



LAS VEGAS METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT
Sheriff Kevin McMahon

LVMPPD Forensic Laboratory

SB35



LVMPD Forensic Laboratory

LAS VEGAS METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT
Sheriff Kevin McMahon

Kimberly Murga, Executive Director
LVMPD Criminalistics Bureau

Cassandra Robertson, Director Laboratory Services
LVMPD Criminalistics Bureau

David Gouldthorpe, Forensic Lab Manager
LVMPD Criminalistics Bureau



LVMPD Forensic Laboratory

LAS VEGAS METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT
Sheriff Kevin McMahon

LVMPD Seized Drugs Unit

- Largest Forensic Laboratory in NV
- Serve Clark, Nye, Lincoln, and Esmeralda Counties
- Serve all agencies, except Henderson and Boulder City
- CY 2022: 1,159 cases received
- CY 2023: 1,501 cases received
- 4 full-time and 2 part-time Forensic Scientists



Senate Bill 35

(effective 10/1/2023)

LAS VEGAS METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT

Sheriff Kevin McMahon

Section 14

1. The Joint Interim Standing Committee on the Judiciary shall conduct a study during the 2023-2024 interim concerning the possible upgrading of forensic laboratories in this State to enable such laboratories to perform quantitative testing involving controlled substances. The study must include, without limitation, an analysis of:
 - (a) The costs and benefits of performing such upgrades; and
 - (b) The impact of such upgrades on this State.
2. The Committee shall include its finding and recommendations for legislation relating to the study in the report required by subsection 4 of NRS 218E.330 to be prepared and submitted to the Director of the Legislative Counsel Bureau for transmittal to the 83rd Session of the Legislature.



Quantitative vs. Qualitative Testing

LAS VEGAS METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT
Sheriff Kevin McMahon

Fentanyl Quantitative Testing

- Analysis in which the amount or concentration of a substance is determined
- Purity analysis
 - Typically performed by Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) Laboratories

Fentanyl Qualitative Testing

- Analysis in which substance(s) are identified
- This testing is performed by local, county, and state forensic laboratories every day throughout the USA



Quantitative Analysis Safety Concerns

LAS VEGAS METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT
Sheriff Kevin McMahon

Increased exposure during sample preparation

- Homogenization - fentanyl is ground into a fine powder
- Aerosolization weaponizes the substance, which can kill

Sample preparation for large items (homogenization)

- Kilo bricks
- Thousands of tablets



Quantitative Analysis Safety Concerns

LAS VEGAS METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT
Sheriff Kevin McMahon

- Transporting cases after analysis
- Introducing evidence into court
- Opening evidence in court
- Destruction of evidence



Quantitative Analysis Safety Concerns

LAS VEGAS METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT
Sheriff Kevin McMahon

- Disposal of waste after each case
- Disposal of evidence after properly adjudicated



What Labs Are Performing Fentanyl Quantitation?

LAS VEGAS METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT
Sheriff Kevin McMahon

For investigative purposes only; no criminal charges:

- Customs and Border Patrol (CBP)
- Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA)

NMS Labs

- One private laboratory quantitates fentanyl and 3 fentanyl derivatives (acetyl fentanyl, carfentanil, and sufentanil)

No other local, county or state labs perform fentanyl quantitation



Costs

LAS VEGAS METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT
Sheriff Kevin McMahon

The LVMPD Forensic Laboratory is not willing to risk the cost of human lives to perform quantitative analysis of fentanyl or fentanyl derivatives

- Fentanyl needs to be ground into a powder to accomplish quantitation, and this is extremely dangerous

If quantitation is mandated in Nevada, testing could be done by NMS at approximately \$895 per sample per drug



In Summary

LAS VEGAS METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT

Sheriff Kevin McMahon

- Completely grinding fentanyl into a powder to perform quantitative analysis is deadly
 - The LVMPD Forensic Laboratory is not willing to take this risk
 - No local, county, or state forensic laboratories in the United States quantitate fentanyl or fentanyl derivatives
 - The LVMPD and other local, county, and state forensic laboratories perform qualitative analysis of fentanyl only
- Federal labs such as the DEA and CBP do not quantitate fentanyl or fentanyl derivatives for criminal charges
- If agencies want quantitative analysis of fentanyl or fentanyl derivatives, they can outsource samples directly to the private lab, NMS.



LAS VEGAS METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT
Sheriff Kevin McMahon

**ANY
QUESTIONS?**