

Scene Documentation

Format: Individual

Time: 4 hours

Description

This activity provides students with an opportunity using a simulated fire scene to photograph evidentiary items, prepare a photo log for each item, diagram the scene, and construct investigative notes.

Materials

- Simulated fire scene(s)
- Evidentiary items
- Tools and equipment
- Device capable of taking photographs (e.g., tablet or cell phone)
- Graph paper
- Photo log
- Notepad
- Pens and pencils

Instructions

1. Photograph three evidentiary items (overall, midrange, and close up for each item).
2. Prepare a photo log for all photographs.
3. Using graph paper, sketch the fire scene.
4. Construct investigative notes.
5. Submit your documents to the instructor (hard copy or electronic).

Instructor Notes

1. Divide students into groups.
2. Assign each group to a simulated fire scene.
3. Provide a minimum of three evidentiary items at each scene.
4. Review each student's documents for the following:
 - Photographs accurately document and support scene findings
 - Photo log completed
 - Sketch identifies evidence, pertinent contents, significant patterns, and area(s) or point(s) of origin
 - Investigative notes provide accurate documentation of the scene and represent complete scene findings

Fire Investigation Report

Format: Individual

Time: 6 hours (2 hours for prep work and 4 hours for presentation and discussion – additional work time may be required outside of class)

Description

This activity provides students with an opportunity to prepare a fire investigation report for a criminal case.

Materials

- Blank face sheet for a fire investigation report
- Case file that, at a minimum, includes:
 - Witness statements (written, audio, or video)
 - Scene photographs with photo log
 - Evidence log
 - Sketches and diagrams
 - Investigative notes
 - Dispatch log
- Tablet or laptop computer

Instructions

1. Review the case file.
2. Create a complete fire investigation report that, at a minimum, includes:
 - Summary of events
 - Notification and response/chronology of events
 - Property description
 - Scene observations
 - Witness statements
 - Opinions and conclusions
 - Attachments

Instructor Notes

1. This is a room-and-content- sized fire investigation.
2. Provide a case file to each student.
3. Using a model fire investigation report for the case, ask students to discuss how they handled various components of the report.