Q: Why is the NCSTL database better than a regular search engine?
A: The NCSTL database is better than a regular search engine when you want to do research in one of NCSTL’s forensic related topics. Professional researchers have scoured available information to locate the newest and best information related to those topics. Additionally, they have prepared abstracts of the information they find to let you know what the item will contain. All you have to do is take a look at what they’ve found. You don’t have to sift through hundreds of thousands of hits from a search engine search to locate the most relevant items. You can limit your searching to particular topics and types of resources. Best of all, you get a quick nutshell of each item’s contents.

Q: What is the NCSTL database?
A: The NCSTL database is designed to be “one-stop-shopping” for information related to the nexus of science, technology and the law. It is a collection of thousands of bibliographic records for forensic and criminal justice related resources. These bibliographic records provide you with an abstract for each item, as well as all the information you or your librarian will need to find that item, including the URL to the full text of the item whenever it is available online.

Q: How is the NCSTL database useful?
A: The NCSTL database is useful for anyone who has to find literature or media resources about a forensic related topic. Whether you are a lawyer preparing for a case that includes scientific evidence, a scientist preparing an in-court presentation, or an academic doing research on a forensic topic, the NCSTL database will be useful in tracking down relevant background reading, as well as media and educational presentations.

Q: What types of information can be found in the NCSTL database?
A: The NCSTL database collects and distributes bibliographic information on thousands of court decisions, pieces of legislation, legal and scientific publications, news and media features, websites and educational opportunities.

Q: Does the NCSTL database contain full text of documents?
A: No. NCSTL is a bibliographic database. Think of the NCSTL database as a great big library catalog, with the library being the world of available forensic/criminal justice information. NCSTL includes abstracts describing documents, finding information for documents, and URLs to the text of documents, but it does not include the full text itself.

Borrow our items through ILL.
Ten Ways to Use the NCSTL Website

1. Want to find research or articles about a topic? Search the Database
2. Looking for a conference to attend? Browse the Calendar
3. Want to read about the latest scientific evidence topics? Read the Newsletter
4. Need to find out about an expert witness? Dig up Dirt
5. Getting ready to testify at trial? Prepare for Trial with Expert Witness Resources
6. Need to learn about the law of scientific evidence? Find the Law with Related Links
7. Want to hear a speaker online? Attend a Lecture with Online Multimedia
8. Need to locate a specific web-based resource? Link to Resources
9. Do you need to read further about a topic? Follow Up with NCSTL's Bibliographies
10. Want to connect with others in your field? Connect to Organizations & Associations

Library without Walls

The National Clearinghouse for Science, Technology, and the Law at Stetson University College of Law hosts an extensive website that includes the world’s only searchable database on law, science and technology. It contains bibliographic information for court decisions and commentary, scholarly publications, commercial applications, professional associations and institutions, and other resources about traditional and new forensic topics, including topics such as, Identity Theft, Intra and Interstate Tracking of Sexual Predators, Canine Sniff Detection, and Less Lethal Technologies. NCSTL has also just begun adding multimedia records, which provide information about forensics-related podcasts, webcasts, and online courses. No other such national resource exists.

You can find other useful research resources at NCSTL’s website, including a quarterly newsletter which focuses on the latest topics. In addition, comprehensive Cold Case and Identifying the Missing resources have their own area on the site, as do other educational and research resources. NCSTL’s popular calendar provides information on upcoming conferences and seminars that are of interest to NCSTL’s audience.

Forensics in the Library

Stetson Law Library at Stetson University College of Law in Gulfport, Florida, is the only major law library in the United States to house a special collection of forensic science resources. NCSTL supports its database by collecting hardcopy books and journals that correspond to its database records. These books and journals are made available to the public and can easily be borrowed through the interlibrary loan system. You can visit Stetson Law Library’s website by going to http://www.law.stetson.edu and choosing “Library” from the menu.