

The analysis of pGSR is a time-intensive and costly analysis. To be mindful of state resources, stubs of residues will be analyzed on a case-by-case basis. The synopsis of the situations surrounding the suspected shooting must be supplied along with the evidence before analysis is to begin.

Officers are encouraged to collect potential pGSR residues in a short time frame after the shooting. GSR is usually removed from the hands of a living subject after 4-6 hours of normal activities. It is better to collect potential residues and later determine if analysis is not needed than miss the window of evidence collection.

The **BEST** evidence for pGSR analysis is a kit collected from the hands and face of a person suspected of firing a weapon. The finding of pGSR on an individual cannot determine if a person fired a weapon or not but may show that a person had been in a gunshot environment. The person's hands should be bagged at the time of apprehension prior to being placed into a police vehicle.

The Montana Forensic Science Division WILL NOT analyze pGSR evidence from the following situations:

Kits Collected from:

- Subjects with gunshot wounds (there could be extenuating circumstances for analysis)
- Potential witnesses (FSD does not have resources to exclude possible witnesses)
- Persons collected greater than 24 hours after a suspected shooting
- Persons that may assisted in basic life support efforts (e.g., CPR)
- Persons that have showered/washed before collection
- Incorrect kit used for collection (There are kits that utilize cotton swabs and liquids to collect residues; these CANNOT be analyzed by the Montana Forensic Science Division.)
  - o **pGSR kit can be ordered by calling Tri-tech Forensics; 1-800-438-7884, item GSR-SEM(1MT)**

Other Situations:

- pGSR evidence collected to satisfy curiosity or satisfy the courts when the analysis of the kit would not be based on accepted scientific method or reasoning
- When video evidence is available to corroborate incident
- Stubs collected from objects or items found at the scene. Although pGSR can remain on undisturbed objects for a long period of time, it is not possible to determine how or when the residues were deposited on the object. Examples of surface stubs that will not be analyzed:
  - o Interior or exterior of a vehicle
  - o Walls or other surfaces at the scene

Other Evidence:

- Victims' clothing may be more suitable for the Firearm section for distance determination
- Firearms and components (e.g., magazine, bullets, cartridge cases) should be submitted to the Firearms section
- Suspected impact sites (bullet strikes) should be referenced to the Firearms section
- Clothing will be assessed on a case-by-case basis (please contact lab about appropriate packaging)

Case Coordination:

- Even though the analysis of items for pGSR may not be probative, consultation between the Firearm section and Chemistry section will confirm the proper course of action for cases involving different/unique types of evidence.
- Private laboratories may be able to analyze items of evidence, at the agency's expense, that fall outside the above guidelines.