

Kronenwetter Police Annual Report 2023



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Letter from the Chief

We saw historical progress in 2023, from the promotion of the first ever KPD Sergeants to the hiring of our first full time female officer. Again, thanks to everyone who supported our staffing increase.



The promotion of two patrol sergeants was important so we could provide after-hours and weekend supervision to patrol. This is particularly true since we have four younger officers on board. Patrol officers are assigned to one of two work rotation teams and now each team has a sergeant to assist them in the field.

In addition, this helps our succession plan by providing two sergeants with an opportunity to gain supervisory training and experience, making them better prepared for command staff positions. I'm very proud of how well our new sergeants and new officers have performed. We have a great group of officers who work together well and embody our core values.

The increase of two patrol officers helped us have fewer "hard minimum" staffing days, which occurs when we only have one officer on duty at a time over a 24-hour period. This is not safe for the officer or the community and leads to decreased response times.

I'm also proud that Kronenwetter was ranked number two in the SafeWise *Safest Cities in WI* report last year. I think this is a testament to the great working relationship we have with our citizens, and the quality of our officers and how they interact with people. We strive to provide an excellent service while keeping per capita costs lower than average.

In closing, I'd like to reflect on the fact that 2023 was the deadliest year for WI police officers in over 20 years. I'm proud that KPD was able to send a representative to three of the four officers' funerals. We know that these incidents can happen anywhere, not just in the "big city." There's a quote etched in the National Law Enforcement Memorial that reads, *It's not how these officers died that made them heroes, it is how they lived.*

Sincerely,

Terry McHugh

Chief of Police

Letter from the Lieutenant

Each year, policing brings Kronenwetter Police Department new challenges, changes, and a deeper level of forward thinking. Forward-thinking for Kronenwetter Police derives from examples like community empathy, staffing levels, hiring for the future, and group cohesion. We firmly believe in growth, and success takes time, just as any business would take seven to ten years to see the success or benefits and so has Kronenwetter Police. Looking at the Kronenwetter Police Department in a holistic way, we see that the department has come a long way from starting fresh twenty years ago, and I am privileged to say I saw this progress from the beginning. The key has always been sustainable and continuous change:



- Commitment and self-determination are the department's principles, and officers embrace the freedom of autonomy. Surely, that freedom helps officers foster good relationships with the community and gives a sense of pride to each officer.
- Having a healthy department internally reflects out into the public and community. It is important to note that our agency may be small, but proper staffing levels are vital to community relationships, officer engagement, and little things like face-to-face interactions.

Additionally, hiring within the department has changed as well, focusing on the department's structure, group cohesion, adaptability, character, and community engagement. The department focuses on what we know currently, issues facing our citizens, cultural competence, and employing officers based on character and competency. We firmly believe that while many agencies faced hiring issues, we had great success, and lots can be said about the department's social environment, both internally and in the community. It comes down to simply caring about others' ideas, views, and personal lives. The effects of an exceptional work group and how they fit in or feel about the department will lead to superb relationships with the community and the citizens of Kronenwetter. So, with that said, hiring officers who have empathy, show dignity and respect, and allow citizens to have a voice fosters trust.

When I speak about staffing, it's great to know we have our citizens in the community and the elected officials' support, as this is critical for improving public safety and fostering a safe community. I have been with the agency from one officer, then two, and so on. This is key as I have seen the community adjust to their own police and the population growth. Looking back at the foundation of the Kronenwetter Police, one common denominator that has always occurred was community interaction, trust, and support.

I applaud our patrol officers for their hard work and dedicated efforts on all levels and for being proactive in the community. It's just amazing when you look at the number of tasks assigned to officers and with being a smaller agency. Many agencies north of Kronenwetter and in Marathon County have other officers to handle particular tasks daily. Our officers are genuinely universal, as they modestly handle calls for service, community relations, criminal investigations, and everything investigators would.

Among those tasks are prevention and safety of the roadways within the interior boundaries of the Village. One of the critical proactive enforcements is drivers who are impaired by drugs and alcohol. According to MADD, drunk driving increased 28%, with people driving intoxicated 300,000 times, but only 3,000 impaired drivers had been arrested and that is staggering.

As I said, our officers are dedicated to the community's safety, and that often is not seen by others. Understandably, it's impossible to predict or prevent injuries or fatalities. However, some often criticize those efforts for not seeing the other side of the fence and often forget those who are affected by impaired drivers. Regardless, Kronenwetter Police Department's impaired driving enforcement came in as the fifth-highest ticket issued. Meaning our officers are out there making a difference in safety tasks and improving the quality of life for the citizens of Kronenwetter.

Rightfully so, knowing the Village demographics and single-family housing is critical to the safety of the Village as a whole. Additionally, we know the majority of national and local citizens are concerned about public safety and traffic safety (speeding), and the department fields calls weekly regarding traffic safety issues.

Noteworthy is that the City of Wausau is just over 20 square miles, and the city's police department ratio of officer to citizen is 1.96. Further, it takes hard work to cover 52 square miles for a small department like ours with a 1.17 ratio per officer/citizen and be proactive on all the roads. Thus, I give our officers great credit for their hard work and commitment to the citizens of Kronenwetter.

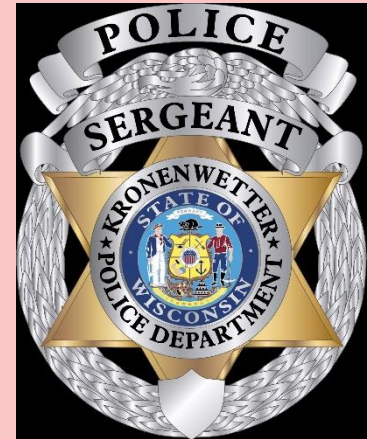
Sincerely,

Chris Smart

Lieutenant of Police

Patrol Sergeant Promotions

KPD made history by promoting our first ever sergeants in 2023. Officers Ben Shope and Aaron Seehafer were promoted to the rank of sergeant in a ceremony on January 9, 2023. Sgt. Seehafer has been with the department since 2018 and is a ten-year law enforcement veteran. He is a field training officer and Taser instructor. Sgt. Shope has been with KPD since 2020 and he is an 18-year veteran. Sgt. Shope is also a field training officer and over the course of his career, he has been a member of a dive team, bomb team, honor guard, and crash reconstruction.



Sgt. Shope (L) and Sgt. Seehafer (R) being sworn in.

Below: Families pinning the new Sergeants' badges on.



New Officers Via Staffing Increase

Police staffing levels are often viewed in terms of the number of full-time officers per 1,000 residents. With respect to KPD staffing levels, the two new positions increased our full-time officers per 1,000 residents to 1.17. By way of comparison, Wausau metro area full time departments range from 1.60 to 2.2 full time officers per 1,000 residents.

Like many job markets, police departments nationwide have struggled to attract applicants. Unfortunately, we have seen fewer and fewer people interested in this profession; however, we were fortunate to hire two outstanding individuals from the same Police Recruit Class at Mid-State Technical College, Officer Mariah Guyer and Officer Corey Baron.

Officer Guyer became the first full-time female officer in the department's history. She has a medical and fire department background, which is a great asset to our village. Officer Baron is a Sergeant in the WI National Guard—something we're very proud to support.



Officer Guyer with Lt. Smart (left) and Officer Baron (right).

2023 Staff Roster

Command Staff

Chief of Police Terry McHugh

Lieutenant Chris Smart

Sergeant Ben Shope

Sergeant Aaron Seehafer

Full-Time Patrol Officers

Officer Dan Dunst

Officer Mason Dallman

Officer Soua Xiong

Officer Mariah Guyer

Officer Isiah Konopacki

Officer Corey Baron

Part-Time Patrol Officers

Officer Josh McCaskill

Officer Eric Soberg

Officer Greg Schremp

Civilian Staff

Clerk Dianne Drew

Property Room Custodian Gary Anderson

Crossing Guard Pete Preu

Crossing Guard Maureen Lambert

Crossing Guard Nicole Vermote

Crossing Guard Kathy Imlach

Patrol Operations

As the old saying goes, Patrol is the backbone of any police department, and ours is no different. The work our patrol officers do every day is incredible, and every day they deal with a myriad of situations. Our patrol operations are broken down into two teams, each having three patrol officers and one patrol sergeant. The sergeant is responsible for supervising their team and Lt. Smart supervises overall patrol operations.

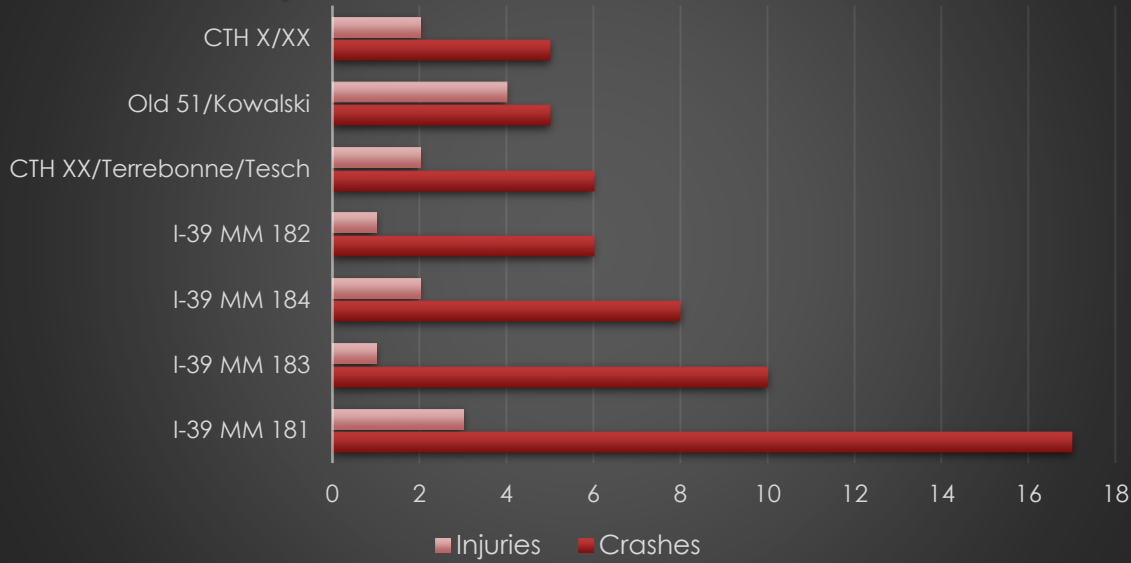
The addition of patrol sergeants added a much-needed layer of street level supervision during night and weekend hours. The new sergeants took on a dual role of not only supervising their patrol teams, but also taking their own calls for service along with the patrol officers. This valuable position also provides the sergeants with supervisory experience to help prepare them for command level positions.

In a small department such as ours, officers not only have to respond to calls for service, but they also must conduct all associated follow-up investigation since we do not have a detective position. Additionally, they each have administrative tasks such as firearms instructor, Taser instructor, TIME System Administrator, Peer Support Team, etc. All these tasks can take away from officers' time.



Patrol Operations

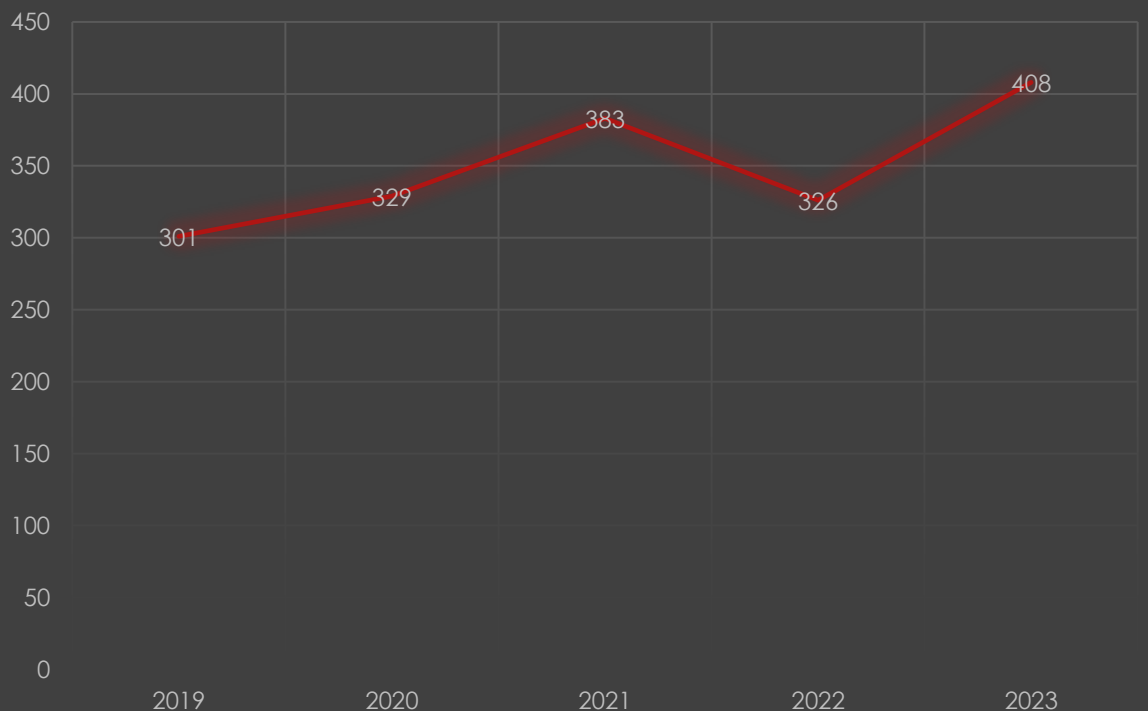
Top Crash Locations 2023



Bear in mind that this chart is only for "reportable" crashes and does not include the numerous "non-reportable" crashes and vehicle slide ins that we respond to. As you can see from the top chart, we continue to take more vehicle crashes on the highway than anywhere else in the Village.

The KPD is responsible for everything on our stretch of I-39, from a simple traffic hazard to a fatality crash. According to the WisDOT Traffic Counts website, the average annual daily traffic count on our portion of I-39 is over 34,000 vehicles!

I-39 Calls For Service by Year



Patrol Operations

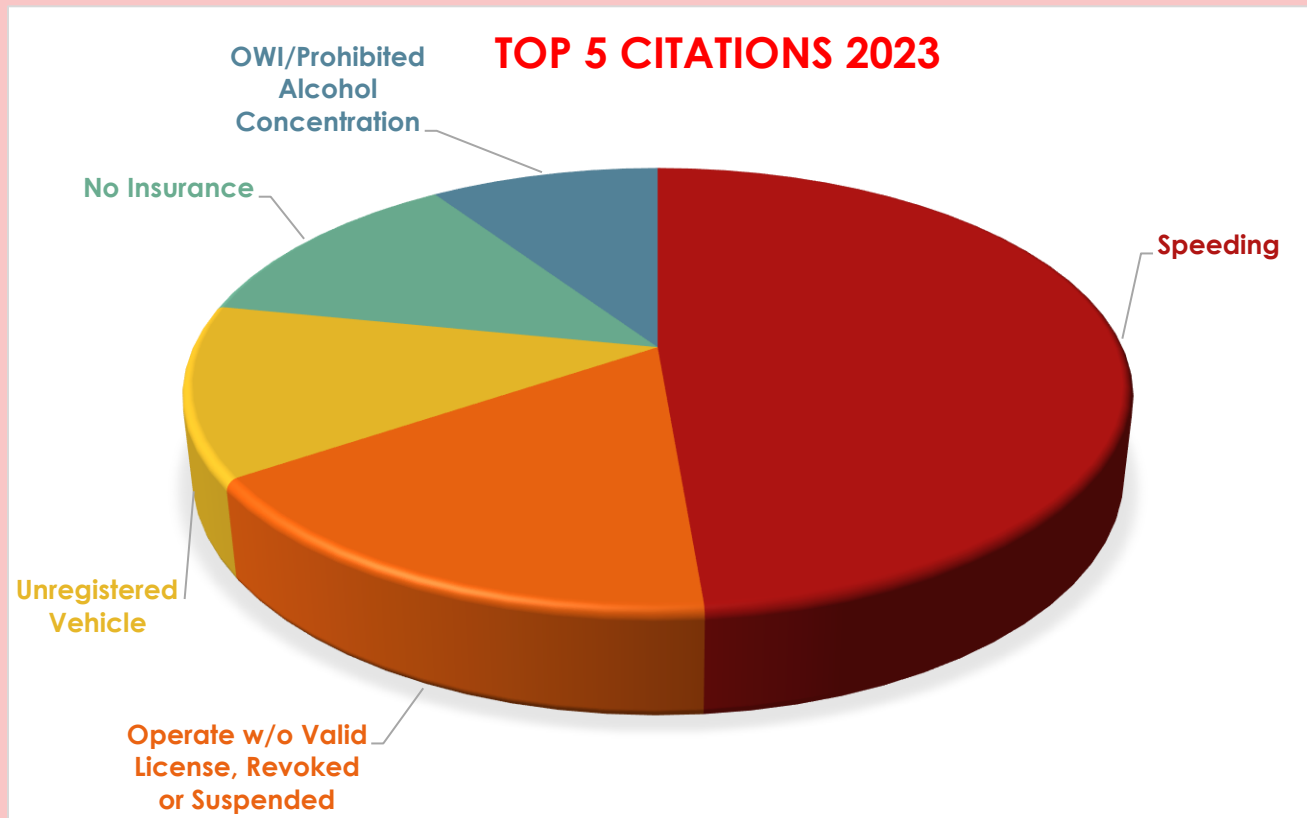
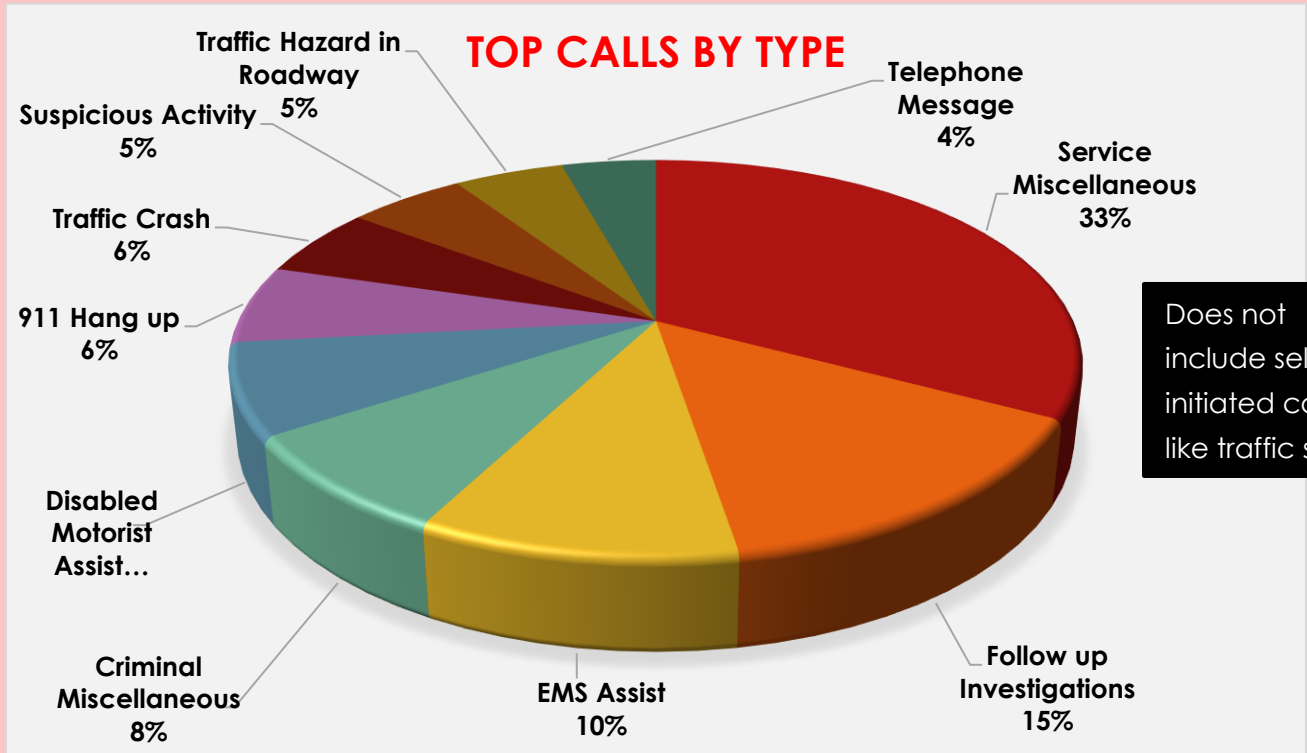
Rank	Call Type	Avg Officers on Scene	Avg time on call
1	Vehicle crash w/ injuries	3.6	1 hr, 5 min
2	Warrant arrest	2.9	1 hr, 5 min
3	Domestic dispute	2.5	1 hr, 19 min
4	Mental health call	2.4	1 hr, 20 min
5	Juvenile disturbance	2	50 min, 33 sec
6	Hit & run vehicle crash	2	39 min, 37 sec
7	Alarms	1.8	16min, 49 sec
8	Sexual assault	1.8	2 hrs, 45 min
9	Welfare check	1.7	58 min, 58 sec
10	EMS assist	1.7	28 min, 26 sec
11	Vehicle crash w/o injuries	1.5	41 min, 35 sec
12	Criminal miscellaneous	1.4	49 min, 16 sec
13	Noise complaint	1.4	17 min, 31 sec
14	911 Hang up	1.3	14 min, 47 sec
15	Suspicious Activity	1.3	22 min, 41 sec

This chart to the left shows the types of calls that required the greatest number of officers on scene. As a note, the average time spent on scene does not include any follow up investigation, evidence processing or report writing related to the original call.

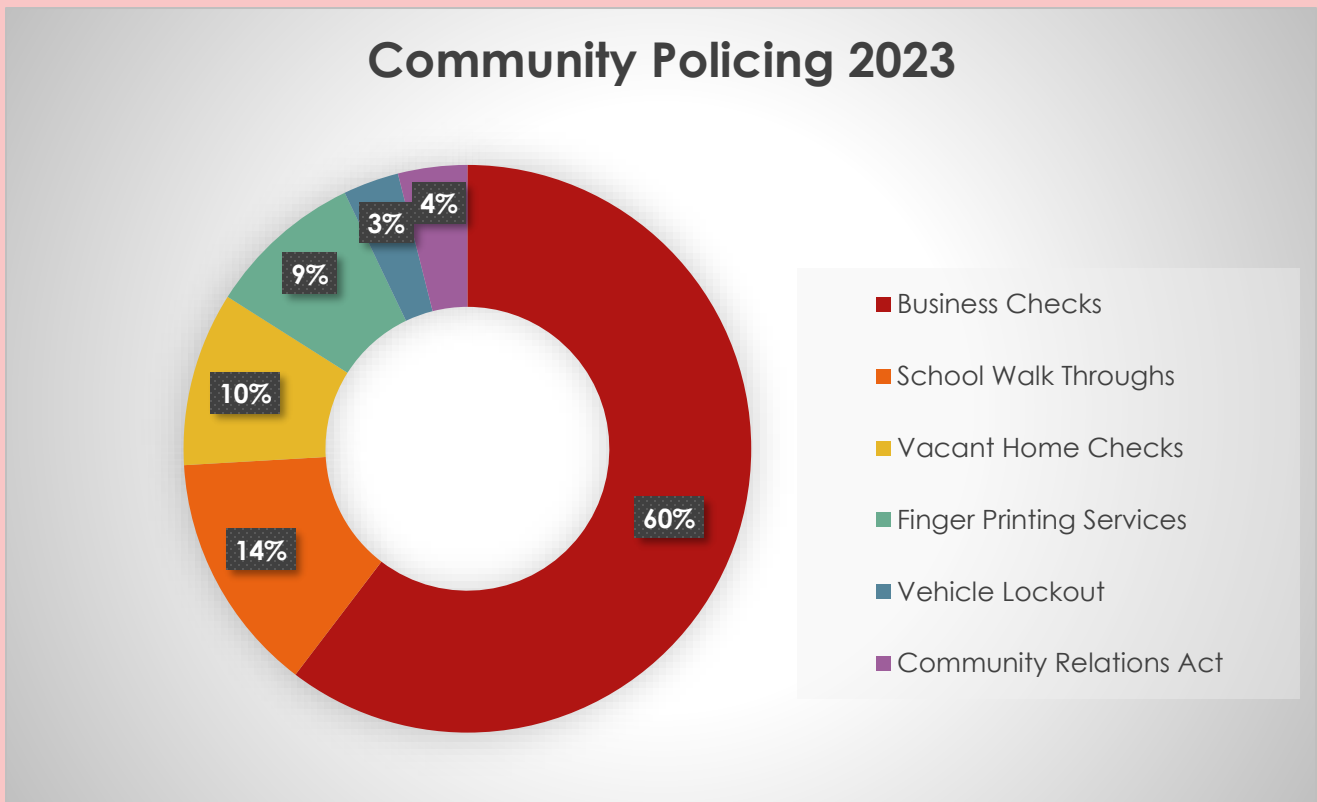
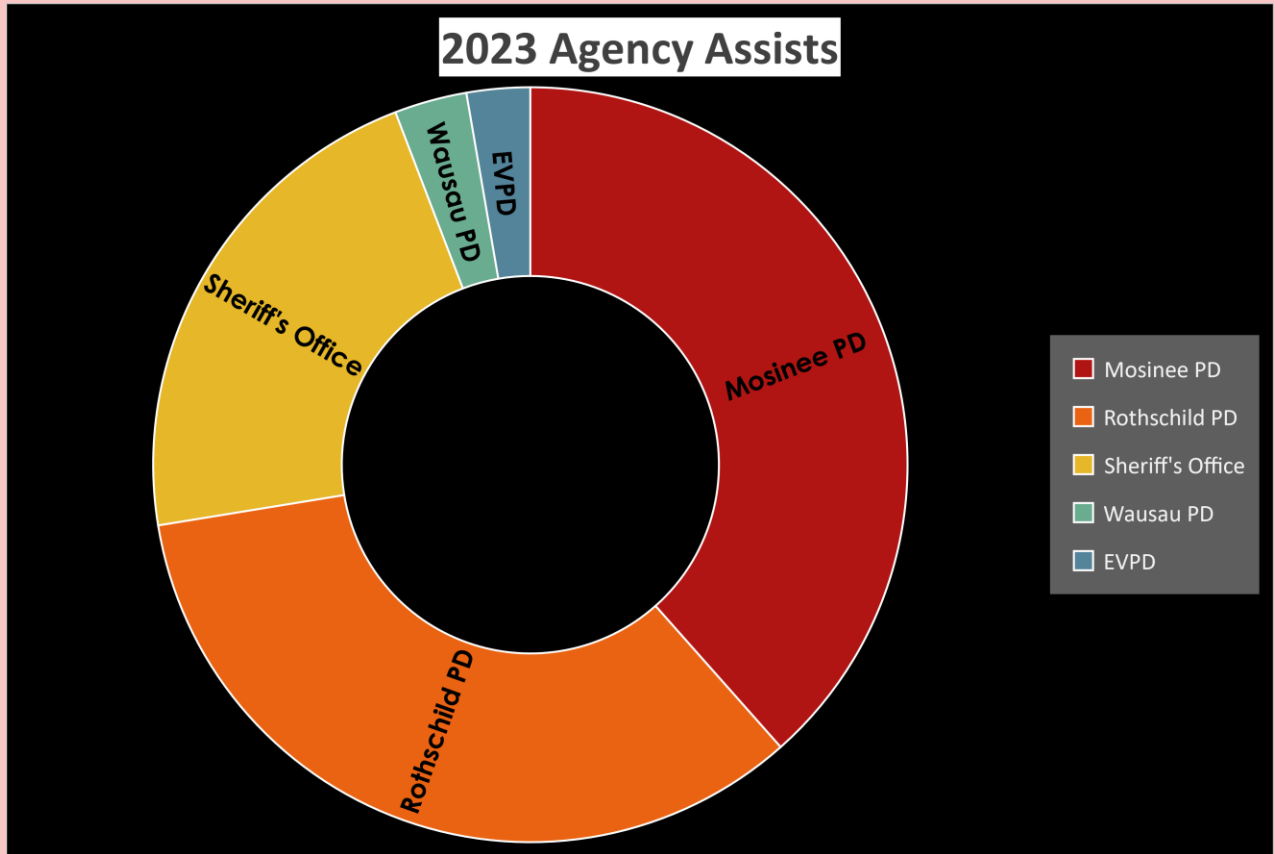
The chart below shows KPD's five-year Uniform Crime Reporting stats.

Nature of Offense	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Criminal Homicide	0	0	1	2	0
Forcible Rape	5	2	2	4	3
Robbery	0	0	0	0	0
Aggravated Assault	2	3	2	3	4
Simple Assault	19	10	10	8	13
Burglary	11	9	4	4	3
Larceny	29	20	19	18	17
Motor Vehicle theft	1	2	0	1	1
Arson	0	0	0	0	0

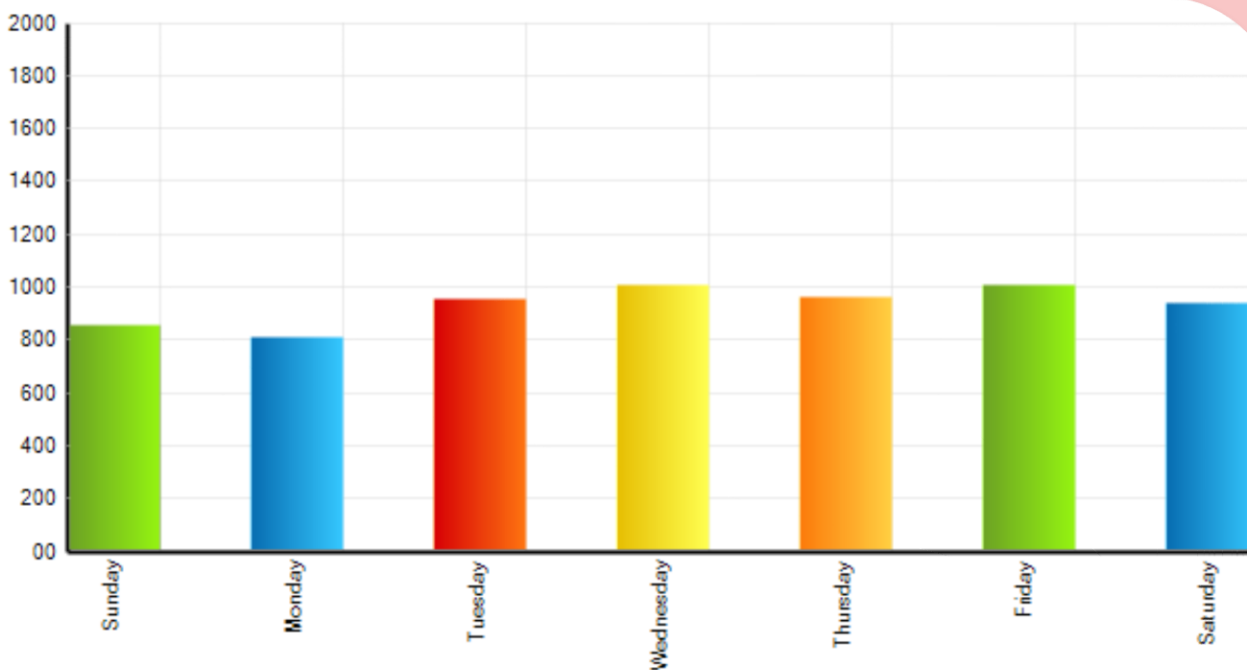
Patrol Operations



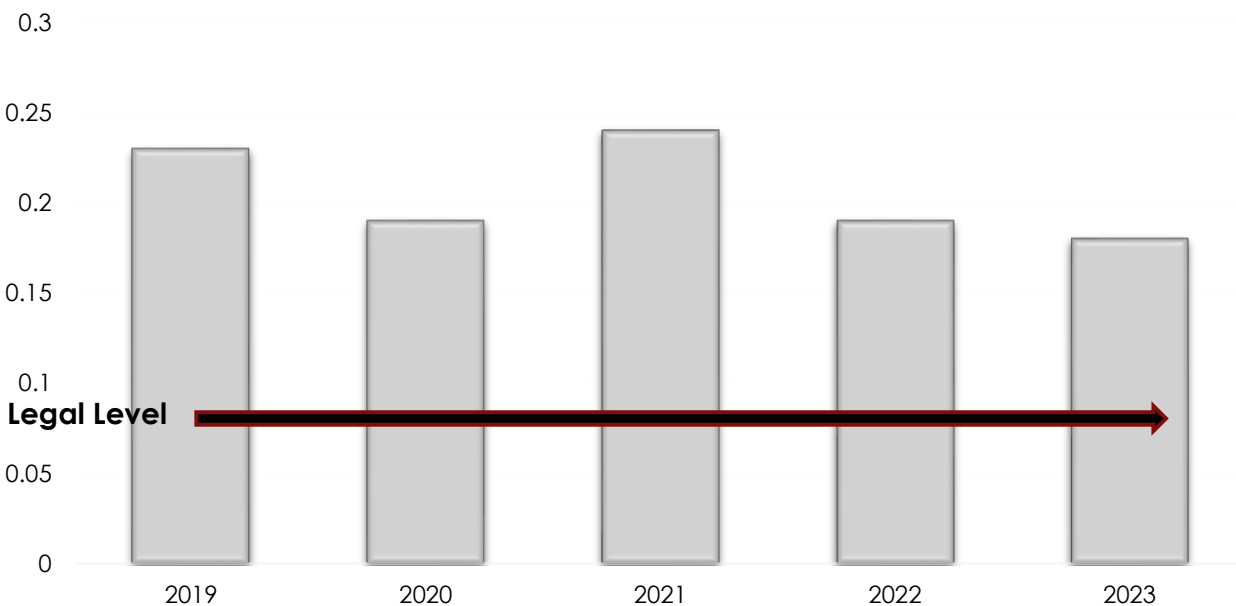
Patrol Operations



2023 Calls for Service by Day of the Week



Avg BAC for Drunk Driving Offenses



The drivers we arrested for OWI in 2023 had an average BAC (blood alcohol concentration) of .18, which is more than two times the legal limit! Drivers who are impaired by alcohol, drugs or both are a danger to everyone on the road. In 2023, most of our arrests were for first through third offense; however, we did arrest one driver for his seventh offense!

2023 in Photos



Above: Sgt Shope at the scene of a structure fire.

Right: Officer Konopacki graduating from CIT (Crisis Intervention Training) school. CIT is a nationwide program that trains officers in the best practices for dealing with people in crisis.

Below: Officer Xiong at the firearms range.





Above: Officer Guyer assists at the Crossing Guard post for Evergreen Elementary.

Below: Officer Baron hits the road to begin his day on patrol.





Halloween





Top Left: Officer Baron & Lt. Smart after Officer Baron's swearing in ceremony.

Top Right: Officer Konopacki receiving Officer of the Year award from Chief McHugh

Bottom Left: Sgt Shope

Bottom Right: Officer Guyer



Right: Chief McHugh prepares to throw out the ceremonial first pitch at the Wausau Woodchucks game.



Left: Clerk Dianne Drew serving cake at the Kronenwetter mural ceremony.



Right: Officer Dunst hosts Santa Claus for a ride along.





Thank you, Crossing Guard Marueen Lambert, who retired in 2023 after many years of service to the village! You will be missed. We wish you a happy retirement!

Congratulations to Officer Dunst, who celebrated his 10-year anniversary with KPD in 2023! Thanks for your dedicated service over the last decade.



Our Values

