

MEGAN WAY, Dept of Natural Science, Forensic Science Program, Fairmont State University, Fairmont, WV, 26554, and KRISTY HENSON, Dept of Natural Science, Forensic Science Program, Fairmont State University, Fairmont, WV 26554. Determining if Household Powders can Aid in Forensic Fingerprint Analysis.

This research work serves the purpose to test whether household powders like cornstarch, baking soda and cocoa powder work in lifting latent fingerprints. This would be helpful if for any reason normal fingerprint powder is not able to be used. While doing the research project the powders used were Sirchie black, white and pink fingerprint powders, cornstarch, baking soda and cocoa powder. The surfaces used were plates, aluminum cans and laminate. A male and female touched each surface and for the first part the prints were dusted immediately. After that, the surfaces were touched again, but this time the prints sat for one hour and lifted after that. Each print was lifted using SIRCH-LIFT tabs. The top film of the tape was not placed back on because it left bubbles in the print, therefore distorting the print. The results showed a lot with each powder. The black powder worked like it was supposed to. The white and pink powders did have some issues with clumping and not sticking to the print. The baking soda did not work at all for any surfaces. The cornstarch and cocoa powder went back and forth between working for each gender and surface. So, these results showed that some household powders would be helpful in the field if regular powders are not accessible.