

The Old Saybrook Department of Police Services provides diverse traditional and non-traditional law enforcement services to our community, **twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week**. For the better part of each day, our Department is the only municipal government agency open to serve the citizens and visitors of our community.

Old Saybrook citizens and those who visit our community expect, demand, and deserve prompt, professional law enforcement services. Business owners and residents alike depend on the police department to create a safe and sound atmosphere. This atmosphere, preserved by the Department of Police Services, enhances the local economy by making our community attractive to new businesses, patrons, and tourists. Parents demand that their children live in a safe community where they are befriended by the police. This includes the delivery of proactive services to students and faculty within our public and parochial schools. Our senior population requires nontraditional programs that provide them with crime prevention tips, identity protection, and prompt response to a medical crisis with superior equipment and well-trained personnel. As a Police Agency we are proud to meet the challenges presented and partner with the Old Saybrook community each day.

The quality of life we enjoy in Old Saybrook begins with the safety and security of our community.

The Old Saybrook Department of Police Services is responsible for the operation and administration of the Town's Emergency Communications Center. The Center is staffed with trained, certified personnel that meet State mandates maintaining various State and National emergency communication certifications. The Emergency Communications Center is responsible for all emergency and non-emergency telephone, radio, and facsimile communications for Old Saybrook's law enforcement, fire services, emergency medical services, and emergency management agencies. In addition to these duties, the center is the only after-hours point of contact for municipal departments including those that assist our agency in emergencies such as the building department and regional public health department, the office of the fire marshal, the Office of the First Selectman, and the department of public works. Public Safety Dispatchers serve as the vital link between those who need help and those that can provide help. The services that are provided by the Emergency Communication Division are unparalleled in the area and are essential to the success of Old Saybrook's First Responder Community. In the past fiscal year, the Center received 28,723 calls and placed 11,427 phone calls. Out of the calls received, 4,434 were 911 calls. Additionally, our Public Safety Dispatchers serve as our vital records clerks, processing and transmitting paperwork to court, satisfying records requests, and ensuring vital, confidential records are properly safeguarded.

The Men and Women of the Department of Police Services are proud of our role as the community's Primary Medical First Responder. When a medical emergency occurs in Town, our Old Saybrook Police Officers are first to arrive with lifesaving knowledge, skills, and equipment. Police officers who are Emergency Medical Technicians can provide advanced care, administer lifesaving medication (including Epinephrine and Narcan), all within minutes from a call for help. This service continues to place a hazardous demand on our personnel over the past year as they responded to COVID-19 Positive patients in need of medical aid, placing their own health in jeopardy to perform lifesaving work. In the past year, we responded to 1,540 medical emergencies. We are proud to offer this level of service, which is unmatched in our area and enjoy working with the members of the Old Saybrook Ambulance Association and the Middlesex Health Paramedics.

In the Department's traditional law enforcement role, we continue to provide superior service. This past year, the Department logged 20,900 incidents. An "incident" is any type of call for service and/or self-initiated activity by a police officer, excluding motor vehicle law enforcement. As an example, an "incident" can be the direction of school traffic, responding to a burglar alarm, an actual burglary, providing emergency medical services, an accident investigation, a domestic violence matter, checking on the wellbeing of a prisoner, caring for a suicidal person, conducting a narcotics investigation, administrative matters, a parking complaint, performing a security check, and/or the investigation of a serious assault. There were 272 custodial arrests last year. (An individual involved in a custodial arrest is transported to the police department, processed in our detention facility and then either released on bond or transported to the Middletown Superior Court on the next available court date.) Only 6 persons under the age of 18 were arrested last year.

Law Enforcement services remain a very personal and private issue for those individuals involved. We remain discreet in the public reporting of matters to maintain as much privacy for crime victims that reside in our small community.

In addition to calls for services last year, Old Saybrook Police Officers conducted 1,840 motor vehicle stops. Of these stops, 701 drivers were given verbal warnings, 790 received written warnings, 248 were issued an Infraction and 82 were given a summons to appear in court for their motor vehicle violation. The remaining motor vehicle stops resulted in arrests for DUI (27), possession of illegal drugs, and/or the apprehension of a person on an outstanding warrant.

The dedicated members of the Animal Control Division continue to work tirelessly to ensure that domesticated animal's rights are protected, lost animals are reunited with their rightful owners, and great homes are found for those looking for a new family. All Animal Control Division Members are per diem employees, being compensated only when they are called to work. This fiscally efficient program requires the dedication of special employees. Each of who is dedicated to the welfare of domesticated animals and works in conjunction with our sworn law enforcement staff to complete sensitive investigations concerning the cruelty to animals and/or animal bites.

The Marine Patrol had a very busy and successful season. We continue to appreciate the support of the marine community and their positive voices encouraging the continuation of proactive patrols during the boating season. In addition to countless safety inspections, impromptu boating education "seminars", and emergency responses to vessels and/or persons in distress.

Giving Back....

Department members spent much time this past year volunteering to assist those in need.

In February, our "It's Time to Do your Duty" Campaign was back again seeking donations of wipes and diapers to help Old Saybrook families with newborns. Working with Social Services, the Shoreline Diaper Bank, and Bare Necessities, we collected thousands of wipes and over 100 cases of diapers! These donations assist with preserving the health of our newest residents! We are happy to do our duty!

Over the Summer months, our Shorts4Sports Campaign ended on September 30th, 2021. Police Officers donated \$5 per day to wear our summer uniform, consisting of a polo shirt and shorts. The police union then matched each officer's donation – dollar for dollar. In total, with an additional private donation, the Department raised \$ 20,000 for the Old Saybrook High School Turf Field Lights! We were proud to be one of the first donations received by the Rays for RAMS Committee, tasked with overseeing fundraising for the High School Turf Field Light initiative. The Department supports our student athletes and can't wait for Friday Night Lights! GO RAMS!

In November, our annual "Give the Cops the Bird" campaign yielded much success once again. Department Members collected more than 700 turkeys and over 3,000 lbs of food that provided Old Saybrook Families in need with all the fixings for both a Thanksgiving and Christmas Dinner. Those in need picked up their turkey and all the trimmings at the police department. Remaining turkeys were donated to similar charities around the State. The Department thanks Youth and Family Services, Stop and Shop, and the Connecticut Food Bank for their support with this important community service project.

In December, the "Make a Child's Wish Come True" Campaign yielded success once again! The police department facility was used to collect, sort, store, and then deliver new unwrapped toys. Once again partnering with Youth and Family Services, the collected toys, games, books, and stuffed animals were distributed to those in need at the police department.

We are appreciative of the generosity of all citizens who make these community give back campaigns an enormous success! The Department is very thankful for those employees who gave their own time to participate in these valuable and necessary community events. Everyone's efforts have made a true positive impact on the lives of our citizens in need and demonstrate the Department's bond with the community.

Department Milestones

Following the August 2020 approval of the fleet replacement plan, the ten (10) new police package Chevrolet Tahoes. Arrived. The delivery of these vehicles and the equipment to transform the vehicles into police vehicles

were drastically delayed due to the worldwide microchip shortage and a significant disruption in the supply chain. We are eager to get all the new vehicles operational and “on the road”. This is the third time that the Town has approved the fleet replacement program which has yielded much success over the past nine years reducing and flat funding vehicle maintenance costs, flat funding capital funding for police vehicles, and most of all ensuring that our police officers have reliable and safe vehicles to perform their duties.

In December of 2020 the Police Commission approved a new Records Management and Computer Aided Dispatch System. During this past fiscal year, NexGen who was awarded the project under its current state contract, worked with the Department to implement the new software. The last time the Department updated its records management system was in 1999. We expect the new software to assist with an eventual “paperless” system that will be mandated by the State Division of Criminal Justice.

The Department is proud of our Police Officers, Public Safety Dispatchers, and Support Employees for their professionalism, dedication, and superior service to the citizens and visitors of the Town of Old Saybrook. We will continue to work hard every day, not only providing traditional and nontraditional law enforcement services, but to maintain, enhance, and earn our positive relationship with those we serve based on a foundation of trust, service, transparency, and compassion.

As always, the Department of Police Services wishes to thank our fellow public safety agencies, municipal government departments, the public school district, and regional and state partners. Without their assistance and collaborative efforts, it would be difficult to deliver superior services.

Michael A. Spera, Chief of Police