



The NIRCL Update

Winter 2019

The Quarterly Report of the Northeastern Illinois Regional Crime Laboratory

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Newest NIRCL Family Members! (left) My granddaughter Wendy Joan, born in November 2018 and (right) Nancy Keel's grandson Morgan Rudolph born in January 2019.

Director's Message:

Welcome to the **Country Club Hills** and **Braidwood Police Departments**, our newest organizations to join the laboratory! The laboratory now processes evidence for 57 law enforcement agencies representing a population of over 1.5 million citizens. The good work done by our scientists continues to generate inquiries from agencies throughout the region interested joining the lab. We won't be surprised if more are added this year.

A big **Thank you** is owed retired Evanston Police Chief **Richard Eddington** for his work on the laboratory Executive Board. **Thank you** also to our outgoing Trustees; Lake County Sheriff **Mark Curran**, Gurnee Police Chief **Kevin Woodside** and Lake Bluff Police Chief **David Belmonte** for their work on behalf on the laboratory over the years.

Winnetka Police Chief **Marc Hornstein** has graciously agreed to serve on the laboratory Executive Board. **Welcome** to our new laboratory trustees: Lake County Sheriff **John Idleburg**, East Dundee Police Chief **George Carpenter** and



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Mount Prospect Police Chief **John Koziol**. We look forward to working with all of you. Our next Board of Director's (Trustee's) meeting is scheduled for March 21st at a location to be determined.

Stay safe and make wise choices during winter cold snaps! <https://www.chicagotribune.com/news/weather/ct-cb-chicago-cold-survival-guide-20190125-story.html>

Thank you and thanks always for your support of the laboratory.

Philip T. Kinsey, Ph.D.
Executive Director

Staffing Update:

As shown in the Casework Trends section of this report, the Latent Prints and Firearms sections are seeing increases in case backlogs and turn-around times. We had two staff cross-train to provide technical assistance in the Firearm section to help address the loss of a part-time Firearms examiner last year. This approach has shown promise and we have posted a position for a part-time NIBIN (National Integrated Ballistics Information Network) technician position.

We are taking a similar approach with the Latent Prints section by preparing to post a vacancy for a Latent Prints Processing Technician. This position will be grant funded using Paul Coverdell grant funds. Unfortunately, the recent partial federal government shutdown has impacted this project moving forward as desired. Stay tuned for updated information.

Casework Trends:

In this report, data for the third and fourth quarters of 2018 and for years 2017 and 2018 are tabulated below.

Although the number of requests we receive for testing goes up and down throughout the year, the total number of requests for the calendar year is consistent with those from last year.

The good news is that cases continue to be completed in a timely manner. Turn-around times are up slightly for all sections last quarter, but for the most part they are below those times at this point last year. Exceptions are the Latent Print and Firearms sections which are in the process of being addressed as described in the Staffing Update section of this report. The ripple effect of increases in case submissions is detected first in backlogs and then in turn-around times in later quarters as older cases are completed. As of this writing, the backlog in the firearms and latent print sections has been reduced by 10% and so we expect numbers back in-line with historical values by the end of the first quarter of 2019.



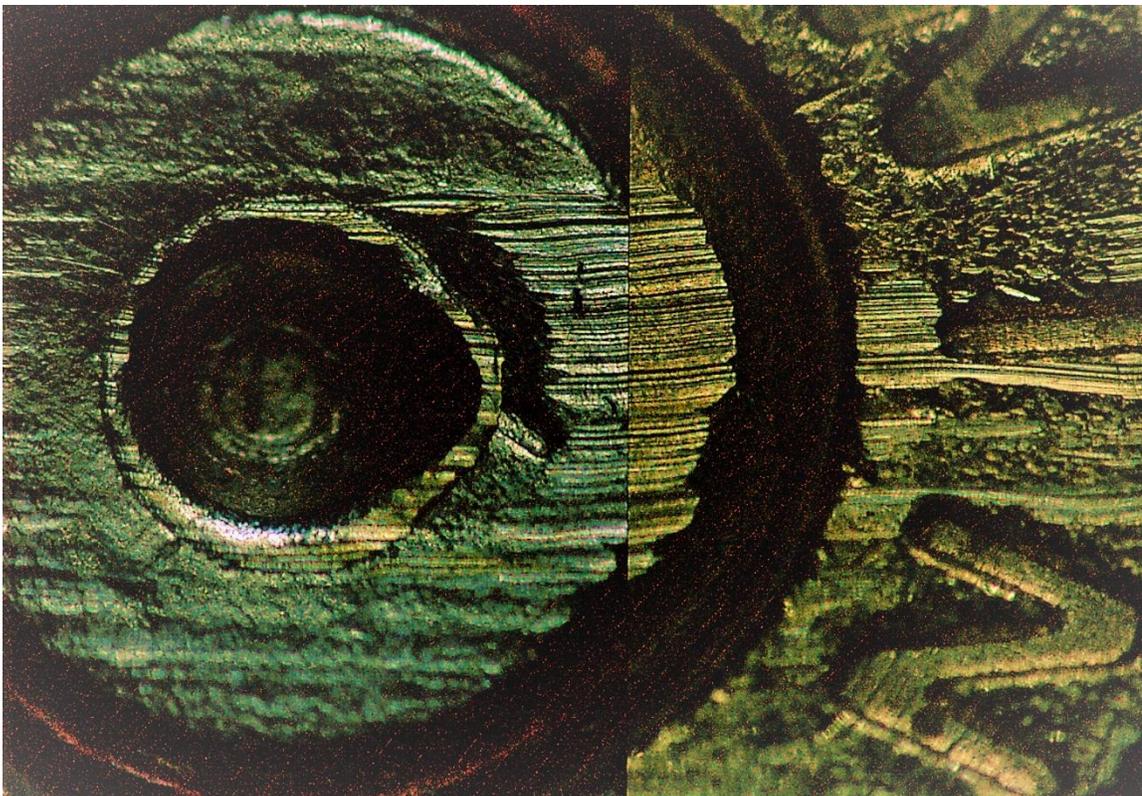
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Quarter	Requests Received		Requests Completed		Final Backlog		Average TATs (days)	
	2018 Q3	2018 Q4	2018 Q3	2018 Q4	2018 Q3	2018 Q4	2018 Q3	2018 Q4
Chemistry	719	604	706	588	77	93	8	15
DNA	290	273	317	252	80	135	36	38
Latent Prints	490	343	342	395	307	255	50	62
Firearms	301	206	234	285	206	127	55	71
Toxicology	145	136	140	135	18	20	11	13

Year	Requests Received		Requests Completed		Average Backlog		Average TATs (days)	
	2017	2018	2017	2018	2017	2018	2017	2018
Chemistry	2,523	2,627	2,531	2,591	110	78	8	10
DNA	1,200	1,083	1,238	1,198	162	175	36	47
Latent Prints	1,502	1,514	1,566	1,468	208	219	50	53
Firearms	987	1,017	990	1,007	92	129	55	49
Toxicology	535	538	563	534	23	20	11	12



Other good news:
 the **Firearms** section recently logged its **1500th IBIS** (Integrated Ballistics Information System) **Lead!**



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Training Corner:

Please contact the laboratory if you have personnel interested in our **Detection, Collection and Preservation of Latent Print Evidence** training. This two-day course was offered last summer and was very successful by all accounts. We don't have dates designated for this training yet, so early interest will likely drive the date of this training; please contact the lab!

As mentioned in the last Quarterly Report, the **Detection, Collection and Preservation of Footwear Evidence** training intended to be offered this winter has been postponed. Stay tuned for this course to be offered next winter.

Laboratory staff are also available to provide in-service presentations on any of our laboratory disciplines as schedules and workloads allow. Please contact the laboratory to make requests for presentations.

Illinois Association of Property and Evidence Managers (IAPEM) training opportunity! The IAPEM will be hosting its annual educational training conference **April 10-12, 2019** at the DoubleTree by Hilton Lisle Naperville located in Lisle, Illinois. Law enforcement and forensic professionals from Illinois and surrounding states will be in attendance; as this is the largest evidence and forensic educational conference in Illinois for 2019. Find more information and register at <https://www.iapem.org/conference2019.htm>.

Laboratory Communication:

While it has been very helpful to be notified of concerns through our on-line survey, our link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/5T57K55> may have outrun its usefulness. Feel free to use it at your convenience, but please also look for other modes of asking you about our customer service in the future.

Thank you for continuing to use the clerical@nircl.org email address when requesting information for non-urgent matters. Please continue to let us know what you need along with any pertinent information that would help us get you your information more quickly. This has been very helpful in reducing interruptions to our scientists in the laboratory. As always, for urgent matters, please call the lab directly.

Impactful Evidence:

Evidence to be processed by ISP:

Our lab has been contacted by the **Illinois State Police Forensic Laboratory** to help provide them with more complete information for cases we submit to them on your behalf (Primer Gun Shot Residue, Arson, Paint and Hair/Fiber Evidence). The following information will be required for us to submit evidence to ISP:

- Investigating Officer's Name, email and phone number (preferably direct) and



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- a concise case summary with enough information to direct the forensic analysis of the evidence.

Please find these ISP policies on our website at http://nircl.org/home/submission_policies_and_guidelines.

Evidence brought to the NIRCL not meeting the ISP submission policy criteria or without the above information will not be accepted.

Thank you for your efforts in helping us improve the efficiency with which we and ISP process your evidence.

Improvements in National Integrated Ballistics Information Network (NIBIN) Lead Notifications:



The NIRCL has been selected to partner with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives to provide more timely investigative leads resulting from the NIBIN. Scheduled to begin in March 2019, the ATF&E will be notifying police agencies directly of NIBIN lead information with emails that will provide direction for securely accessing those results. Current laboratory reporting will continue in addition to these early email notifications. The lab will be reaching out to our Department Chiefs for the names and contact information (phone **and** email) of those who are to receive these notifications. **Thank you in advance for your quick response when you receive this request.**

If you have any questions or comments, please don't hesitate to contact

**Phil Kinsey at pkinsey@nircl.org,
(847) 362-0676 x102 or (406) 493-8083.**

Stay safe and thanks for reading!