

MITCHELL POLICE DIVISION

CHAPTER 33

PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

PURPOSE: The property management system is designed to provide for the management and control of found, recovered, and evidentiary property in the custody of the Division. In order to maintain the credibility of the property management system, strict safeguards must be adhered to by personnel responsible for this function.

33.1 PROPERTY CONTROL REGULATED

- A. The Investigators are accountable for all property received or stored in the evidence room. This shall include found, recovered and evidentiary property that is placed in the evidence room.
- B. All property held by the Division shall be listed on a Property and Evidence Control Sheet and each piece of property will be labeled with a tan or blue evidence/Property Tag. This includes, but is not limited to, the following items:
 - 1. Found property (Blue Tag)
 - 2. Property held for safekeeping (Blue Tag)
- C. Valuable property must be secured in an evidence room.
- D. The property and Evidence Control Sheet must be filled out and placed with the item in the evidence room.

33.2 PHYSICAL SECURITY OF STORED PROPERTY

The Lieutenant shall be responsible to ensure that all property stored by the Division shall be maintained in designated, secure areas. However, property that is not evidence or has little monetary value will be placed in the property cabinet in the property room. After a court order to release evidence has been obtained and/or after 60 days has passed since property owners have been sent a letter via regular U A mail to their last known address advising them that they may pick up their property, such property may be destroyed or declared surplus property. Such property may be placed into the property cabinet in the property room. This will allow property to be released anytime of the day or night, including weekends.

33.3 EVIDENCE/PROPERTY STORAGE AREA ACCESS LIMITED

Access to the Evidence/Property Room will be restricted to authorized personnel only. Authorization for access will be determined by the Chief of Public Safety or his designee. At no time will anyone, other than evidence personnel, be allowed to enter or remain in the Evidence/Property Room without Evidence personnel present.

33.4 STORAGE OF SPECIAL PROPERTY

- A. Items requiring additional protection, such as money, precious metals, jewelry, gem stones, weapons, narcotics, and dangerous drugs shall be stored in a separate, locked, secure area located within the Evidence/Property storage area.

- B. Large amounts of money should be logged on the Property and Evidence Control Sheet by denomination and serial number. The copy machine can be used and copies of currency shall be placed in a separate sack and tagged and recorded under a separate item number on the Property and Evidence Control Sheet.
 - 1. Money is to be placed in a sack, stapled and sealed with tamper-proof evidence tape. The employee shall write his initials, half on the seal and half on the sack.

 - 2. Large amounts of money will be counted by two Evidence Section employees. Both employees will count the money at the same time and must initial the evidence card together.

- C. Firearms Property and Evidence Precautions
 - 1. All firearms brought into Property shall be unloaded and have the action open.
 - a. Exceptions: When a firearm is loaded and unloading would destroy valuable physical evidence, the weapon may be placed into Evidence/Property under the following conditions:
 - (1) All safety devices must be engaged

 - (2) A warning sticker indicating "Loaded Firearm" will be placed by the officer on the inside door of the evidence locker when putting a loaded firearm into evidence. The evidence tag must also be conspicuously labeled, in bold

print, that the weapon is loaded and is evidence.

D. Explosives, Property and Evidence Precautions

1. Explosives or suspected explosives shall never be stored within the confines of any Division vehicle or building.
2. Ordinary fireworks are not considered explosives.
3. Fireworks held as evidence are to be photographed, then destroyed, rather than being physically placed in the Evidence/Property room.
4. Explosives held as evidence are to be seized and stored or photographed by the direction of the Evidence personnel.

E. Open Liquid Property and Evidence Precautions

1. Toxic or explosive liquids will not be stored in open containers or be stored in the building.
2. These liquids will be stored at the Street Division.
3. These items will be marked with an evidence tag with copies placed in evidence lockers.

F. Bicycles are to be handled as any other found/recovered property. A Property and Evidence Control Sheet will be completed, the bicycle tagged and placed in the bike storage room of the Mitchell Police Division.

33.5 REFRIGERATED STORAGE IS AVAILABLE

- A. The policy of the Mitchell Police Division is that a secure refrigerated storage shall be available for those items taken into evidence that are perishable in nature.
- B. A refrigerator will be located in the Evidence/Property room of the Mitchell Police Division. This shall be utilized for the storage of those items requiring refrigeration.

33.6 DISPOSAL OF PROPERTY

- A. When authorized, and legal requirements have been satisfied for issuing final

disposition of evidence, or destruction there of, the Evidence shall be released to the owner, destroyed, or otherwise disposed of per court order.

- B. Property disposition will be logged on the Property/Evidence Control Sheet.

33.7 COURT DATE WITH EVIDENCE

- A. When an employee takes evidence to be used in court and that evidence is held by the court as a States Exhibit, it shall be the Clerk of Courts responsibility to properly dispose of the evidence/property.

33.8 CENTRALIZED PROPERTY PROCUREMENT

- A. All purchases of new equipment or property shall be accomplished as required by current city policy, and shall be centralized through the office of the Chief of Public Safety.
- B. A Division Secretary shall be responsible for the processing of the accompanying paperwork.
- C. Once an authorized purchase has been made and the property received, a Division Secretary shall forward a copy of the invoice to the Major or his designee for entry into the inventory.

33.9 RECORDS, STATUS OF EVIDENCE

The Mitchell Police Division, Investigative Evidence Section will record the status of all property held as evidence. This records system will reflect the following:

1. The location of the property
2. Date and time when the property was received and/or released
3. Character, type, and amount of property on hand
4. Date released

33.10 RECEIVING IN-CUSTODY AND EVIDENTIARY PROPERTY

- A. The policy of the Mitchell Police Division is that all property (i.e. evidence,

found or property kept for safety reasons) obtained shall be documented by employees.

1. All employees will complete a descriptive inventory of every item of property coming into their possession as a result of their official duties and responsibilities as soon as practical.
 2. Every item of property obtained by an employee during a shift should be placed into the evidence room or property locker prior to the end of their shift. Exceptions are authorized to this procedure; however, supervisory approval should be obtained.
- B. A written report detailing the circumstances by which the property came into the Division's possession and describing each item of property obtained will be filed as part of the case report submitted by the investigating officer.
- C. The responsibility of the releasing officer is to make a reasonable attempt to locate the owners of found property. Any release of property shall be affected as expeditiously as is consistent with State Law.