviction, delinquency adjudication, or commitment under Wis. Stat. § 971.17 or Wis. Stat. § 980.06 held by the Department is destroyed prior to the discharge date of every person convicted, adjudicated, or committed unless (Wis. Stat. § 968.205):

- a. The property and evidence technician notifies by certified mail each person who remains in custody and their attorney of record or the state public defender of the intent to destroy the biological evidence unless a motion for testing of the evidence is filed or a written request for the retention of the evidence is received by the Department within 90 days of receipt of the notice.
- b. No person notified files a motion for testing of the evidence or submits a written request for retention of the evidence within 90 days of receipt of the notice.
- c. No other provision of law requires the Department to retain the evidence.

A record of all certified mail receipts shall be retained in the appropriate file. Any objection to, or motion regarding, the destruction of the biological evidence should be retained in the appropriate file and a copy forwarded to the Investigation Bureau supervisor, and the evidence retained until the discharge date of the person making the request unless the court orders destruction or transfer of the evidence or further order of the court (Wis. Stat. § 968.205).

802.7.3 RETENTION OF SEXUAL ASSAULT KITS

After a state crime laboratory processes a sexual assault kit and returns it to the Department's possession, the Department shall securely store the kit for a period of 50 years, until the expiration of the statute of limitations, or until the end of the convicted offender's term of imprisonment or probation, whichever period is longer (Wis. Stat. § 165.775; Wis. Admin. Code § JUS 20.05).

802.8 REPORT OF ABANDONED PROPERTY AND UNCLAIMED FUNDS

Abandoned property and unclaimed funds should be disposed off per any applicable state law and/or village ordinance.

802.9 INSPECTIONS OF THE Property Control Section

The Department requires that periodic and event-specific inspections, audits, and inventories be completed, and results documented and forwarded to the Chief of Police. Such inspections, audits, and inventories shall include but are not limited to

1.
 - a. The Investigation Division supervisor, or the authorized designee who oversees the property and evidence technician that performs the property and evidence control function, conducts an annual inspection intended to assess compliance with policies and procedures governing property and evidence management and control. Inspections must be conducted independent of any other required inspections or audits. While an inspection does not require an audit of property itself, a random audit of a small amount of property (10 items or less) can be included in an inspection.
 - b. An annual audit of the property and evidence conducted by the Investigation Division supervisor. The audit must be conducted independent of other

required audits or inspections. Its focus should be on high-risk items (e.g., currency, drugs, jewelry, firearms) but may be expanded to include other items. A minimum of 10% of the total inventory shall be sampled. At the direction of the Chief of Police, the sample items can be selected by the electronic property control system or by the chief.

- c. Random, unannounced inspections and/or audits are conducted at the discretion of the Chief of Police. In the event of a random audit, the size of the sample to be audited will be determined by the Chief of Police.
- d. A comprehensive (full) audit of property and evidence whenever:

The primary property and evidence technician responsible for property and evidence control is replaced for any reason.

Any of the members responsible for property control leaves the section or the department. A new property control member is assigned.

A new Chief of Police is appointed.

The audit should be conducted jointly by the new property and evidence technician / new supervisor, or new chief and another person designated by the Chief of Police.

e. The Chief of Police may order a specific inspection and/or audit of the department's property control section based on a substantial allegation of misconduct; in which the particulars of said allegation can be tied to any section of this policy. Should the Chief of Police be the target of or a subject of the allegation, the village administrator shall be notified of said complaint before any inspection or audit is conducted.

802.10 EVIDENCE HANDLING

Some types of evidence require additional considerations when processing.

802.10.1 FINGERPRINT EVIDENCE AND PROCESSING PROCEDURE

Wisconsin Department of Justice Physical Evidence Handbook guidelines should be observed when processing fingerprints (i.e., preserving, developing, collecting/lifting, labeling, packaging) as evidence.

802.10.2 DNA EVIDENCE PROCEDURE

Members should be mindful of certain precautions and responsibilities to potential sources of DNA evidence before entering any crime scene. Upon entering any crime scene, officers should:

- a. Wear protective clothing, gloves, masks or face shields, and glasses, as appropriate.
- b. Refrain from handling any items without wearing gloves.
 - 1. Gloves should be changed after handling each item.
 - 2. Double glove if desired. Members may change only top gloves after each item collected.
- c. Avoid touching any areas where DNA evidence may exist.
- d. Avoid talking, coughing, or sneezing on or near DNA evidence.

- e. Recognize possible DNA sources, protect evidence, and maintain a record of persons entering the scene.

DNA evidence shall be collected, transported, and stored in accordance with the Physical Evidence Handbook guidelines.

802.10.3 COMPUTER/DIGITAL EVIDENCE PROCEDURE

Members should conduct an initial assessment of the scene as part of their precautions and responsibilities to determine if computers and/or digital evidence will be part of the investigation. It may be necessary to gather information from the complainant or witnesses in order to assist in determining the value of the digital evidence.

If it is determined that the investigation will consist of computers and/or digital evidence, members shall ensure proper legal authority has been established for seizing and/or examining the devices before collecting, preserving, transporting, and storing should occur. Members should not overlook the availability of owner consent to seize or to search the computer and/or digital devices. The owner's consent should be accompanied by a signed Consent to Search form that specifies the items to be searched and content to be examined.

Collection, preservation, transportation, and storage of computers and/or digital evidence should be done in a manner that best preserves the integrity of the evidence.

Extraction and the initial analysis of digital evidence data should be completed only by specially trained digital evidence examiners. Computers and other digital devices may be submitted to the Wisconsin State Crime Laboratory or other law enforcement processing agencies that have examination capabilities and qualifications. Members shall follow the specific laboratory submission guidelines. Further analysis of the data for the purpose of determining evidentiary relevance may be conducted by other personnel.

Digital evidence examiners shall receive initial certification training, with periodic training to maintain proficiency, certifications, and enhancement of skills.

802.11 PRESCRIPTION DRUG DISPOSAL PROGRAM

The Department operates a prescription drug disposal program for collection, storage, and disposal of unused or expired prescription medications to reduce potential public health and safety concerns.

The Department shall place authorized secure disposal receptacles in the lobby clearly marked regarding their purpose, along with any restrictions or prohibitions, including warning not to place sharps (e.g., needles, syringes, lancets), liquids, or nuclear medicines inside the receptacles. All disposal receptacles should be under video surveillance and be designed to not be easily moved.

802.11.1 STORAGE PROCEDURES

Only the Chief of Police and any authorized designee should have access to the disposal receptacles. The Chief's designee will oversee the program and ensure that drug disposal receptacles are checked and emptied on a regular basis.

Two members, one being a supervisor shall access or empty the disposal box. The member removing items from the drug disposal receptacle will process and package the items as follows:

- a. Place contents in a leak-proof plastic bag before placing the plastic bag inside a cardboard container.
- b. Sign and date over the tape seal of the container.
- c. Weigh the container.
- d. Secure the container within the property room until disposal and destruction.
- e. Complete the log sheet to include the weights.

802.11.2 DISPOSAL PROCEDURES

The property and evidence technician will dispose of the prescription drugs in accordance with the State of Wisconsin's Drug Take Back program guidelines or a method approved by the Chief of Police.

Property Storage

The department uses multiple methods and physical locations to store property and evidence. The two main physical sites for our property storage are the police department located within the Little Chute Public Safety Building located at 200 W. McKinley Ave. and in a garage building owned by the Village of Combined Locks located at 405 Wallace St. Combined Locks, WI. 54113

The majority of our property, about 95%, is stored at the Combined Locks facility.

Historical Context

The department has been in its current facility since this building was built in 1983.

The overall building is shared with the Little Chute Fire Department. The current facility has evolved somewhat over the past 42 years, but our total space and square footage is limited with no ability for internal expansion.

Metro originally formed with the Village of Kimberly joining in 1995. In 2012, the Village of Combined Locks joined this law enforcement consortium.

With three villages comprising the police department, our activity significantly increased. With that increase, we realized a significant increase in the quantity of property that came

into our possession. All this property could no longer fit properly within the confines of the police department building.

When Combined Locks (CL) was part of the Metro, we were able to use part of their facility to store property. The current location was the most practical due to its size, physical layout, and accessibility. The garage bay was modified to include secure fencing, security cameras and locks to prevent unauthorized access. The facility also needed a fiber optic connection so that we could have secure internet access for our property control software program.

In 2017, Combined Locks left the consortium. CL allowed us to keep our property at their facility. In 2020, CL started charging us rent for the continued use of the property.

In July of this past year, I was notified by the CL Administrator, Raquel Shampoo-Giese, that they intended to terminate our lease agreement effective January 1, 2026.

With this information, it became clear that we had to find another site to store all our property.

Current Property Situation

Currently the department has about 4,110 pieces of physical property in our care and custody. The following is a breakdown of that property:

Evidence pieces = 3,951

Found Property/Safe Keeping pieces= 159

Total pieces of property = 4,110

Of that, we have the following:

11 – pieces are stored in the bike shed at the PD.

1 – car stored in our parking lot.

1 – car stored in the DPW yard.

All other pieces would be stored in CL.

Property Storage Facilities

As stated before, we have two main facilities for storing all our property – the police department building and CL facility. At the police department we also use an outside, detached shed to store confiscated property along with department property. I would note that the shed is not considered “secured” for purpose of storing evidentiary items.

The size of each of these areas is as follows:

CL evidence storage garage = 1,186 sq. feet

Metro evidence processing room in the basement is approx. 324 sq. feet

The shed is about 200 sq. feet. Only half (100 sq. feet) is used for non-dept. storage.

Total available storage area = 1,610 sq. feet.

As you can see, the CL facility comprises the vast majority, about 74% of all our storage space. Because of that, the loss of using this space poses a significant challenge to us.

There are times when we must process motor vehicles as evidence. This includes searching the vehicle and/or examining it for physical evidence and processing it for evidence such as DNA and fingerprints. This process needs to be done in a climate-controlled environment free from outside weather that may damage or diminish physical evidence.

When we do this, we use our current indoor garage where we typically keep our squad cars. We have three bays. Processing a vehicle for evidence can take several days or even weeks. We also have to store some vehicles long-term, and this has a negative impact on our indoor parking situation.

Facility and Storage Issues

Having multiple facilities and/or locations to store property and evidence poses some unique challenges.

Those challenges are:

- Maintenance of separate facilities
- Cost associated with separate facilities (climate control, electricity, etc.)
- Travel time and costs going to and from separate facilities.
- Facility security issues
- Logistics of securely moving property between separate facilities

Available Space

The other and more prominent issue is that of available space. We currently have adequate room for just what we have. But as time goes on, we will surely require more space.

Staff believe that we could use a facility or facilities that give us a combined total of about 4,000 sq. feet. This would allow for current storage needs and give us room for growth into the next few decades. This equates to a 148% increase in storage space capacity. One of the reasons for such a noticeable increase is that requirement of storing motor vehicles from time to time. The area of the average motor vehicle is about 100 sq. feet. To include space around the vehicle to move and have access, that size increases to about 240 sq. feet.

The facility should have enough “reserve” space to account for a minimum of one year of evidence. Sometimes we take possession of very large items including vehicles and furniture. Moving these items and storing them long-term is quite a logistical challenge. Having multiple garage bays in a new facility would not only accommodate these items but would make moving them safer and easier.

Property and evidence storage facilities will need to be climate controlled and protected from the outside elements. The storage of certain chemicals and illegal drugs also requires a proper air ventilation system.

Internet access is needed for connection to our software systems and video security systems.

In addition to the actual storage space, property processing / packaging area is needed.

The facility itself needs to be secured with restricted access, but the inside may require multiple layers of physical security and access based on the type of property being stored.

Access and Handling of Property

Per policy and best practices, the access to property, mostly evidence is restricted to as few people as possible.

Our department has a limited number of staff who have access to property beyond the handling from the officer who initially received the property. These staff members also have advanced training and experience in handling property and evidence. When property has to be moved from one facility to another, it is only these select staff that can do this.

This procedure is in place to maintain the security and integrity of the property that is in our possession.

Facility Security

Exterior Security

The facility where property and evidence are stored needs to be protected from theft, tampering and damage.

A secure building that protects property from illegal intrusion and the elements is necessary. Our current facilities are secure with varying layers of security.

Facility security should include:

- A physical design for both the land and improvements that include the principles of CPTED – Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design...

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) is a multidisciplinary approach to reducing crime and fear by changing the look, feel, and layout of places. The goal of CPTED is to improve quality of life and build a sense of community.

Some key concepts of CPTED include:

- **Natural surveillance**

Making it easier to see what's going on in an area by using lighting, landscaping, and window placement. This makes it harder for criminals to hide and increases the likelihood that they'll be noticed.

- **Natural access control**

Controlling access to potential targets by using physical and mechanical means, such as fencing, lighting, landscaping, and entrances and exits. This makes it harder for criminals to access their targets and increases the risk they'll perceive.

- **Territorial reinforcement**

Creating a sense of ownership in a space by using physical design to define property lines and differentiate between public and private areas. This can be done through landscaping, lighting, signage, and fences.

- **Target hardening**

Making it more difficult for criminals to break into buildings by using security features like alarms, cameras, strong locks, and reinforced doors and windows.

Source: AI Overview

Interior Security

Interior security is another layer of security that adds to the overall security of the facility and its contents. Interior security should include:

- Secure doors, windows, and passageways.
- Locking mechanisms at control points
- Adequate lighting
- Fire alarms and fire suppression systems
- Secure storage containers
- Intrusion alarms / motion detectors
- Video surveillance
- Legal notices and signage

Systems Security

Systems security should include the following:

- Relevant policies and procedures
- Staff vetting and training
- System audits
- IT security
- Access accountability
- Best practices

In summary, the proper handling of property and evidence requires purpose-built facilities, proper processes and a high level of security to ensure the storage and integrity of said property.

Current Challenges

The department faces two challenges that affect our ability to safely and properly handle and store property and evidence. Those are:

- Not enough physical storage space
- Elimination of a significant portion of our current storage space.

Space Needs

The department currently has just enough space for all the property that we currently have. We do not have enough room for future growth and needs. Currently facilities do not allow for the allocation of space just for this purpose.

Reduction of Storage Space

The elimination of our current storage space capacity due to the termination of our lease with the Village of Combined Locks is the most critical issue that we currently face. As stated before, about 74% of our property and evidence are stored inside that facility. We have a short amount of time to adequately relocate about 3,041 pieces of property and evidence.

An assessment of our facility at the police department would not allow for the efficient and proper storage of all this property without making significant changes. Rooms that are currently used for staff operations would have to be filled with property and dedicated to that use only. Funds would have to be allocated and spent for some remodeling and physical security upgrades to those areas of the building. This would also leave our staff without adequate working spaces.

The 2008 space needs study for the Little Chute Public Safety Building was based on the concept of the fire department vacating the building and the police department assuming all the facility space. That study proposed that all property would be stored in various rooms or areas within the basement. Since that study, the department has expanded from a personnel and operations standpoint. These basement rooms are currently being used for staff work and training. Eliminating these work areas would displace about 20 employees from their work areas. The potentially available space within the current fire department would not adequately or efficiently accommodate these staff.

The basement space is broken down as follows:

- Training and meeting room: 550 sq. feet
- Patrol Officers work room: 310 sq. feet
- Investigators' work room: 170 sq. feet.

Total basement area referenced: 1,030 sq. feet.

The area in the basement that is *potentially* available for storage falls short of the CL storage facility by 156 sq. feet. Our basement does not allow for the storage of larger items such as motor vehicles, furniture, and appliances.

In addition to displacing staff and requiring remodeling, this “band-aid” fix would not consider room for future growth needs. The plan in this antiquated study assumes that the fire department is vacating the facility. While it is the plan of the village to build a new fire station facility, construction would not be completed in time for our deadline to have all property removed from the CL facility.

Potential Solutions

The department has analyzed our current situation and has identified some solutions to our property and evidence storage issues.

The most obvious solution is that we need a new storage space to accommodate all the property that will have to be removed from the CL facility by the end of this year.

As mentioned above, it does not appear to be a feasible option to store all this property within our current police department facility. Not can we realistically expect to store all this property when the fire department vacates their portion of the building without having a negative impact on our operations.

Staff have concluded that we have but two options that will adequately meet our needs and within the timeframe we have been given:

1. Find another offsite location to store the displaced property.
2. Build a facility on our current facility land.

Offsite Facility Option

We have looked at the feasibility of finding another location that meets our physical and security needs. Any rental facility would have to have adequate space and security measures. This would require significant funding. Most commercial storage facilities are not target hardened nor do they have adequate alarm systems or video surveillance. Most don't have electricity or internet access either. The lack of a controlled climate or ventilation via an HVAC system poses a problem too.

Financially, renting any commercial building would certainly cost more than what the Village of Combined Locks is currently charging us. In 2024 we paid about \$9,500.00 for the year. In 2025 there is a 3% increase. Current figures for storage rental space in the U.S. would put us at around \$17,000.00 per year, for the area that we are leasing from CL.

Other area departments that have a sizable storage area also have limited space and are not inclined to share with us.

The Village of Kimbelry offered some storage space that is located within the basement of their village complex. In looking this over, we realized the following:

- Kimberley would have to purge a lot of their own property
- Extensive remodeling would be needed to accommodate and secure our property
- The storage areas would be fragmented
- Limited room for future needs
- Remodeling would cause property code issues with ingress and egress
- This would be another “band aid” fix

The Little Chute Public Works Department has limited space on the mezzanine in the MSB. A site visit a few years ago revealed that this space would only hold a fraction of our property. It would also prohibit the DPW from using their own space in the future.

In summary, renting, leasing or borrowing space from a commercial source or another government department would be costly and not meet our long-term needs.

Onsite Facility Option

We have considered the idea of having semi-permanent shipping containers placed in our parking lot. This option would require multiple containers that would take up a sizable portion of our parking lot. In addition to this, the following issues were identified:

- Do not have electricity or HVAC for heating/cooling
- Not as secure as a dedicated facility
- Costly
- Unsightly
- Potentially not within property code
- Would only address a portion of the property needing secure storage

Staff research shows that the most feasible and realistic option to meet our current and future needs would be the construction of a dedicated property storage facility on our current land parcel.

This building could be attached to the current facility or be a separate, detached building.

We have conducted some preliminary research with the assistance of a local planning and construction firm. Their research showed the following:

- Design and construction of a 4,000 sq, foot building could be accommodated on our current site
- The building could be attached to the current building, be separate or be separate with an enclosed walkway

Building design would include dry storage area, garage area with multiple garage doors and an office area for administrative duties related to property and evidence processing. The building would have basic security requirements and controlled climate areas facilitated by an HVAC system. This building would be minimalistic in construction materials with function taking precedent over fashion or aesthetics.

Depending on final plans and materials, cost could range from \$500,000 to one million dollars. This information was obtained through discussions with a local building construction firm. This firm met on-site with our staff and toured our facility and grounds. They developed multiple plans and options based on operational and facility needs.

The advantage of this option is:

- We would have a permanent facility that meets our current and future storage needs.
- We would have a facility that has several garage bays for processing and storage of vehicles and larger items without impacting on our fleet parking.
- We would have a facility that has a proper, non-water fire suppression system and a decontamination station for employees who are exposed to harmful materials.
- We would own the facility instead of renting or leasing
- Per square foot, it is more cost efficient vs. renting or leasing
- Logistically, this flows better for our staff and operations. We do not have to travel back and forth with property between separate facilities
- Returning property to people would be centralized at the police department. This would not require staff to retrieve it from an off-site location and bring it back to Metro.

Next Steps

Space Needs Study

The next logical step in this process would be to conduct an official space needs study to do the following:

- Identify our current space needs
- Identify our future space needs
- Identify facility challenges
- Identify potential solutions
- Validate or discredit staff opinions

Construction?

If space needs study validates our concerns and our solution, we will want to proceed with the process of hiring an organization for design and construction. An RFP process would be the first step.

Transition

If a new facility is built (or an alternative plan is identified, we would need to start the process of relocating all the property from the CL facility. This will be a complex endeavor that poses several challenges...

- All property must be handled and moved in accordance with department policy and the rules of evidence.
- We will have limited staff to do this. We will not have personnel other than those who are currently authorized to handle evidence to participate in this process. This would most like be the two investigators who are currently assigned to property control and management.
- All property will have to be properly logged into the property control software program each time it is handled and moved. Locations will have to be updated.

With almost four thousand pieces of property needing to be moved and with only two people to do it, this process may take a few months to accomplish. I cannot take these staff away from their daily duties to be dedicated just to this property project.

Summary

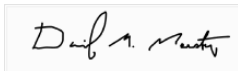
The department is currently facing a property and evidence storage dilemma. The facility that we are currently leasing to store almost 4,000 items will no longer be available to us as of January 1st, 2026. We have less than a year to find a realistic and feasible storage facility solution and be able to relocate all that property within the time given to us.

The ideal solution is to build a new facility on the current parcel that the police department is located on. A new facility should be built big enough to accommodate our current needs and our future growth needs.

Conducting a *space needs study* is the next logical step in this process. This study should validate our current concerns and show us what solutions are available to us.

With less than a year to identify and implement a solution, we are requesting the village boards approve the space needs study as soon as possible.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Daniel M. Meister", enclosed within a light gray rectangular border.

Daniel M. Meister
Chief of Police