



# Collection and Submission of Fire Debris Samples

## Sample Collection

Sample collection should be based on ASTM E1188, NFPA 921, including policies and procedures for the laboratory doing the analysis.

Fire investigators should exercise caution to prevent cross-contamination during sample collection. Using disposable gloves and clean collection tools is recommended to prevent cross-contamination. It is very important to use new gloves for each sample, and tools should be cleaned thoroughly with cleaners that do not contain volatile solvents.

Regardless of what type of containers will be used, fire investigators should not fill the container to its maximum capacity and it is always recommended to collect three types of samples for a more accurate interpretation of results:

- **Container Control Sample (Trip Blank)**

This sample will show any volatiles or possible contamination present in the container itself or those volatiles that it may have acquired during transport and storage of sampling containers.

- **Comparison Sample**

This sample has the same material or substrate as that of the samples for analysis, but this is believed to be free of ignitable liquid. This sample will help the investigator to determine what is normally present in that type of material to prevent a possible false positive interpretation.

- **Fire Debris Sample**

Actual sample to be analyzed.

## Sampling Supplies

Sampling supplies are provided by AGAT to clients as per request. Sampling supplies are placed in a cooler and may or may not contain the following depending on the types of samples that will be collected:

- AGAT approved sampling container (unlined and pre-treated paint cans, nylon bags, pre-cleaned glass jars/vials).
- AGAT Laboratories “Chain-of-Custody Record”
- Custody Seals
- 1 Trip Blank
- Non-Woven Sponges
- Nitrile Gloves
- AGAT bags
- 40-ml vials
- Cotton Swabs
- Security tape

It is also possible for clients to purchase or use their own sampling containers. In this instance, it is always recommended for them to submit a blank container that will serve as trip blank. The client must confirm that they want to go ahead with the analysis even if the method was not validated for the container that they used.

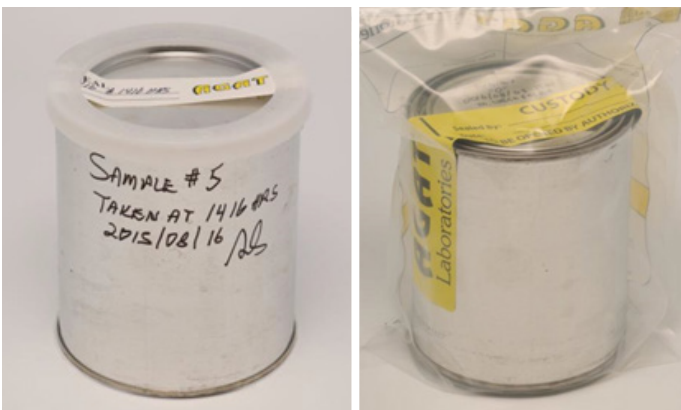
## Sample Sealing and Labeling

Sample must be labeled completely. Label should have the following information:

- Sample Name / ID Number
- Sampling Date / Time
- Name/Initial / Signature of the person who collected the sample
- Other pertinent details

A signed “Custody” seal MUST be placed across the top of the sample container, followed by the ring lock or lid clips, if being used.

Paint cans must be sealed properly after sample collection. Paint can clips or rings may be used to ensure that the cans are sealed properly. It is also recommended to put each can in an AGAT bag to ensure that there will be no cross contamination between samples.



Samples can be put in a cooler with frozen ice packs/ “Chain-of-Custody” form(s) should be filled-up completely and must be sent with the samples.



Cooler can be sealed and signed by the person who collected the sample to ensure that it was not opened or tampered with from the time that the samples were collected to the time that it was received by the laboratory.



Coolers can be shipped or dropped-off at any AGAT location. Please contact us using the information provided below prior to shipping or drop-off so we can ensure proper sample reception.

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