



Cumberland County
Office of the District Attorney

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PRESS CONFERENCE STATEMENT

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VACUUM METAL DEPOSITION (VMD) INSTRUMENT

Welcome everyone to the Cumberland County District Attorney's Office new Forensic Laboratory. We are currently in the process of relocating from our old location at the old Cumberland County Prison to this much more expansive facility on Ritner Highway. Joining me here today are Joe Blackburn, Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Chiefs of Police Association and Michael Pennington, Director of Criminal Justice Systems Improvements from the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency.

We began the Cumberland County Forensic Laboratory in the late 1990's with Eric Radnovich as our Forensic Director. Beginning modestly with the Central Processing initiative, the laboratory soon moved forward in the chemistry field with a Gas Chromatography-Mass Spectrometry. In 2002, the lab began its first crime scene processing and toxicology testing for blood

serum and plasma. We were one of the first laboratories to initiate rapid DNA testing. At the current time, we are anticipating that our laboratory will be fully accredited as a forensic laboratory in the fall. This will make Cumberland County's Forensic Laboratory only the fourth such laboratory in the state to be accredited behind the Pennsylvania State Police, Philadelphia and Pittsburgh.

Given a generous grant from the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency, we are here today to announce the acquisition of a Vacuum Metal Deposition instrument which will greatly enhance our ability to process latent evidence.

VMD is a highly technical physical process of coating evidence with a very thin metal film under a high vacuum. Metals such as gold, zinc, silver, and others, are use to coat the substrate of the evidence. The result is a reverse development latent print. Since the process coats the substrate of the evidence and not the latent print, it does not interfere with collection of samples being submitted for DNA analysis.

Vacuum metallic deposition is the optimal technique for a wide-range of evidence including flexible plastic packaging, fabrics, glossy paper, thermal paper, currency, wood, and other materials which cannot normally be processed for latents. Our VMD instrument is only one of two currently located in

Pennsylvania, and only one of fourteen in the entire United States.

*** Comments from guests ***

The staff will now conduct a live demonstration of the instrument, along with previously processed examples of evidence treated in the VMD.