

# ALTOONA POLICE DEPARTMENT 2014 ANNUAL REPORT



Ofc. Tufts at Over the Edge

Christmas Shopping at Cops for Kids



## Our Mission

The Altoona Police Department will work in partnership with the community to reduce the fear and incidence of crime, to enhance the quality of life, and to render the highest standards and ethics of professional law enforcement.

**Jody L. Matherly**  
Chief of Police

**ALTOONA POLICE DEPARTMENT  
CITY OF ALTOONA, IOWA**

**Interoffice  
MEMORANDUM**

**FROM:** Jody Matherly, Chief of Police

**DATE:** January 23, 2015

**TO:** Honorable Mayor Skip Conkling  
Honorable City Council  
Jeff Mark, City Administrator  
Randy Pierce, City Clerk  
Community of Altoona

**SUBJECT:** Altoona Police Department 2014 Annual Report

**CHIEF'S MESSAGE:**



It is my pleasure to present to you the 2014 Altoona Police Department Annual Report. Several national events this year proved to be a challenging time for law enforcement agencies in general. The lessons learned are the need to build police-community relationships with all citizens before such events occur. As such, we have historically and will continue to enhance our community-policing efforts by being a part of, not apart from our community. The men and women of the Altoona Police Department remain committed to providing the highest level of professional service to the citizens, businesses, schools and visitors of Altoona. A challenge we prepare for is the commercial and residential growth that is expected to take place at a rapid pace. We are confident we will be ready due to the support we have experienced from the Altoona city council, mayor, administration and citizens to provide appropriate technology, staffing, equipment and training.

Some of the highlights were:

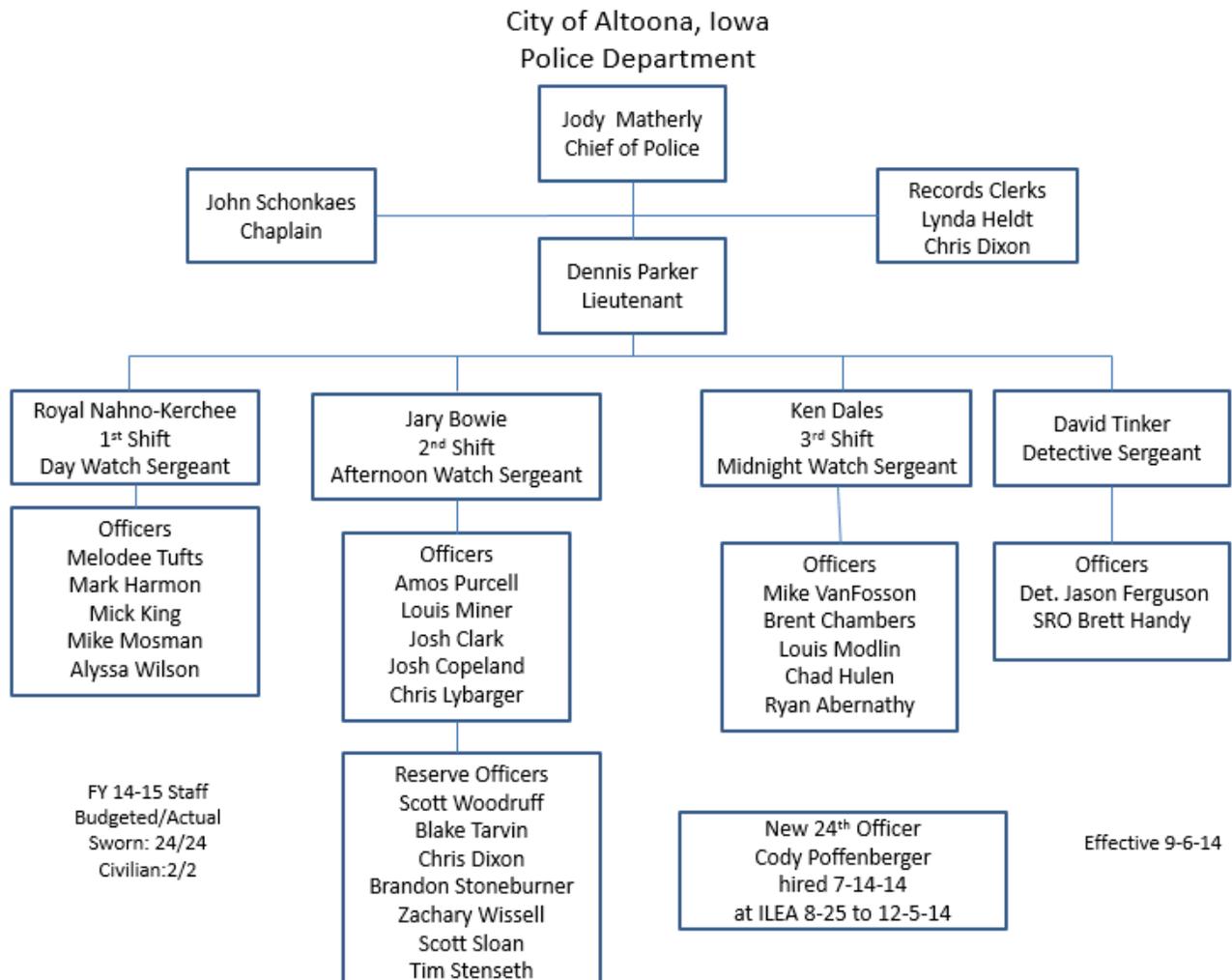
- Updated animal control ordinance
- Began Facebook page
- Started Crime Mapping
- Trained three additional bike patrol officers
- Trained a certified bike patrol instructor
- Started Animal Control Officer assignment
- Started Crime Analysis assignment
- Started Traffic Enforcement unit
- Replaced all mobile (car) and portable radios
- Hired new officer to replace retired officer (24<sup>th</sup> position)
- FY 14-15 budget purchases
  - Replaced 14 new body armor and 6 Tasers
  - Replaced 9 PCs
  - 2 Dodge Charger AWD patrol vehicles
- Purchased 10 Tasers using \$10,000 Prairie Meadows Community Betterment Grant
- Installed a Drug Drop Off Box in PD lobby
  - Donated by USPS, designed by Ted's Auto Body and ACME Signs
- Began full-time School/Community Liaison Officer position
- Held 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Citizens Police Academy
- Hired two Police Reserves

## STAFFING:

The Altoona Police Department is currently budgeted for 26 employees: 24 sworn police officers and 2 civilian employees. There is one (1) Chief of Police, one (1) Lieutenant, four (4) Sergeants and eighteen (18) Police Officers. One officer retired and one officer was hired this year.

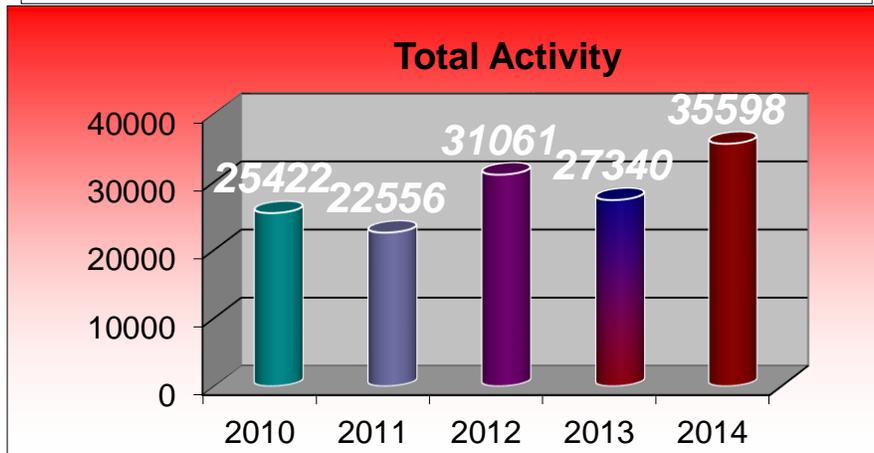
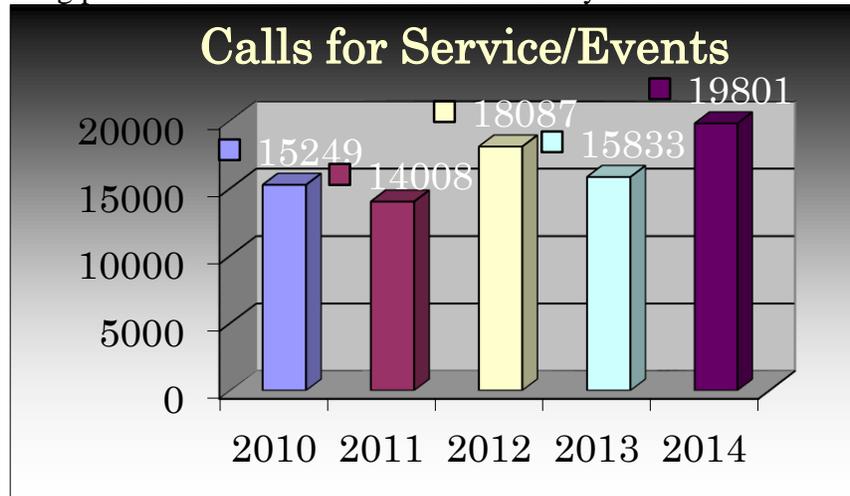
The employees are assigned as follows:

- Chief (1) - Day shift handling departmental planning, organizing administration, coordination, budget, evaluating
- Lieutenant (1) - Day shift managing the Patrol Operations and Criminal Investigations Divisions Special Events, Internal Affairs and assigned to patrol shift as a primary response officer
- Sergeants (4) - Three (3) Patrol Operations and one (1) Criminal Investigations Division
- Patrol Officers (16) - assigned to Patrol Operations
- CID Officers (2) – One (1) detective, one (1) School/Community Liaison
- Civilians (2) - two secretary/records clerks
- Reserve Officers Police (7)
- Police Chaplain (1)



## PATROL OPERATIONS DIVISION:

The Patrol Division experienced a rise in the number of calls this year. Our police department responded to 19,801 events (Calls for Service), a 25% increase from 2013 which had 15,833. With all police activity combined, such as crimes investigated, arrests, traffic crashes, etc., we handled 35,598 activities, a nearly 30% increase over last year. Officers do an outstanding job at serving a community with an estimated 15,653 residents, four schools, major employers such as Prairie Meadows Racetrack & Casino, Adventureland, Bass Pro, Wal-Mart, Marzetti Pasta, and over 4 million visitors annually. In addition to their regular duties, our officers also take on administrative collateral duties such as training new officers and reserves, maintaining the patrol fleet and managing the property room. Balancing extra duties while prioritizing protection and service to our community is a skill at which they have excelled.

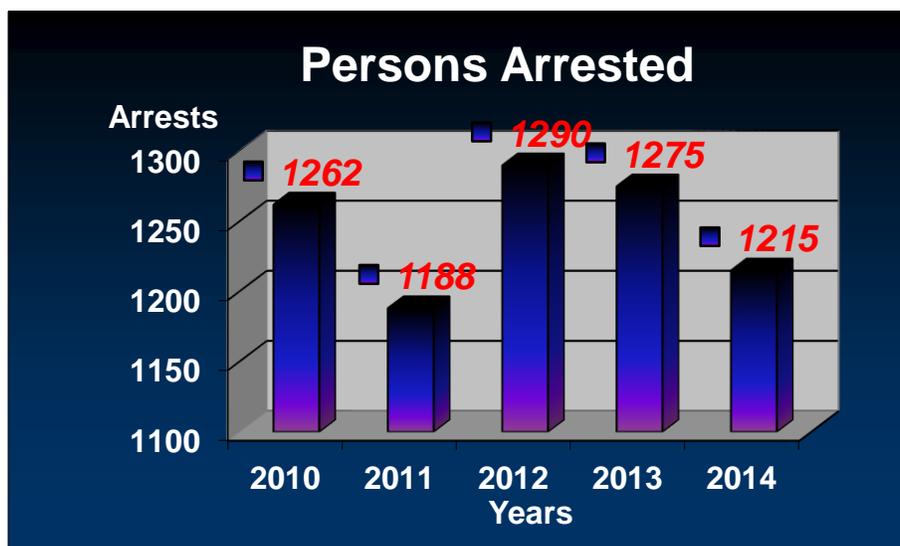
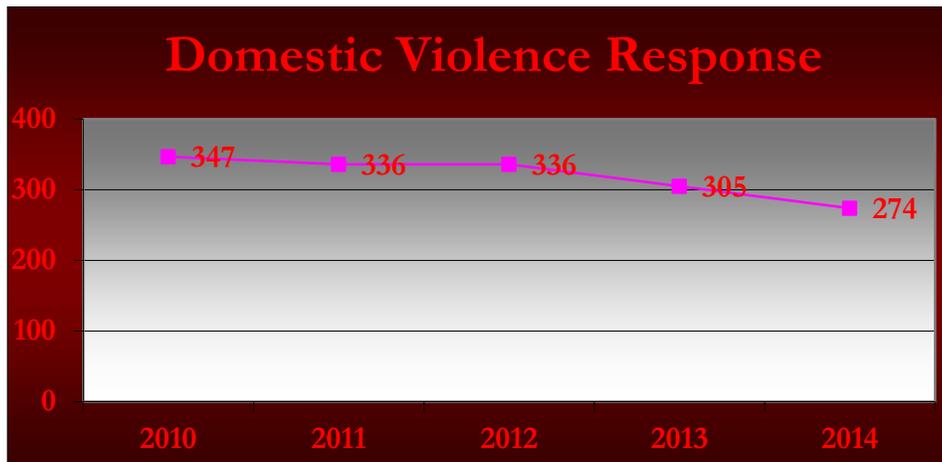
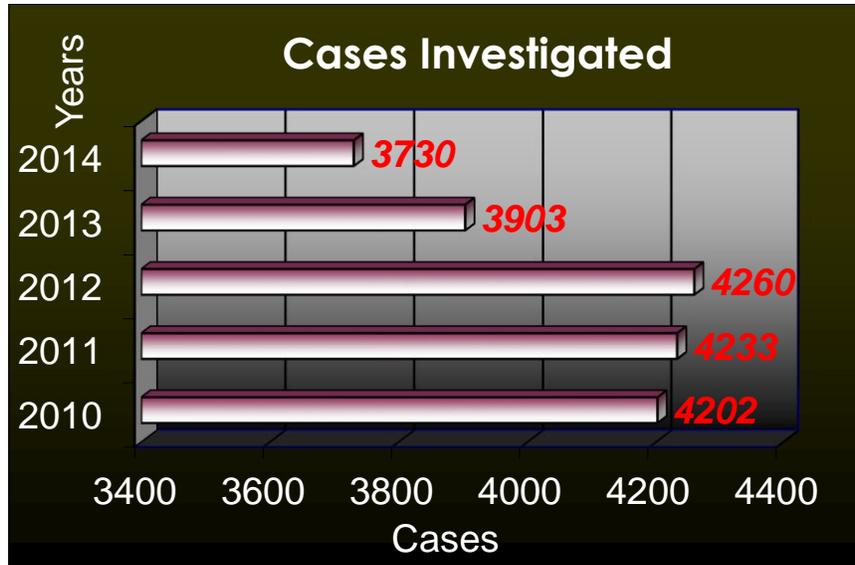


### Average Response Times

		Priority	2014	2013	2012	2011
Emergency	0		00:47	00:34	01:01	00:11
	*1		03:01	03:25	03:57	03:19
Non-Emergency	2		03:11	03:38	03:42	04:02
	3		03:02	03:56	04:33	05:06
	4		02:14	02:07	02:01	02:26
	5		04:00	04:20	05:03	04:59
	6		03:34	08:31	05:31	05:31
	9		02:04	03:20	07:21	01:48

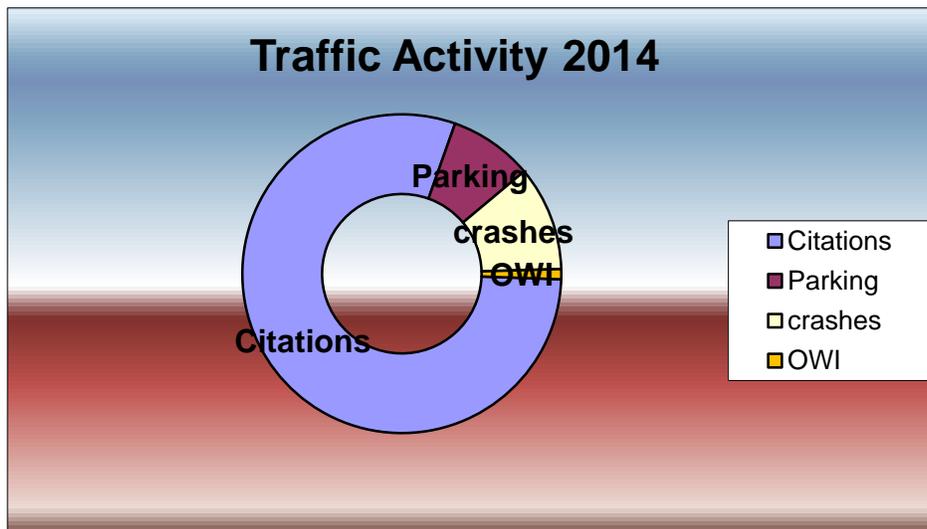
## CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS DIVISION:

Our detectives and patrol officers investigated 3,730 cases in 2014, a decrease of 4% from 2013. Incidents such as drugs, theft and domestic violence decreased, while frequency of burglary, sex abuse and assault rose. Many variables factor into determining crime patterns and rates as well as the resources necessary to reduce it. The CID detectives investigate crimes that are more serious in nature and require a higher level of expertise or take more time to solve.



## TRAFFIC SAFETY:

Traffic citations/violations that were issued increased 54% from 2,980 in 2013 to 4,603 this year. There was a 6% increase in vehicle crashes causing property damage this year with 451 occurring. Injury accidents also increased by 78% from 45 to 80, a high for the past five years. There were 82 hit and run crashes, a decrease of 17%. There were no fatal crashes in our city in 2014. Any increase in traffic crashes is concerning. Even with increased traffic enforcement, better engineering of roadways, and improved technology in vehicles, preventing crashes can be challenging due to many other variables such as driver distraction, weather conditions and fatigue.



## TECHNOLOGY INITIATIVES:

**CRIMEMAPPING.com™**

Keeping the public well informed has been proven effective in reducing crime. Sharing information about a police department's activity helps to strengthen community-oriented policing by improving collaboration between citizens and the police. The Altoona Police Department introduced two new tools they are using to keep the public up-to-date in police department activity. First, police can now show residents and businesses of this city the crimes that are happening in their neighborhood. This information is available by a free, publically accessible website called CrimeMapping.com. The site is easy to navigate. By clicking on the state of Iowa on the map, a user can see a list of agencies using Crime Mapping. After choosing Altoona, a map of the city will appear populated by icons showing recent crimes, which are generally updated every 72 hours. Clicking on each icon will show incident description, date, time, location. The system even allows for free e-mail subscriptions in the form of Crime Alerts, which let subscribers know when a new crime has taken place in their area. Crime Mapping provides a powerful communication channel for the Altoona Police Department. Second, the



police department launched its Facebook page at [facebook.com/altoona-iowa-police](https://www.facebook.com/altoona-iowa-police). The department posts the latest news, updates, alerts, advisories and crime prevention methods. Residents are encouraged to "Like" the page to receive newsfeeds from the department and stay current on important information. The goal is to reach a large number of people in an efficient way.

## RESERVE POLICE OFFICERS:



The Altoona Police Reserve Unit is led by Officers Josh Clark and Chris Lybarger. In 2014 we hired two new reserves: Officers Scott Sloan and Tim Stenseth. Both attended our Citizens Police Academy, which prompted them to want to join our reserves. These additions maintains the total compliment at seven (7) reserve officers. As part of our team, these fine volunteers assist with events such as July 4<sup>th</sup> and Homecoming festivities, as well as provide police support for other activities.

## POLICE CHAPLAINCY PROGRAM:



Pastor John Schonkaes of Christ the King Lutheran Church is the Altoona Police/Fire Chaplain since February, 2013. His position acts as a volunteer and supports official functions of the department. He may attend all regular training sessions and meetings, ride along with patrol officers and visit with sick or injured police officers, police reserves and their family members. The Chaplain provides exceptional services to the community in times of personal or city wide crisis, assists officers in addressing community issues, and promotes community policing ideals as a special representative of the Chief of Police.

## TRAINING:



Lt. Parker coordinates the training section and ensures that the minimum requirements promulgated by the Iowa Law Enforcement Academy are met. All of our staff attend additional courses that allow them to excel in various police disciplines and reach higher levels of expertise. We have certified instructors in subjects such as firearms, defensive tactics, alcohol enforcement, precision driving, Taser and cultural diversity that are utilized by the Iowa Law Enforcement Academy. Others

hold certifications in field sobriety testing and drug recognition expert (DRE) training. We also began legal update training using an online service that allows our staff to train onsite at minimal cost.



# COMMUNITY-POLICING PROGRAMS

## Cops for Kids



The Cops for Kids program is a valuable asset for our communities. It allows children of all ages the opportunity to purchase Christmas gifts that they would not otherwise have the means to do. The kids also shop for these gifts with a uniformed police officer. This allows the children to have a one-on-one interaction with a police officer in a very positive way and on a personal level. This unique opportunity helps strengthen the bonds between the police and the communities we serve and fosters relationships that will last a long

time. This is in partnership with Pleasant Hill Police, Wal-Mart, Turner Construction, Facebook, and many other businesses such as Assembly Hall in Pleasant Hill.



## Citizen's Police Academy



We hosted our 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Citizens Police Academy in partnership with Mitchellville Police Dept. Participants spent 25 hours working and patrolling with police officers to learn about officers jobs. More importantly, the learned why they do what they do. CPA topics included investigations, traffic enforcement, special programs, tactical team and the history of police departments.

## Bike Patrol:

This is the third year for the Altoona Police Bicycle Program, led by Ofc. Mike VanFosson, who is now a certified bike patrol instructor. The program is designed to get officers out of the patrol cars and into the community. It removes the barriers of car



doors and windows between

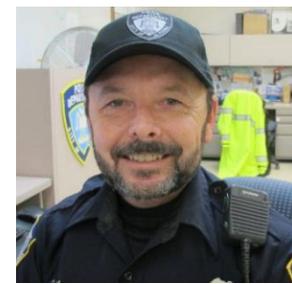


officers and citizens, which make us more approachable. This year, we trained three (3) additional bike officers, bringing the unit to a total of six (6) officers. Ofc. VanFosson also instructed police officers from Pleasant Hill, Grinnell and Mitchellville. The bike patrol spent time this year in the schools, at the Iowa Truckers Association conference, traffic control for parades and community events teaching about officer's duties on bike patrol and promoting bike safety. In addition, they logged 130 hours of patrolling on bikes.

## Other Community Programs:



These events are used to promote professionalism through communication and cooperation with our community: the Altoona Police Officers Association hosted their annual spaghetti dinner fundraiser; staff participated in No Shave November (our female staff wore breast cancer awareness pink) which raised financial donations for the Caring Hands Outreach in Altoona; we supported events such as Law Enforcement Torch Run/Special Olympics, Altoona Area Chamber of Commerce Nippy Hippy 5k Run; Halloween Trick or Treat patrols; tours of our police department; Southeast Polk School student ride-along program; Take Back the Night, Camp 911 and others.



## HONORS AND RECOGNITION:

Our staff is recognized for outstanding contributions to the department, community, and the police service. Awards may be presented for superior performance, unusual acts showing a high level of expertise, commitment to organization goals and saving the life of another.

### Officer/Employee of the Year

In partnership with the American Legion Altoona Post #682, this is awarded to an employee who has exceeded, above and beyond, the duty requirements expected in his/her position or has demonstrated a distinctive pattern of community service coupled with professional achievement. Episodes of heroism will, of course, also be included where noted.



The 2014 Officer of the Year recipient is Sergeant Kenneth E. Dales. He was recognized for his leadership abilities as well as his caring and compassionate demeanor with citizens and co-workers. His ability to embrace change to help the department achieve objectives in its strategic plan was also acknowledged. Sgt. Dales is described by his officers as a great listener and an excellent educator due to his knowledge and many years of experience. In 2013, he received an award from the U.S. Attorney's Office of Iowa for his part in an investigation and arrests of persons responsible for a major narcotics ring operating in several states, including in the Des Moines metropolitan area.

<b>Type of Call</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2013/14 Difference</b>	<b>2013/14 %</b>
<i>Calls for Service (events)</i>	15,249	14,008	18,087	15,833	19,801	3,968	25%
<i>Incident Reports</i>	3,076	3,168	3,358	3,082	2,909	-173	-6%
<i>Traffic Enforcement</i>	5,142	3,544	3,656	3,335	5,151	1,816	54%
<i>Motor Vehicle Crashes</i>	563	529	568	570	613	43	8%
<i>Arrest (charges)</i>	1,262	1,188	1,290	1,275	1,215	-60	-5%
<i>Juvenile Arrests</i>	127	110	130	148	133	-15	-10%
<i>Business checks</i>	NA	NA	3,858	3,062	5,646	2,584	84%
<i>Bike Patrol</i>	NA	NA	30	35	130	95	271%
<b>Total Activity</b>	<b>25,419</b>	<b>22,547</b>	<b>30,977</b>	<b>27,340</b>	<b>35,598</b>	<b>8,258</b>	<b>30%</b>
<b>Cases/Calls by Category</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>Difference</b>	<b>%</b>
<i>Murder</i>	1	0	0	0	0	0	0%
<i>Controlled Substance cases</i>	110	148	145	181	168	-13	-7%
<i>Assault cases</i>	150	157	183	139	152	13	9%
<i>Burglary cases</i>	78	59	83	49	58	9	18%
<i>Sex Abuse cases</i>	14	24	22	13	17	4	31%
<i>Theft cases</i>	421	518	525	576	477	-99	-17%
<i>Domestic Abuse calls</i>	347	336	336	305	274	-31	-10%
<i>Disturbance calls</i>	295	310	252	202	207	5	2%
<i>Alcohol Offense cases</i>	233	214	187	143	168	25	17%
<i>Animal calls</i>	565	501	568	517	519	2	0%
<i>Arson cases</i>	0	2	3	1	1	0	0%
<i>Robbery</i>	1	4	4	4	3	-1	-25%
<i>Fraud</i>	128	154	151	143	143	0	0%
<b>Total Cases</b>	<b>4,202</b>	<b>4,233</b>	<b>4,260</b>	<b>3,903</b>	<b>3,730</b>	<b>-173</b>	<b>-4%</b>
<b>Traffic Enforcement</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>Difference</b>	<b>%</b>
<i>Citations/Violations</i>	4,934	3,390	3,390	2,980	4,603	1,623	54%
<i>Parking tickets</i>	124	124	183	298	489	191	64%
<i>OWI – Operating While Intox</i>	85	63	83	57	59	2	4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,143</b>	<b>3,577</b>	<b>3,656</b>	<b>3,335</b>	<b>5,151</b>	<b>1,816</b>	<b>54%</b>
<b>Motor Vehicle Crashes</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>Difference</b>	<b>%</b>
<i>Property Damage calls</i>	455	395	416	426	451	25	6%
<i>Personal Injury calls</i>	25	50	69	45	80	35	78%
<i>Hit and Run calls</i>	83	84	83	99	82	-17	-17%
<b>Total</b>	<b>563</b>	<b>529</b>	<b>568</b>	<b>570</b>	<b>613</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>8%</b>
<b>Prairie Meadows</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>Difference</b>	<b>%</b>
<i>Cases</i>	232	210	146	144	160	16	11%
<i>Arrests</i>	134	108	78	71	83	12	17%
<b>Total</b>	<b>366</b>	<b>318</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>215</b>	<b>243</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>13%</b>