

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR PROPERTY & EVIDENCE

Property Room Standards

13. NARCOTICS HANDLING

Narcotics evidence should not be commingled with any other property types, except when a common enhanced security area is shared with the storage of firearms or currency. All items in this category should be handled and processed with extreme caution. The following are recommended features for a narcotics storage room:

- A narcotics storage room must be impervious to entry and should be constructed of either concrete block wall or heavy gauge fencing.
- A narcotics storage room shall have an adequate ventilation system consistent with legal mandates that will not impact other areas of the building. Always consider a negative pressure system.
- Storage identifiers should be consistent with the storage scheme of the main property room.
- High security areas should be designed so that more than one person is needed to open them.
- A narcotics storage room should be alarmed independently from the main property room alarm system.
- A narcotics room alarm system should consist of an intrusion alarm, door or vent contacts, and some type of infrared or motion sensors.
- An entry log should be maintained either electronically or by hand of all entries.
- In the event that a narcotics evidence room is not practical, because of either budgetary constraints or a narcotics volume that does not justify the expense, a safe or fenced enclosure within a secured room would suffice.

A narcotics storage room or vault needs to be designed in a manner that provides enhanced security, environmental safety, and easy retrieval. In addition to the narcotics storage space designated for active cases, there needs to be another secure space in the narcotics room specifically for those items that have been signed off for destruction. Drugs for disposal should never be stored in areas that do not have enhanced security.

Every agency's policy statement needs to specifically outline procedures for the handling, storage, transportation, and auditing of narcotics for destruction. Minimum standard requirements should also include requiring witnesses to audit the destruction, and specifying the number of armed sworn escorts to the destruction site.