

Benson Police Department



2012 Annual Report

As presented on March 4, 2013

February 26, 2013

Rob Wolfington, City Manager
City of Benson

Re: 2012 Annual Report

Dear Rob,

This report contains a detailed overview of the Benson Police Department's activity for 2012. Included in the report are statistics related to the department's calls for service and total offenses charged. Also included is information regarding Police Department activities and updates on some of our significant programs for your review.

This report is not an all-inclusive document, but rather a synopsis of events occurring in 2012, along with explanations/opinions on why we are seeing these trends. Also attached to this report is an all-inclusive list of statistics without any explanations of trends.

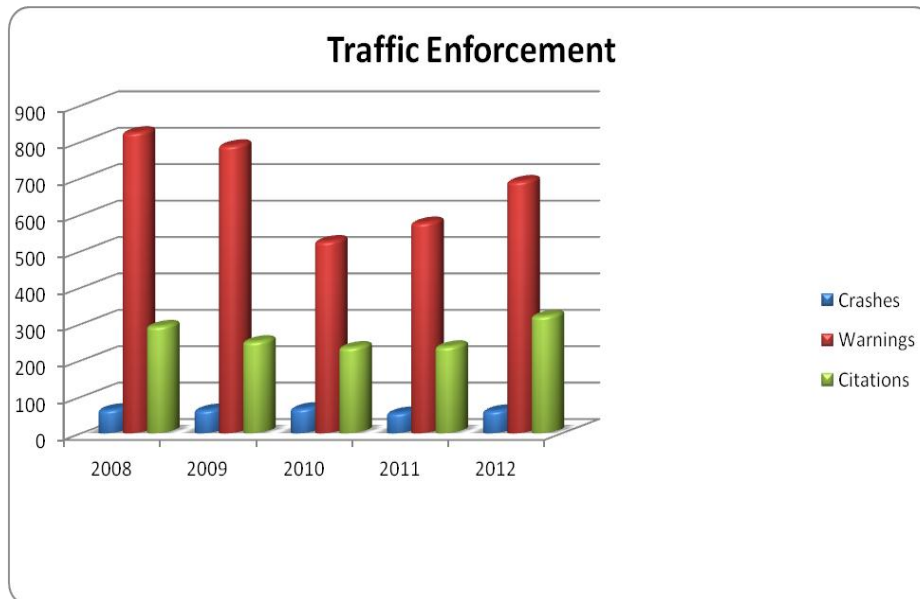
I hope you enjoy the reading and if you or anyone else should have any questions regarding this document they should feel free to call or see me. I do plan to present this at the next city council meeting and ask that you have this item put on the agenda for discussion. Thank you for your support in 2012!

Respectfully,

Paul W. Larson
Sergeant

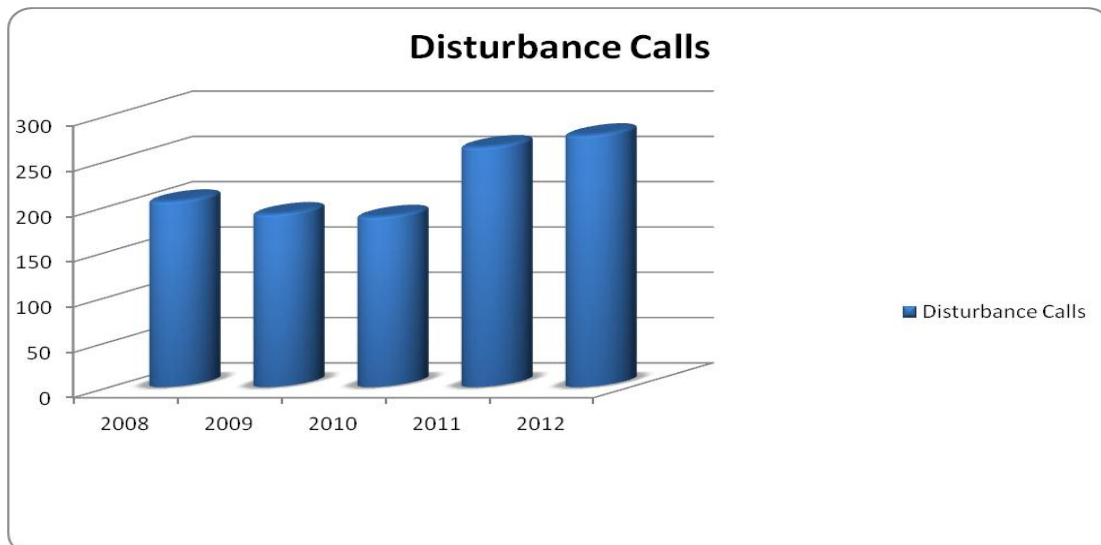
Traffic Crashes / Traffic Citations

Since 2008, we have seen an average of 63 crashes per year. Things seem to have kept right on pace with 62 crashes in 2012. Effective January 1, 2006, the department started to document all traffic warnings in order to have a more accurate picture of our traffic contacts with the public. In 2012, BPD officers issued 692 warnings for various traffic offenses and 322 citations. As a whole, BPD officers issued 2.14 warnings for every citation written.



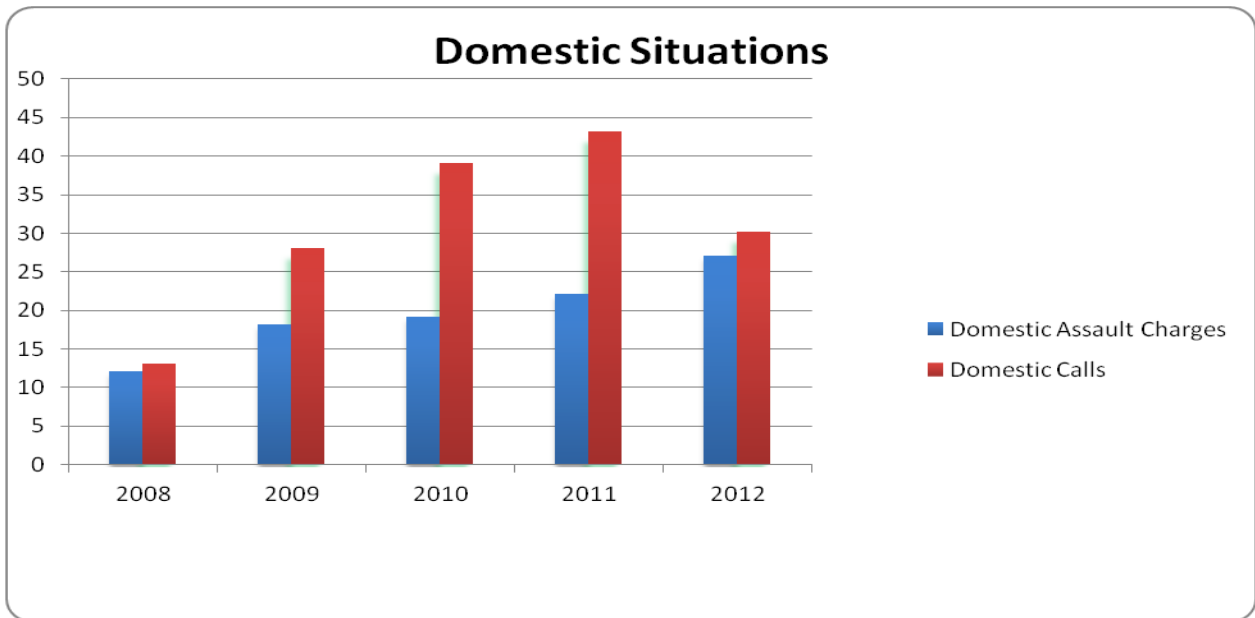
Disturbance Calls

Our calls for *Disturbances* have increased from 205 complaints in 2008 to 278 complaints in 2012.



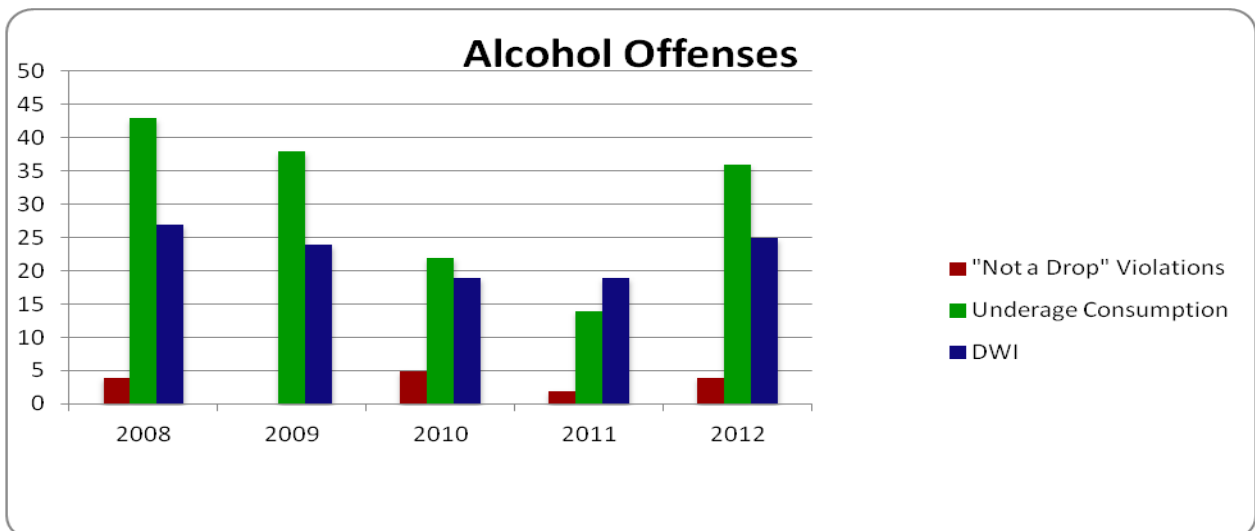
Domestics Situations

We have experienced a decrease in reports of *Domestic Disturbance* and an increase in reports of *Domestic Assault* in 2012. The department continues to work closely with the Swift County Attorney's Office, Swift County Human Services and Victim's Advocates Teams in these cases. Out of the 30 Domestic Calls in 2012, 27 suspects were charged with Domestic Assault.



Alcohol Offenses

This year we experienced an overall increase in Alcohol Related violations. The number of *DUI* arrests is above average when compared to the previous 5 years. *Underage Consumption Offenses* also increased overall since our high in 2008 as illustrated in the table below.

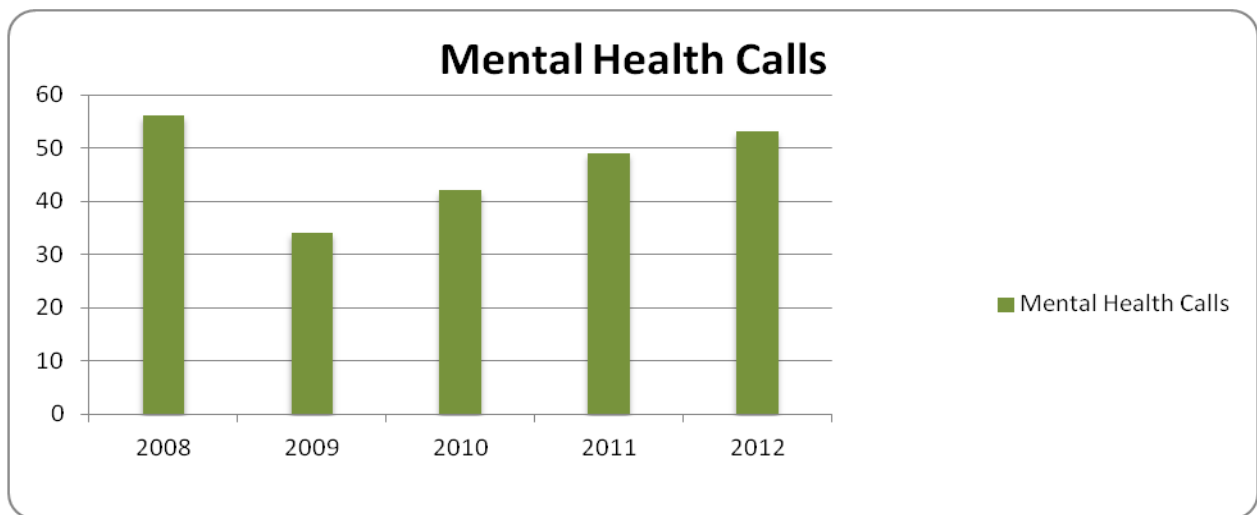


Mental Health Calls

In 2012, we responded to 53 *Mental Health* calls. This number still represents a decrease from what we saw in 2008; however, it is a slight increase from the previous year.

As your Acting Chief of Police, I still believe there is great value in having well trained and prepared officers to handle Mental Health calls. Currently, the department has all but our newest Officer trained as Crisis Intervention Team members. Additionally, three of our five part-time officers are also trained in the curriculum.

We also continue to work closely with Swift County Human Services, Swift County Sheriff's Office and the Appleton Police Department to assist and update each other on the status of people within our community that may suffer from mental health issues.



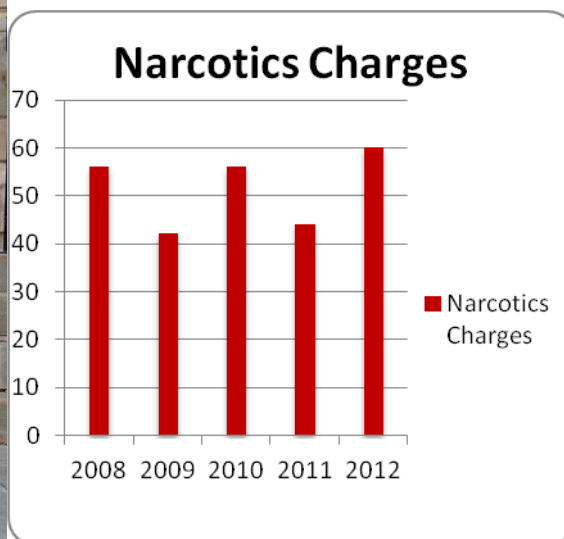
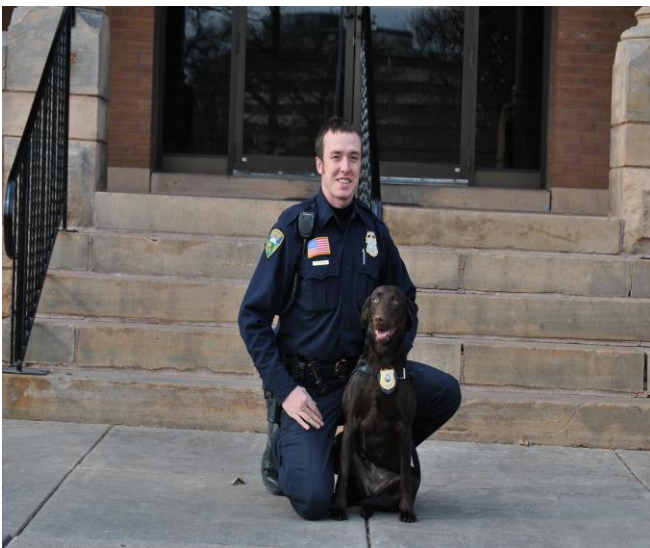
Narcotics Investigations

We saw an increase in *Drug Related Calls* in 2012. We have answered these calls with insistent investigation and enforcement. We continue to have an officer, when time permits, working directly with the CEE VI Drug Task Force to combat these problems.

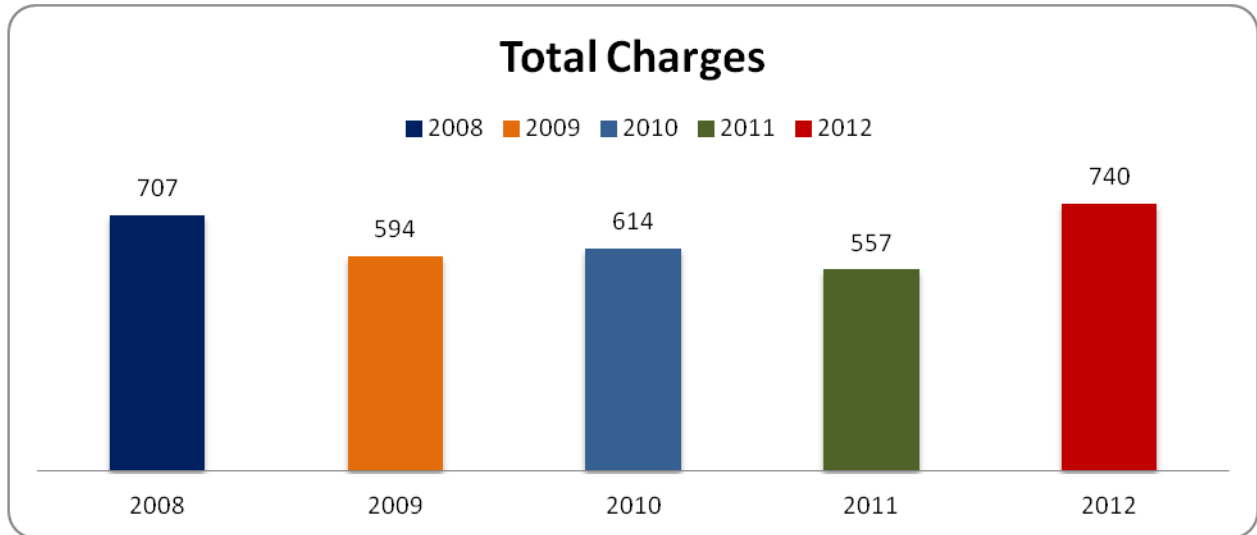
BPD's drug enforcement efforts in 2012 resulted in 60 local charges. These statistics represent narcotics incidents that the Benson Police Department investigated either as the primary agency within the City of Benson, or as an assisting agency- assisting the CEE VI Drug Task Force in close proximity to the City of Benson.

As of December 2012 Officer Burton has been assigned as a Liaison Officer to the CEE VI Drug Task Force. This work involves generating informants that assist in task force investigations. BPD submitted 10 narcotics Intelligence Reports to the CEE VI - DTF. Naturally, not all Intelligence Reports result in an arrest. Our efforts resulted in 4 Narcotics Investigation Operations. It should be noted that all of the investigations were directly related to narcotics trafficking going in and out of Benson.

A shining example of the effectiveness of having a Liaison that works with other agencies is a case where Benson Officers wrote a search warrant for a residence in a neighboring county and discovered approximately 7 pounds of marijuana and numerous stolen items from the Benson businesses. I look forward to increasing Narcotics Investigations when the current staffing level returns. As you may know, the Department's Canine Riddle has joined in the narcotic investigation and enforcement mission in November and has been an outstanding addition to our narcotics enforcement efforts. There is a great deal of work yet to be done in this area. In the month of December alone the K-9 Unit answered 5 calls for service and performed 5 narcotics searches.

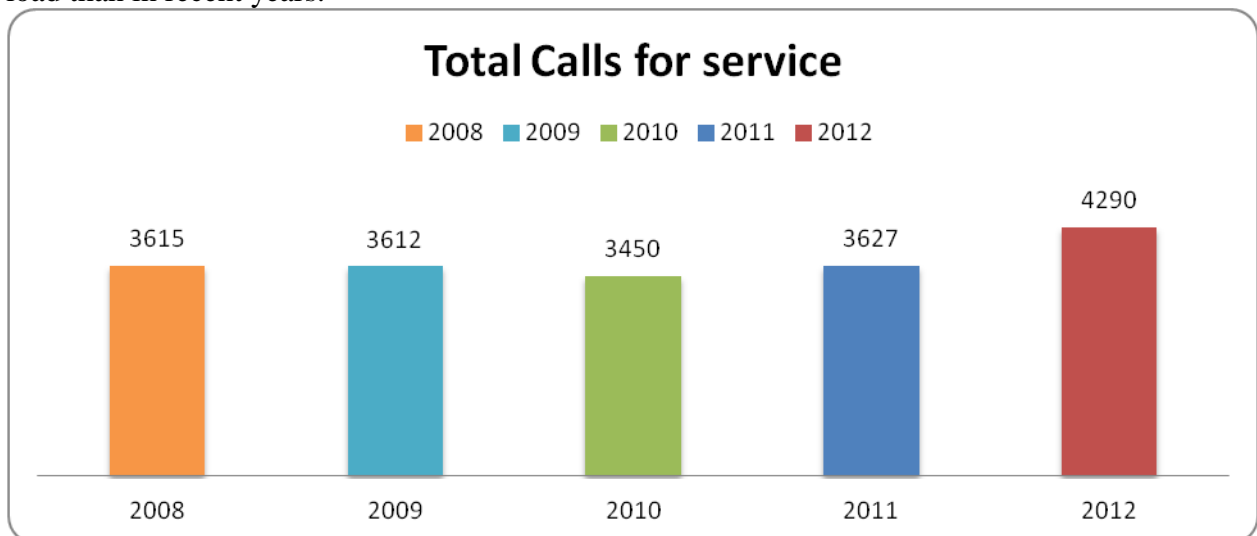


Total Charges



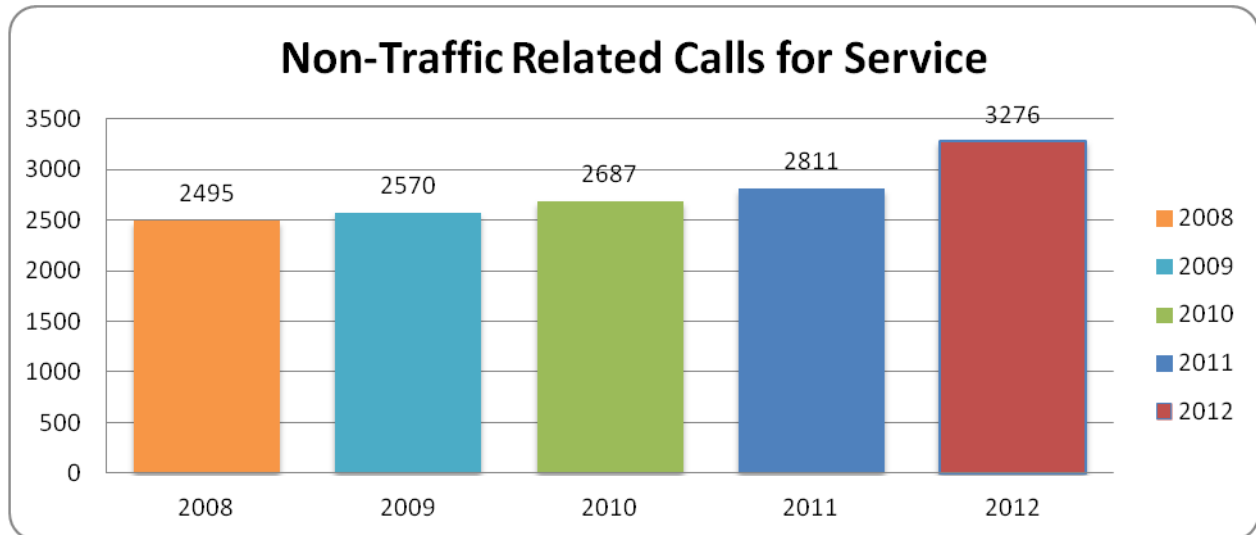
Total Calls for Service

Your police department answered 4290 calls for service in 2012. Due to being staffed at 6 FT officers; staffing was spread thin for parts of 2012. As a result, each officer handled a larger call load than in recent years.



Above you will see the total calls for service. This number represents every call the Police Department answered and initiated in 2012 including traffic stops.

Non-Traffic Related Calls for Service



Above you will see calls for service that were answered by the Police Department in 2012. I removed all traffic stops to give a true representation of the call load that our Officers are handling. Please take notice that the call load of the department has been steadily increasing since 2008.

Twenty-Four Hour Patrol

In 2012, the Benson Police Department continued providing our community with 24 hour Police patrol. We continue to believe that this is a necessity in the current day in age. During overnight hours, Officers focus their patrols on businesses both by vehicle and foot patrols. Officers continued to discover numerous open doors to businesses. Our 24 hour patrol was again instrumental in solving thefts from vehicles, burglaries and also responding to medical emergencies.

We continued to provide this 24 hour coverage despite decreased staffing levels. We are currently staffed at 6 Full Time Employees, including a Patrol Sergeant and we plan to continue at this level until the Chief of Police vacancy is filled.

Technology Advancements



The Benson Police Department believes that technology helps us provide a better service to our community. In 2012, we worked closely with the Swift County Sheriff's Office and Appleton Police Department to reach an agreement with the Law Enforcement Technology Group (LETG). The three agencies worked well together in organizing the new joint records system in the spring of 2012. This system included records management mobile in car field reporting and computer aided dispatching. Since implementation of this system there has been a notable difference in the time officers spend at the office. Officers are now able to complete the majority of their reports and paperwork from their squad cars. This allows Officers to spend more time in the community, rather than at the office.

Community Involvement

The Benson Police Department continues to be very active in and involved with the community. Officers are currently involved in a number of Community Policing Projects to include:

- Senior Citizen Assistance Program
- Child Seat Assistance Program
- School Resource Officer Program
- DARE Program
- Safe Communities Coalition
- CEE VI Drug Task Force Liaison
- Bullying Prevention Committee
- Health and Safety Committee- Benson H.S.
- Healthy Community / Healthy Youth Program
- Firearms Safety (Volunteer)
- Benson Schools Crisis Team (when needed)
- Driver's Education
- Crosswalk Safety Campaign
- Crisis Intervention Team
- Safe & Sober
- Swift County Child Protection Team
- Swift County Adult Protection Team

In addition, as the Acting Chief is a member of the Benson Kiwanis, Minnesota Chiefs of Police Association, CEE-VI Drug and Gang Task Force Board of Directors and is also a member of the Region 6 Chiefs of Police Association. He also is involved with the Swift County Emergency Management Organization, Restorative Justice Program and the City of Benson Safety Committee.

Training

Police Officers have to put their life on the line occasionally, but they make life and death decisions on a regular basis. They also make decisions on whether or not to take away someone's freedom by incarcerating them. With this in mind, proper training is paramount to the successful delivery of effective service to the community. Benson Police Officers are trained to the highest level possible while staying within budget constraints. Last year your officers received countless hours of training in areas ranging from Active Shooter to Crisis Intervention and many other things in between. Proper training is directly related to quality delivery of service to the community and also minimizes potential for litigation. Officers attended the following courses in 2012:

- Firearms Qualification Courses
- Use of Force Refresher Courses
- High Risk Traffic Stops Course
- Meth Investigations
- Missing Persons

In January 2012, the Benson Police Department again entered into a cooperative agreement with the Appleton Police Department and the Swift County Sheriff's Office. The contract was for 72 hours of training for each officer. The intent our cooperative agreement was to have all police officers in the county trained in the same manner and to the same level in regards to officer tactics. Due to the program's success, the Benson Police Department, Swift County Sheriff's Office and the Appleton Police Department have continued the agreement in 2013. We also send officers to selected classes and participate in a MN LMC web based training program which covers a wide array of legal topics and offers new classes every month.

