

# CITY OF WASHINGTON POLICE DEPARTMENT



## 2020 ANNUAL REPORT

### *TWO SMALL WORDS*

*There are two words that when put together mean many different things to many different people. Two words that can put smiles on people's faces or anxiety in their hearts. Two words that may strike hatred in some and love in others. Two words that are more than just words. They are a title, an occupation, a career. Better yet, they are two words that describe a lifestyle. A lifestyle like no other for the men and women who choose to place a badge on their chest and promise to serve and protect. A lifestyle that may require that person in a split second to save someone's life while risking their own. A lifestyle that requires that person to face good and bad every single day that others don't see. A lifestyle that asks that person to wake up every morning without the assurance they will come home that night. Two words mean all that. Two words that should forever be remembered. Those Two Small Words are Police Officer!*

*Author Unknown*

## *Message from the Chief*

It is my pleasure and honor to serve as Chief of Police for the City of Washington and I am pleased to present the Washington Police Department's 2020 Annual Report.



Jim Lester  
Chief of Police

The Police Department adapted well to the ever-changing COVID-19 Pandemic guidelines that resulted in multiple changes in our operational practices throughout the year.

In addition to the worldwide pandemic, the Police Department also encountered peaceful protests in response to an in-custody death in Minneapolis, Minnesota. This incident resulted in conversations and policy changes across the country related to police Use of Force policies.

We are fortunate to be using Lexipol to provide us with customizable, state-specific policies based on current state and federal law, current case law and best practice guidelines. Lexipol is the nation's leading provider of public safety policy solutions for law enforcement.

The Police Department enjoys a great deal of success based primarily on the level of support and cooperation from both our local elected officials and the community. Throughout the pandemic and the events of the summer, officers appreciated the many kind gestures of support including an anonymous monetary gift designated for the purchase of external vest carriers for each member of the department.

As we readied for the move into our new facility, the department also made some organizational changes, with the promotion of officers to supervisory positions.

This report is designed to provide a summary of the department's activities and accomplishments, as well as relevant statistics of the incidents and offenses the officers handled throughout the year.

The department continues to work on our community engagement programs and we look forward to working more with the Police Community Advisory Committee in partnering with other community groups and organizations as we develop additional programs to provide positive interaction with the community.

We are fortunate to have a very well trained and dedicated group of officers who take pride in serving our community.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jim Lester".

Jim Lester  
Chief of Police

## *2020 Personnel Changes*

### **Retirements:**

Lieutenant / Investigator Ron See retired January 31, 2020 after serving 32 years in public safety, including eight years in Oklahoma.

### **New Hires / Assignments:**



Officer Brian VanWilligen was appointed the department's Criminal Investigator following Lt See's retirement. Investigator VanWilligen also serves as a Drug Recognition Expert (DRE).



Officer Eric Kephart joined the Police Department in March 2020. Officer Kephart previously worked twelve years for the Keokuk County Sheriff's Office and has assumed the duties of K-9 Handler, partnering with K-9 Dex.



In a promotional ceremony held in July Officer Shamus Altenhofen was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant; Officer Jason Chalupa was promoted to the rank of Sergeant; and Officer Ben Altenhofen was promoted to the rank of Sergeant.

## **2020 WASHINGTON POLICE DEPARTMENT STAFF**

Chief of Police Jim Lester / Lieutenant Lyle Hansen / Lieutenant Shamus Altenhofen

Sergeant Jason Chalupa / Sergeant Ben Altenhofen / Investigator Brian VanWilligen / Officer-K-9 Handler Eric Kephart

Officer Seth Adam / Officer Tanner Lavelly / Officer Chris Raymer / Officer Ethan Hansen

Administrative Assistant Rhonda Hill / P-T Admin. Assistant Melanie Huschka / P-T Admin. Assistant Jamie Mayer

Part-Time Officers: Zach Haworth / Eddie Cardenas / Nolan Burke / Brett Johnson

## *Specialty Training & Teams*

The community is fortunate to be served by a well-trained and experienced team of law enforcement officers. The members of the Police Department have over 125 years of combined public safety experience with a wide range of specialty training and involvement with specialized teams.

The Police Department has certified instructors for the following specialties:

- Defensive Tactics
- Taser
- Firearms
- Rifle
- Less lethal munitions
- Crisis Intervention Training (C.I.T.)
- ALICE (Alert. Lockdown. Inform. Counter. Escape.)
- SFST (Standardized Field Sobriety Testing)

Along with certified instructors the department is also fortunate to have officers trained in the following specialty areas:

- Drug Recognition Expert
- Law Enforcement Intelligence Network (LEIN)
- Narcotics Investigations
- Field Training Officers
- Certified Sniper/Spotter
- Domestic Abuse Investigations
- Child Abuse Investigations
- Sexual Assault Investigations
- Crime Scene Photography
- Evidence / Property Management
- Internet Crimes Against Children Investigations
- Glock Armorer
- Rifle Armorer
- Shotgun Armorer
- SWAT (Special Weapons and Tactics)

### ***Drug Recognition Expert:***

The DRE is specially trained in identifying and classifying individuals into various categories of drug use including Central Nervous System Stimulants (Methamphetamine), Cannabis and Central Nervous System Depressants (Prescription Medications).

In 2020, the DRE was activated seven times for drug impaired drivers, these cases involved six adults and one juvenile.

### ***Narcotics Investigations:***

The Police Department had incidents that involved 40 drug offenses and 30 drug paraphernalia offenses in 2020. In addition, the following types of controlled substances were seized by officers during 2020: Marijuana, Methamphetamine, Cocaine and Prescription Drugs.

Covid-19 restrictions did have some effect on drug investigations in 2020 and also limited investigator trainings and task force meetings.

### ***K-9 Team:***

The Washington Police Department K-9 Team logged over 300 hours of training during 2020.



Officer Eric Kephart and K-9 Dex

Officer Eric Kephart was appointed the K-9 Handler in June 2020. We would also like to acknowledge and thank retired WPD K-9 Handler Brett Sorrells for his knowledge and expertise in working with Officer Kephart and Dex to help them learn together and achieve their initial certification in less than a month.

During the last half of the year K-9 Dex was deployed on five incidents, resulting in four cases of possession of controlled substance and/or drug paraphernalia.

The K-9 Team participates in monthly training and annual certification trials to maintain proficiency in narcotics detection, article/person search and officer protection.

***SWAT (Special Weapons and Tactics):***

The Washington Police Department SWAT Team is led by Team Leader Sgt. Jason Chalupa and Assistant Team Leader Lt. Shamus Altenhofen. SWAT officers are recruited, selected, trained, equipped, and assigned to resolve critical incidents involving a threat to public safety which would otherwise exceed the capabilities of traditional law enforcement first responders.

Team members must be dedicated, physically fit, have sound tactics and possess the ability to make good decisions under stress. Team members must complete and pass an annual physical strength and agility test, as well as pass firearms qualifications above what is required by the Iowa Law Enforcement Academy.



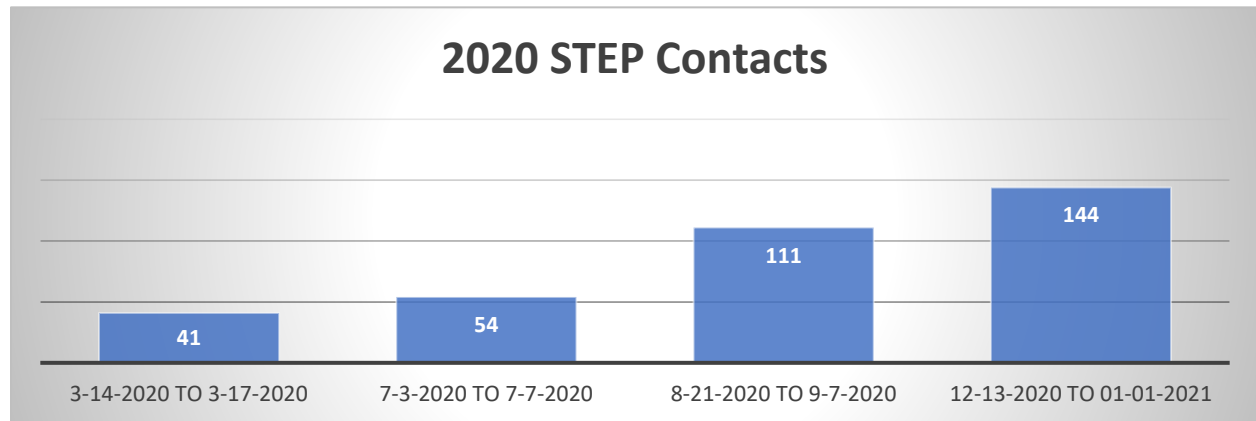
2020 SWAT Activity

- Training Days: 8
- Training Hours: 35
- Deployments: 2
- Deployment Hours: 3

The team also participated in joint training sessions with the Washington County Sheriff’s Office and the Jefferson County Sheriff’s Office. Two team members attended a 40-hour SWAT school hosted by the Cedar Rapids Police Department and Officer Chris Raymer attended Instructor certification for chemical munitions and less lethal. Training topics in 2020 included Operations Planning and Risk Assessment, priority of life, tactical communications, low-light/no light, chemical munitions, less lethal, distraction devices, ballistic shield use and movement and MRAP familiarization.

***Governor’s Traffic Safety Bureau – Special Traffic Enforcement Program:***

The Police Department participated in four STEP Waves during 2020. In addition to the special traffic enforcement during these periods, we also receive grant funding for the purchase of equipment. In 2020, STEP funds were used for the purchase of a PBT (Preliminary Breath Testing) device utilized in OWI cases and an in-car video recording system.



This chart indicates the number of contacts officers had during each of the STEP Waves in 2020.

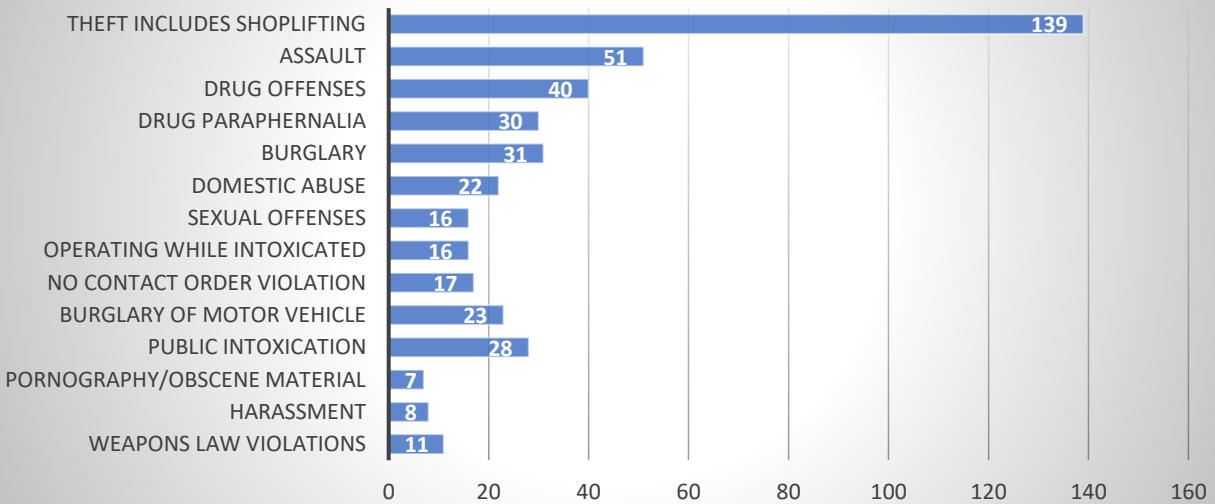
## 2020 Activity

This chart indicates a summary of the activity the Police Department responded to during 2020. Calls for service do not always include requests to return phone calls, alarms, instances where officers are approached while on patrol for minor issues or requests for assistance from other agencies such as probation / parole checks.

### 2020 Activity Summary

Citations / Warnings	614
Traffic Stops	971
Traffic Accidents	130
Parking Tickets	117
Vehicle Unlocks	285
Arrest Warrants Served	67
Search Warrants Served	27
Calls for Service	4004
Animal Calls	276
Mental Health Responses / Suicidal Subjects	50
Arrests	300
Reportable Offenses	669

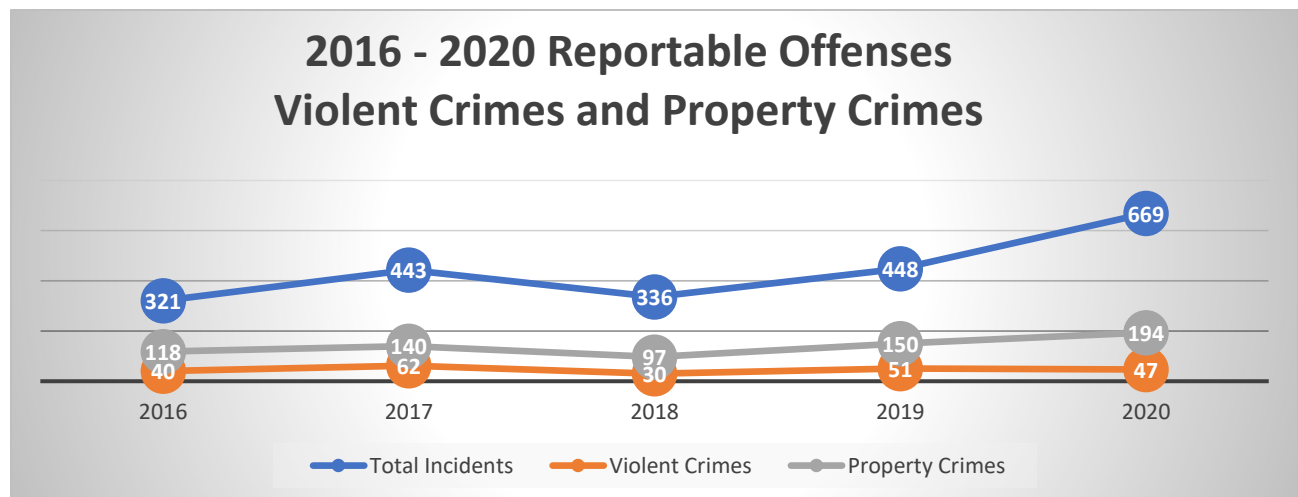
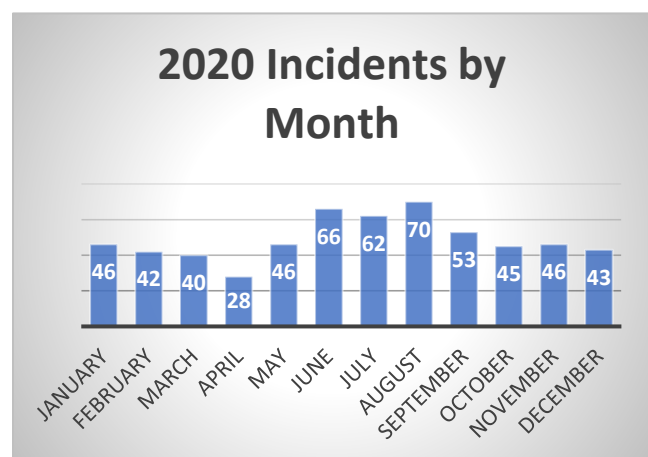
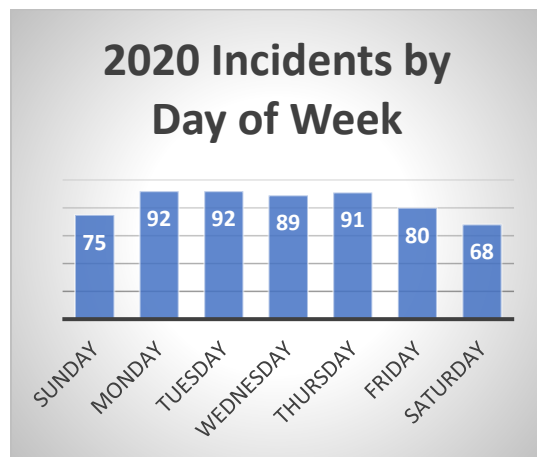
### 2020 Offense Summary



## Crime Reporting

The Washington Police Department participates in the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program, a nationwide cooperative statistical effort of law enforcement agencies voluntarily reporting data on offenses reported or known. The program's primary objective is to generate reliable information for use in law enforcement administration, operation and management. The data is used across the country for varied research and planning purposes.

The UCR Program created the National Incident Based Report System (NIBRS) to assist agencies in accurately reporting data on each incident and arrest within their jurisdiction. Using NIBRS, law enforcement agencies report data on each offense and arrest within 24 offense categories made up of 52 specific crimes called Group A offenses. Agencies only report arrest data for an additional 10 Group B offense categories.



In the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program, violent crime is composed of four offenses: murder and non-negligent manslaughter, forcible rape, robbery and aggravated assault. Violent crimes are defined in the UCR Program as those offenses which involve force or threat of force. In the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program, property crime includes the offenses of burglary, larceny-theft, motor vehicle theft and arson. The object of the theft-type offenses is the taking of money or property, but there is no force or threat of force against the victims. The property crime category includes arson because the offense involves the destruction of property; however, arson victims may be subjected to force.



## ***2020 Awards***

### ***Officer of the Year:***



The Washington Police Department is proud to announce that Criminal Investigator Brian VanWilligen has been recognized as the department's Officer of the Year for 2020.

Investigator VanWilligen, has been a member of the Washington Police Department since July 2005. He is trained as a Drug Recognition Expert and holds instructor certifications in Standardized Field Sobriety Testing and A.L.I.C.E.

In February 2020, Officer VanWilligen transitioned from patrol into the role of Criminal Investigator. Investigator VanWilligen's work ethic, drive and attention to detail provides victims with a fair and impartial investigation of their crime.

His investigations in 2020 resulted in multiple felony arrests and convictions, providing both victims and the department confidence that crimes against persons are investigated efficiently and professionally.

### ***Commendation:***



On July 6, 2020 Officer Ethan Hansen was on patrol in the city when he investigated thick smoke coming from an area on the west edge of town.

Despite the flames and thick smoke, Officer Hansen's quick and decisive actions prevented the occupant from becoming engulfed within the fire of the motor vehicle.

Officer Hansen's professionalism and actions above and beyond the call of duty that afternoon made for an outcome that could have been far more tragic had he not acted without regard for his own personal safety.

Officer Hansen continued his care for the victim following the rescue by maintaining an open airway and providing important emotional support.