

VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY -- 1995 SESSION

CHAPTER 578

An Act to amend and reenact § 18.2-253 of the Code of Virginia, relating to destruction of contraband.

[H 2342]

Approved March 24, 1995

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That § 18.2-253 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 18.2-253. Disposal of seized substances.

A. All controlled substances, imitation controlled substances, marijuana or paraphernalia the lawful possession of which is not established or the title to which cannot be ascertained, which have come into the custody of a peace officer or have been seized in connection with violations of this chapter, shall be forfeited and disposed of as follows:

1. Upon written application by the Division of Forensic Science the court may order the forfeiture of any such substance or paraphernalia to the Division for research and training purposes and for destruction pursuant to regulations of the United States Department of Justice Drug Enforcement Administration and of the Board of Pharmacy once these purposes have been fulfilled.

2. In the event no application is made under subdivision 1 of this subsection, the court shall order the destruction of all such substances or paraphernalia which order shall state the existence and nature of the substance or paraphernalia, the quantity thereof, the location where seized, the person or persons from whom the substance or paraphernalia was seized, *if known*, and the manner whereby such item shall be destroyed. A return under oath, reporting the time, place and manner of destruction shall be made to the court and to the Board of Pharmacy by the officer to whom the order is directed. A copy of the order and affidavit shall be made a part of the record of any criminal prosecution in which the substance or paraphernalia was used as evidence and shall, thereafter, be prima facie evidence of its contents. *In the event a law enforcement agency recovers, seizes, finds, is given or otherwise comes into possession of any such substances or paraphernalia which are not evidence in a trial in the Commonwealth, the chief law-enforcement officer of the agency may, with the written consent of the appropriate attorney for the Commonwealth, order destruction of same; provided that, a statement under oath, reporting a description of the substances and paraphernalia destroyed, and the time, place and manner of destruction is made to the chief law-enforcement officer and to the Board of Pharmacy by the officer to whom the order is directed.*

B. No such substance or paraphernalia used or to be used in a criminal prosecution under this chapter shall be disposed of as provided by this section until all rights of appeal have been exhausted, except as provided in § 18.2-253.1.