

CDPHE Completes Review of CBI Toxicology Program

(February 16, 2016—CBI—Lakewood, CO)—The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) completed a review of the Colorado Bureau of Investigation's (CBI's) Toxicology testing program and released its final report on February 16, 2016.

The first finding in the report confirmed that blood alcohol analysis in 56 Driving Under the Influence (DUI) or Driving While Ability Impaired (DWAI) cases (representing less than 4% of all CBI's toxicology testing) showed erroneously lower blood alcohol levels for the drivers. The inaccurate results were caused by a technique used by one scientist that allowed alcohol to evaporate out of the samples during the testing process.

The second finding in the report focused on the need for the CBI to implement more specific protocols for reporting multiple test results on a single sample that varied by more than 10%.

The third finding in the report identified the need for more specific instructions for law enforcement on how to label evidence during the collection process.

The CBI has implemented a number of actions to prevent these types of issues in the future. Specifically, the CBI has augmented its procedures, provided additional training to scientists, and increased the number of tests verified through the CBI's Quality Assurance program. Further, the CBI has reanalyzed existing cases to ensure accuracy in reporting, improved instructions for the evidence collection process, and coordinated with impacted jurisdictions, prosecutors, and the Colorado State Public Defender through updates and amended reports.

"The CBI remains committed to working with our public safety partners to conduct these important tests and to provide scientifically sound results," said CBI Director Michael Rankin. "While we deeply regret the errors, the review process with the CDPHE has served as a valuable tool in refining our practices within the CBI Toxicology program, and we will continue to work tirelessly to strengthen the public's trust in our work."

The CDPHE review was initiated in late 2015 when a private laboratory identified errors in toxicology testing in addition to similar anomalies detected through the CBI's Quality Assurance testing process during the same timeframe.

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