



# Department of Justice



## Office of Justice Programs

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**\*\*\*\*\*PUBLICATION ADVISORY\*\*\*\*\***

**NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF JUSTICE IMPROVES VEHICLE  
IDENTIFICATION USING PAINT FRAGMENTS**

WASHINGTON – The Office of Justice Programs’ National Institute of Justice (NIJ) today published an online article describing enhancements made to the Paint Data Query, a database used by law enforcement to identify vehicles involved in crimes and hit-and-run accidents. The article discusses issues with the database that sometimes lead to inaccurate information or the failure to identify small paint samples taken from crime and accident scenes. The report recounts steps taken by researchers to address these weaknesses by, for example, applying prefilters that differentiate paint samples by automobile manufacturer and using a new algorithm that corrects distortions in infrared readings. The new measures promise to increase both the speed and accuracy of forensic automotive paint analysis.

More information about today’s publication and other NIJ programs is available here:  
[www.nij.gov](http://www.nij.gov)

**TITLE:** *“Improving a Database to Help Identify a Vehicle by Using Paint Fragments”*

**AUTHORS:** National Institute of Justice

**WHERE:** <https://nij.gov/topics/forensics/evidence/trace/pages/database-to-identify-vehicle-using-paint-fragments.aspx>

The Office of Justice Programs, headed by Acting Assistant Attorney General Alan R. Hanson, provides federal leadership in developing the nation’s capacity to prevent and control crime, administer justice and assist victims. OJP has six bureaus and offices: the Bureau of Justice Assistance; the Bureau of Justice Statistics; the National Institute of Justice; the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention; the Office for Victims of Crime; and the Office of Sex Offender Sentencing, Monitoring, Apprehending, Registering and Tracking. More information about OJP and its components can be found at [www.ojp.gov](http://www.ojp.gov).

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