

EXEMPLAR: NOT TO BE COPIED OR RETRANSMITTED. The following information is fictitious. It is used only to illustrate the types of information that may be collected as well as one possible format for a medical examiner's report. Types of information as well as style will vary by agency, local policies, regulations, and laws.

## DEATH INVESTIGATION

The decedent, PTB John Anderson, was found lying face up in the post-explosion debris of the family living room of his home on 42 Ophelia Court. The body was lying near the northwest corner of the living room, following the north-south long axis of the room. An office chair and a collapsed child's playpen were next to the head and body.

The decedent had received extensive injuries to his head, arms, torso, and groin area with corresponding tears and burns to the decedent's shirt, tie, and front of the dress pants. Brain tissue, part of the facial skeleton, and cranial vault were absent from the body, although present at the scene. The hands were absent from the forearms, and in a fragmentary condition at the scene. From the waist down, the decedent was covered with sections of acoustic ceiling tile and a gray fibrous debris.

Using gloves, the decedent was warm to the touch. The room was heated. Using a digital thermometer, the temperature in the living room at floor level was 68 degrees F. Rigor was not assessed with the hands or jaw. At the time of recovery, movement at the knee joints and elbows appeared to be normal. Because of extensive blood loss, observations were not possible as to livor. Efforts to assess blanching were not made.

According to EMS personnel, they had minimally moved the damaged desk, chair, a child's playpen, and other debris to gain access to the decedent's head and torso. Based on the massive head injury, they did not attempt resuscitation. According to EMS, the decedent was found lying face up on his back and was not further moved. This is supported by the presence of apparently undisturbed fiber material on the decedent's lower extremities.

Examination of the remains and clothing using grazing light disclosed the presence of potential trace evidence, including the fragmented portions of what appears to be a printed circuit board (PCB). These fragments of a PCB were found on the decedent's tie next to his nose and mouth. These items were collected at the scene, placed in a labeled plastic zip lock bag, and sealed. Notes as to time, location, and items collected, and by who were recorded in the case notes.

Once the investigating agency had taken their photographs and made the measurements needed to document the placement the decedent in the room, the decedent was rolled toward the chair. His back and the carpet beneath the body were examined and photographed. Once documented, the decedent was lifted and moved to clean white sheet that was lying in an open remains pouch. A tag containing PTB identifying information was attached to the right shoe of the decedent. The sheet was gathered around the decedent and tied at the head and feet to contain any trace evidence. The remains pouch was zipped closed and was sealed with a plastic pouch seal, bearing the serial number 12345. Mr. Smith of the "Removal Service" transported the remains to the morgue at 1800 hrs in a GMC van, License ABC-12345.

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The forensic team processed the scene, and they collected any materials they believed to be human remains, to include tags of soft tissue, scalp, hair, brain tissue, and bone fragments. These were collected and labeled using their protocol. All of the items believed to be remains or personal effects were collected and placed in individual evidence plastic zip lock bags. All items were then placed in a larger evidence zip lock bag, which was labeled with the necessary case information and then sealed. It was hand delivered, with hand receipts, to the OCME to be placed in refrigeration. I left the scene at 2130 hrs. The local PD forensic team and AFT were still processing the scene when I left. Universal precautions for blood borne pathogens were followed. No accidents or injuries occurred while I was present at the scene.

Howard B. Keller