

2020

ANNUAL REPORT

MINNETRISTA
PUBLIC SAFETY DEPARTMENT

PAUL A. FALLS
DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC SAFETY

"FIGHT CRIME. PROMOTE SAFETY."

Public Safety



Sworn Personnel-Command Staff

Chief Paul Falls
Lieutenant Craig Squires
Sergeant Mike Kokesh
Sergeant Pat Cummings

Non-Sworn Personnel

Lori Brazil, Administrative Assistant
Amie Langenfeld, Administrative Assistant
Brad Carlson, CSO
Kevin Walsh, CSO
Volunteer Police Reserve Officers

Sworn Personnel-Police Officers

Officer Jonathan Stutelberg
Officer Chad Griggs
Officer Nathan Hintz
Officer Jesse Schmidt
Officer Ryan Wegner
Officer Brandon White
Officer Justin Thompson
Officer Josh Brown
Officer Nikki Myhre

Overview

2020 was a historic year in many ways. The COVID-19 Pandemic was the worst health crisis many of us have ever experienced. As a result, it forced us to drastically change the way we live and work. Operations changed dramatically as we strived to find ways to deliver essential services in a safe and effective manner.

City Hall was closed and all non-essential employees were ordered to work from home. Essential meetings were re-designed to be held virtually. Non-essential services were suspended indefinitely. Essential services changed drastically in order to keep staff and the public safe.

The COVID-19 pandemic forced government to make unprecedented changes very quickly, many of which are still in place today as the pandemic continues into 2021.

The death of George Floyd in May of 2020 also brought a level of civil unrest never experienced before in and around Minneapolis. The response to the civil unrest required the largest and most unified coordination of law enforcement agencies and National Guard ever undertaken in Minnesota.

In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, we welcomed Officer Nikki Myhre to our team. She started on May 18, 2020. Shortly after her start date, the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis sparked an unprecedented level of civil unrest. The combination of the COVID-19 pandemic and civil unrest, has made 2020 one of the most challenging years law enforcement has ever experienced. Despite these challenges, we successfully completed a hiring process, trained a new officer and continued to deliver public safety services in a safe & efficient manner. This is a true testament to the dedication of our staff.

Public Safety



Our Mission

The Mission of the Minnetrista Public Safety Department is to “Fight Crime and Promote Safety.” We achieve our mission by faithfully enforcing the law, by working with our community, listening to them and educating them, by working as a team, treating each other with respect and by acting professionally and ethically.

Training

Minnesota has very high standards for police officers. In Minnesota, police officers are required to be licensed and certified in a number of proficiencies in order to be employed.

The Minnesota Peace Officer Standards and Training Agency (POST) governs training and licensure for police officers. Police officers are required to earn a minimum of 48 hours of continuing education every three years in order to maintain their license. Much of this training is held in-house, such as use of force, Taser, and firearms training. In addition, all of our officers participate in ongoing monthly on-line training through the League of Minnesota Cities. On-line training topics include everything from use of force issues to legal updates and mental health.

There is also a significant amount of external training as well. This training includes topics such as, but not limited to, emergency vehicle operation, pursuit intervention tactics, crime prevention, first-aid, crime scene management, mental health, domestic assault intervention and interview techniques.

In addition to individual training, many of our police officers also attend instructor level training so they can serve as department instructors in various topics. Of our current 13 officers, 9 of them are certified instructors in DARE, Use of Force, Firearms, Taser, Hobble Restraint, Lidar, and CPR. Additionally, we have two certified Glock Armors and two certified AR15/Rifle Armors.

Public Safety



Public Safety Services Provided

The Minnetrista Public Safety Department is a full service police department providing a wide range of public safety services. To best deliver these services, our agency is broken up into 6 divisions: patrol, investigations, support services, community services, school resource officer (SRO), and emergency management.

Patrol

We provide 24/7 single patrol coverage and 16/7 double patrol coverage. In addition to general patrol, we provide services including, but not limited to; responding to calls for service, traffic enforcement (internally and as part of the statewide Safe & Sober Program), vehicle lock-outs, chaplain response, residential and commercial security evaluations, house checks, court-ordered civil standbys, mediation services, as well as community education events such as Neighborhood Watch, National Night Out, and Citizens Academy.

Investigations

We provide full criminal investigation (felony, gross misdemeanor, and misdemeanor) services as well as administrative investigations such as liquor licenses, employee and vendor background checks, etc. Additional services include complaint response and investigation, preparation of cases for court, as well as alcohol compliance checks and evidence room oversight.

We also have a detective assigned to the West Metro Drug Task Force specifically for narcotics investigations. This position frees up general investigators to work on their already heavy case loads. See the Drug Task Force section for further details.

Support Services

The Minnetrista Public Safety Department provides a wide range of support services. Those services include but are not limited to; answering phone calls from the public, records management, records checks, records retention, processing reports for the public as well as other agencies in compliance with data practice laws, resolving suspense files, preparing discovery motions for trial, and other paperwork, monitoring and updating predatory offender records, processing evidence, as well as a host of additional tasks as necessary.

Public Safety



Community Services

In addition to support services, the Department provides a host of other important services to the public such as; code enforcement, animal control, car seat inspections, civil fingerprinting, security reviews for planning projects, fire service reviews, city code updates and research, public safety education through Trista Day and other events, school interactions, and attendance at all City Council meetings. The Department also coordinates the use of the public safety facility for regional training and other meetings.

School Resource Officer

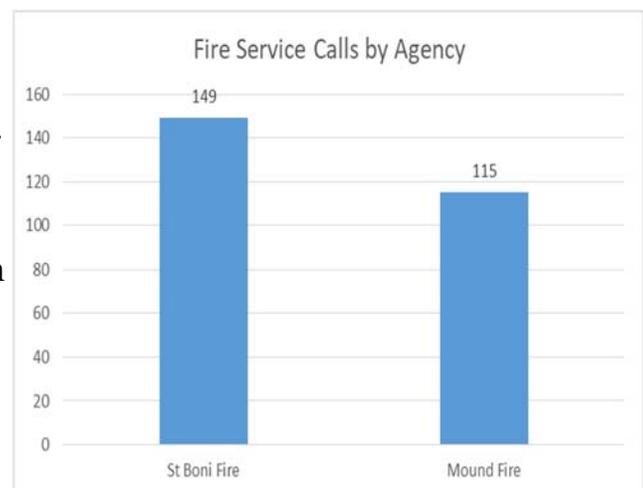
Officer Nate Hintz is the current School Resource Officer (SRO), which is a multiple year assignment. The SRO works out of the Mound-Westonka High School office during the school year and at the public safety facility during the summer months. The SRO is responsible for juvenile investigations, DARE, child safety education, security at schools within our jurisdiction, public safety planning for sporting events, graduation, dances, and homecoming. The SRO also processes special event and gun permits. The SRO's time is split approximately 50/50 between school related and non-school related activities.

Emergency Management

The Director of Public Safety serves as the Emergency Management Director for the cities of Minnetrista and St. Bonifacius. Both cities are part of the Lake Minnetonka Regional Emergency Operations Plan along with Hennepin County, Three Rivers Park District, and 19 other lake area cities. The department provides a full range of emergency management services consistent with an all-hazards approach. Our emergency plan addresses everything from natural disasters such as tornados, floods, and wild fires, to train wrecks, plane crashes, explosions, accidental releases of hazardous materials, enemy attack or other similar types of events that pose a potential threat to the public health and safety in the Lake Minnetonka Region. These services include implementing the emergency plan when necessary, preparing emergency plans, providing training for staff and citizens, managing the outdoor warning system, as well as budgeting for emergency preparedness programs and equipment.

Fire Services

The Department also coordinates with both St. Bonifacius and Mound Fire Departments for the provision of fire services in the community. There were 264 total calls for fire service within our jurisdiction (St. Bonifacius & Minnetrista): 149 calls by the St. Bonifacius Fire Department (80 in Minnetrista and 69 in St. Bonifacius), and 115 calls by the Mound Fire Department (49 fire and 66 rescue), in 2020.

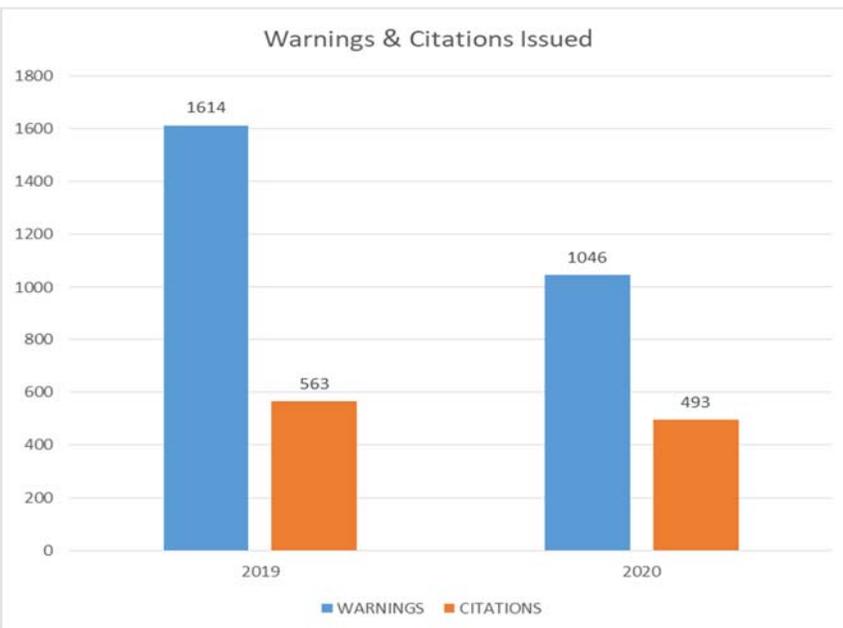
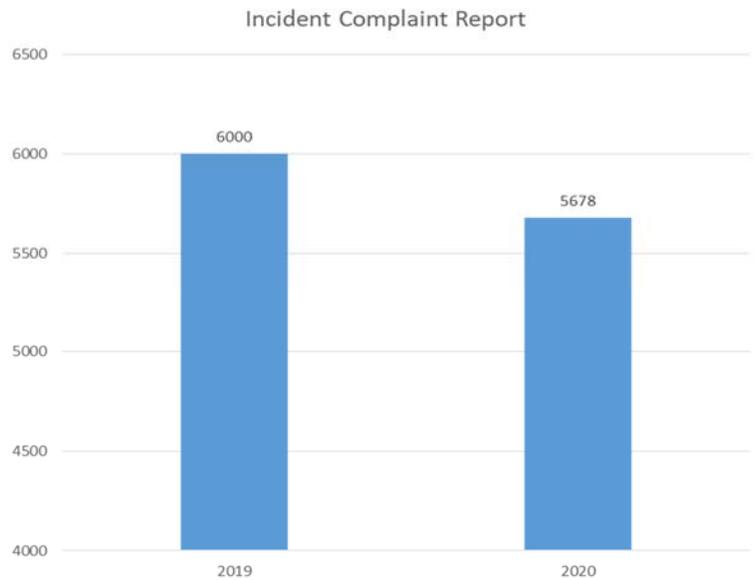


Public Safety

Public Safety Activity

There were 5678 Incident Complaint Reports (ICRs) written in 2020, a decrease of 5.7% from 2019. Incident Complaint Reports are calls for service, officer-initiated service and traffic enforcement – any event that results in a reportable occurrence.

The overall clearance rate for ICRs was 98%.

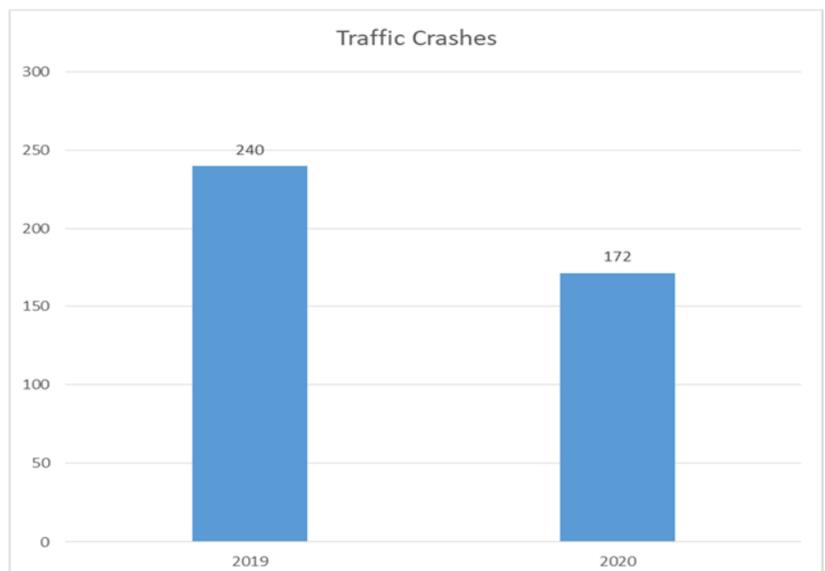


Tickets Issued

Tickets are comprised of citations and warnings. There were 493 citations issued and 1046 warnings issued in 2020 for a total of 1539, compared to 2177 in 2019.

Traffic Crashes

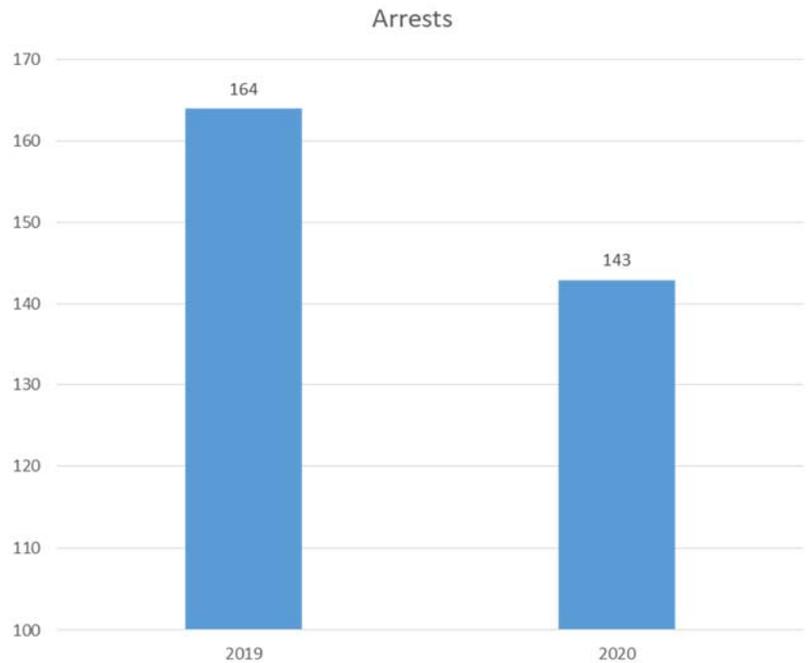
There were 172 crashes: 1 fatality, 21 personal injury, 24 animal-involved, 89 property damage, and 37 vehicles off the road or other category crashes in 2020, down 28.3% from 2019.



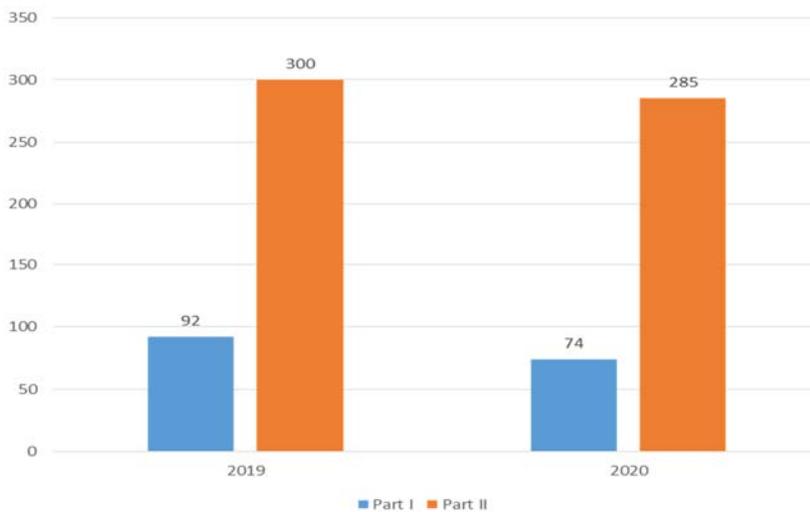
Arrests

There were 116 adults arrested and 27 juveniles arrested in 2020. Arrests do not always mean the person was jailed. In some cases a citation is issued and other cases are charged by our prosecuting attorneys and the suspect may never be in custody.

There were 11 civil fingerprints processed in 2020. These are done for a variety of reasons, job application requirements being the most common.



Part I and II Crimes



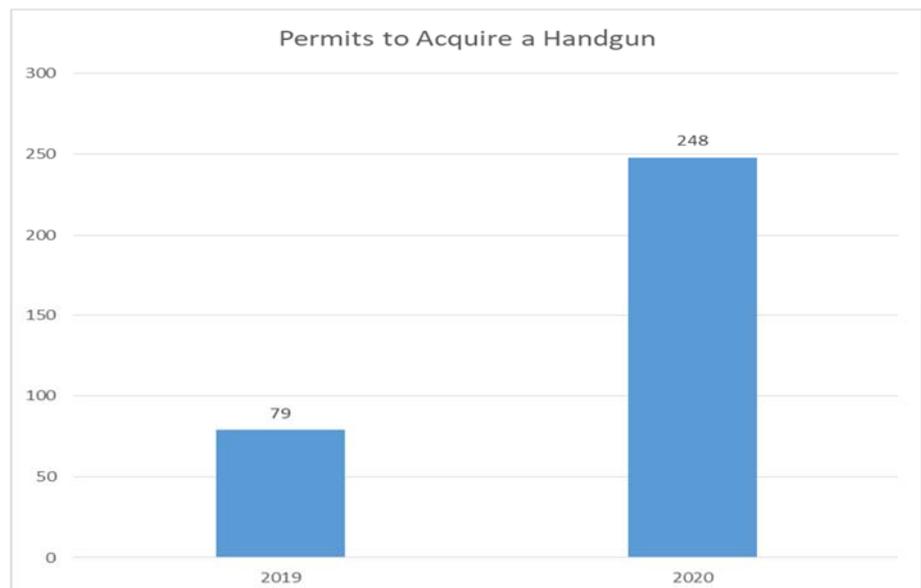
Criminal Investigations

There were 74 Part I (most serious) crimes and 285 Part II (serious) crimes investigated by this Department in 2020, for a total of 359, down 8.4% from 2019. The Minnetrista Public Safety Department had a clearance rate for closing criminal cases of 71%.

Permits

There were 248 applications received for handgun permits in 2020, compared to 79 in 2019.

There were 4 special event permit applications reviewed in 2020, compared to 7 in 2019. Most, if not all, events were cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.



Public Safety

West Metro Drug Task Force

The West Metro Drug Task Force (WMDTF) specifically investigates narcotics-related cases including illegal drug possession, illegal drug sales, and drug overdose related deaths. This position frees up general investigators to work on their already heavy case loads. The Task Force is a multi-jurisdictional agency, which currently consists of Minnetrista, Medina, Orono, West Hennepin and Hennepin County. The WMDTF operates under a joint powers agreement and allows for greater resources to this very regional problem. All drug task force agents attend specialized narcotics-related training in order to become experts in the field. As a result, we are able to take a proactive vs. reactive approach to drug issues affecting our community.

West Metro Drug Task Force Annual Statistics:

	(2019)	(2020)
• Search Warrants	134	111
• Arrests:	112	82
• Charges	110	42
• Firearms Recovered:	30	85
• High Grade Marijuana	117 lbs.	99 lbs.
• Marijuana Wax	2 lbs.	5.5 lbs.
• Cocaine	3.4 lbs.	5.7 lbs.
• Edibles	6.2 lbs.	53.6 lbs.
• Methamphetamine	152 lbs.	428 lbs.
• Heroin	.67 lbs.	5.3 grams
• Illegal Prescription Pills	2750 pills	

In 2020, the WMDTF executed a search warrant resulting in the largest methamphetamine bust in state history (328 lbs.).



Public Safety



Lake Minnetonka SWAT Team

The Lake Minnetonka SWAT Team was formed in 2006 to address the growing need for a tactical response to critical incidents. This multi-agency team is a collaboration of five Lake Minnetonka area agencies (Minnetrista Public Safety, West Hennepin Public Safety, Orono Police, South Lake Minnetonka Public Safety, and Wayzata Police) and currently consists of 16 officers. The Minnetrista Public Safety Department currently has 3 officers assigned to the team. All members of the SWAT team have completed a variety of specialized training.

The Lake Minnetonka SWAT Team responds to critical incidents such as barricaded suspects and hostage rescue. The team is also utilized for high risk search warrants and suspect apprehensions.

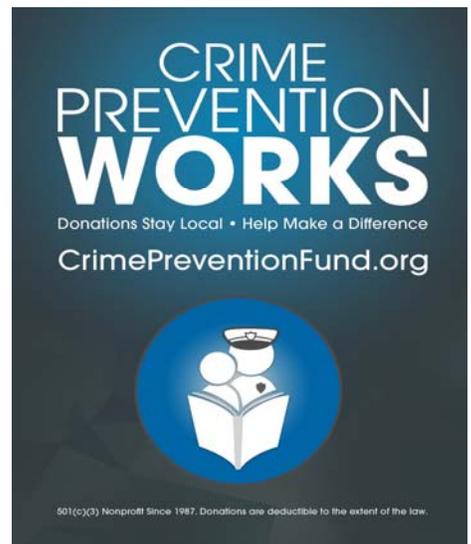
In 2020, the Lake Minnetonka SWAT Team was called out three times. SWAT Team members also participated in monthly training up until COVID-19 restrictions prohibited that activity.



Public Safety

Crime Prevention Fund

The Crime Prevention Fund is a 501c3 nonprofit organization. One hundred percent of the profits from fundraising and donations go to support youth, drug awareness and meaningful crime prevention ventures and programs. The Crime Prevention Fund fundraises to support Crime Free Safe Communities. They are not part of any government entity and the IRS prohibits all 501c3 organizations from any political activity. A Board of Directors governs the Crime Prevention Fund and the Minnetrista Public Safety Director and the Orono Police Chief are advisors to the Board of Directors.



A few of the worthwhile ventures they financially support are DARE and Officer Friendly school programs, unbudgeted public safety-related equipment, educational crime prevention materials, novelties for children and adults, public training and speakers, Citizens Academy, and Trista Day. The Crime Prevention Fund also sponsors things like bike rodeos, picture contests, National Night Out, community Drug Free Forums, and prescription drug take back programs. Additionally, the Crime Prevention Fund is able and willing to raise reward money if requested by their Law Enforcement advisors.

The Crime Prevention Fund is an important nonprofit organization that tirelessly serves our communities. In order to support these worthwhile causes, the Crime Prevention Fund hosts an annual Crime Prevention Charity Golf event every Spring. This event was cancelled in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Crime Prevention Fund reminds us all that "Giving Back Matters."

Your support has most certainly contributed to safer communities through education, training, and awareness for enforcement. I would like to extend a very sincere thank you to all citizens, business community members and the Crime Prevention Fund members for supporting the Minnetrista Public Safety Department in our continuous effort to keep our communities safe.



Public Safety



Volunteer Reserve Officers

Volunteer Reserve Officers play a very important role in our commitment to public safety. Members of our reserve organization volunteer their time and efforts to assist the department with a wide variety of tasks such as:

- ◆ Prisoner transports to jail, detox, etc.
- ◆ Business checks
- ◆ House checks
- ◆ Event security
- ◆ Traffic control
- ◆ Vehicle impounds
- ◆ Assist with crosswalk enforcement and other traffic enforcement details
- ◆ Provide an extra set of eyes and ears in the community
- ◆ Provide additional police presence and visibility in the community
- ◆ Public safety education

2020 was a difficult year for volunteers due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Many non-essential services were suspended as we did not want to put our volunteers, staff or the public at undue risk. With that said, we appreciate our volunteers very much and look forward to getting back to some sense of normal in the near future.

Our volunteers come from a wide variety of backgrounds. Some of them have law enforcement related experience, while others come from non-law enforcement backgrounds and are just looking for ways to give back to the community. Whatever the reason, our volunteers play a critical role in helping us deliver the best possible services to the citizens we serve. We are always in search of additional volunteers to join our reserve team.

