








# History of the Phoenix Police Department Crime Laboratory

Prior to the establishment of the Phoenix Police Department Crime Laboratory, a local chemist was being paid for tests & testimony concerning drunk driving cases. It had also been necessary to use facilities of the Federal Bureau of Investigation or the Los Angeles Police Department Crime Laboratory for other tests. Quite often, long delays were experienced before the results of the tests were known, and this hindered the investigation. In addition, it was difficult to produce the crime laboratory expert who had made the test when his testimony was required in court. This was especially true when the FBI facilities were used. When the Los Angeles facility was used, the head of that lab would take time off from his work to come to Phoenix. Establishment of the City's own Crime Laboratory meant that tests in the Los Angeles laboratory were required only where needed equipment was not available in this area. The Phoenix Police Department chemist also used facilities of college & industrial labs in Phoenix for testing which required equipment in special instances. Mr. Ray Pinker, head of the Los Angeles Police Laboratory, worked closely with the Phoenix Police Department in determining the equipment required for the Phoenix Crime Laboratory.

<p><b>1958-59</b></p> <p>The City started purchasing materials to establish a Phoenix Crime Detection Lab. The equipment was initially housed at 17 S. Second Avenue.</p> 	<p><b>1960</b></p> <p>William J. Collier was hired as a Chemist, expanding the staff to two.</p> <p>In September, Herbert M. Irvin was hired as the Police Chemist - the original position title. The lab was considered part of internal services &amp; was under a police Captain. The 1st operating laboratory facilities were in the converted kitchen of an Elks Lodge located at 320 W. Washington Street.</p> 	<p><b>1962-67</b></p> <p>The lab moved to new quarters in the basement of the City Courts building located at 12 N. 4th Ave. In January, Mr. Irvin resigned from the lab. Mr. Collier was working alone until June when another chemist was hired - Luke Haag. By this time, the position title had been modernized to Criminalist.</p> 	<p><b>1967</b></p> <p>Two more Criminalists were hired &amp; the staff continued to expand by approximately one employee per year for the next 5 years. A physical evidence manual was compiled by the lab for use at the Phoenix Police Academy.</p> <p>The Laboratory Services Bureau was established in November as part of the Technical Services Division. William J. Collier became the 1st bureau director.</p>	<p><b>1969</b></p>	<p><b>1973</b></p> <p>Organization within the laboratory was restructured with a new position of Criminalist Supervisor being added. Luke Haag became the first person to hold the position.</p> 	<p><b>1975</b></p> <p>The laboratory moved in to the basement of the new Police &amp; Public Safety building at 620 W. Washington Street. A number of sophisticated analytical instruments were added to the Bureau during the years between 1970-1975; including laser raman, infra-red, gas chromatography and an energy dispersive x-ray fluorescence system.</p> 		
<p><b>1975</b></p> <p>A Criminalist qualification affidavit form was developed and distributed to all justices of the peace, thereby eliminating the need for Criminalists to appear at preliminary hearings. This greatly reduced Criminalist's court appearance time.</p> 	<p><b>1977</b></p> <p>Serological typing capabilities were expanded to include the simultaneous determination of two enzyme systems in a single analytical procedure. This greatly heightened the lab's quantum of proof in blood typing cases over former capabilities.</p> <p>The Mark IV Gas Chromatograph Intoxilyzer (GCI) was implemented for testing DWI suspects.</p>	<p><b>1978</b></p> <p>The Latent Print section was moved from the Records &amp; Identification Bureau to the Crime Laboratory.</p> <p>In May, the Automated Fingerprint System (AFIS) went online which allowed the ability to search unknown fingerprints to identify suspects and aide investigations. The Phoenix Crime Laboratory was the only agency in the state with this capability at the time.</p>	<p><b>1989</b></p>	<p><b>1991</b></p> <p>The Crime Lab received certification by the National Forensic Science Training Center which allowed for DNA testing to be performed. A condition of this certification was that the Crime Lab would gain voluntary accreditation within 18 months. By achieving certification &amp; then accreditation, the Phoenix Crime Lab was able to participate in the National DNA Index System (NDIS). Participation in NDIS is required in order to enter profiles into the Combined DNA Index System (CODIS) database to identify suspects &amp; aide in investigations.</p>	<p><b>2000</b></p> <p>The Phoenix PD Laboratory Services Bureau was granted accreditation with the American Society of Crime Laboratory Directors/ Laboratory Accreditation Board.</p> <p>The Laboratory Services Bureau relocated to a brand new, state of the art building located at 621 W. Washington Street.</p> 	<p><b>2001</b></p>	<p><b>2007</b></p> <p>The Phoenix PD Laboratory Services Bureau has grown considerably in its 50 years of existence. Today the lab is staffed by one Commander, two assistant administrators, one Lieutenant and over 150 lab employees.</p>	<p><b>2010</b></p>

# Commanders and Administrators of the Crime Laboratory



**Cmdr. Harry Markley**  
2009 - Present



**Cmdr. Brent Vermeer**  
2007 - 2009



**Cmdr. Richard Groeneveld**  
2004 - 2007



**Judy Welch**  
2003 - 2004



**Susan Narveson**  
1998 - 2003



**Cmdr. Marcus Aurelius**  
1997 - 1998



**Cmdr. Thomas Lannon**  
1994 - 1997



**William Collier**  
1969 - 1994