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August 21, 2023

Washington Association of Prosecuting Attorneys  
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Olympia WA 98501

Subject: NIOSH Health Hazard Evaluation Report No. 2021-0115-3388

In April 2021, the Washington State Patrol Toxicology Laboratory Division requested the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) provide a Health Hazard Evaluation (HHE) for the Seattle Forensic Laboratories. The HHE included the Seattle Toxicology Laboratory and Seattle Crime Laboratory Chemical Analysis Section.

The focus of the HHE was to evaluate the potential for occupational exposure to illicit drugs among employees working in these laboratory areas. NIOSH completed two virtual site visits in March 2022 and April 2022 and an on-site visit in June 2022. The site visits included confidential medical interviews; observation of work processes, practices, and conditions; ventilation evaluations; and employee hand wipes and surface sampling.

The final HHE report, received August 17, 2023, is attached herein and will be available on our public websites.

In the final HHE Report, NIOSH provided recommendations to further minimize exposure risk to employees and improve safety training among laboratory personnel. The safety and wellness of our employees is paramount and the Forensic Laboratory Services Bureau is committed to:

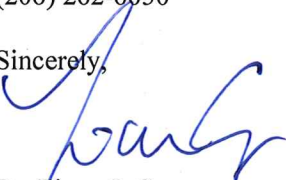
- Strengthening training on personal protective equipment (PPE) and consistent use of PPE
- Updating Manuals/Policies to provide clearer guidance on task-based PPE requirements
- Augmenting cleaning methodologies and the use of local exhaust ventilation (fume hoods) to further minimize background levels of drugs detected on surfaces

For questions regarding the evaluation, report and recommendations please contact:

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Sincerely,

  
Dr. Fiona J. Couper  
Forensic Laboratory Services Bureau

FC:GL:LG:ch  
Enclosure