

# Alaska Scientific Crime Detection Laboratory

## Change in Instrument Status Form

Issued: 12/15/2017  
Effective: 12/15/2017

Version: CIISF 2017 R0  
Status: Active

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Instrument Serial Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Instrument Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor Name and Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

Describe the Status Change or Issue with the Instrument:

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If instrument was placed in service or removed from service, fill out the appropriate sections below.

In Service Date/Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Out of Service Date/Time: \_\_\_\_\_

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**For Use by SCDL**

**Additional Notes**

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**Email completed form to [dps.scdl.toxicology@alaska.gov](mailto:dps.scdl.toxicology@alaska.gov)**

For questions contact the Breath Alcohol Program at 907-269-5740

## Walton, Derek J (DPS)

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**From:** DPS SCDL Toxicology (DPS sponsored)  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 25, 2021 1:22 PM  
**To:** 'Derek McGarrigan'  
**Subject:** RE: Detector Overflow

Hi Ofc. McGarrigan,

Anything that causes infrared absorbance will cause the detector reading to increase. This could be chemicals in the air, ethanol on someone's breath, acetone, etc. The way the instrument distinguishes ethanol from something else is with the 3 filter system. If something is detected on a person's breath that has a different pattern from the ethanol pattern, Interference Detected would be the typical status message. However, the detector also has a limit to how much signal it can handle. If this limit is exceeded, Detector Overflow may occur. That high detector signal could be caused by anything listed above, or simply by the detector needing adjustment or wearing out.

I'll take a look at your instrument remotely and see what the detector voltage is looking like when it's idle. If the voltage is too elevated, we may need to replace your instrument. For now, you should be fine to continue using the instrument.

*Derek Walton*

Forensic Scientist  
State of Alaska Scientific Crime Detection Laboratory

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**From:** Derek McGarrigan <DerekM@City.Ketchikan.Ak.Us>  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 25, 2021 8:23 AM  
**To:** DPS SCDL Toxicology (DPS sponsored) <dps.scdl.toxicology@alaska.gov>  
**Subject:** Detector Overflow

Good morning,

Last night we had someone brought through for a breath test. He was arrested for DUI for huffing a can of dustoff. The dude huffed it when he was contacted by police. He took a breath test about 50 minutes later. The DM gave a Detector Overflow status message. The message happened a second time and a third time with the same subject. We got a SW for blood.

The DM passed a VOC just the other day. Everything seems to be good. Our department has had (possibly) 4 DUI cases involving dustoff in the last couple years. The others showed an Interfering Substance Detected status message. Last night was the first time I've seen Detector Overflow for a known huffing case. Have you seen this? The manual wasn't much help, but please let me know if I need to do something here.

Thanks,

Derek McGarrigan  
Ketchikan Police Department

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