

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR PROPERTY & EVIDENCE

Property Room Standards

7. PROPERTY ROOM CONSTRUCTION

The type of materials used in the construction of the property room is vital, as the room must be secure from unauthorized entry. The exterior concerns relative to the actual building are critical. The building materials should ideally consist of concrete blocks with filled cells or similar material. In addition to the walls, the floor and ceiling must be impervious to intrusion. In constructing the interior and exterior walls, the outside elements must be taken into account. It is best to avoid sheetrock or drywall as it can be easily penetrated. In the event drywall is used, it should be backed with plywood or a double layer of drywall. The walls need to extend from the floor to the ceiling. Never leave space for entry that may be achieved by removing a T-bar ceiling section. The room, if possible, should be designed without windows. Heating, air conditioning, and ventilation system duct registers must be constructed to prevent entry. The exterior roof should be constructed of materials that are resistant to entry and alarmed to detect any such attempts. A flat roof with tarpaper and 1/2" plywood is easily breached. Exterior doors should be metal clad with metal frames. The hinges to these doors should always be located on the inside. Interior doors should be solid-core and any half-doors should be dead-bolted on both halves.

The Property Room should be equipped with fire sprinklers, smoke detectors, fire extinguishers, and an emergency eyewash.

The size of the property room is influenced by the size of the agency and its workload. One of the most important aspects in the design is the need to closely control certain items, such as firearms, narcotics, and currency. These items should be segregated from other property. An ideal option is to have available separate locked and alarmed room(s) or vault(s) totally inside the property room.

The design and layout of the property room is dependent upon the size of the agency and the volume of property to be stored. Larger agencies may opt for a supply service function and a fully staffed evidence control area. It is, however, important to remember that departmental supplies should never be co-mingled with property and evidence.

Regardless of the department size, certain minimum standards should be included in the design and layout of the property room. The Property Office should be adjacent to the property room, but not within the confines of the storage area. This allows property transactions to occur within the office and minimizes access to the actual storage area. Narcotics, firearms, and currency need to be stored separately. Easy access for release of property to the public and to officers is recommended. Property rooms adjacent to report

writing areas with pass through lockers are recommended. Access to a parking lot via a security door for movement of property is also recommended.