

SHARE:

[Join Our Email List](#)

IAPE Monthly Newsletter & Updates

November 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,

I'm, relatively new to the property room which was sorta broken when I took over. After attending the IAPE class, I found there are several things we weren't doing or weren't doing right!

Historically, firearms are submitted to the property room in a sealed box and I can't check either the serial(s) number or loaded status of any guns in a gun box. My Lieutenant says that if we open the box, we become a part of the chain of custody! I would appreciate any ideas on how to get past this first hurdle.

Thanks,
[Stymied](#)

Dear Stymied,

If you can diplomatically advise your Lieutenant or let him read my reply this may help with your concern.

Once the gun is submitted to the Property Room, you become a part of the Chain of Custody whether it is in a box or not! If a long gun comes into your property room and not in a box and you store it on the shelf, is it not the same thing?



After teaching over 900 evidence classes over the last 30 years, I have found most evidence custodians report they routinely find firearms in the inventory where the serial numbers don't match the property record or case report. Often it is at the time of release or destruction this discrepancy is found.

It is understandable that serial numbers get documented incorrectly. However, doesn't it make sense to find the mistake the day after submission, instead of the day of destruction or release?

The worst-case scenario is for "the gun in the sealed gun box" not to be inspected and validate the serial number from the gun for its stolen status against the property record or case report. Need to provide a second set of eyes to the process. If there had been an arrest of a person for a firearm possession charge and the more serious not be charged as no one knew the gun was stolen,

because the serial number was improperly run. The same goes for the defendant being charged for a misdemeanor versus a felony if the gun was stolen.

Possible solutions for checking the stolen status of the firearm to ensure the weapon was property documented:

Regardless of who runs the gun for it's stolen status during the submission process, a copy or screen dump be printed out showing the gun not to be stolen and attached to the gun box. When the property officer received the gun they have the ability to compare what was run against the gun itself.

Second option is to re-run the firearms upon entry into the property room.

When it comes to checking the loaded status of a firearms it is imperative the loaded status be checked. The news headlines are replete with stories of accidental discharges in the property room.

As a part of this discussion, you may want to provide the Lieutenant with a copy of our professional standards as outline below.

IAPE Professional Standards 11.3.

FIREARMS – RECEIPT INTO PROPERTY ROOM (SAFETY)

Firearms received in the Property Room will be checked for proper packaging, documentation, labeling, initials, dates and times.

Firearms received in the Property Room will be checked for loaded status.

Firearms received in the Property Room will have the serial number checked for correctness and accuracy.

Any exceptions will be defined in policy.

IAPE Professional Standards 11.3. (Reasoning Document)

Reasoning: To ensure that all firearms evidence is submitted to the Property Room in a manner that meets all safety needs, it is imperative that all submissions meet the protocols of the agency's Packaging Manual or other packaging directives. The listed topics need to be closely adhered to when submitted.

Loaded Status:

Property room history is abundant with stories of firearms accidentally discharging in the confines of the Property Room. One easy method to eliminate this type of accident is the use of nylon wire ties or safety ties through the action or cylinder when feasible.

The tie should not be inserted through the barrel as it may alter the barrel markings. Any proposed policy to this effect should be reviewed by the Crime Lab in use to satisfy any forensic objections or concerns.

Serial Numbers:

All too frequently, firearms are found to be loaded during a release to the owner and/or during the destruction process where the serial numbers should be re-run. In many cases, the serial number if run incorrectly at time of submission could later be determined to be stolen due to the improper entry. Identifying the firearm early in its life cycle may add additional charges to the person in possession at time of arrest. Processes need to be in place to ensure the numbers were run correctly before storage.

The booking officer should cause the firearm to be queried through NCIC and any state databases to determine the status and history, if known. Making the query upon submission may identify the firearms as stolen and can possibly link the possessor to another crime.

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

Training

*Celebrating our 30th Anniversary with you by hosting 30
 classes
 across the country in 2023!*

World Class Training in “Best-Practices” For Evidence & Property Room Management

We offer dozens of classes per year across the U.S. and Canada, taught by current and former law enforcement officials with extensive real-world experience in management of property and evidence. This two-day course is ideal for those responsible for, or actively involved in, the operation, supervision or management of a Property and Evidence Unit. All training topics address best business practices and professional standards.

Registration to any 2-Day class now includes the digital download of
"Property and Evidence By The Book" 2nd Edition.

Evidence Management Training Classes

2023 2-Day Evidence Management Classes

November
 Stillwater, Minnesota

For More Registration Information

2024 1-Day Advanced Evidence Management Classes (Formerly Supervisor Classes)

Anaheim, California
 St. John County, Florida
 Sacramento, California
 Humble, Texas

2024 2-Day Evidence Management Classes

January
 Anaheim, California
February
 Las Vegas, Nevada
 St. John County, Florida
March
 Lansing, Michigan
 Sacramento, California
 Tucson, Arizona
 Hutto, Texas
April
 Town of Cary, North Carolina
 Kansas City, Missouri
 Salem, Oregon
 Lancaster, Ohio
May
 Commerce City, Colorado

Union Gap, Washington
Commerce City, Colorado

Allegheny County, Pennsylvania
White County, Illinois

June

Hurst, Texas

August

Indianapolis, Indiana

Humble, Texas

September

Union Gap, Washington

Overland Park, Kansas

October

Wisconsin

Interested in Hosting a Class?

[email us](#)

More Coming in 2024!

Need Training Right Now? IAPE also offers ONLINE TRAINING



ONLINE FULL CLASS OPTION:

The Full online course class option is a great choice if you want much of the same training as the Live classes but without the travel and time away from the department. The IAPE Property and Evidence Management video Course is approximately 14 hours in length and was prepared by Law Enforcement Personnel for Law Enforcement Personnel. Completion of the course meets the training requirements for becoming a Certified Property and Evidence Specialist (CPES).

**Registration to any 2-Day class now includes the digital download of "Property and Evidence By The Book" 2nd Edition.*

Headlines:

A state trooper killed himself Friday in despair over botching a gun check on a man who later allegedly took part in a deadly bank robbery.

Trooper Mark Zach committed suicide a day after three men stormed into a local branch of U.S. Bank and fatally shot four bank employees and one customer.

Zach had stopped one of the suspected gunmen, Erick Fernando Vela, on a traffic violation last week. At that time, he arrested Vela for carrying a concealed weapon. But when he entered the gun's serial number into a police computer, Zach transposed two digits.

Had he entered the correct numbers, he would have learned that the gun was stolen and Vela would have been charged with a more serious offense that might have kept him in jail longer. As it was, Vela was able to post bond after just a few hours in custody.

After Vela was arrested in connection with Thursday's holdup, friends said

Zach was devastated. He killed himself with his service revolver in a field outside Norfolk at lunchtime on a gorgeous fall day.

Zach, 35, left behind his wife and six young children and stepchildren. Four of the victims of the bank robbery also left behind children. The fifth had married last month.

"And so, tragedy compounds tragedy," Gov. Mike Johanns said. He was driving to visit the trooper's widow. To sit with her. To pray with her. "There's not much more we can do," he said.

Authorities were quick to note that even if Zach had flagged the stolen weapon, Vela might still have been able to post bond quickly. To assume that he would have remained in jail longer--or that the bank robbery would have been foiled--is "pure speculation," said Terri Teuber, a spokeswoman for the Nebraska State Patrol.

The weapon Vela was allegedly concealing when Zach stopped him remains locked up in an evidence room. It was not used in the bank robbery.

"Mark, being the trooper he is, felt he had done something wrong, and that's just not the case," the governor said.

Zach was a 12-year veteran of the patrol force; he also served on his union board. "An outstanding trooper," said Johanns, who had met with him earlier this month on union issues.

News of Zach's suicide hit hard after an exhausting, emotional day of disclosures about the robbery.

Read Entire Story

DPD Property Room Shooting

July 25, 2023

A DPD property room shooting required officers to respond to their own facility for a firearm discharge.

The **Dallas Police Department** is investigating the accidental discharge of a firearm at the Dallas Police Property Room. The property room is located on Baylor Street just south of Deep Ellum. An employee was shot in the arm while processing evidence at that location around 8:30AM this morning.

Dallas Police were called to the location with Dallas Fire Rescue. The employee was taken to Baylor Hospital with non-life threatening injuries. Dallas Police could not confirm if the employee shot was a sworn officer or civilian.

[Read Entire Story](#)

Advertisers



Take the cuffs off your agency

A user-configurable, no-code software platform that empowers public safety agencies to create unlimited applications to efficiently manage their mission-critical processes.

Resources

Got a Job? Need a Job?

IAPE is delighted to announce that we have a new section for posting a job announcement or checking job opportunities.

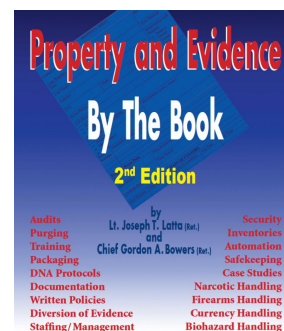
[Available Job Opportunities](#)

[Post Job Opening](#)

Become a Certified Evidence Specialist

Along with the IAPE's extensive evidence training courses, the IAPE offers our members the opportunity to become Certified Property and Evidence Specialists.

[Learn More](#)



[Buy Now](#)

Have you stopped by the [ShopIAPE](#) store lately?

Check out some of our new products and save 25% using code "KRAPOLA"





IAPE Justice Desk Mat

[Buy Now](#)



Kween of Krapola Unisex Tri-Blend 3/4 Raglan Tee

[Buy Now](#)



Keeper of Krapola Unisex Heavy Blend™ Hooded Sweatshirt

[Buy Now](#)



IAPE Mug

[Buy Now](#)

IAPE | www.IAPE.org | 800-449-4273

