

**Joint Appropriations Subcommittee on
Justice and Public Safety**

Wilmington Police Department

February 26, 2013

Forensic Services

Bethany P. Pridgen, Forensic Lab Manager

- Latent Prints
- Firearms (Test Firing & NIBIN entry only)
- Computer Forensics
- Toxicology (Blood alcohol only)
- Controlled Substances

Total FTE: 11.5

Total Budget (2012): \$747,460

Funded by the City of Wilmington, Grant Funding and Receipts

Criminal Investigation Division

- Crime Scene Unit (CSI)
 - Latent Prints
 - Firearms
- Computer Forensics Laboratory

Total FTE: 10

Total Budget (2012): \$595,460

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Latent Prints (2012)

- AFIS Matches: 266
- AFIS Entries: 445
- AFIS Comparisons: 3,419
- Fingerprint Comparisons: 1,525
- Latent Print Matches: 142

FTE: 0.75 (5 Examiners: CSI – 85%; Latent – 15%)

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Firearms

- Test Fires: 243
- NIBIN Entries: 416

FTE: 0.15

(1 Technician: CSI – 70%; Latent – 15%; Firearms – 15%)

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Computer Forensics

- Individual Cases: 25
 - Hard drive imaging
 - Cell phone dump
 - IP and MAC address traces
 - Forensic examination of hard drives
 - Forensic examination of non-allocated space on hard drives

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Support Services Division

- Crime Laboratory
 - Toxicology (Blood alcohol only)
 - Controlled Substances

Total FTE: 1.5 (0.5 grant funded until October 2013)

Total Budget 2012: \$152,000

Operating Costs: \$45,000

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Controlled Substances

Program Opened August 2011 (WPD only)

Cases: 41

Total Items: 109

No routine casework

Casework limited to rush requests/ undercover buys

Routine casework – March 2013

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Jurisdictions Served (Blood alcohol only)

- Three Counties
 - New Hanover
 - Brunswick
 - Onslow

Local and State Agencies: 16

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Agencies Served (2012)

- Wilmington Police Department
- New Hanover County Sheriff's Office
- Carolina Beach Police Department
- Wrightsville Beach Police Department
- Leland Police Department
- Oak Island Police Department
- Boiling Spring Lakes Police Department
- NC Wildlife Resources Commission
- NC State Highway Patrol

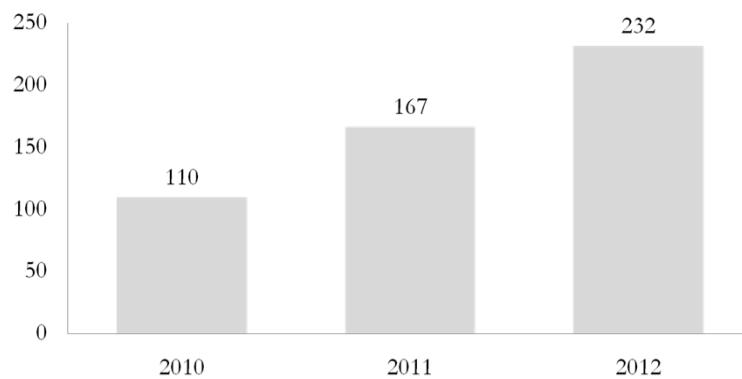
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Additional Agencies (2013)

- Jacksonville Police Department
- Shallotte Police Department
- Holden Beach Police Department
- Sunset Beach Police Department
- Southport Police Department
- Ocean Isle Police Department
- Brunswick County Sheriff's Office (pending)

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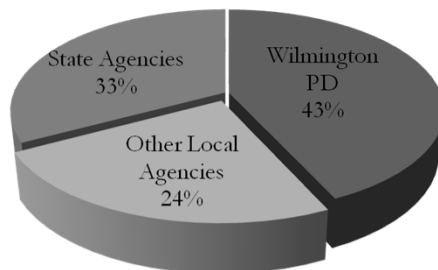
Submissions (2010-2012)



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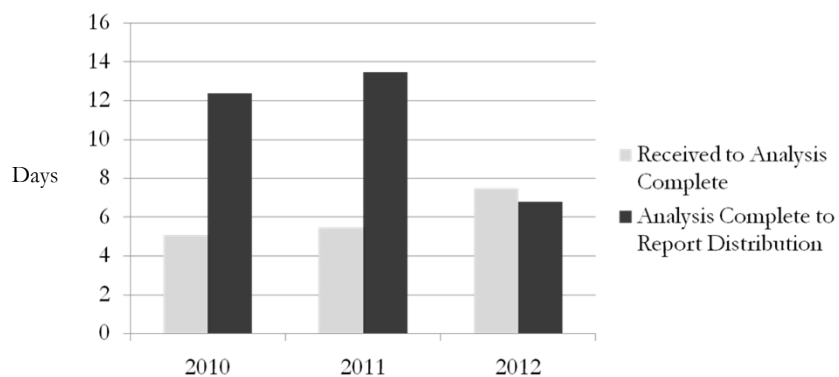
Submissions by Type of Agency

2012



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Turnaround Time



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Court Testimony

- First Appearance (Defendant)
 - Laboratory results provided
- Melendez-Diaz v. Massachusetts
 - Requires live testimony by analyst
 - On call: 10 to 45 minutes from court house
- Court Appearances and Testimony
 - 7 times in court
 - 6 times on stand

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Issues to Address

- Court Fees
 - No charge to law enforcement agencies
 - \$600 court fee assessed on offender (Lab Fee)
 - Court fees assessed at discretion of judge
 - Generated \$4,265.10 (2.9%)

In 2012, a total of 241 cases could have generated \$144,600

If only 25% of the cases had the fee assessed: \$36,150

A \$600 mandatory fee (no waiver allowed)

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Issues to Address

- Recent Legislative Action
 - Accreditation requirement for all forensic analysis
 - Confusion on part of local law enforcement units
 - What forensic disciplines apply?
 - Mandate with no funding

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Improving Services

- NHC District Attorney – Ben David
 - Grant for dedicated instrument for blood alcohol
 - \$40,000
 - Estimate 3-5 day turnaround time

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Future Endeavors

- Combine all forensic services into one division
- Convert part-time, grant funded forensic chemist to full-time position (\$75,000)
- Add Toxicology – Blood drug analysis
 - Two forensic chemist positions (\$160,000) and lab tech (\$50,000)
 - Instrument/Equipment needs (\$400,000)
 - At a minimum, double number of DWI cases (alcohol and drugs)
 - The above could be recouped with a mandatory \$300 lab fee within an estimated 4 years. (2,285 cases @ \$300 = \$685,500)

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Future Endeavors

- Options for latent print and computer forensic work due to July 1, 2013 accreditation mandate
 - Working with New Hanover County to meet State mandate
- Attain accreditation for latent prints and computer forensics by June 2014
- **Currently no funding source has been identified for new or changed positions or programs**

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Questions

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