

Evidence



Property & Evidence Information

Property and Evidence

The Property and Evidence Unit provides safe and appropriate storage for all items seized by the Wallowa County Deputies or turned in as found property by members of the community. The Property and Evidence Unit currently stores numerous items of evidence, found property and property identified as safekeeping.

Storage and Retrieval

Evidence: All evidence is retained until the case is adjudicated, dismissed or past statute. A release is required from the Wallowa County District Attorney before any item of evidence may be released. After the District Attorney has released your property/evidence, you will receive a letter from the Property and Evidence Unit notifying you to make an appointment to retrieve your property.

Safekeeping: Items are immediately available for release. The owner will be contacted in person or by letter notifying them to come pick up their property. These items will be held for 30 days. In the event the owner cannot be located/contacted or they fail to retrieve the property, it will be forfeit and the Sheriff's Office may dispose of it appropriately.*#

Weapons: Prior to the release of any weapons, a background check will be performed to ascertain your eligibility to receive these weapons.

Contraband: Items which are not evidentiary and illegal to possess will be destroyed immediately.

Property is released on Tuesdays by appointment only. To make an appointment please contact the Property and Evidence Unit at 541-426-3131. Please bring photo identification. If you are retrieving property for someone else, a notarized release is required authorizing you to pick it up. Firearms may only be retrieved by the owner after a background check has been

completed. # *Any property or evidence that is unclaimed or the owner cannot be identified will be destroyed, auctioned or donated. # Exceptions may be made by the Sheriff or his designee.

MARK YOUR BELONGINGS TO REDUCE LOSS The best way to inscribe your property is by etching your state abbreviation and driver's license or identification number on your property. (For example OR555555DL or OR555555ID). Property marked in this manner is easier to return to owners, and is more difficult to alter. It is important to always document serial numbers and inscribe owner identification on items of value. In the unfortunate case you are the victim or lost or stolen property, your chances of recovery are greatly increased with this information.

STAFF PRESERVE THE CHAIN OF EVIDENCE One civilian Property/Evidence Technician and a Patrol Sergeant are responsible for the receipt, preservation, release, and in some cases the destruction of all items in their care. The property/evidence personnel are trained in storage techniques to ensure that the integrity of the evidence is maintained., Detailed records of transactions involving items of evidence are maintained in order to preserve the "chain of custody." A computerized inventory is employed to maintain the detailed records necessary for the preservation of the evidentiary chain of custody for court.

Found Property

RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF FINDERS AND OWNERS 98.005 Rights and duties of finder of money or goods. (1) If any person finds money or goods valued at \$100 or more, and if the owner of the money or goods is unknown, such person, within 10 days after the date of the finding, shall give notice of the finding in writing to the county clerk of the county in which the money or goods was found. Within 20 days after the date of the finding, the finder of the money or goods shall cause to be published in a newspaper of general circulation in the county a notice of the finding once each week for two consecutive weeks. Each such notice shall state the general description of the money or goods found, the name and address of the finder and final date before which such goods may be claimed. (2) If no person appears and establishes ownership of the money or goods prior to the expiration of three months after the date of the notice to the county clerk under subsection (1) of this section, the finder shall be the owner of the money or goods. [1973 c.642 §1; 1989 c.522 §1]

98.025 Rights of owner. If an owner of money or goods found by another person appears and establishes a claim to such money or goods within the time period prescribed by ORS 98.005 or 98.015, whichever applies, the owner shall have restitution of such money or goods or their value upon payment of all costs and charges incurred in the finding, giving of notice, care and custody of such money or goods. [1973 c.642 §3]