



Idaho State Police

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Colonel Kedrick R. Wills
Director

Brad Little
Governor

To: County Prosecutor
From: Matthew Gamette, ISP Forensic Services Laboratory System Director
Subject: **Pocatello FT-IR Maintenance**
Date: February 10, 2020

In an abundance of caution, Idaho State Police Forensic Services (ISPFS) is notifying you of maintenance on the FT-IR instrument in the Pocatello laboratory. While we believe all the testing on this instrument was performed within specifications, and case results are correct, we are offering agencies the opportunity to have their case/samples retested on the GC/MS instrument if they desire.

On November 1, 2019, the manufacturer's service technician performed preventative maintenance on the Pocatello lab FT-IR instrument. The service technician recommended as part of preventative maintenance to replace the Attenuated Total Reflectance Diamond (hereafter referred to as the "diamond window") on the instrument. The service technician ordered the part, and the lab staff replaced the diamond window. After the replacement, a performance verification was performed on the instrument and all verification specifications passed. The FT-IR was placed back into service on 11/5/2019. The required monthly performance verification was performed on 12/2/2019 and again everything passed specifications. On 12/30/2019, a crack in the new diamond window was detected a few days before the monthly performance verification for January was due to be performed. The instrument was taken out of service, a new diamond window was installed, and a performance verification was performed on 1/2/2020. Again, after the diamond window was replaced, the instrument passed all verification specifications and was returned to service. On 1/10/2020, a crack in the newly replaced diamond was detected, and the instrument was again removed from service. ISPFS is investigating why cracks have been discovered in these two diamond windows, and has taken the Pocatello lab FT-IR instrument out of service indefinitely until the investigation is complete and any root cause(s) have been addressed.

While spectral analysis by the analyst and technical reviewer and appropriate corresponding presumptive results allow ISPFS to be confident in the results we issued in cases run during this time interval, we are providing you with all cases in your county run by that Pocatello FT-IR instrument for December 2019 and early January 2020. Again, we are doing this in an abundance of caution. Those cases are attached to this communication.

Again, while we are willing to retest any of these cases (where evidence remains) on GC/MS, we have no reason to suspect the resulting conclusion will change.

ISPFS is committed to the highest level of quality operations. This issue will be thoroughly investigated to ensure that the data produced by the laboratory supports conclusions rendered.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at 208-608-2301 or matthew.gamette@isp.idaho.gov if you have any questions.

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