

**WATERTOWN POLICE
DEPARTMENT ANNUAL
USE OF FORCE REPORT**

2025



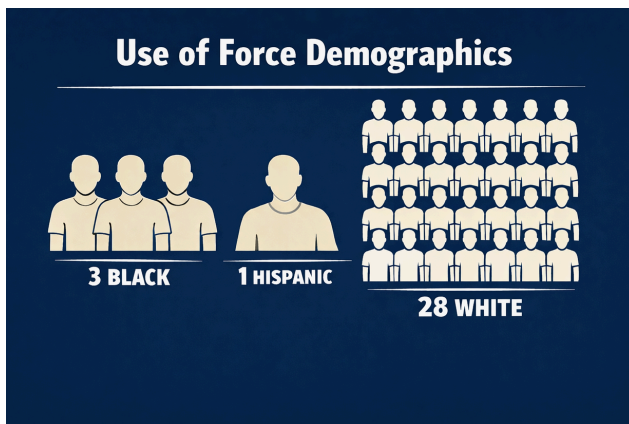
**THE CITY OF
WATERTOWN**

Use of Force Report

The Watertown Police Department is proud to present the 2025 Annual Use of Force Report. This document provides a transparent overview of our encounters and reflects our ongoing dedication to the safety of both our officers and the community we serve. Our primary objective in every interaction is to achieve a peaceful resolution through professional presence and effective dialogue. We take great pride in our ability to resolve conflicts through communication, utilizing the visibility of a marked squad car and a uniformed officer as primary tools to encourage voluntary compliance. Our officers are trained to prioritize verbal de-escalation as the first and most vital step in any encounter, ensuring that the vast majority of our tens of thousands of annual calls for service are resolved without the need for physical intervention.

While our goal is always 100% voluntary compliance, the nature of law enforcement occasionally requires officers to use force to protect the public and themselves. As detailed in this report, such instances represent only a small fraction of our total interactions, with a total of 36 use of force incidents documented during the 2025 reporting year.

To maintain the highest standards of professional conduct, every incident is reviewed by a group of officers certified by the Wisconsin Department of Justice as Defensive and Arrest Tactics Instructors. Officers are required by policy to document any action involving the pointing or discharge of a weapon, any force resulting in alleged injury or death, and weaponless physical force at the level of compliance holds and above. This rigorous oversight ensures that all force used is justified and allows the department to analyze annual data to identify trends and continuously improve our service to the City of Watertown.



OF THE FORCE USED BY THE POLICE, 3 OF THE SUBJECTS WERE BLACK, 1 WAS HISPANIC AND 28 WERE WHITE.

Use of Force Report

Use of Force by Month

During the reporting year, a total of 36 use of force incidents were documented. Monthly totals show some fluctuation, with activity generally increasing during the mid-year months.

The year began with a low number of incidents, with 1 use of force reported in January. Activity increased in February with 4 incidents, followed by a slight decrease in March and April, which each recorded 2 incidents.

Use of force incidents rose again in late spring and summer, with 3 incidents in May and 4 incidents in June. The highest level of activity occurred in July with 5 incidents. August and September each recorded 4 incidents, maintaining elevated activity levels during this period.

In the final quarter, incidents declined, with 2 reported in October and November, before a slight increase to 3 incidents in December.

Overall, the data reflects a trend of lower activity at the beginning and end of the year, with a sustained increase during the summer months. This pattern is consistent with seasonal increases in calls for service and overall police activity.

Use of Force by Day

Here's the breakdown of use of force incidents by day of the week:

Saturday: 9
Wednesday: 8
Thursday: 8
Sunday: 4
Tuesday: 4
Monday: 2
Friday: 1

Use of force incidents were most common on weekends—especially Saturdays—and midweek (Wednesday/Thursday), while Fridays and Mondays saw the lowest activity. This pattern often aligns with higher call volume periods and weekend-related activity.

Use of Force Report

Use of Force - Age of Subject

Throughout the 2025 reporting period, the department recorded 32 incidents involving use of force against human subjects. An analysis of the age demographics reveals that the largest concentration of force applications occurred within the 20–29 age bracket, which accounted for 31% of all recorded subjects (10 individuals). This was followed closely by the 30–39 age group, representing 7 subjects, and the 40–49 age group, representing 6 subjects. Collectively, individuals between the ages of 20 and 49 comprised the vast majority of use of force encounters, totaling approximately 72% of the annual data.

Incidents involving subjects at the extreme ends of the age spectrum were less frequent. Only two subjects were recorded in the 10–19 age range, both of whom were 19 years old. Conversely, subjects aged 50 and older represented approximately 22% of the total, with 3 subjects in their 50s and 4 subjects in their 60s. The oldest subject encountered was 67 years of age. Data was omitted for animal-related calls (Incident Types: Injured Animal, Dog Bite, Animal Complaint) which totals 4 incidents.

Use of Force - Application Type

The analysis of force applications in 2025 shows that Point Firearm was the most frequent action taken, occurring 16 times, followed closely by Point Taser at 13 occurrences. These "display of force" actions—where a weapon is drawn but not discharged—represent a significant portion of the department's tactical interventions, often used to gain compliance during high-risk scenarios such as traffic stops and domestic disputes.

Physical control techniques, specifically Decentralization, were employed 12 times. This technique remains a primary method for safely taking resistant subjects to the ground. Taser Fired (actual deployment) occurred in 6 instances, indicating that in approximately 31% of the cases where a Taser was involved, the display alone was insufficient to resolve the encounter.

Lower-level force options, including Compliance Holds and OC Spray, were utilized less frequently, totaling 4 applications. Additionally, officers were required to Destroy Animal on 4 occasions due to injuries or safety threats. In total, the department recorded 57 distinct force actions across the 36 reported incidents, reflecting the multi-faceted nature of these high-pressure encounters.