

RAPID DNA GENERATES ACTIONABLE RESULTS FOR CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS: MIAMI BEACH POLICE DEPARTMENT'S PILOT PROGRAM

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Obtaining real-world experience is critical to the effective implementation of new forensic technologies. Towards this end, a pilot program was designed to integrate the ANDE Rapid DNA System into the Miami Beach Police Department Crime Scene Unit. The ANDE System was used to test all sample types collected in association with criminal investigations including buccal swabs, blood, cigarette butts, and touch samples.

The ANDE System was provided to a team of five experienced crime scene investigators led by a supervising crime scene manager. Training on operation of the ANDE system and recommendations for successful sample collection were provided, and the training included hands-on exercises in which mock crime scene samples were collected, documented, and tested. A critical feature of the pilot is that duplicate samples are collected for each item of evidence-- the first swab is sent to the local crime lab for DNA testing and the second swab is processed on ANDE. When insufficient sample is present, priority is given to the crime lab sample. Crime scene sample profiles generated by ANDE are stored and searched against suspect profiles generated during the pilot program.

Putting Rapid DNA technology into the hands of law enforcement personnel is beneficial for the entire law enforcement community's understanding of the power and appropriate applications for Rapid DNA. The system developer is also receiving feedback regarding the operation and performance of the system in the field. Most importantly, a blueprint is being written to demonstrate to other agencies how successful implementation can be achieved with obstacles overcome and lessons learned. Rapid DNA can be used by local police agencies to provide investigative leads within two hours – changing the paradigm of how DNA can be used for criminal investigations.