

STORAGE SOLVED

SITUATION: For the McKinney Police Department, there can be no room for error in the evidence handling process and zero doubt about the integrity of confiscated evidence – which is why the department made evidence storage a top priority for a new state-of-the-art public safety facility.

TOTAL CONFIDENCE

EVIDENCE STORAGE IS A TOP PRIORITY FOR MCKINNEY POLICE DEPARTMENT, ADVANCED STORAGE SOLUTION FORTIFIES EVIDENCE HANDLING THROUGHOUT THE CHAIN OF CUSTODY.

TAKING IT TO A HIGHER LEVEL

McKinney, located 30 miles north of Dallas, was recently ranked as one of the nation's fastest-growing cities of its size. To accommodate rapid growth and ensure the safety of its residents, the city built an 84,000-square-foot Public Safety Building. The new facility, completed at a cost of \$17.5 million, was a welcome relief to McKinney PD.

In the old facility, space constraints created inefficiencies. When depositing evidence, tight space meant only one officer could do the work at a time; others had to wait. The old facility also involved the use of 12 key-operated and antiquated evidence lockers. Locker space also became inadequate as the city grew. As such, Evidence Unit personnel had to report in on weekends to clear lockers, and virtually any time of the day or night to deposit biological evidence inside the secured property room.

With a hand in the design of the new facility, McKinney PD set out to take full advantage of the new space and make its already secure evidence handling processes even better.





Officers deposit evidence in DSM evidence lockers, each of which is 36 inches wide by 82 inches tall. The pass-thru system has a total of 45 locker compartments to accommodate evidence that arrives in diverse sizes and shapes. Biological evidence is deposited into refrigerated compartments (below) with the plug-in located securely inside the property room.



Retrieving evidence inside the property room is both efficient and secure. Inside the room, biological evidence (above) is removed from a refrigerated unit. Evidence Unit personnel are able to retrieve other evidence via a single panel on each of the six DSM lockers. As shown, the panel opens to expose all the compartments in that unit.



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STORAGE SYSTEMS AND PROCEDURES: A PERFECT MATCH

As a first step, McKinney PD tripled the space devoted to evidence handling. Officials also consulted with Southwest Solutions Group, Inc., the local Spacesaver® representative and member of the nationwide Spacesaver Group of independent contractors. Together, McKinney PD and Southwest Solutions developed a strategically focused approach to evidence handling systems for the new 3,000-square-foot property room.

Southwest Solutions installed a distinct mix of advanced evidence handling systems, all of which are tailored to match McKinney PD's proven procedures. The storage system, which is used to process evidence throughout the chain of custody, includes:

- A bank of six keyless DSM™ pass-through evidence lockers built into the wall that separates the evidence deposit area from the property room.
- Four, double-walled refrigerated compartments within the DSM pass-through system for storing biological evidence.
- An Eclipse Powered System™. The High-Density Mobile Storage (HDMS) system is located inside the property room for storing deposited evidence and other items.
- Custom-built stationary shelving for storing larger items and four, specially designed cabinets.

If a detective or the district attorney calls for a piece of evidence, McKinney PD can typically locate the item and present it within one minute.

One carriage of the Eclipse Powered System incorporates a hanging file system for storing items such as CDs, DVDs, squad car video systems, and audiocassette tapes.



Custom-designed rotary files, measuring nearly seven feet tall, take advantage of vertical wall space to efficiently store McKinney PD's case files and department records. Only authorized personnel have access to the rotary file system.



McKinney PD officials say the expanded property evidence room and strategically designed evidence storage system at the new McKinney Public Safety Building inspires public confidence in the department.

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The new property room and advanced evidence storage systems make a secure chain of custody even more secure. Evidence processing at McKinney PD is also smooth and efficient, which increases confidence when preparing for trial. Additionally, McKinney PD officials say the strategic storage solution has helped the department become well prepared for accreditation through the Texas Police Chief's Association Foundation (TCPAF) Law Enforcement Recognition Program.

In the end, residents of McKinney benefit from a police department with a solid chain of custody. When combined with a skilled and talented team of law enforcement professionals, the strategic storage solution results in a high rate of convictions.



McKinney PD's Eclipse Powered System operates at the touch of a button and provides 28,172 linear inches of secure and efficient storage capacity. It has six movable carriages, each of which is more than 28 feet long and nearly nine feet tall. When all six carriages are closed, the system takes up only half the space of conventional shelving.