

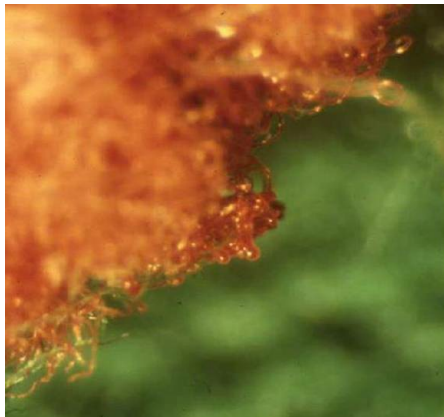


January 2013

First
Forensic Ltd

Forensic Focus - The newsletter of First Forensic

www.firstforensic.co.uk | admin@firstforensic.co.uk



Melted fibres on clothing

Suspected "Flash burning"

We were recently asked to comment on a case of suspected "flash burning" to the clothing of a defendant who was charged with Murder following the death of his wife in a fire. It was alleged by the prosecution that he had poured white spirit onto the victim, and ignited it, causing her death.

One of the prosecution scientists interpreted the burns to the defendant's clothing as "flash burns", i.e. that the defendant had been in close contact at the moment of ignition. Our examination of his clothing however, showed that the burns could not have resulted from the "flash" ignition of white spirit, but were due to brief contact with the flames as the defendant attempted to extinguish the fire.

A second prosecution expert subsequently agreed with our interpretation and consequently this aspect was dropped from the prosecution case. The defendant was acquitted of murder and found guilty of Manslaughter.

Did you know.....?

White spirit is not as volatile as petrol, and normally requires the ignition source (flame) to be in almost direct contact, in order for it to ignite.

Some of the damage caused to clothing when exposed to a flame may be visible but some may only be seen using a microscope. When this damage is present, it can associate the wearer with a source of heat or flame.

When a highly volatile material such as petrol is ignited, this can result in a "fireball" or "flame wash". The flame passes rapidly over clothing and other materials causing microscopic damage.

Heat damage must be interpreted in the context of the circumstances of each individual case.

Need Forensic
Awareness

CPD for legal
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CPD training

First Forensic are accredited by the Solicitors Regulation Authority to provide CPD training in forensic awareness to the legal profession. Our courses are tailored to our clients specific requirements and cover a range of forensic issues and updates. For more information, [click here](#) to contact us.

We provide high quality, timely, cost effective forensic solutions to the criminal and civil justice system. Our expertise includes

- Fire and explosion investigation, interpretation of burning damage and thermal injuries.
- Physical evidence: shoemarks, toolmarks, drugs packaging etc
- Firearms and ballistics
- Fingerprints
- Contact traces: glass, paint, building and particulate materials
- Biological materials: DNA, blood, saliva, semen etc
- Documents
- Drugs
- Photography



Please take a moment to complete our [short survey](#). Many thanks.

If you require any further information on any of our services, please do not hesitate to contact us on admin@firstforensic.co.uk

Forensic Science in the news



Khat

Last week, the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs (ACMD) published a report on Khat, a plant material which can be chewed, producing mild stimulant effects. Khat is popular within the Yemen, Saudi Arabia and Somali communities and is not currently controlled under the Misuse of Drugs Act, although its active constituents are Class C drugs. ACMD have recommended that Khat remains a "legal high" and is not controlled under the MODA. due to the lack of evidence of any serious harmful

effects. To view the full report, [click here](#).

Following the Sandy Hook massacre in Connecticut, USA in December 2012, the Home Secretary, Theresa May, has announced that Firearms licence checks may be extended to include the partners of applicants. [Click here](#) for more information.

Other recent additions to the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 include:

"Spice"



- Piperazines (Class C), which have similar effects to the Ecstasy group of drugs, and are often "cut" with MDMA (ecstasy)
- Cannabis receptor agonists (Class C), such as "Spice", which mimic Tetra Hydro Cannabinol (THC), a major active ingredient in Cannabis and "Skunk"
- Fifteen new steroids and two non-steroid agents (Class C)
- Naphyrone (Class B)

First Forensic news in brief

- Andrew Wade has been asked to speak at a forthcoming forensic science conference in Abu Dhabi. He will be running a workshop in advanced fire investigation techniques.
- First Forensic will also be presenting at the Forensics Europe Expo in London's Olympia on 24th April. Our presentation will include several of our recent high profile "cold case reviews".
- Karen Wade has been asked to be an external examiner for Nottingham Trent University on their Forensic Science BSc courses.

At First Forensic, we are proud of our impartiality and undertake work on behalf of the prosecution and the defence. This impartiality has been favorably commented on in court on several occasions.

We are experts in the analysis and interpretation of forensic evidence and may be able to provide the information you require to assist your client.

For more information or advice, please call us on 01606 74810, [email us](#) or visit www.firstforensic.co.uk

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