FACTSHEET FOR ASTM E2329-17

Standard Practice for Identification of Seized Drugs

WHAT IS AN AAFS STANDARD FACTSHEET?

The AAFS produces clear, concise, and easy to understand factsheets to summarize the contents of technical and professional forensic science standards on the OSAC Registry. They are not intended to provide an interpretation for any portion of a published standard.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS STANDARD?

The identification of seized drugs or chemicals depends on the competence of the analyst and the use of an analytical scheme that incorporates validated methods.

This standard practice covers minimum criteria to determine the presence (or qualitative identification) of seized drugs. It categorizes analytical techniques that can be utilized and provides direction on how these techniques can be combined to form an appropriate analytical scheme.

The chosen analytical scheme shall demonstrate the identity of the specific drug(s) present and shall minimize false positive and false negative identification. Limitations of the chosen scheme shall be reflected in the reported results.

WHY IS THIS STANDARD IMPORTANT? WHAT ARE ITS BENEFITS?

Adherence to this minimum standard establishes consistency amongst laboratories in the building of an analytical scheme that effectively results in reliable and scientifically supportable drug and chemical identifications.

The standard provides direction to the forensic drug analyst community regarding the qualitative analysis of seized drugs.

Forensic seized drug laboratories are encouraged to meet these minimum standards.

HOW IS THIS STANDARD USED AND WHAT ARE THE KEY ELEMENTS?

Analytical techniques that can be used to develop an appropriate analytical scheme to meet relevant legal and scientific requirements for the identification of seized drugs are described in this standard. The techniques are grouped according to their discriminating power and classified into three categories (A, B, or C) based on their maximum potential discriminating power.

When a Category A technique is incorporated into an analytical scheme, at least one other technique must be used. When a Category A technique is not used, at least three different techniques must be employed, two of which shall be from Category B. Classification of a technique may be lower, if the sample, analyte, or mode of operation diminishes its discriminating power. Hyphenated techniques (which may use more than one instrumental method) can be considered as separate techniques provided that the results from each are used and their individual acceptance criteria are fulfilled. Tests results are considered "positive" when they meet the acceptance criteria defined in the respective method validation.

This is a practice standard, which means that these minimum requirements may not be sufficient for the identification of all drugs in all circumstances. Additional tests beyond those required in the standard may be necessary. Laboratories that cannot meet the standards internally may use external resources to meet the requirements (e.g., outsourcing, partnerships).

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