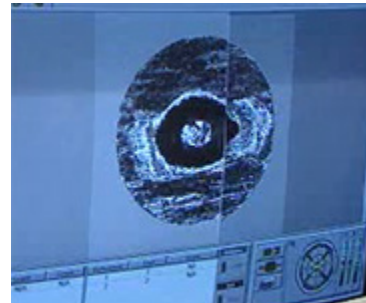


## Crime lab uses ballistics ID system to work on sniper evidence

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[Roger Harvey](#)/Eyewitness News

Indianapolis - Authorities have been investigating the interstate sniper, and the evidence collected includes bullets found at both interstate locations. There's information on those bullets and fragments that could help investigators solve the crime. Indiana State Police will use a high-tech computer called the Integrated Ballistics Identification System to help them determine the type of weapon used. It is one of seven ballistics identification systems in Indiana.



"When a bullet enters an object, it does splinter. So we are going to let our ballistics experts determine what is a bullet and what is a fragment from another bullet," said Indiana State Police Sergeant Jerry Goodin.



"We find a bullet or cartridge casing at one scene and a bullet or cartridge casing at another scene and then put each under the microscope here and compare the markings," said Cole Goater, a Marion County firearm examiner.

The IBIS computer system takes digital images of bullets and cartridge casings and compares unique markings against a database of more than 25,000 entries.



"The system is only as good as the database that's in there, so we try to get as much in as we can," said Marion County firearms examiner John Brooks.

He said the county IBIS computer successfully found 125 matches since 1997. In addition to sharing information with six other IBIS computers in Indiana, examiners can also look for matches across the country.

"I have the ability to correlate with California on crimes there," Brooks said. "You can basically go nationwide."

When a gun is fired, the bullet and cartridge casing have markings on them which are unique to the weapon that fired them.

"Whether or not that can be something viable enough in a fragment for an examiner to determine the caliber of weapon is just based on what is left," said Michael Medler, the director of the Marion County Forensics Services Agency.

Ballistics testing normally can take weeks to complete, but state police investigators said because of the high priority of the case, they hope to get results as early as Tuesday.