

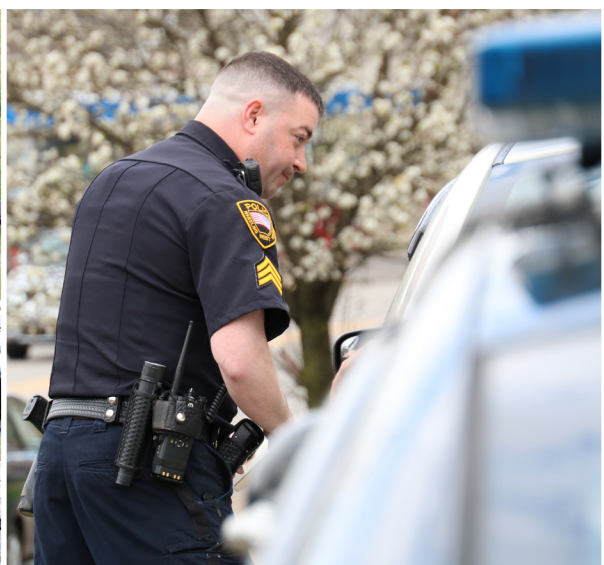


2023

ANNUAL REPORT

2115 Chapline Street, Wheeling, WV 26003 | 304.234.3664 | wheelingwv.gov/police

 Wheeling, WV Police Department  @WheelingPolice



Wheeling Police Department

ANNUAL REPORT 2023

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LETTER from the Chief

I am pleased to present the Wheeling Police Department's 2023 Annual Report. This document will provide an overview of this historic department and showcase highlights over the year and multiple areas of data during the last several years. I remain extremely proud of the progress of the Wheeling Police Department and its members. Every time I am fortunate enough to venture out into our wonderful community, I hear from our citizens about the gratitude and pride that they have in their police department. That type of sincere feedback is worth more than anything and motivates us to continue doing what we do, being the premiere law enforcement agency in the great state of West Virginia.



SHAWN SCHWERTFEGER
Chief of Police

During 2023, the Wheeling Police Department members, through geographic and problem-oriented policing, were successful in reducing "Group A" crimes by 6% as well as reducing motor vehicle crashes and overall calls for service. Our False Alarm Reduction Program continues to reduce the number of false alarms that the WPD responds to. Moving forward, the Wheeling Police will continue to utilize a CompStat process and focus on data-backed and driven trends to ensure resources are being applied appropriately. We will continue to look for alternative ways to enhance our operations and continue to ensure the City of Wheeling is a great place to live, work, and play.

In 2023, the Wheeling Police successfully implemented an Assigned Vehicle Program in which all sworn members of the department are assigned their own police vehicle to take home. This enhances response times, visibility, recruitment, and retention efforts. Additionally, we have brought on a Forensic Evidence Specialist position which has been instrumental in coordinating all things evidence-based and in line with our policies and procedures. During the new school year, the WPD transitioned our sworn personnel assigned to Ohio County Schools to School Resources Officers (SROs) and brought on a new program of School Security Officers (SSOs) to supplement security in our school system. Finally, the biggest highlight in 2023, the Wheeling Police Department moved into a brand new, state-of-the-art facility that will make this agency thrive well into the future. We thank all of those who played a role in making this large project come to a completion.

As we move into 2024, we look to successfully implement a 12-hour shift program for our patrol officers which will provide more coverage on our streets and improve manpower and recruitment and retention efforts. Despite the downward trend in crime in 2023, we did see an increase in overdoses, and in 2024 will be bringing on some embedded peer support positions into the WPD for outreach and casework surrounding our overdose victims and those suffering from substance use disorder. These peers will be joining us through a partnership with First Choice Services. We will also look to implement a robust wellness program for our staff, create a Business Crime Watch program, and redistrict our patrol areas.

Finally, I am so proud of the staff of the Wheeling Police Department. Their tireless dedication, professionalism, and desire to serve are paramount to the success presented in this document. Additionally, we thank our community for their unwavering support of our staff and for working with us continually for the betterment of the City of Wheeling.

Chief Shawn Schwertfeger



MISSION Statement

The Wheeling Police Department is committed to enhancing the quality of life in and around the community by:

1. Building partnerships that will provide a safe and secure community through proactive and impartial enforcement
2. Honoring and enforcing the codified ordinances of the city of Wheeling, the code of the state of West Virginia and the United States Constitution
3. Maintaining a focus on fighting crime and the fear of crime
4. Continuing to strive to become the model law enforcement agency in the state of West Virginia



DEPARTMENT Personnel

CHIEF OF POLICE

R. Shawn Schwertfeger

DEPUTY CHIEF OF POLICE

William M. Noice

Ken J. Prager

LIEUTENANTS

Joshua P. Sanders

Russell B. Campbell, Jr.

Jonathan M. Stipetich

Gust J. Kepreos

SERGEANTS

Sheldon P. LaCava

Richard A. Robbins, Jr.

Joshua R. Raddish

Greggory M. Harris

Daniel D. Finger

Douglas J. Howell

Marcus L. Narehood

Robert S. Safreed, III

Ryan M. Ferrell

Douglas R. Somerville

Andrew B. Adams

Brent J. Ruby

Jason A. Hupp

Benjamin J. Young

Robert J. McConnell, Jr.

CORPORALS

Jason A. Chambers

Jason A. Martin

Ronald J. Faldowski

Bryan T. Wilson

Erick M. Burke

Robert C. Scott

Kevin A. Kuca

Carlie M. Haywood

Ryan J. Moore

William P. Castilow

John W. McKenzie

Robert W. Agostino

Gage C. Parker

Dean J. Redinger

Gerald T. Mitchell

PATROLMAN FIRST CLASS

Brandon J. Hoehn

Brandon T. Stanley

Dylan J. Giusto

Shayne M. McAllister

Joshua A. Bolyard

Jacob P. Skinner

Robert M. Kovalyk

Brendan N. Ross

Zachary F. Stoneking

Colt P. Thomas

Blake A. Paxton

John T. Wolf

Cayden R. Hennen

Collin E. Jamison

Rebecca J. Tobiczyk

John C. Miller, Jr.

Jacob H. Auten

Howard J. Haglock, IV

PATROLMAN

Gabriel M. Damico

Patrick M. Ryan

Harrison R. Franks

Zachary D. Herron

Nolan C. Brough

Cory A. Rager

Tyler M. Davis

Cory A. Holt

Eddie Stewart, III

Colin M. Cooper

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Francine A. Catlett

CIVILIAN INTAKE COORDINATORS

Jennifer A. McGannon

L. Martin Haynes

Grace A. Lontz

Sean M. Snyder (Part-Time)

Janis L. Crosby (Part-Time)

CRIME ANALYST

John R. Wroten

EVIDENCE FORENSIC SPECIALIST

Deanna M. Ryan

HIGHWAY SAFETY COORDINATOR

Sean M. Snyder

PARKING METER ATTENDANTS

Patricia L. Miller

Roy Johnson

PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER

Philip M. Stahl

RECORDS

Michael E. "Rick" Roxby

VICTIM ADVOCATE OFFICE

Samantha M. Baker

COMMAND Staff



R. SHAWN SCHWERTFEGER
Chief of Police



DEPUTY CHIEF WILLIAM NOICE
Operations Bureau Commander



DEPUTY CHIEF KEN PRAGER
Investigations Bureau Commander



LT. JONATHAN STIPETICH
South District &
Alpha Shift Commander



LT. GUST KEPREOS
East District &
Bravo Shift Commander



LT. RUSSELL CAMPBELL
North District &
Charlie Shift Commander



LT. JOSH SANDERS
Special Operations &
Traffic Commander



SGT. SHELDON LACAVAL
Delta Shift Commander



SGT. JOSH RADDISH
Office of Professional Standards



SGT. ROB SAFREED
Detective Division



SGT. DOUG HOWELL
Training / Fleet Manager



ORGANIZATIONAL CHART





PATROL Division

The Patrol Division is the backbone of the Wheeling Police Department. It is the most visible part of the department and receives the most interaction with the public.

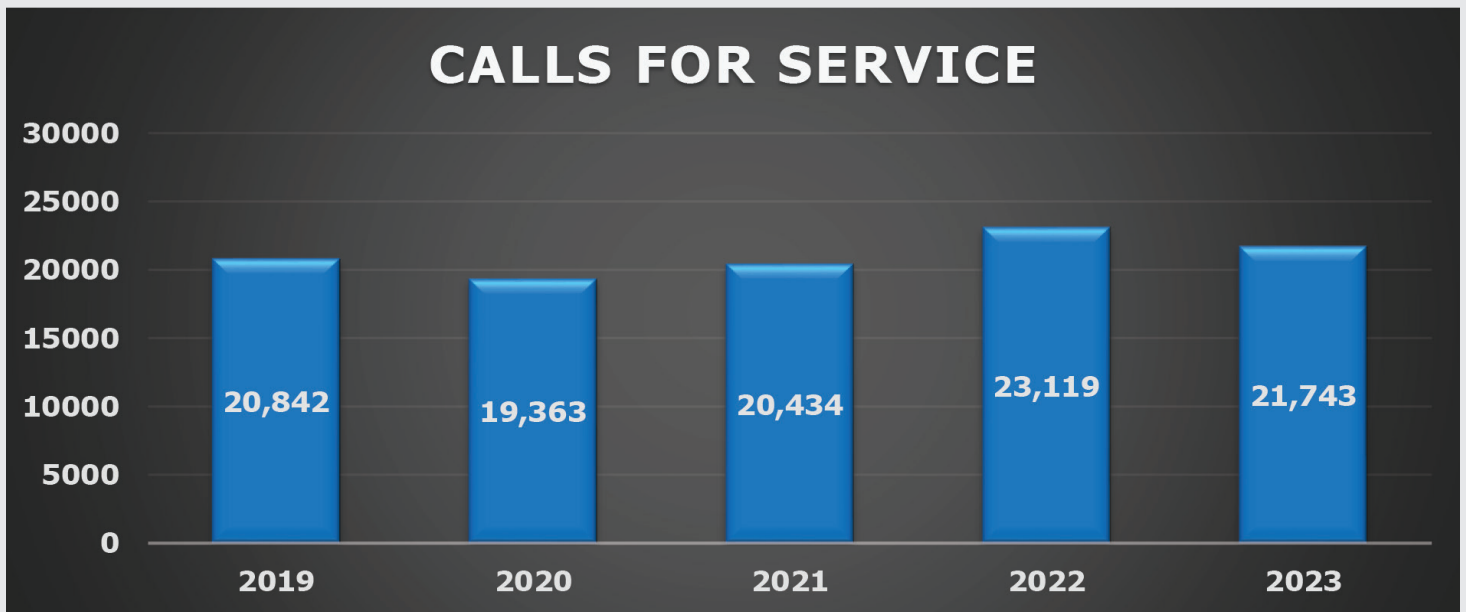
The division consists of four shifts: Alpha, Bravo, Charlie and Delta. Alpha, Bravo and Charlie shifts are assigned to work an eight-hour schedule, rotating every eight weeks, from day shift (6 a.m. – 2 p.m.), to afternoon shift (2 p.m. – 10 p.m.), and midnight shift (10 p.m. – 6 a.m.). Delta works a steady eight-hour night-turn shift of 8:30 p.m. – 4:30 a.m.



The division also has four K-9 handlers, all of whom are assigned to one of the main patrol shifts – Alpha, Bravo and Charlie. The City of Wheeling is divided into three patrol districts that are monitored 24 hours a day, covering an area of 14 square miles.

CALLS FOR SERVICE

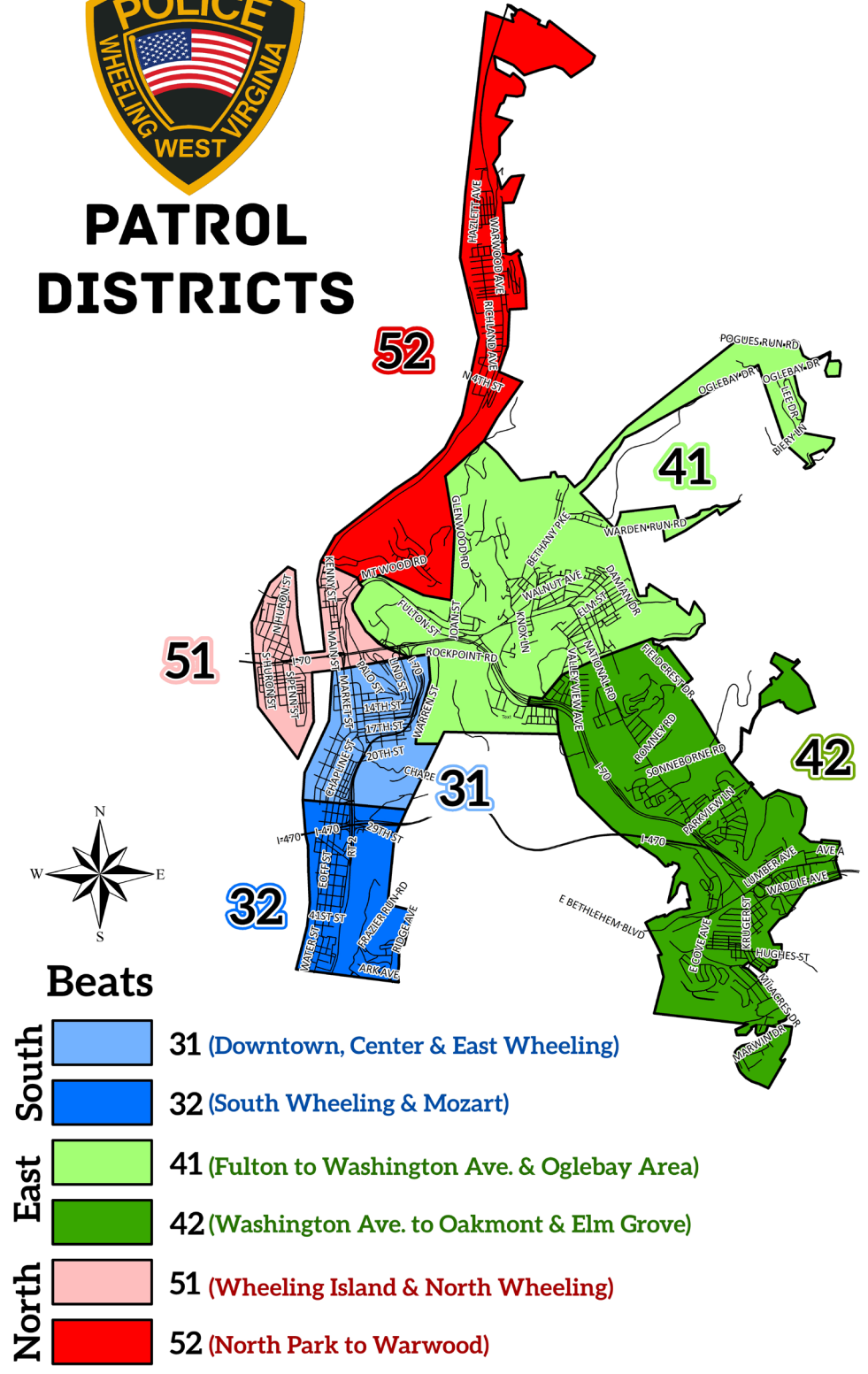
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
TOTAL	20,842	19,363	20,434	23,119	21,743



Total calls for service were down 6%. The overall number – 21,743 is more in line with an 'average year' after a rare increase in 2022. The reduction also is associated with continued efforts on officer-initiated activity, nightly foot patrols, community policing and multiple selective enforcement operations.



PATROL DISTRICTS



Beats

- South** **31** (Downtown, Center & East Wheeling)
- South** **32** (South Wheeling & Mozart)
- East** **41** (Fulton to Washington Ave. & Oglebay Area)
- East** **42** (Washington Ave. to Oakmont & Elm Grove)
- North** **51** (Wheeling Island & North Wheeling)
- North** **52** (North Park to Warwood)



INVESTIGATIONS Division

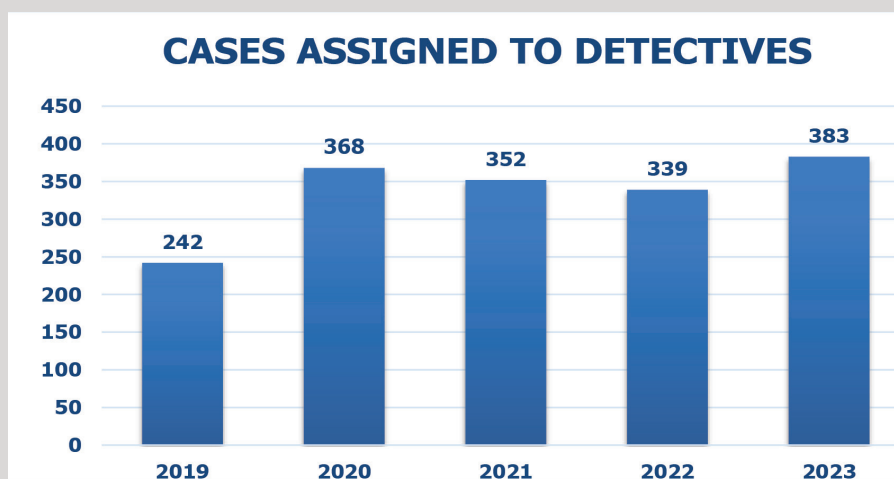
The Investigations Division – also known as the Detective Division – consists of four investigators and a supervisor. The detectives follow up on calls that require more than an initial report and are tasked with interviewing suspects, victims and witnesses as well as obtaining surveillance video and any forensic evidence.

Additionally, WPD’s investigations division is an affiliate with the West Virginia Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force (WVICAC). The task force participates in actively pursuing perpetrators involved with internet crimes against children as well as investigating crimes reported by individuals.

Sgt. Rob Safreed serves as investigations commander along with detectives Robert McConnell, Dean Redinger, Robert Agostino and Brandon Hoehn.

CASES In 2023, the Investigations Division investigated 383 new cases, a slight increase from the previous year. When looking at several years of cases, numbers are still up because of a change in the methodology used when assigning cases to detectives. This includes the investigation of more domestic-related cases and several misdemeanor crimes.

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
TOTAL	242	368	352	339	383



THE OHIO VALLEY DRUG TASK FORCE

Established in 1989, the Ohio Valley Drug Task Force investigates drug and violent crimes in the Ohio Valley area and consists of three Wheeling Police Officers, one Ohio County Sheriff's Deputies, and two West Virginia State Police Troopers. The OVDTF is housed in the Drug Enforcement Administration office in downtown Wheeling and works with local prosecutors' offices and the U.S. Attorney's office to prosecute offenders.

DRUGS SEIZED in 2023:

Cocaine: 1,427.95 grams
Crack Cocaine: 193.51 grams
Heroin: 75.9 grams
Marijuana: 2,641.59 grams
Fentanyl: 500.97 grams
Methamphetamine: 3,641.31 grams
Psilocybin: 21.01 grams
MDMA: 120.38 grams
Rx Drugs: 558 Doses

Drug Buys: 86
Arrests: 47
Search Warrants: 15
Firearms Seized: 2
Agency Assists: 16
Currency Seized: \$60,828
Real Property: \$24,737

VICTIM ADVOCACY PROGRAM

Established in 2020, the Victim Advocacy Program will help anyone who becomes a victim of a crime. Our Victim Advocate is the first line of contact for any victim and will work to consistently stay in direct contact, so they are not left behind. The program works together with the WPD detective division.

145

**VICTIM
ENCOUNTERS**

42

**PRIMARY
VICTIMS**

103

**SECONDARY
VICTIMS**

Assault - 13
Child Physical Abuse - 4
Child Sexual Abuse - 8
Death (Accidental) - 4
Death (Natural) - 2
Domestic - 47
Drug Overdose - 18
Fraud - 2
Harassment - 6
Missing Person - 2
Robbery - 7
Sexual Assault - 10
Strangulation - 3
Traffic Fatality & Incidents - 7
Vandalism - 7
Violation of DVP - 5



HANDLE WITH CARE

Often, children are exposed to violence and trauma. Childhood exposure, without the right support, can be associated with an increased risk of emotional, behavioral, and physical well-being issues.

The department started the "Handle with Care" program in 2016 where proper notification to the child's appropriate school or daycare will be notified privately when a traumatic incident occurred with that child. The school or daycare gets a notification to "handle the child with care." No other information on the specific case or incident that occurred will be released to protect the privacy of the child.

FOR 2023, A TOTAL OF

106

**HANDLE WITH CARE INCIDENTS
WERE REPORTED.**

OFFICE OF Professional Standards

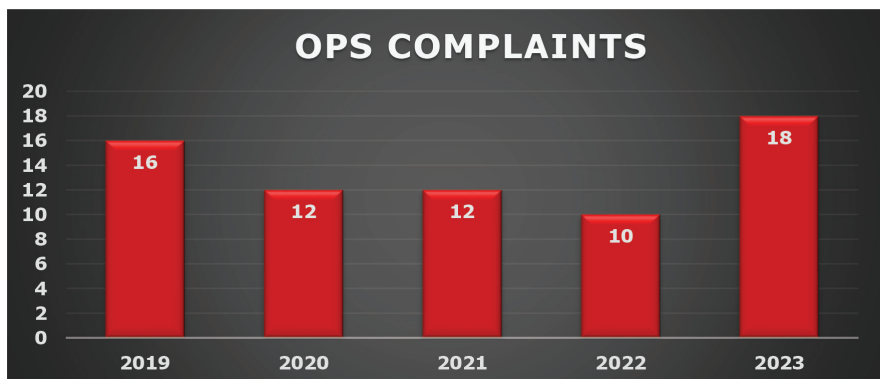
Created in 2012, the Office of Professional Standards (OPS) serves as an oversight on all citizen complaints to ensure that a complete and thorough investigation is conducted regarding complaints filed against Wheeling Police Officers.

The OPS takes all complaints against department members seriously and every case is investigated thoroughly and is handled in compliance with established laws and internal policies.

Because internal investigation records are considered confidential by the State of West Virginia and the policies of the Wheeling Police Department, the OPS cannot provide information regarding the investigation or its outcome.

OPS COMPLAINTS:

In 2023, the Office of Professional Standards conducted a total of 18 complaint inquiries/investigations. These complaints include both Internal Investigations and Performance Reviews.



INTERNAL INVESTIGATIONS:

Of the 18 complaints filed in 2023, 3 were classified as **Internal Investigations** and 15 as **Performance Reviews**. The OPS has several rulings that can be made from internal investigations. They include sustained, not sustained, exonerated, unfounded, voluntarily withdrew, informational, performance, training, and policy failure.

FINDINGS:

- 3 – Sustained
- 1 – Exonerated
- 1 – Unfounded

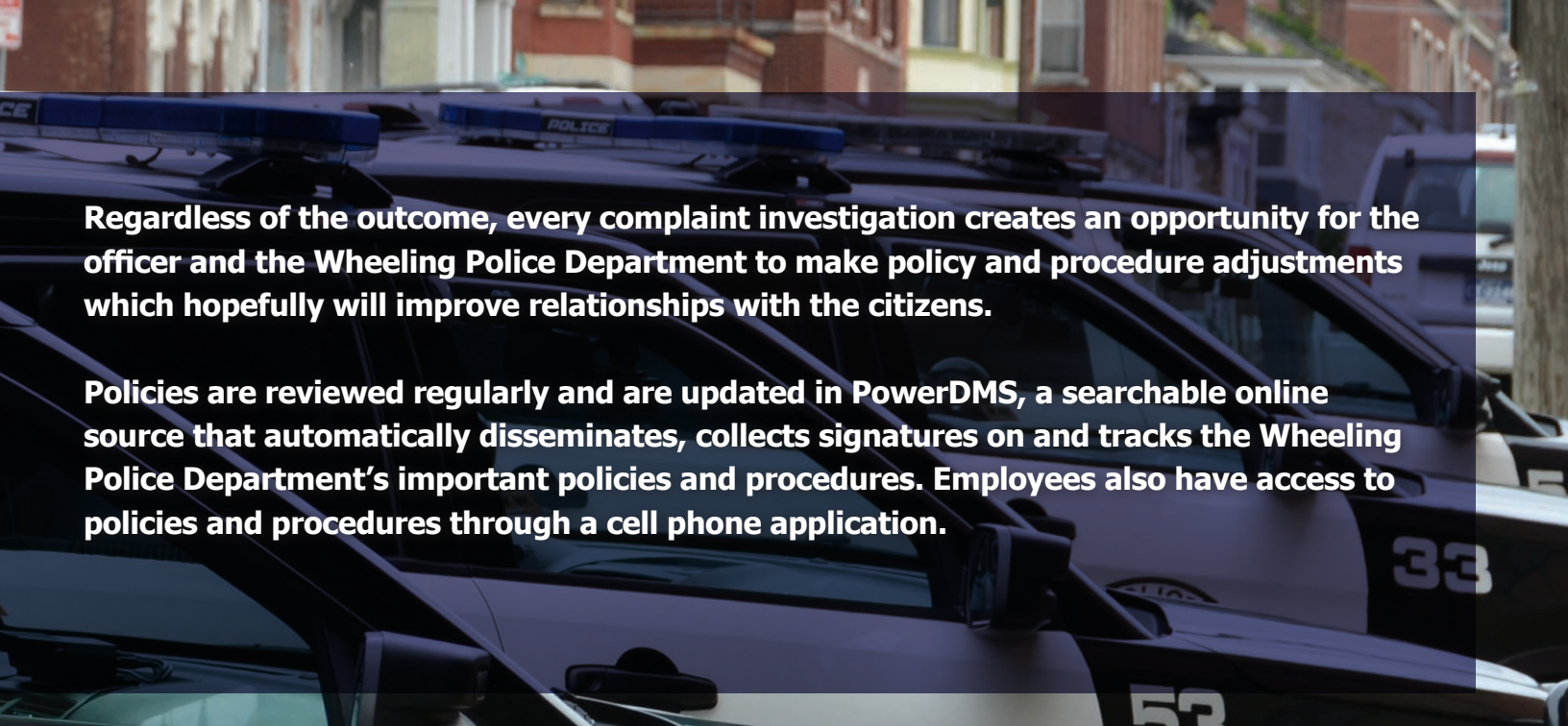
PERFORMANCE REVIEWS:

Of the remaining 15 complainant investigations handled by the OPS, all prompted a **Performance Review** - These types of complaints were mainly investigated by the officer/employee's shift supervisor or the OPS investigator. Of these Performance Reviews, each investigation was also issued a finding by the OPS investigator.

FINDINGS:

- 5 – Exonerated
- 6 – Sustained
- 2 – Performance
- 2 – Not Sustained
- 2 – Informational
- 2 – Unfounded

* **Note:** Each internal investigation and performance review can produce multiple findings.



Regardless of the outcome, every complaint investigation creates an opportunity for the officer and the Wheeling Police Department to make policy and procedure adjustments which hopefully will improve relationships with the citizens.

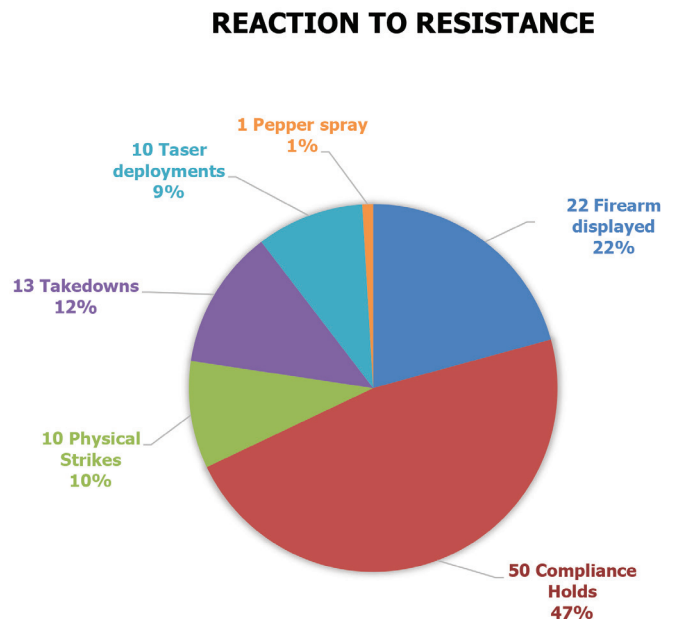
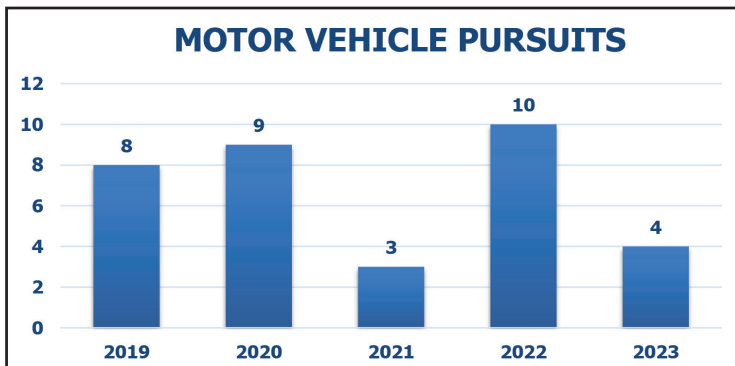
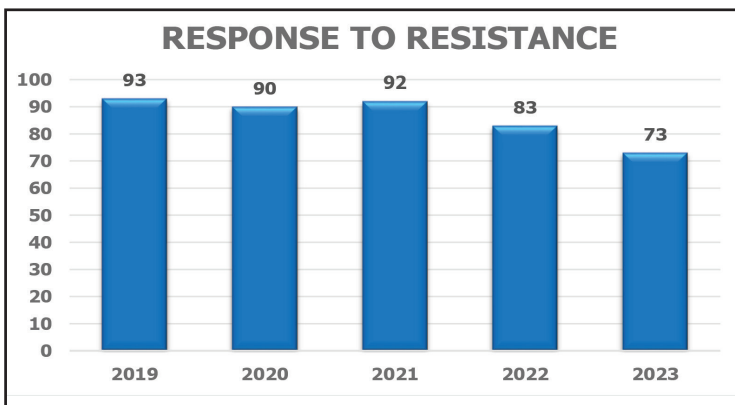
Policies are reviewed regularly and are updated in PowerDMS, a searchable online source that automatically disseminates, collects signatures on and tracks the Wheeling Police Department’s important policies and procedures. Employees also have access to policies and procedures through a cell phone application.

RESPONSE TO RESISTANCE:

One of the many duties the OPS tracks is Response to Resistance incidents that result in a written report filed by an officer who used some type of force on a person.

In 2023, 1,091 people were placed under arrest by Wheeling PD. During these arrests, some sort of force was used to gain control of an arrestee or other subject.

A total of 73 individuals were subjected to some type of force by police throughout the year. Of those responses, a reaction to response is created (note: each reaction can have more than one type generated).



TRAINING Division

The Training Division keeps up to date on changes to officer training requirements per West Virginia State Law and ensures each officer meets or exceeds those training requirements each fiscal year.

Every Wheeling Police officer must complete a minimum of 16 hours of in-service or continuing education hours to remain certified as an active law enforcement officer. These training requirements vary depending on the officer's rank and certain job duties. Supervisors have more training requirements to meet than patrol officers, and instructors must also maintain certification in their discipline.

In 2023, WPD Officers trained for a total of

**2,963
HOURS**

Training Breakdown:

- Mental Health/Wellness Training:** 308 hours
- De-Escalation & Firearms Training:** 542 hours
- Supervisory Training:** 788 hours
- In-Person Trainings held at Wheeling PD:** 9



FIREARMS TRAINING

The Wheeling Police Department currently has three firearms instructors – Sgt. Doug Somerville, Sgt. Robert McConnell and Cpl. Bryan Wilson. The firearms instructors conduct bi-annual weapons qualifications and training with the weapons used by the department. Weapons qualifications are done twice a year, during daylight hours (spring) and during low light hours (fall). All officers are required to complete 16 hours of firearms training annually. Trainings also are comprised of several scenarios that are played out to enhance an officer's critical thinking skills.

FIELD TRAINING OFFICER (FTO) PROGRAM

Wheeling Police Officers are not only required to graduate from the West Virginia State Police Academy, but they must also meet the requirements of the Wheeling Police Department's Field Training Program.

Trainees must complete a minimum of 16 weeks of training in the FTO program and are exposed to a comprehensive roster of police duties. They are trained in criminal law, traffic codes, accident investigation, processing crime scenes, community relations, domestic violence, emergency vehicle operations, and more.

Candidates must complete 24 hours of specialized training to become certified and become training officers. The department currently employs 14 certified field training officers.

6
NEW OFFICERS TRAINED

4,214
TRAINING HOURS COMPLETED

OFFICERS WHO GRADUATED FROM THE WEST VIRGINIA STATE POLICE ACADEMY IN 2023:



Tyler Davis



Zachary Herron and Cory Rager



Nolan Brough and Cory Holt

7
CIVIL SERVICE TESTS

25
BACKGROUND INVESTIGATIONS

4
OFFICERS HIRED

BACKGROUND & RECRUITMENT TEAM

The Background and Recruitment Team conducts extensive background investigations on police applicants who are in the hiring process for the Wheeling Police Department. The team contacts references, prior and current employers, conducts criminal history checks, and more to ensure all police applicants meet the strict standards and core values of the Wheeling Police Department. The team also attends several job and college fairs to recruit new officers in the region.

SPECIALIZED Units

SWAT TEAM

The Wheeling Police Department's Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) team is made up of 15 officers and 3 fire department medics. All team members complete an initial 40-hour basic SWAT school presented by a reputable training organization and recognized by the National Tactical Officers Association.

After successful completion of SWAT school, the team trains for varying missions monthly. Each team member has received special training in using tools, equipment, and tactics beyond that of a patrol officer assigned to a beat.



In 2023, the SWAT team was utilized mostly to assist the Ohio Valley Drug Task Force with search warrants.

SWAT TEAM MEMBERS:

Cpl. John McKenzie – Commander
Sgt. Josh Raddish
Sgt. Doug Somerville
Cpl. Jason Chambers
Cpl. R.J. Faldowski
Cpl. Bryan Wilson
Cpl. Ryan Moore
Cpl. Robert Agostino
Cpl. Gage Parker
Pfc. Brandon Hoehn
Pfc. Brandon Stanley
Pfc. Brendan Ross
Ptlm. Patrick Ryan
Ptlm. Harrison Franks
Lt. Dennis VanKirk – WFD Medic
Fire Engineer Dan Brown – WFD Medic
Fire Engineer Niko Kefauver – WFD Medic



CRISIS INTERVENTION TEAM (CIT)

The Crisis Intervention Team is a community partnership between WPD, Northwood Health Systems and several mental health/social service agencies professionals that work together to improve the crisis response system for people who live with mental illness and/or substance use disorders.

A component of the CIT is the 24/7 Mobile Crisis Response Unit, which consists of the department's CIT officers and mental health/

addiction professionals. The MCR can be activated by any officer, not just CIT-trained officers. They are requested at overdose scenes and any time an officer requests assistance with a mental health-related situation.

The CIT also provides training for law enforcement agencies in the region.

**CIT MOBILE
RESPONSE UNIT
ACTIVATED**

**121
TIMES**

K9 UNIT

The Wheeling Police Department's K9 Unit has served the department and city since 2003. Two K9s are Narcotic/Patrol dogs, meaning they are trained to detect narcotics, track fleeing suspects, building searches, and officer protection. The illegal narcotics that the K9 Unit is trained to detect are Marijuana, Cocaine, Heroin and MDMA. K9 Ozzy, a German Shepherd is trained in detecting explosives.



Cpl. John McKenzie & Jericho

Cpl. Ryan Moore & Virgil

Cpl. Jason Martin & Ozzy

Sgt. Jason Hupp & Zero



Deployment Breakdown:

- Building Search:** 6
- Evidence Search:** 85
- K9 as Backup:** 76
- Officer Protection:** 29
- Public Demonstrations:** 15
- Tracks:** 1

Evidence Breakdown:

- Firearms:** 2
- Cocaine:** 58.68 grams
- Heroin:** .1 grams
- Meth:** 186.28 grams
- Fentanyl:** 28.72 grams of powder, 63 pressed pills
- MDMA:** .5 pills

- Marijuana:** 7,791.7 grams
- THC Oil:** 7 fl oz
- THC Vape pens:** 4 items
- Alprazolam:** 9.5 pills
- Clonazepam:** 1.5 pills
- Buprenorphine:** 8 pills
- Drug Paraphernalia:** 62 items

CRASH RECONSTRUCTION TEAM

The Wheeling Police Department's Crash Reconstruction Team (CRT) responds to all life-threatening or fatal vehicle crashes in the City of Wheeling. The Ohio County Sheriff's Office also can request the Wheeling PD's CRT to respond with their organization to crashes that occur inside Ohio County. The CRT officers are certified traffic crash reconstructionist through the Institute of Police and Technology Management (IPTM).



The CRT was called out three times in 2023 for two vehicle fatalities - one involving a motorcycle on I-70, and another for a single-vehicle crash on Bethany Pike. They also investigated a non-fatal, DUI-related crash on National Road at Rush Avenue.



NORTHERN REGIONAL HIGHWAY SAFETY OFFICE

The Northern Regional Highway Safety Office is located within the Wheeling Police Department and is part of the Governor's Highway Safety Program (GHSP). The GHSP is the lead agency for West Virginia's participation in federally mandated and funded highway safety improvement measures. The purpose of GHSP is to encourage, promote, and support safety throughout West Virginia. Sean Snyder serves as the Northern Regional Highway Safety Office Coordinator.

2023 Highway Safety Regional Highlights (includes other agencies in region 4):

- **Click It or Ticket** – 135 citations - 73 hours worked
- **Speed/Work Zone** – 569 citations - 503 hours worked
- **Target Red/Stop Signs** – 52 citations – 36.5 hours worked
- **Impaired Driving** – 12 arrests - 256 hours worked
- **Other** – **1,425 citations** – 600.5 hours worked
- **Child Passenger Safety** – 194 car seats installed

UNMANNED AERIAL RECONNAISSANCE TEAM

The UART – Unmanned Aerial Reconnaissance Team was formed in 2022 and is comprised of five Wheeling Police officers and the department's crime analyst. WPD personnel have been trained and educated on FAA rules and regulations as well as the general functionality of the drone, flying techniques, in-flight emergencies, advanced ground school, and have been taught tactics through various scenarios. The drone, DJI Matrice 300 is equipped with a Zemuse H20T camera and was purchased – along with additional equipment – in part by the city of Wheeling and the Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) program.



Team Members:

Cpl. Jason Martin - Ops Manager / Pilot

Cpl. Jason Chambers - Pilot

Pfc. Brandon Hoehn - Pilot

Ptln. Gabriel Damico - Pilot

Ptln. Brandon Stanley - Pilot

Crime Analyst John Wroten - Pilot

220
FLIGHTS

53.5
HOURS AIRTIME

SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICERS

School Resource Officers (SROs) address numerous issues regarding safety within their respective schools. SROs review, update and improve, where possible, the existing school's emergency response plans. SROs may address school violations to positively impact student behavior and character and may refer students to school personnel as necessary. They also address school-related education laws to positively impact student behavior and character to mitigate more serious behaviors.



Wheeling Police Department's School Resource Officers:

Sgt. Gregg Harris – Wheeling Middle School

Cpl. Bryan Wilson – Wheeling Park High School

Cpl. Jason Chambers – Triadelphia Middle School

Cpl. Kevin Kuca – Warwood Middle School

Pfc. Dylan Giusto – Bridge Street Middle School

Cpl. R.J. Faldowski – Campus Liaison Officer for West Virginia Northern Community College

478
CLASSES/
PRESENTATIONS

241
EXTRA-
CURRICULAR
ACTIVITIES

719
PARENT
NOTIFICATIONS

1,217
ONE-ON-ONE
STUDENT
INTERACTIONS



HONOR GUARD

The Wheeling Police Honor Guard consists of several department members, tasked with providing ceremonial presentations at several events, including the State of the City Address, the annual Law Enforcement Memorial, the annual Sept. 11 memorial ceremony, and the Fire/Police Department recognition ceremony, funerals of former and fallen officers and various other community events.

In addition to providing these presentations, the Honor Guard is also tasked with providing services at the funerals of deceased active duty and retired department members.

WPD Honor Guard:

Sgt. Josh Raddish - Commander, Lt. Josh Sanders, Lt. Russell Campbell, Sgt. Doug Howell, Sgt. Robert McConnell, Cpl. Ryan Moore, Cpl. John McKenzie, Cpl. Gerald Mitchell, Pfc. Brandon Hoehn, Pfc. Robert Kovalyk, Pfc. Collin Jamison, Ptlm. Patrick Ryan



LAW ENFORCEMENT MEMORIAL MAY 17, 2023



WHEELING POLICE DEPARTMENT OFFICERS KILLED IN THE LINE OF DUTY

- **Joseph P. Brady** – Sept. 27, 1868
- **Joseph Glenn** – Jan. 17, 1888
- **Salavia C. "Lafe" Bowen** – Dec. 26, 1902
- **Henry Carl Seamon** – Feb. 26, 1917
- **Herman Henry Bartels** – May 3, 1922
- **Ray Melvin Lazear** – Jan. 12, 1925
- **Charles Ulrich "Bud" Brunhaus** – Jan. 20, 1926
- **James Robert Wolfe** – Jan. 31, 1931
- **James Reiter Bailey** – Oct. 11, 1971

COMMUNITY Outreach



NEIGHBORHOOD ASSISTANT VOLUNTEERS (NAVS)

The Wheeling Police Department Neighborhood Assistant Volunteers consists of 17 uniformed volunteers who are all graduates of the Citizens Police Academy. Upon being accepted to the NAV Program, and graduating from the Citizens Police Academy, NAVs received an additional 40 hours of training. These volunteers assist officers in the field as well as perform administrative duties in the department.

1,126
VOLUNTEER
HOURS

In Memory of
Janet Castilow, (1938-2023)
and
Judy Winesburg, (1947-2022)

WPD NAVs: Craig Collins, Zachary Cooper, Susan Downing, Kimberly Emery, Becky Gentle, Martin Imbroscio, Jon Letzkus, Rhonda McCollough, Jackie McGlumphy, Tom Miller, Jody Miller, Jacob Plants, Julia Sheets, Susan Simpson, Carla Vessels, Stephanie Whipkey, Julie Zogg

CITIZENS POLICE ACADEMY

The Citizens Police Academy is a 13-week program intended to foster relationships with the citizens of Wheeling to provide them with a working knowledge of the policies and limitations of the Wheeling Police Department. This program helps to increase the trust and confidence of our citizens in our ability to provide effective public safety and creates a better understanding between the citizens of Wheeling and the Wheeling Police Department through education.



The Wheeling Police Department conducted one Citizens Police Academy Class from August to November 2023. Fourteen individuals graduated in this class.

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH PROGRAMS

WPD currently holds seven monthly crime watch meetings throughout the city year-round in various neighborhoods. Meetings are informal and can be attended by any citizen, regardless of where they live. The purpose of the meetings are to build relationships with residents by working together on crime-related issues through conversation. Officers provide monthly statistics and talk about upcoming events, initiatives, and crime trends.

53
MEETINGS HELD



- Ward 1 Warwood – **Second Thursday**
- Ward 2 North Wheeling – **Third Thursday**
- Ward 2 Wheeling Island – **Fourth Tuesday**
- Ward 3 East Wheeling – **First Monday**
- Ward 3 South Wheeling – **Fourth Tuesday**
- Ward 4 Woodsdale – **Second Tuesday**
- Ward 6 Elm Grove – **Third Wednesday**

COMMUNITY Events

NATIONAL NIGHT OUT



OPERATION TOY LIFT



CITIZENS POLICE ACADEMY



WHEELING HOSPITAL SAFETY TOWN



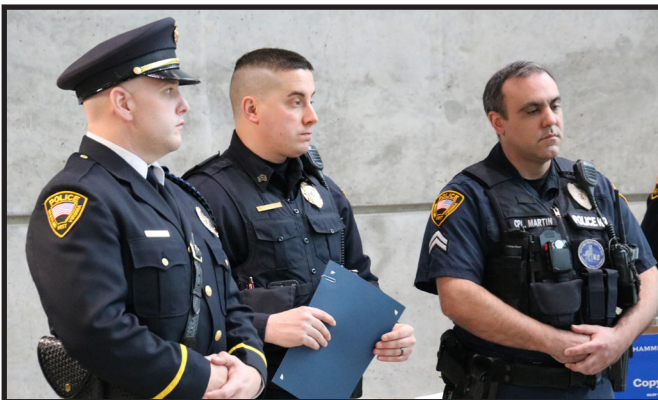


GUNS VS. HOSES Basketball Game

August 3, 2023

PUBLIC SAFETY Ceremony

March 23, 2023



2023 PERSONNEL ACCOLADES AND NOTES

RETIREMENTS



Karen L. Grimes

Retired 1/6/2023
47 years of service

NEW OFFICER HIRES

Cory Holt, 5/1/2023
Eddie Stewart, 11/6/2023
Colin Cooper, 11/6/2023

PROMOTIONS

Patrolman First Class

Pfc. Jacob Auten
Pfc. Howard Haglock, IV
Pfc. Gabriel Damico

DEPARTMENT RECOGNITION

Meritorious Performance

Sgt. Jason Hupp
Cpl. John McKenzie
Cpl. Jason Martin
Cpl. Jason Chambers
Cpl. Erick Burke
Cpl. William Castilow
Pfc. Brandon Hoehn
Pfc. Jacob Skinner
Pfc. Cayden Hennen
Pfc. John Wolf
Crime Analyst John Wroten

Medal of Merit

Lt. Gust Kepreos
Sgt. Rick Robbins
Sgt. Jason Hupp
Sgt. Ben Young
Cpl. Jason Martin
Cpl. Robert Scott
Cpl. Ryan Moore
Cpl. Erick Burke
Pfc. Colt Thomas
Pfc. Cory Castilow
Pfc. Brandon Stanley
Pfc. Brendan Ross
Pfc. John Wolf
Ptlm. Tyler Davis
CIC Martin Haynes

Lifesaving

Sgt. Robert Safreed
Cpl. Robert Agostino
Cpl. Dean Redinger

Community Service

Pfc. Cody Schwertfeger

Department Commendation

Cpl. Ryan Moore
Pfc. Cayden Hennen
Pfc. Rebecca Tobiczky
Ptlm. Patrick Ryan

Chief's Eagle Award

Sgt. Jason Hupp
Sgt. Doug Howell
Cpl. Erick Burke
Cpl. Jason Martin

Department Appreciation

Michael Lloyd, IT Director
Kristy Myers, Northwood Health Systems

WPD Eagle Award

Chief Shawn Schwertfeger

OFFICER OF THE QUARTER



1st – Pfc. Robert Kovalyk



2nd – Cpl. William Castilow



3rd – Ptlm. Zachary Herron



4th – Cpl. William Castilow

2023 OFFICER OF THE YEAR PFC. John Wolf



NEWSWORTHY Notes

FEBRUARY



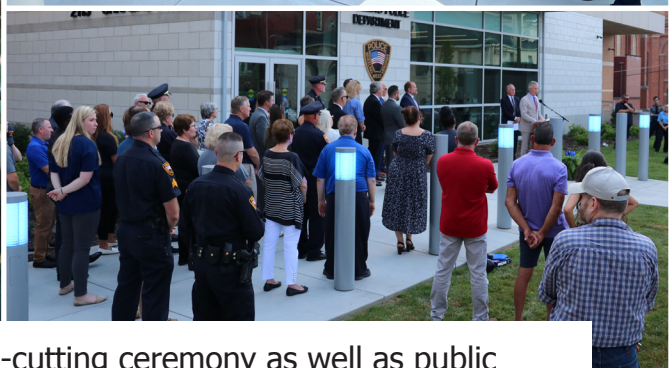
After a year and a half of construction, the department started moving into its new headquarters the week of Feb. 13.

A gas line rupture prompted an emergency response from various agencies. The gas was shut off quickly and traffic was reopened by the evening commute.

APRIL



JULY



The department held a ribbon-cutting ceremony as well as public tours of the new headquarters.

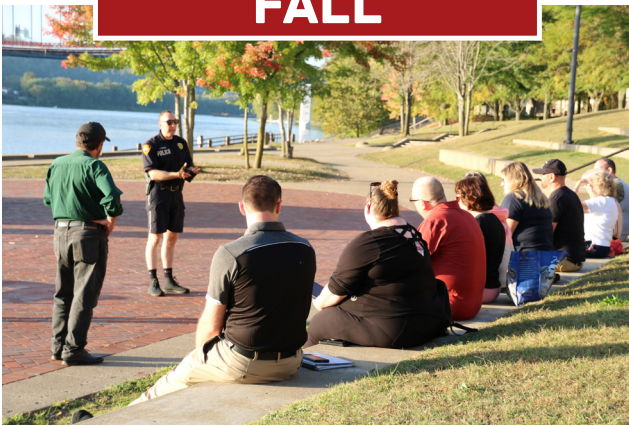
NEWSWORTHY Notes

Virgil, a 20-month-old Belgian Malinois joined the K9 Unit as its newest member.



AUGUST

FALL



The Citizens Police Academy returned after a four-year hiatus. Classes were held on Wednesday evenings at WPD Headquarters.

Police detectives and the Ohio County Prosecutors Office held a press conference discussing the abrupt plea agreement of Gerald Jako who committed a triple homicide in 2018.



SEPTEMBER

DECEMBER



K9 Zero, who was part of the WPD K9 Unit for the last five years retires.

CRIME Statistics

The National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) and the West Virginia Incident Based Reporting System collect information on each single incident and arrest within 22 crime categories composed of 46 offense types known as "Group A offenses." **Group A offenses** require an extensive amount of crime data collection. **Group B offenses** are also recorded but only collect arrest data for the offenses. The Wheeling Police Department is in compliance with the state of West Virginia in reporting all required crime data.

For specific crime-related information, the data is divided into two areas – "Group A" offenses, which are generally more serious (homicide, robbery, sex crimes), and "Group B" offenses, which involve more nuisance, quality of life, property crimes and highway safety/traffic offenses.

After seeing a rise in several "Group A" offenses in 2022, most went down in 2023 – including burglary, vandalism, drug offenses, motor vehicle theft and robbery. Categories of note that increased during the year were assaults (7%) and fraud cases (12%). Arrests slightly decreased and "Group B" offenses were mostly unchanged from the prior year, with a slight increase of 2%.

Total calls for service were down 6%. The overall number – 21,743 is more in line with an 'average year' after a rare increase in 2022. The reduction also is associated with continued efforts on officer-initiated activity, nightly foot patrols, community policing and multiple selective enforcement operations.

When looking at drug overdoses, cases rose for the first time in several years. Overall overdoses went up by 11% with a yearly total of 182. A total of 26 overdose-related deaths were reported in 2023 after a major decline the prior year. The deaths are unfortunately related to the continued enhanced uses of fentanyl mixed with other types of opioids and newer drugs being used like xylazine (a.k.a. 'Tranq').

(**NOTE:** Crime Stats numbers can change from previous publications because of pending cases and on-going investigations. Numbers are updated to reflect the most accurate data each annual report.)

GROUP A (more serious crimes)

DECREASED 6%

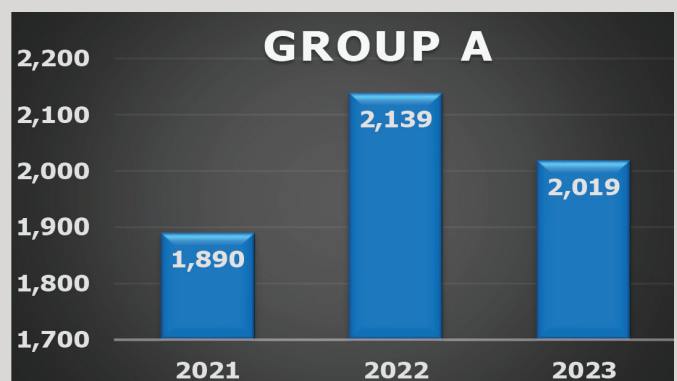
Categories that **decreased** from the previous year:

- Burglary (Down 17%)
- Drug Offenses (Down 24%)
- Motor Vehicle Theft (Down 17%)
- Robbery (Down 25%)
- Vandalism (Down 6%)

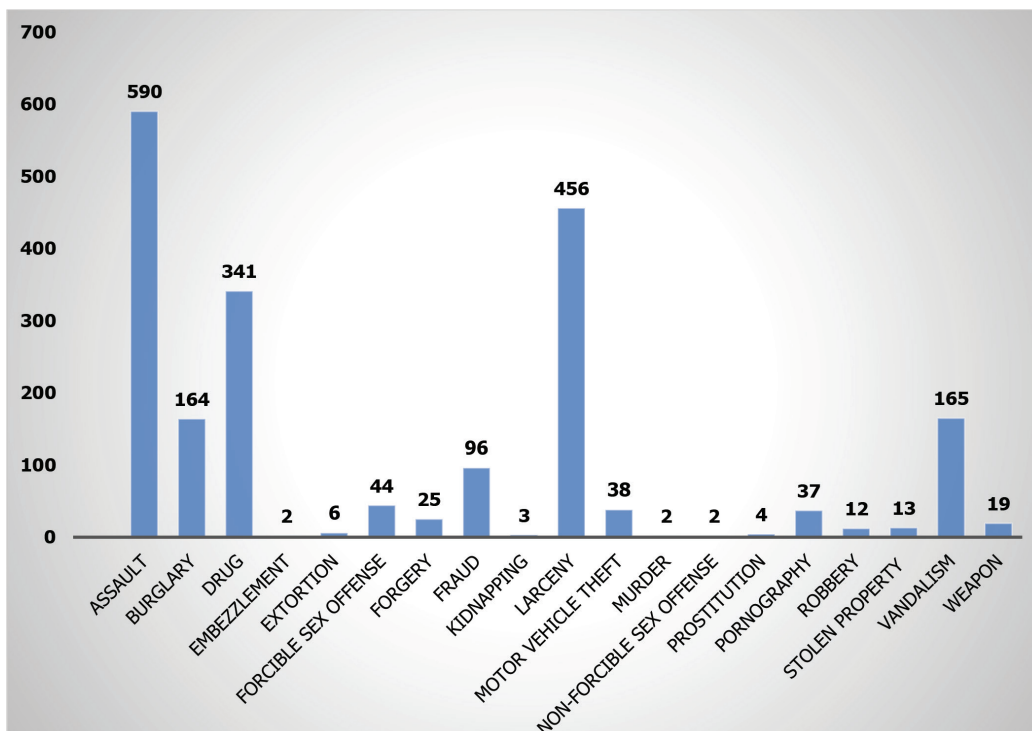
Categories that **increased** from the previous year:

- Assaults (Up 7%)
- Fraud (Up 12%)

Categories mostly unchanged from the previous year include larceny/thefts, sex-related crimes, and weapon-related offenses.

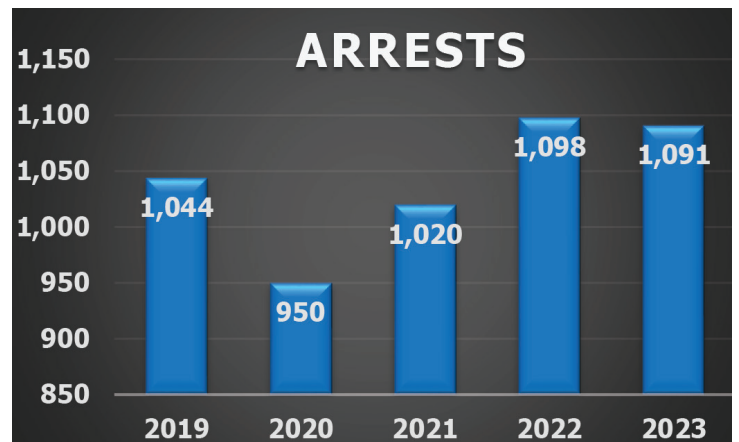
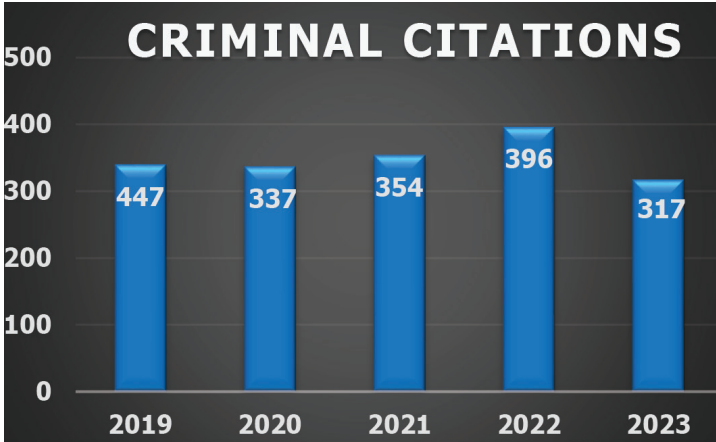
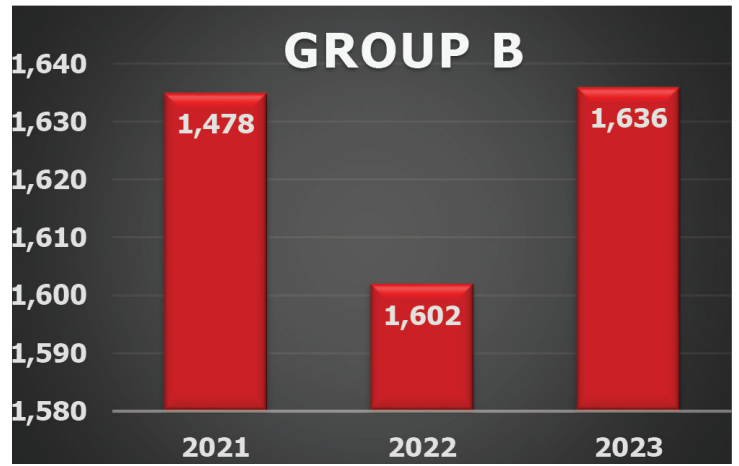


Group A Offenses	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
ARSON	2	4	2	2	0
ASSAULT	577	557	528	551	590
BURGLARY	144	179	122	197	164
FORGERY	37	36	26	39	25
VANDALISM	175	224	183	176	165
DRUG OFFENSES	287	328	384	451	341
EMBEZZLEMENT	6	2	5	7	2
EXTORTION	2	0	4	4	6
FRAUD	70	62	78	86	96
MURDER	1	1	2	2	2
KIDNAPPING	7	6	7	4	3
LARCENY	455	417	397	451	456
MOTOR VEHICLE THEFT	46	44	33	46	38
PORNOGRAPHY	16	12	25	27	37
PROSTITUTION	4	7	3	0	4
ROBBERY	17	31	16	16	12
FORCIBLE SEX OFFENSE	28	45	38	43	44
NON-FORCIBLE SEX OFFENSE	2	2	1	1	2
STOLEN PROPERTY	18	9	7	15	13
WEAPON	19	32	29	21	19
TOTALS	1,914	1,998	1,890	2,139	2,019



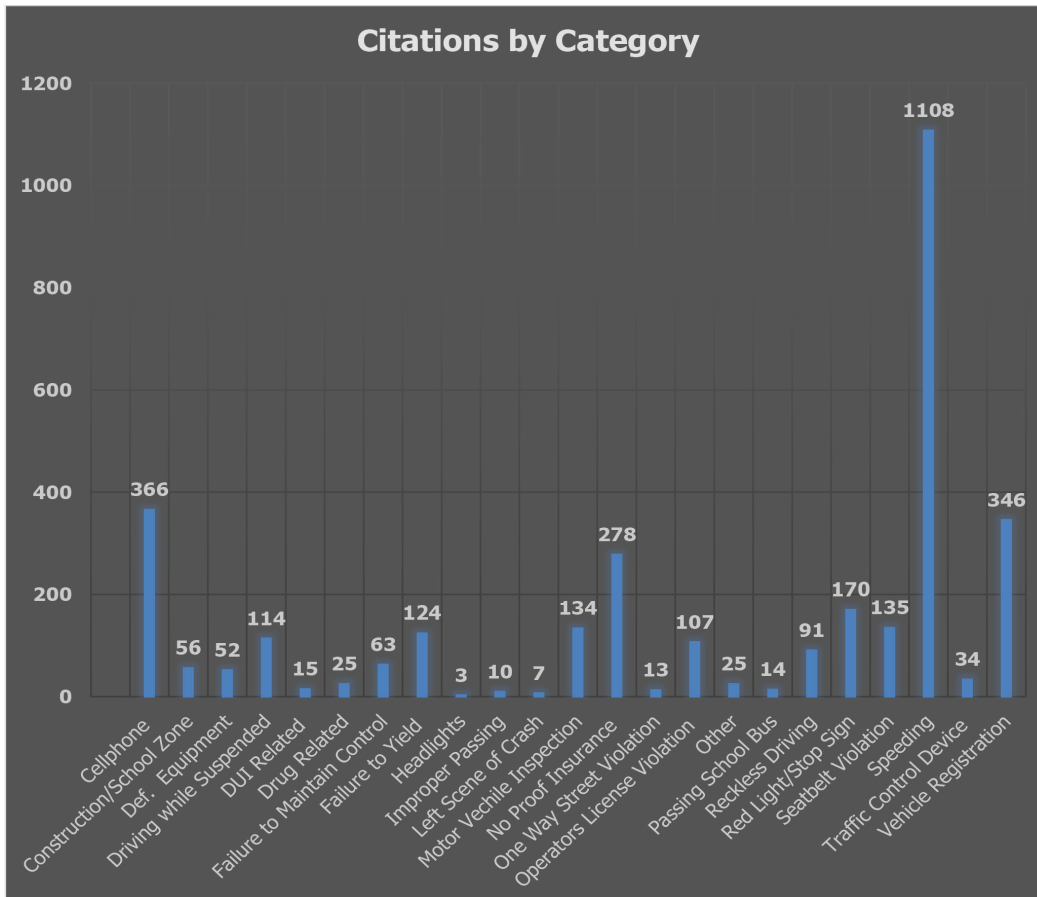
GROUP B (less serious crimes)
INCREASED 2%

Group B offenses were slightly down, and mostly unchanged from the previous year. DUI arrests also were down from the year before.

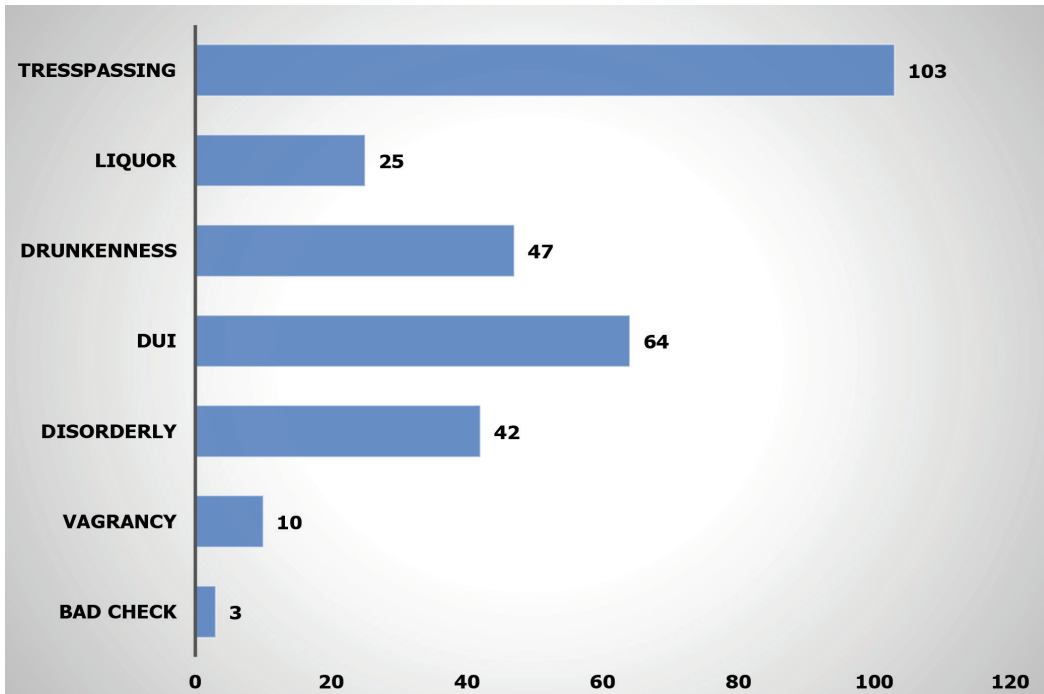


	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
CRIMINAL CITATIONS	340	337	354	396	317

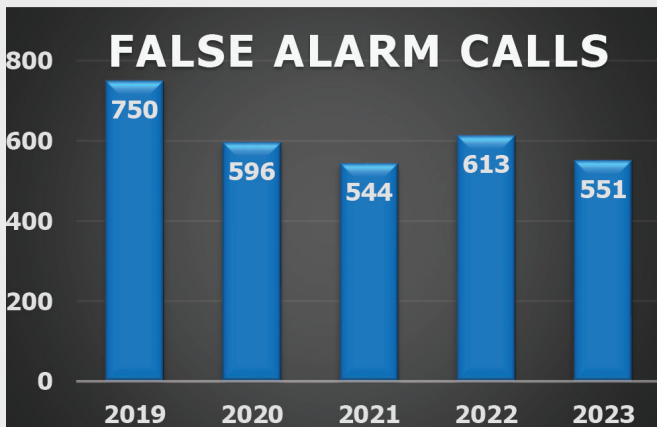
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
ARRESTS	1,044	950	1,020	1,098	1,091



Group B Offenses	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
BAD CHECK	4	3	2	5	3
VAGRANCY	14	11	5	4	10
DISORDERLY	50	28	42	47	42
DUI	84	64	78	54	64
DRUNKENNESS	38	27	49	38	47
LIQUOR	17	19	24	22	25
TRESPASSING	41	56	60	97	103
ALL OTHER	1,300	1,270	1,375	1,335	1,342
TOTALS	1,548	1,478	1,635	1,602	1,636



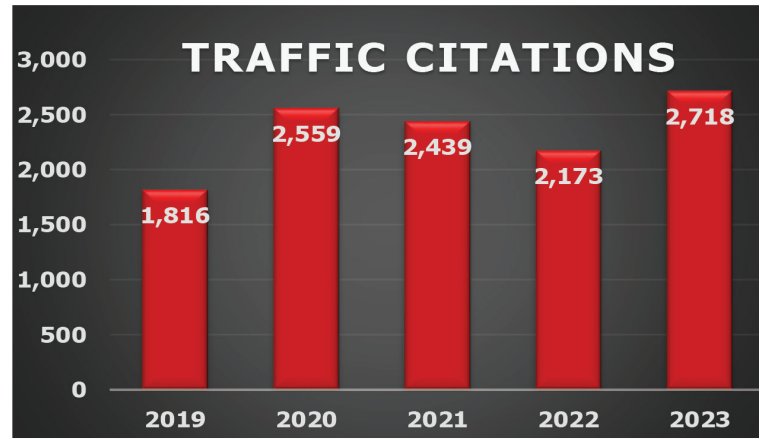
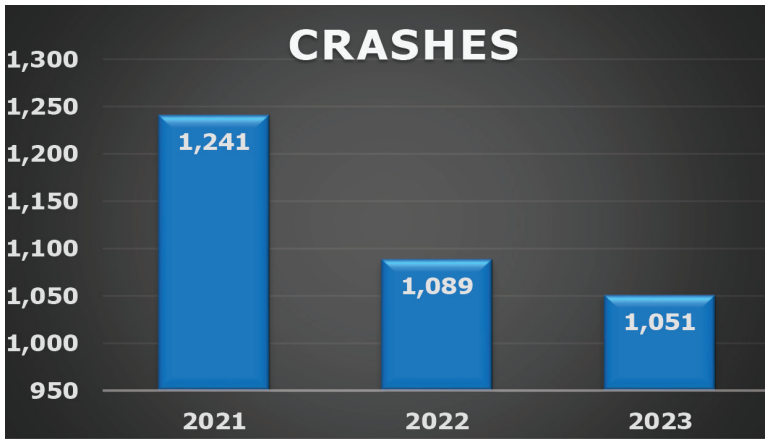
FALSE ALARM Reduction Program



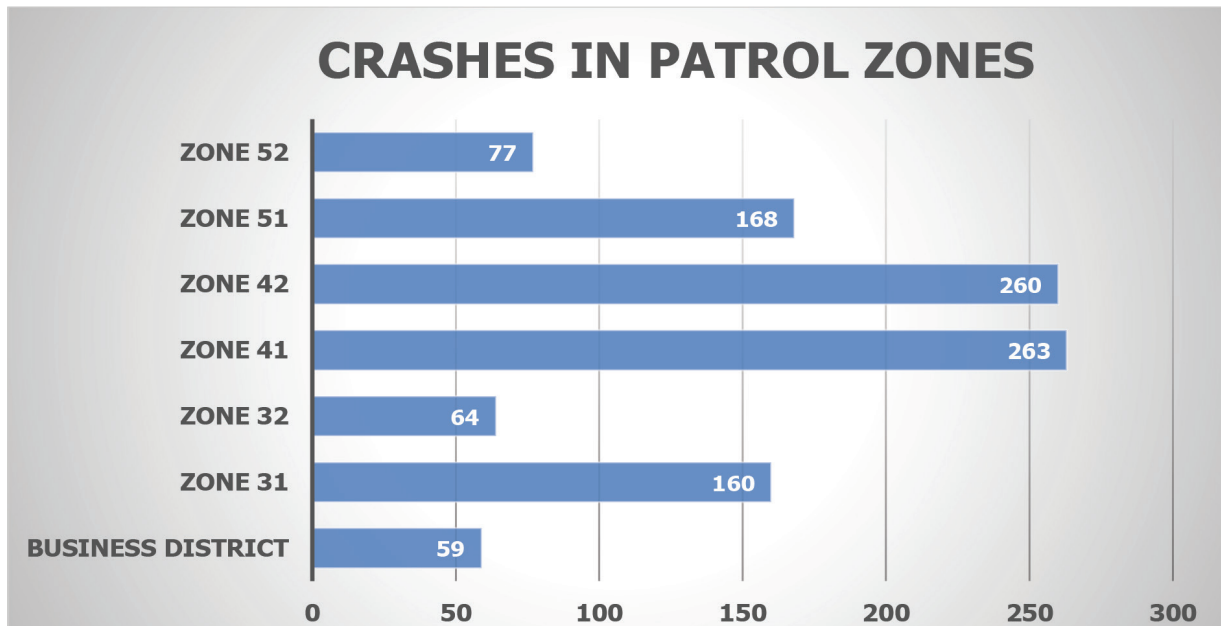
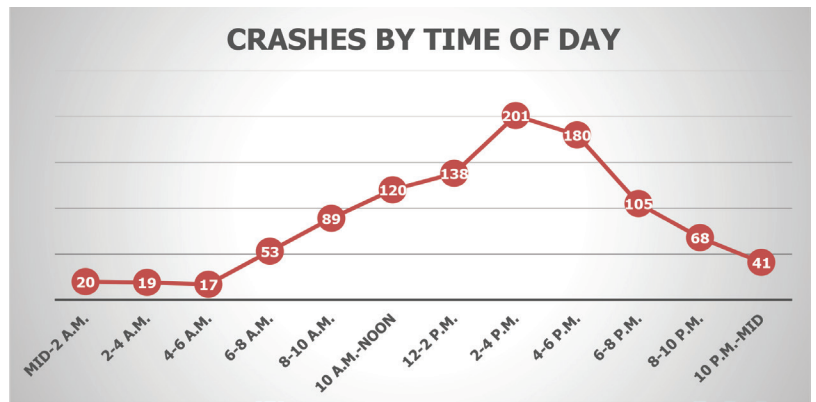
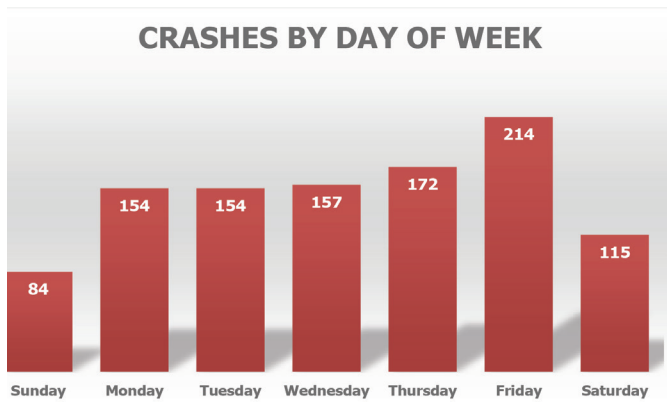
The False Alarm Reduction Program was implemented in 2016 to gradually decrease the number of false burglar alarms officers were responding to in hopes of easing the burden on the patrol division. Calls decreased 11% over the previous year, and significantly since the program's inception. All alarm users who live within the City of Wheeling must register their alarm systems with Cry Wolf Services – an outside agency that manages the database and issues fines related to a false call.

TRAFFIC Enforcement

With no major winter weather activity or severe weather incidents, overall crashes decreased slightly by 3.5% in 2023. Citations were up by 25% because of more checkpoints and a larger departmental focus on highway safety. The increased number of citations also contributes to lower crashes.



	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
TRAFFIC CITATIONS	1,816	2,559	2,439	2,173	2,718



DRUG HOUSE Abatement

The Wheeling Police Department continues to enforce the city’s drug house abatement ordinance by holding property owners and tenants accountable for illegal drug usage or other vice crimes, that are occurring with or around the real property.

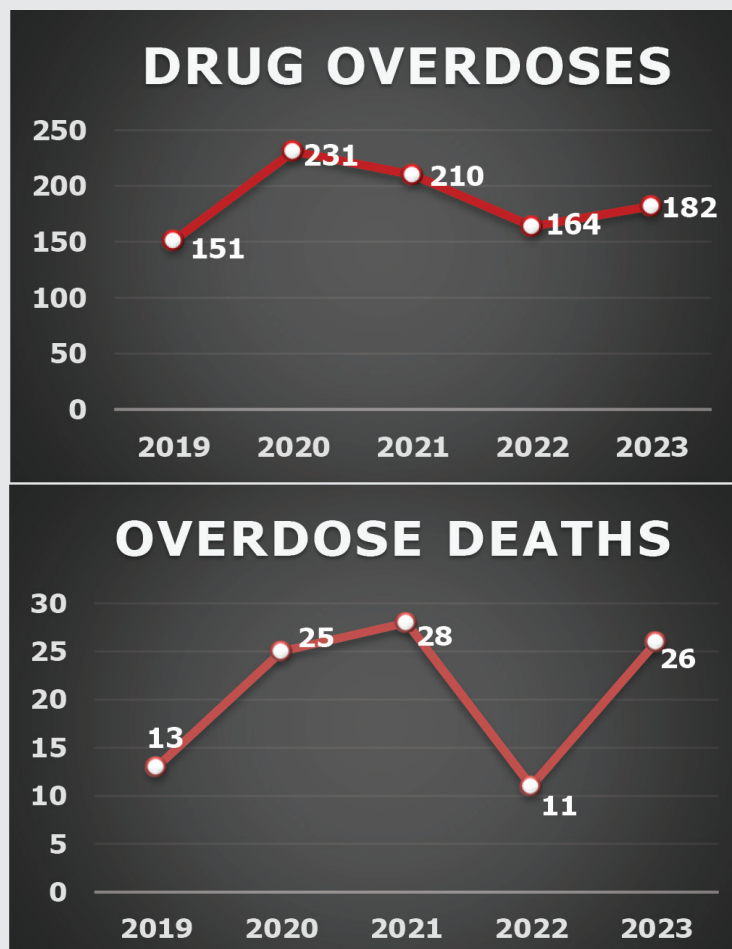
In 2023, WPD corresponded with the owners of 9 residences within the city whose property violated the Drug House Abatement ordinance.

Enacted into law in July 2019, and enforced by the WPD beginning in the summer of 2020, the City of Wheeling now has an opportunity to abate these criminal issues. If there is documented evidence of either two misdemeanor vice crimes or a single felony regarding illegal drug activity during a 12-month period, police will take the property owner to municipal court regarding the abatement.

Based on the municipal court’s decision, the property owner may be ordered to evict the tenant, add security features, ban individuals from the property, or force landlords to enhance screenings at their property for future rentals.

DRUG Overdoses

Drug-related overdoses increased slightly after a three-year downward trend. This is due to enhanced uses of fentanyl and newer drugs being introduced into the area, like xylazine (a.k.a. “Tranq”). Drug overdose deaths also increased significantly after a drastic decline the year prior. Drug overdoses reflect on various types of illegal narcotics, and not just one certain type of drug.



****Note: Overdose death numbers can change after annual statistics are released because of current pending cases with the state medical examiner’s office****



2024 STRATEGIC PLAN

The Wheeling Police Department continues to implement the strategic planning process to guide the police department's organizational goals and the actions needed to achieve those goals. The strategic plan aids in guiding the budgeting process through several years, prioritizes training needs, and sets the tone for the direction of the agency. Departmental goals and directions have been identified through command staff meetings and internal/external assessments. The elements of the strategic planning process have been prioritized into five strategic directives:

- 1. Reduce Crime and Enhance Public Safety**
- 2. Enhance Community Outreach**
- 3. Increase Efficiency**
- 4. Emergency Preparedness**
- 5. Occupational Safety and Wellness**

COMPLETED INITIATIVES IN 2023:

- Move Into New Police Facility (February 2023), Ribbon Cutting Ceremony held in July.
- Continued Launch of New Assigned Vehicle Program
- Hired new Evidence Forensic Specialist
- Reduction in Group A Offenses
- Recruitment/Retention Initiatives
- School Security Officer Program
- Homicide Convictions
- Enhanced Training

GOALS FOR 2024:

- Partnership with First Choice Services to Hire a Peer Support Specialist
- 12-Hour Patrol Shift Implementation
- Acquisition of Specialized Vehicles
- Continue Wellness Program Efforts
- Enhance Recruitment and Retention Efforts
- Implementation of a new Downtown Patrol District
- New Downtown/Business District Crime Watch Group



IN LOVING MEMORY OF

Karen L. Grimes

FEBRUARY 24, 1949 – MARCH 23, 2023

47 Years of Service to the Wheeling Police Department

Longtime Assistant to the Chief of Police

Dedicated and Compassionate Employee

A Kind Friend to All



2023 ANNUAL REPORT

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 Wheeling, WV Police Department  @WheelingPolice