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IAPE Monthly Newsletter & Updates

August 2023



Ask Joe... Each month, IAPE's primary instructor and Executive Director, Joe Latta, answers one of your questions pertaining to your everyday property and evidence room questions.

To submit a question for Joe, [Contact Us](#)

Dear Joe,

Much to my delight, I was just advised our department is moving forward with the construction of a new facility and was asked to look at the plans. After a quick first time look, I found there was no firearm room or cage to store firearms. When I ask where we are going to store guns, I was told that we were getting high density shelves (shelves on tracks). When I asked about security it was explained to me that the carriages that all the shelves can be locked down. At that time, I voiced my opinion about not having a gun room or cage to which my captain was open and asked for any ideas.

Joe... any thoughts on how you would do it?

Regards,
D. Wright

Dear D. Wright

Interesting that you ask, approximately 15 years ago, I had the opportunity to provide the Elk Grove Police Department, in California, some design assistance as they were moving into another facility. My goal was to provide sufficient secure space for firearms and drugs for the present and projecting into the future.

This photograph was taken showing the amount of space available after seven years. The room still has an efficient use of space, and items are easy to find as a result of the evidence custodians using good purging protocols!

Facts about the room:

Room is 8'6" x 19', or 160 sq. ft.

Left side of room – has space for 495 handguns.

Right side of room – could also accommodate



another 495 if all of the shelves were used for firearms. In the case of this department, they used the right side for storage of drug envelopes as seen in the blue bins. The shelves accommodate three blue bins, or drawers, per shelf.

The back wall has sufficient space for 144 long guns.

Shelves are all at least 51" deep to accommodate the long gun boxes. In this photo the shelves were 48" deep or 3" less than the boxes. Of concern to me was having shelves where container (Long gun boxes) was not hanging off the front as the boxes they were using were 50" in long. Solution, place a three inch spacer between.



In the back of the shelf and the wall, which allows a more professional look. Second option purchase 48" boxes as they come in different sizes. Additionally, always store the guns on the shelf on their spine as shown and make sure the shelves are adjustable vertically.

In the case of Elk Grove Police Department, the room was designed for both gun and drugs. The present configuration of 14 shelves of drugs on the rise side with 3 drawers for each shelf, has the capacity to store about 50 envelopes each for a total of approximately 2,100 envelopes. If the entire room was dedicated to drugs, its capacity would be well over 10,000 packages – in less than 160 square feet. That's efficient! Our special thanks to Supervisor Kevin Corcoran for having such a great operation.

Thank you,
Joe Latta
Executive Director
International Association for Property and Evidence

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2024

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Headlines

Dallas police employee shot in arm after accidental discharge in property room

July 25, 2023

A Dallas police employee was shot in the arm Tuesday after a gun accidentally discharged in the property room, the department confirmed. The employee, who was not named by police, was processing evidence when the shooting occurred, a police spokeswoman said. They were hospitalized with injuries that weren't considered life threatening, police said.

Police spokespeople declined to clarify whether the employee fired the shot or was shot by another person.

Dallas police Chief Eddie García said in a memo sent internally to department employees Tuesday afternoon that the weapon was "not rendered safe." He said employees must ensure all weapons are rendered safe before they're submitted to the property room, and outlined steps for securing pistols, revolvers and rifles.

"We are lucky the injury was not more serious, and the employee will recover," García said in the memo obtained by The Dallas Morning News.

"Safety is paramount, not only for the people we serve, but for all members of our DPD family." Dallas police are investigating. The department declined to provide additional details.

Read Entire Story

COMMENTARY:

We don't know all the facts surrounding this case as there has not been any additional press releases. What we do know is that when the question of firearms training is discussed in our live class that more often than not civilian employee rarely have received any type of firearms safety training. It is imperative that management provide annual training in the handling of firearms from the agency's firearms officer to mitigate any accidents. Secondly, if there is an accident such as the one described above, could the department be held civilly liable for not providing such training?

The IAPE Profession Standards state:

Standard 1.8. Training

Reasoning document:

Basic safety training should include, but is not limited to:

- • Firearms handling and safety.
- 11.4. SUBMISSION INTO PROPERTY ROOM
- 11.4.1. Firearms will be submitted to the Property Room in accordance with the agency's Packaging Manual or packaging instructions.
- 11.4.2. Any time a firearm is handled, it will be handled as if it were loaded.
- 11.4.3. Firearms will be submitted in an unloaded and safe condition.
- 11.4.3.1. Any exceptions will be defined in writing.
- 11.4.4. Firearms should be made safe and unable to fire when submitted to the Property Room. 11.4.4.1. A safety appliance (zip tie, chamber flag, safety block, etc.) should be placed in or through the action of a firearm prior to submission into the Property Room.

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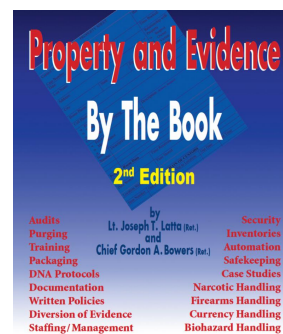
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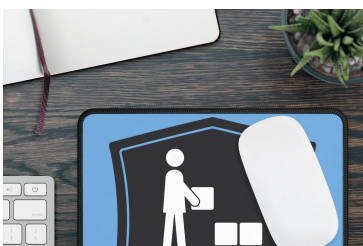
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