



# **Norton Shores Police Department**

# FY 2019 Annual Report



*Dedicated To Excellence*



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## ADMINISTRATION

The Norton Shores Police Department is under the command of Chief Jon Gale. The Chief of Police provides administrative control, establishes and implements policy relative to fiscal and operational control, and personnel management. The Department has the responsibility to provide the best law enforcement services possible to the community, at the least possible cost, by utilizing personnel and equipment in the most economical and efficient manner possible.



### AGENCY FOCUS:

This agency continues to focus on police-community relations and crime prevention strategies. The Police Department participates in several prevention groups such as; Alcohol Liability Initiatives, Juvenile Response Team, Mental Health Diversion, Know Smoke, Muskegon Health Projects, Coalition for a Drug Free Muskegon, AMP, Sexual Assault Response Team, Drug Take Back and Ride with Pride. Our approach is to prevent crime and provide the tools necessary for citizens to make the right choices before crimes occur. Preventing and solving crime is a team effort.

Some challenges have been identified for the future of the department. In FY2019, the department received an increasing amount of complaints on Mona Lake from property owners due to high water levels. The department responded and provided marine safety courses, educated the public regarding boating regulations and provided an enforcement presence. This was accomplished without a budget for this added responsibility. In FY2020, the department will seek input from the citizens and city council as to the amount of enforcement necessary and will request a budget to support it.

The department also continues to provide full-time support for the security of the Muskegon County Airport, Mona Shores High School, Mona Shores Middle School, and the West Michigan Enforcement Team. Staffing levels continue to be a concern in providing the level of service the citizens of Norton Shores expect. The Public Safety Millage will soon expire, so it is vital to educate the public as to the need for funding to continue the services the citizens have grown to expect.



## Budget Expenditures

The Police Department purchased Capital Budget items that increased officer safety, assisted with traffic safety, and completed building repairs.

**Traffic Safety purchases**– In FY2019, one new speed radar trailer was purchased. This trailer assists the department with slowing traffic in areas where citizens have complained of excessive speeds. The trailer collects data which is valuable to assist with enforcement follow up. The police department now has two trailers which are actively used throughout the city rotating from neighborhood to neighborhood. The police department also replaced two speed display signs which can be permanently attached to poles in the area of the schools for slowing traffic.

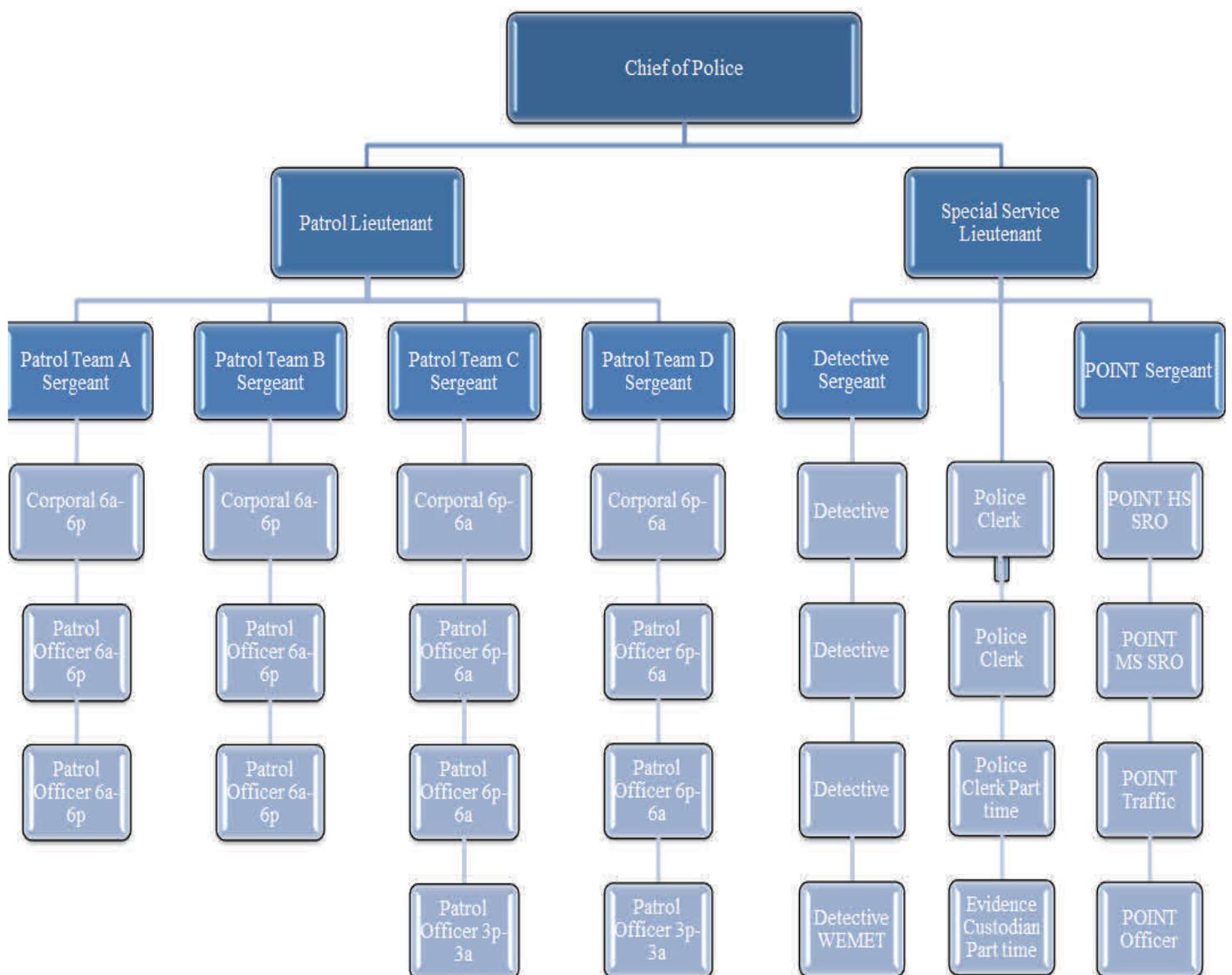
**Officer Safety**– The Police Department purchased a Powder Safety work station to assist the department's detectives with safely testing suspicious powders such as Heroin and Fentanyl. These substances can be deadly if absorbed into the body. Ballistic vests and a ballistic shield were purchased to protect the officers in the field. Federal grants were secured to help fund these purchases.

**Building Upgrades**– The men's locker room received a remodel after several years of faulty plumbing issues. The room had not been updated in thirty years. A new drinking fountain with a bottle fill station was purchased to avoid purchasing plastic water bottles. The detectives received new lockers for equipment storage.



## Personnel

During FY2019, the Department's authorized strength was increased to 31 sworn and two non-sworn full-time personnel. In addition, the Department has four part-time non-sworn clerical positions and five part-time non-sworn police cadets. Three positions are funded through grants and contracts for services.



## New Employees

Ofc. Brace grew up in Holland, Michigan where he attended Holland Christian High School. He then transferred to Grand Rapids Community College where he earned an Associate's degree and graduated from the police academy. After graduation Ofc. Brace worked for the Covert Township Police department until hired at the Norton Shores Police Dept on March 18, 2019.



Ofc. Stephanie Alm grew up in the Muskegon area. She earned a Bachelor of Science degree from Baker College earning Magna Cum Laude honors. She then graduated from the Grand Valley Police Academy and received her Law Enforcement certification. Ofc. Alm worked full time at the Muskegon Police Department from August 8, 2017, until the Norton Shores Police Department hired her on April 22, 2019.



Ofc. Adam Ludovicz grew up in Providence, Rhode Island. He attended Salem State College where he earned a Bachelor of Science degree. After college, he enlisted in the Army National Guard where he was on active duty from 2006-2014. During that time he was deployed to Iraq in 2007 through 2008. Ofc. Ludovicz worked for the Rockport Police dept. for seven years before being hired by our police department on June 10, 2019



## **CADET PROGRAM**

The Department maintained the Police Cadet program for FY2019. The following are the police cadets hired for the 2019 season (Note: an asterisk (\*) indicates returning from the previous year).



Josh Hankins  
Connor Heaton  
Gretchen Damm\*  
Mackenzie Anderson\*  
Bradley Papin  
Mitch Dixon\*

## Retirements

Lt. Michael Kasher retired from the Norton Shores Police Department after serving 27 years. Lt. Kasher rose through the ranks as a Patrol Officer, WEMET detective, Patrol Sergeant, Detective Sergeant, and Patrol Lieutenant. Lt. Kasher was known throughout the community as a fair officer and supervisor who cared for his community.



Officer Tom Sabo retired after 30 years as an officer with the Norton Shores Police Department. Tom was a very dedicated patrol officer who was active in traffic enforcement. Tom will be remembered as an energetic officer who was committed to the community where he lived and worked.



We thank both officers for their many years of dedication and commitment to the City of Norton Shores. We wish them luck with their future ambitions.

## Law Enforcement Accreditation



On April 2, 2016, the Norton Shores Police Department was awarded its eighth consecutive Advanced Law Enforcement Accreditation by the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc. (CALEA). The Department is one of only thirteen accredited law enforcement agencies in the State of Michigan and has been accredited since March 1993.

The Commission was established as an independent accrediting authority in 1979 by the four major law enforcement executive associations: The International Association of Chiefs of Police; The National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives; The National Sheriffs' Association; and The Police Executive Research Forum. The Commission has 21 members – 11 of whom represent public safety agencies and ten from the public and private sectors. The Commission was established for two reasons: to develop a set of law enforcement standards, and to create and administer an accreditation process through which law enforcement agencies could demonstrate voluntarily that they meet professionally recognized criteria for excellence in management and service delivery. Over 900 public safety agencies throughout the United States, Canada, Mexico, Barbados, and Bermuda are enrolled in some stage of the CALEA process.



In FY 2017 the Norton Shores Police Department moved to the new four-year assessment cycle mandated by CALEA. This new process now consists of 3 years of a remote web-based auditing process conducted by CALEA assessors. Each year 25% of the standard files are reviewed for compliance with the time-sensitive records examined annually. A report is then completed each year detailing the results of the independent auditor's findings. The first three years reports are meant to guide the department in gaining compliance with the standards. The final report is completed the 4th year after CALEA assessors conduct an on-site assessment and then presented to the commission for final approval.

In March 2019, the third year remote assessment was completed by an assigned CALEA assessor. The assessor marked all standards reviewed in compliance. The Department's accredited status is in effect for a period of one more year, with the next independent on-site assessment anticipated to be conducted in December 2019.

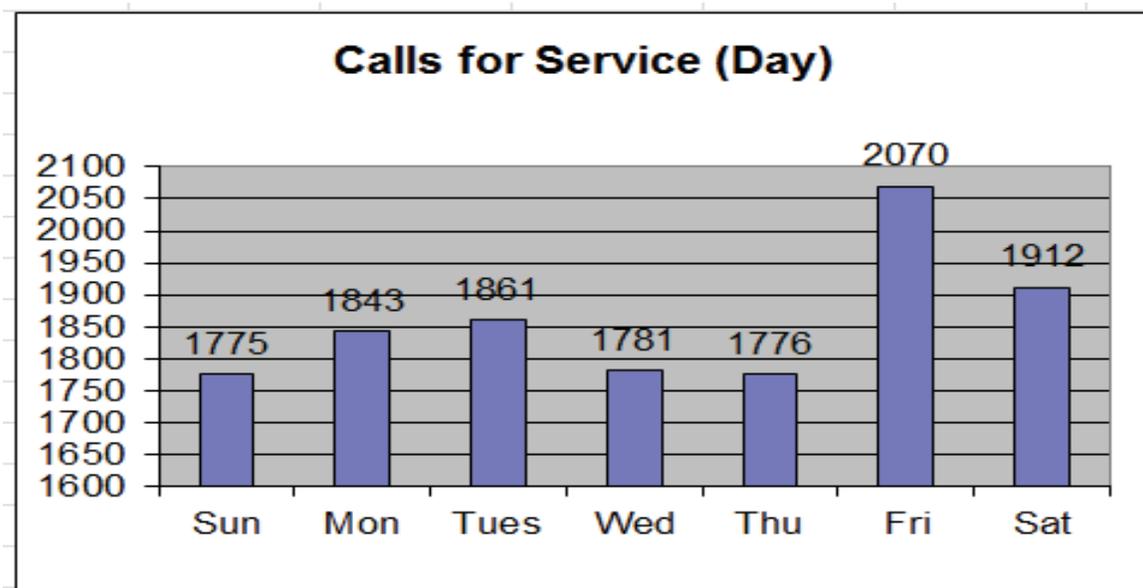
## PATROL DIVISION



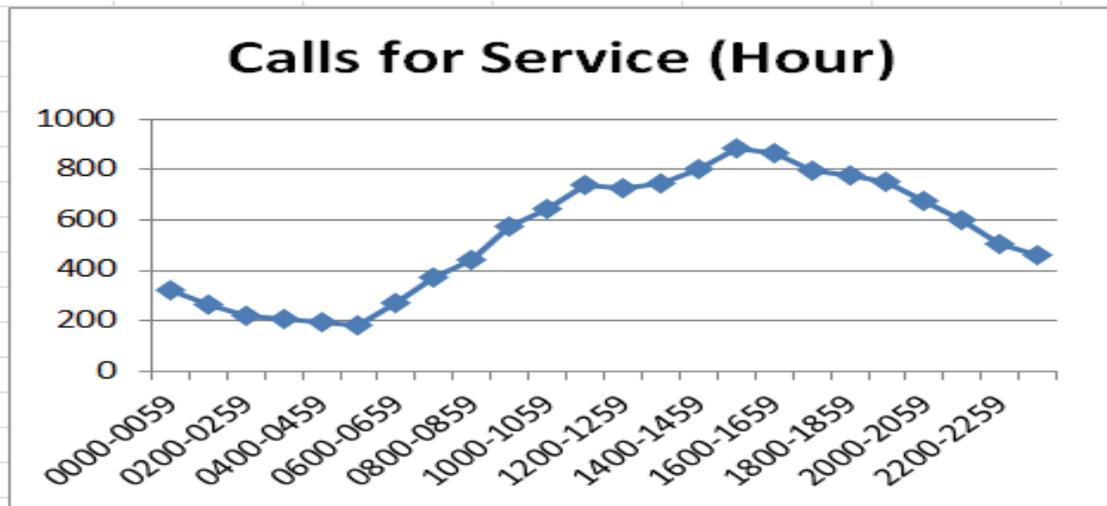
The Patrol Division is under the command of Lieutenant Marc VanderStelt and consists of four sergeants, four corporals, and ten patrol officers. Patrol is responsible for conducting crime prevention patrols, responding to calls for service, preliminary criminal investigations, traffic enforcement, and miscellaneous field services. Officers assigned to this function have the greatest contact with members of the community.

### Calls for Service

During FY2019, the Police Department logged 13,018 calls for service, which is an increase of 1,691 calls for service as compared to FY2018 (11,327). Calls for service include all emergency / non-emergency calls for service and any officer-initiated activities (see Appendix C). Department personnel submitted 8,169 incident reports, which is a decrease of 481 reports compared to FY2018 (8,650).



The following chart depicts, calls for service based on hour of day for FY2019



As depicted in the chart above, the Department receives the fewest number of calls for service in the early morning (3a-6a) hours. Calls typically increase during the afternoon (12p-8p) reaching a peak in the late afternoon or early evening hours. This pattern generally matches traffic flow volumes observed throughout the city.

Officers covered 298,831 miles this past year FY2019 while patrolling, responding to calls and doing follow-up investigations. This is a .01% decrease in miles traveled as compared to last year's 298,954 miles.



## Criminal Activity

Class A type crimes (more serious) were down by 6.5% compared to last year. Class B type crimes were down 1.3% for the fiscal year. Total crime was down 5% for this fiscal year.

	Fiscal Year 2019		
	FY2019	FY2018	Chng
Group A Offenses	1189	1272	-83
Group B Offenses	747	757	-10
<b>TOTAL OFFENSES</b>	<b>1936</b>	<b>2029</b>	<b>-93</b>

## Non-Criminal Activity

The number of non-criminal incidents reported in 2019 (6,233) decreased by 7% as compared to Fiscal Year 2018(6,613). Non-criminal incidents comprised 76% of the Department’s total incident reports. Non Criminal reports include reports such as residential and business alarms, crashes, civil complaints, and driving complaints.

## Internal Affairs

It should be understood that the Department expects and receives the highest degree of integrity from its members, and accordingly presumes unless evidence is discovered to the contrary, that all employee actions are performed in good faith. The following chart indicates the number of internal and external complaints investigated for the last three calendar years.



### Complaints and Internal Affairs Investigations

External	2016	2017	2018
Citizen Complaint	6	1	2
Sustained	2	0	1
Not Sustained	0	1	0
Unfounded	0	0	0
Exonerated	4	0	1

Internal	2016	2017	2018
Directed complaint	11	10	9
Sustained	7	9	7
Not Sustained	0	0	0
Unfounded	0	0	1
Exonerated	4	1	1

## Training

The Norton Shores Police Department is dedicated to professionalism and high standards. To maintain this high level, training and education have increased to keep up with expectations. Because of the complexity of policing, and the many aspects of it, the more training and education an officer has, the better he or she is prepared to deal with issues in our community. Our officers, including command officers, received over 100 hours per officer of training this past year which equates to over 3,000 hours for the whole department.



## Training continued;

Studies have proven that there is a link between a lack of training and liability. Therefore, training lowers the risk of civil and criminal liability for the agency and the officer. The Norton Shores Police Department provided training in FY2019 that included firearms, use of force, defensive driving, legal updates, diving and underwater recovery, how to resolve conflicts by utilizing verbal de-escalation techniques, interview techniques, basic and advanced investigations, radar operations, Taser recertification, Street Survival Seminar, impaired driving, and mental illness. The training sessions also include reviewing departmental policies regarding each of these areas. This training included lectures, range, and scenarios where officers need to think and analyze their decisions.



The Police Department is committed to continuous training which will help prepare our officers to handle stressful situations and give the community we protect better service. The Police Department will continue its proud tradition of training and educating officers to ensure that they are well prepared and equipped to deal with all kinds of situations that they will encounter.



## SPECIAL SERVICES

The Special Services function is under the supervision of Lieutenant Brandon Poel. This unit includes the Records Bureau, which staffs two full time and two contracted part-time clerks. The Problem Oriented Intelligence-led Neighborhood Team (POINT) has three officers assigned to the team, which their primary function is community relations. The Detective Bureau includes four detectives, the Traffic Unit which currently has one assigned officer and the Police Cadet Unit.



### Problem Oriented Intelligence-led Neighborhood Team

The Problem Oriented Intelligence-led Neighborhood Team (POINT) is authorized four officers and a supervisor. The team is responsible for providing crime prevention, school resource programs, oversight of the Sex Offender Registration, airport security, marine patrol, and investigation of traffic complaints.

POINT Officers spend considerable time in Mona Shores and Western Michigan Christian conducting educational activities in conjunction with the Muskegon *Ride with Pride* Coalition, school personnel, and other participating organizations. POINT Officers also assist *Know Smoke* and the Muskegon *Alcohol Liability Initiative* by delivering vendor training packets and completing decoy “buy” operations.



To be positive community stewards, POINT Officers regularly conduct monthly Cop Talk sessions in partnership with local businesses in an effort to provide transparency and solicit feedback. This is done in conjunction with outreach efforts to churches, neighborhoods, and youth groups. Regularly this is done in a format called “Coffee with the Cops” but can also include “Bowling with the Blues” or “Cops and Cones.”

Throughout FY2019, POINT Officers continued the award-winning *Ride with Pride* program. This incentive-based positive behavior program encourages students to abstain from alcohol and other drugs, follow their school's behavior matrix, and avoid negative contacts with the police. POINT Officers conducted this program at Western Michigan Christian High School and all grade levels of Mona Shores Public Schools.



Impaired driving prevention and safety activities were conducted throughout the school year, including driving courses and divided attention activities while wearing alcohol or marijuana impairment goggles.



Each elementary held their *Ride with Pride* finale, giving away two bicycles donated by Meijer or Walmart. In addition, a free game of bowling to every student donated by Sherman Bowling Center, and free ice cream cones to all students donated by Whippi Dip or Frosty Oasis.

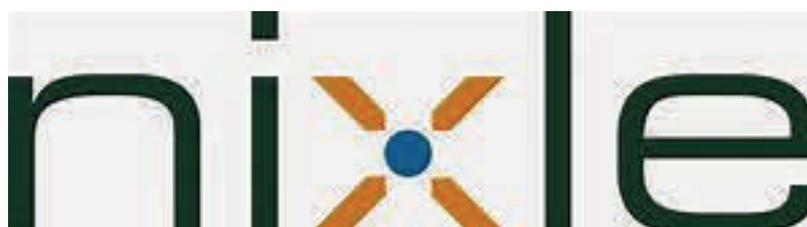
*Ride with Pride* became its own organization under the Coalition for a Drug Free Muskegon group this year and expanded to a total of seven school districts. With funding from the Mercy Health Project, POINT Officers provided assistance to these new programs.



POINT Officers continue a close partnership with Mona Shores Public Schools and Western Michigan Christian by providing school safety advice at all buildings. Regular "lockdown" drills are conducted for students and staff. Further, POINT Officers aided in the development of a new Emergency Operations Plan, which was a key factor in nearly \$1,700,000.00 of school security grant funding awarded county-wide.



POINT Officers also coordinate the Department’s social media presence. Websites utilized include Facebook, Twitter, and Nixle. With over 4,700 followers on Facebook, information about community events, crime prevention, and general advisories are communicated. One of the more popular media campaigns this year was “Operation: Stop Watch” which detailed the department’s efforts to keep students safe at area bus stops.



## Water Safety

With the rise in water levels and an increase in drownings throughout the state, NSPD has made a concerted effort to protect the safety and property of those who enjoy Mona Lake and Lake Michigan. This year, two additional Officers were certified in Marine Enforcement through a school hosted by the Michigan Sheriff's Association with instruction by the U.S. Coast Guard and Department of Natural Resources. Topics covered include marine law, vessel towing/boarding, and water emergency response. NSPD now has six -course graduates to help address the city's needs.



NSPD has increased its presence on Mona Lake to address citizen concerns and promote responsible boating practices. Including daily patrols, and collaboration between the Muskegon Sheriff's Department, Department of Natural Resources, and U.S. Coast Guard have provided an increased presence in our area.

Community outreach efforts to assess the needs of residents included meeting with the Mona Lake Association and with concerned residents one on one. Public Service Announcements were also utilized to educate the public on best practices to avoid soil erosion and navigational issues that the jagged layout of Mona Lake creates.



The POINT division also began teaching Boating Safety during the FY2019. A free two-day session was hosted in June which provided students with practical and lecture-based instruction. The twenty-six participants were awarded the Michigan Boating Safety Certificate in accordance with DNR policies.



## **Evidence Room**

The evidence custodian is a part-time civilian position responsible for the management of the property/evidence room and overseen by the Special Services Commander. The evidence custodian continues organizing and purging of the evidence room. Updated forms and new training continue to assist with this process. To maintain compliance with evidence rules inspections and audits are conducted throughout the year.

The evidence room continues to be more manageable and allows full-time officers to engage in the community more.

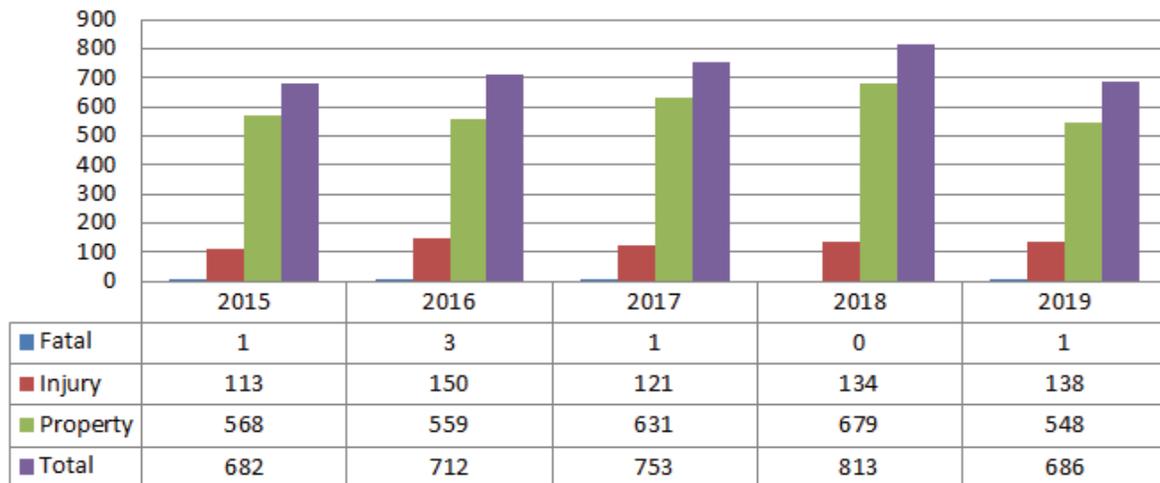


## Traffic

### Traffic Crash Summary

There were a total of 686 traffic crashes reported during FY2019, which is a decrease of 16% from the previous year FY2018 (813). Over the past five years, the City of Norton Shores has averaged 729 traffic crashes per year. The following is a breakdown of the crashes based on severity:

### Traffic Crash Comparison



Most accidents involved passenger vehicles; however, the Department also policed 24 commercial vehicles, 9 motorcycles, 6 emergency vehicles, 4 pedestrian, and 1 bicycle crashes. There was no school bus- related crashes this past year. There were also 67 car versus deer crashes, which is a decrease of 17% from the previous year when 80 crashes occurred.

Of the 686 total crashes, at least one person was injured in 138 incidents, which is 20%. The number of injuries increased from the previous year (134, or 16%), even though the total number of crashes decreased significantly. The average number of injury crashes for the last five years is 131 or 17.9%.

The following intersections had the highest number of crashes during FY2019:

Rank	Location	Crashes
1	HARVEY ST @ STERNBERG RD	29
2	HENRY ST @ NORTON AVE	26
3	NORTON AVE @ SEAWAY DR	11
4	GRAND HAVEN RD @ PONTALUNA RD	10
5	GRAND HAVEN RD @ STERNBERG RD	10
6	N US 21 @ PONTALUNA RD	9
7	HENRY ST @ SUMMIT AVE	9
8	GRAND HAVEN/S BS US 31 @ SEAWAY DR	8
9	GETTY ST @ SHERMAN BLVD	8
10	SEAWAY DR @ GETTY ST	8
11	N US 31 @ HILE RD	8
12	GETTY ST @ SEAWAY DR	8
13	AIRLINE RD @ S US 31/AIRLINE RAMP	7
14	AIRLINE RD @ S US 31	7
15	S US 31 @ SHETTLER RD	6
16	SEAWAY DR @ SEMINOLE RD	6
17	AIRPORT RD @ GRAND HAVEN RD	6
18	N US 31 @ AIRLINE RD	6
19	HENRY ST @ FOREST PARK RD	6
20	BROADWAY AVE @ HENRY ST	6

Once again Harvey St. @ Sternberg rd. was the top crash intersection with 29 crashes. Henry St. @ Norton Ave also stayed at #2 with 26 crashes. The third top crash intersection this year was Norton Ave @ Seaway Dr. with 11 crashes. Last year Broadway Ave @ Henry St. was #3 (15 crashes), but this year it dropped to #20 with only 6 crashes.

There are several new intersections to the list this year. N US 31 @ Pontaluna Rd (#6), Grand Haven/S BS US 31 @ Seaway Dr (#8), N US 31 @ Hile rd (#11), Getty St @ Seaway Dr (#12), S US 31 @ Shettler Rd (#15), N US 31 @ Airline Rd (#18), and Henry ST @ Forest Park Rd #19).

This year the following intersections did not make the list: Harvey St @ Hile Rd (#17 last year), Henry St @ Seminole Rd (#6 last year), N US31 @ Sternberg Rd (#12 last year), and Airline Rd @ Getty St (#13 last year).

## Traffic Enforcement Summary

The Police Department issued a total of 2,982 traffic citations during FY2019, which represents an increase of 7.5% from the previous year (2,745). There were also 131 parking citations issued (FY2019) which is a 1.5% decrease when compared to FY2018 (133).

The Department has joined with other area agencies in an attempt to reduce the number of bicycle and pedestrian crashes by participating in educational and enforcement activities. The Michigan Office of Highway Safety Programs has provided the funding necessary to cover the overtime expenses for officers participating in these safety programs.

The chart below represents the most common violations:

	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018	FY2019
No Proof of Insurance	383	336	440	652
Speeding	643	471	560	423
Driving on a Suspended Operator's License	220	176	230	138
Expired Plate	253	271	266	445
No Operator's License on Person	84	45	34	30
Fail to Stop in Assured Clear Distance	173	194	187	202
Seatbelt Violation	124	69	85	46
Improper Plate	70	75	106	128
Expired Operator's License	19	9	13	75
Defective Equipment	259	192	275	159
Fail to Yield Right of Way	70	59	117	44
Red light/stop sign	214	150	132	85

## Records Bureau

The Records Bureau provides administrative support to the entire department and is staffed by part-time contractual employees and two full-time records clerks. The bureau is responsible for maintaining all law enforcement records, including reports, citations, warrants, and subpoenas. In addition, the bureau provides computer support and serves as the Department's Law Enforcement Information Network (LEIN) Terminal Coordinator.

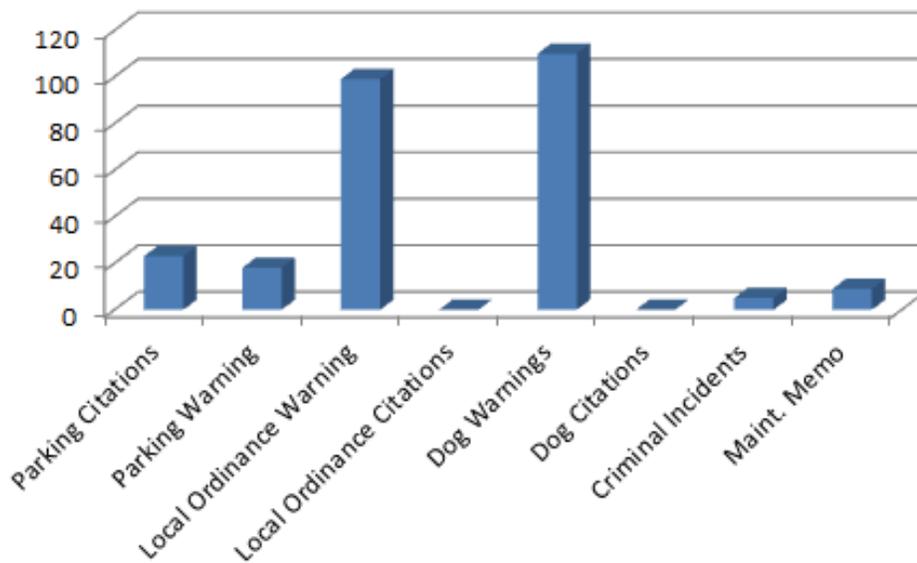
This fiscal year the Records staff submitted 116 incident reports and 891 supplemental reports for walk-in or telephone complaints which did not require the presence of a sworn police officer. In addition to processing all felony and misdemeanor warrants, the following tasks were performed by the Records staff:

- Registered a total of 89 sex offenders residing in the city of Norton Shores.
- Processed 903 handgun registrations for citizens of the city, including criminal records checks and entry of the weapons into the Automated Pistol Reporting System.
- Provided information to victims of crime.
- Registered 11 bicycles.
- Provided tours of the Police Department for school- age children.
- Registered 66 participants for the Norton Shores Hunter Safety Program.
- Prepared 1,212 case files for officers to be used during court appearances.
- Processed LEIN paperwork for 196 impounded or abandoned vehicles.
- Processed 38 personal protection orders.
- Processed 466 misdemeanor arrests.
- Processed 171 felony arrests.



## Police Cadet Unit

Currently, in its eighth year, the Police Cadet Program serves the community of Norton Shores and its visitors by ensuring an enjoyable experience for all in our park system. Trained and supervised by the POINT division, their primary focus is to represent the city by providing useful information to visitors, enforce ordinances, and assist Police Officers as needed.



Cadet Gretchen Damm  
Three years of service!

Cadets seek voluntary compliance before issuing citations, but typical violations dealt with include off-leash dogs or dogs on the beach. The six Cadets are essential to keeping underage alcohol and other drug use out of Lake Harbor, Ross, and Black Lake Parks.

## INVESTIGATIONS

The Investigations function is under the supervision of Lieutenant Marc Vanderstelt. The service includes the Detective Bureau, which consists of three officers assigned as detectives. Also,, one officer is assigned to the West Michigan Enforcement Team (WEMET) addressing regional drug and vice crimes.

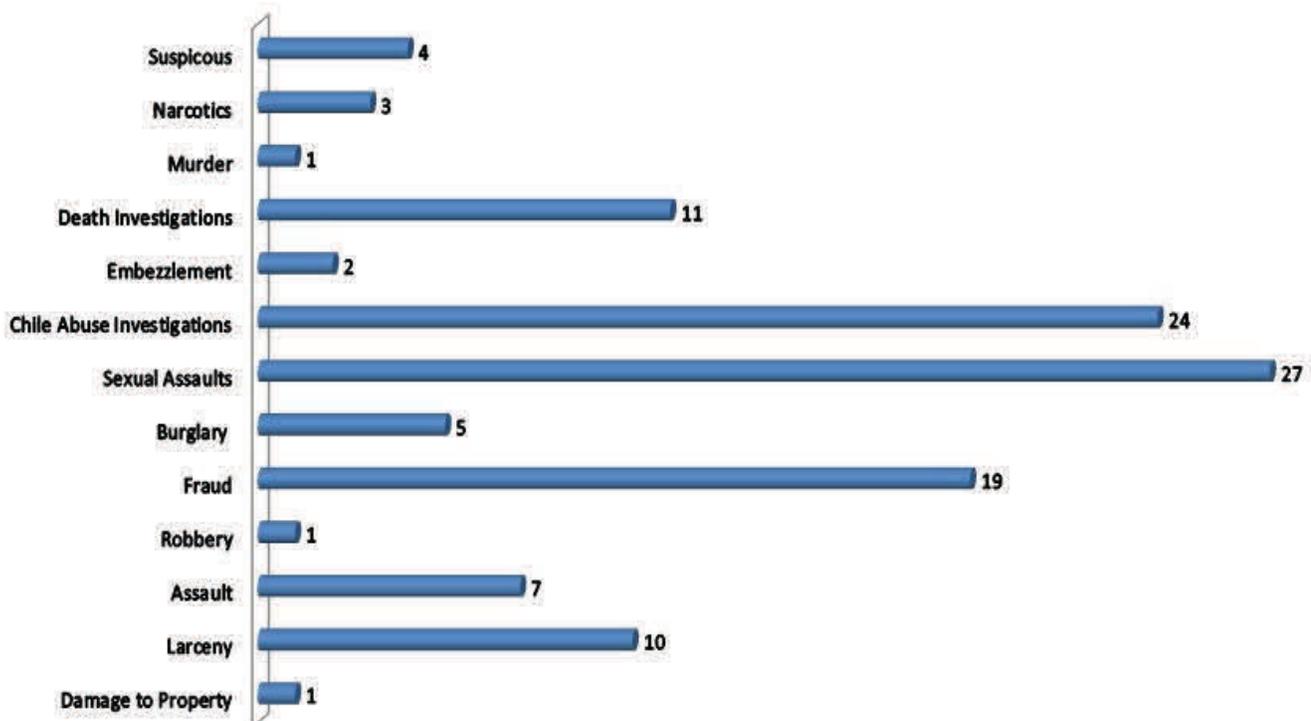


### Detective Bureau

Members of the unit are responsible for elaborate investigations that require specialized training and extensive staff- hours. Detectives spend a significant amount of time at the courthouse swearing to warrants and meeting with the Prosecutor’s office to discuss investigations. In addition, personnel cooperates with other agencies on multi-jurisdictional investigations such as organized crime, fraud, internet crimes, and narcotics.

One hundred and fifteen new cases were assigned to the detective bureau in FY 2019, an increase of two investigations from FY 2018. The following graph shows the types of crimes investigated.

**Types of Crimes Investigated**



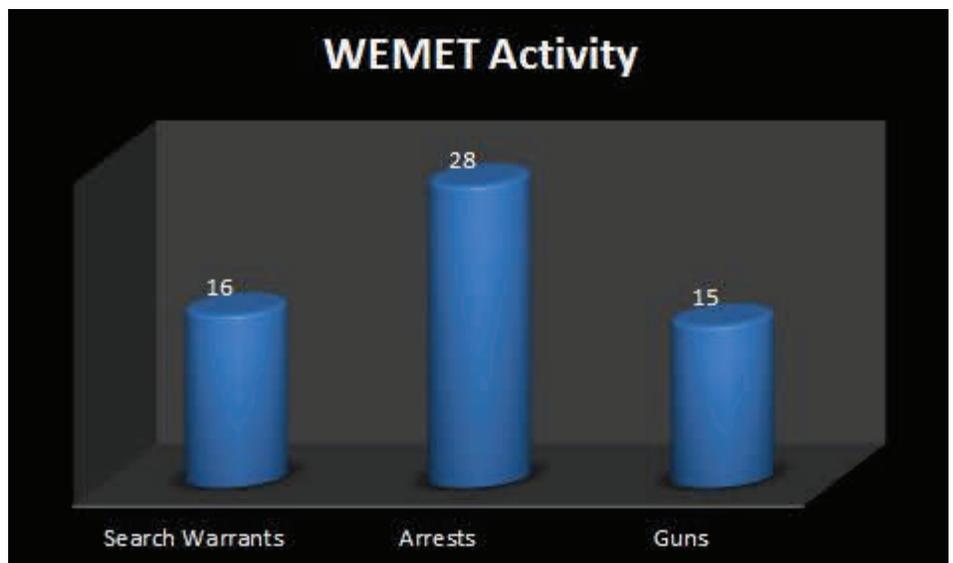


In addition to conducting interviews and interrogations, the detectives are responsible for processing crime scenes and the collection of evidence.

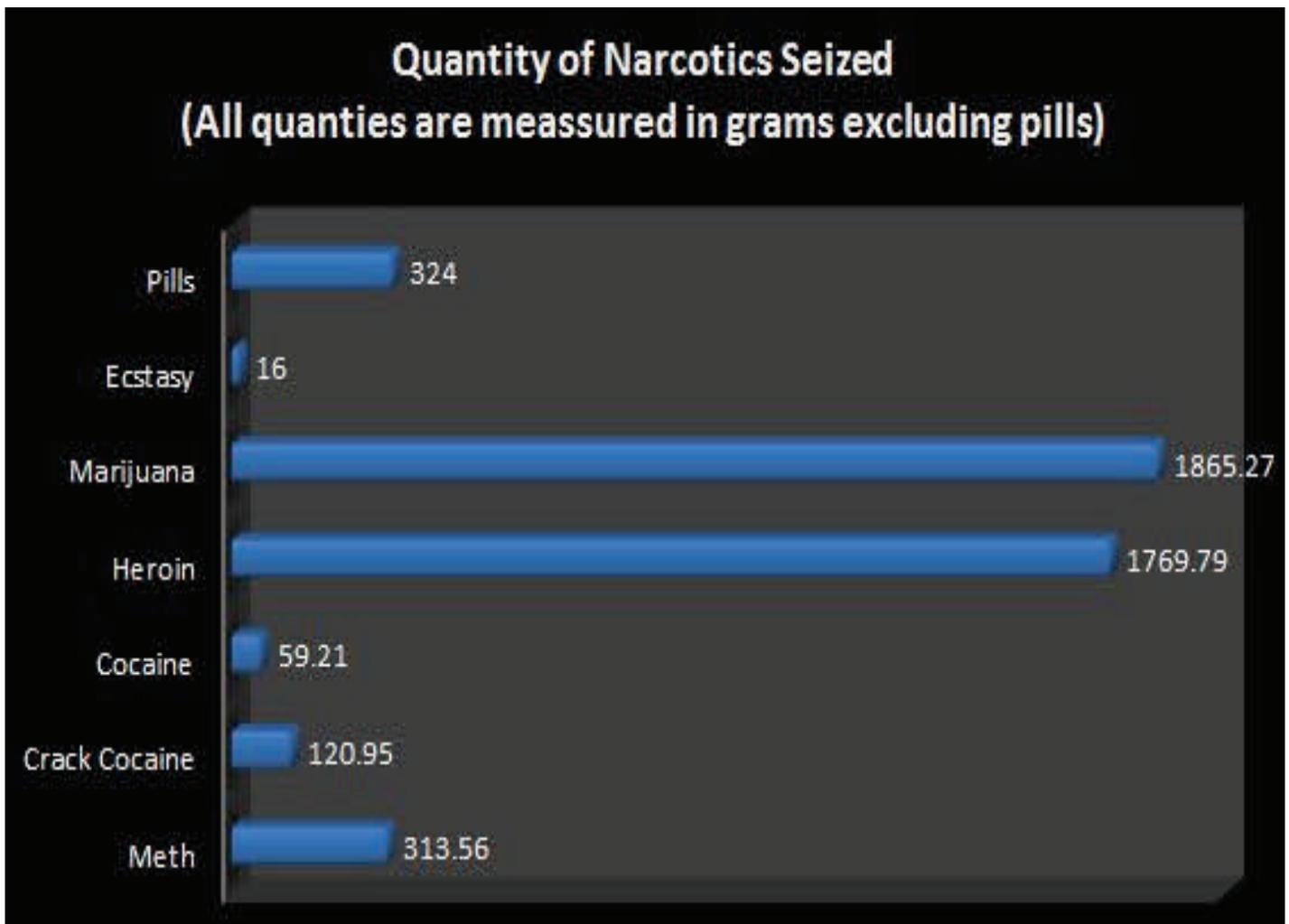
## West Michigan Enforcement Team

The Norton Shores Police Department has one detective assigned to the West Michigan Enforcement Team (WEMET), a regional “concept team” assigned to investigate the trafficking of narcotics. The detective conducts undercover investigations with officers assigned to WEMET from other Muskegon County agencies. WEMET is under the direction and control of the WEMET Board of Directors, of which City Administrator Mark Meyers is a member, and the WEMET Operations Board, of which Chief Gale is a member. WEMET is supervised daily by the Michigan State Police. Our assigned detective was promoted to Corporal in October of 2018, and the position was vacant until July 2019.

During the four months our Detective was involved in WEMET, they assisted in the following activity.



The chart below illustrates the narcotics seized by WEMET between the months of July 2018 and October 2018.



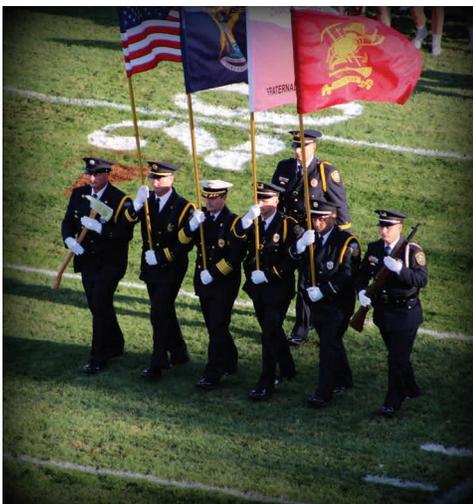
## SPECIAL TEAMS

### Norton Shores Underwater Recovery Team



Also known as the Dive Team, this working group is comprised of Police and Fire Department members. The Dive Team is the primary responder to water emergencies within Norton Shores and works closely with the Muskegon County Sheriff's Department Dive Team to aid neighboring communities.

Monthly training sessions are utilized to maintain the team's operational capabilities. Areas of focus include low visibility, ice, swift-water, and deep-water diving. Additionally, the Dive Team acquired a badly needed new "side-scan sonar" this fiscal year to increase recovery capabilities in deep muck lake bottoms such as Mona Lake.



### Honor Guard

The Norton Shores Honor Guard team includes four members from the Police Department and four from the Fire Department. Upon request, the Honor Guard will make appearances to present or retire the National Colors (flags) during public relations events or parades, represent the city during times of mourning, or represent the city at funeral services for public safety members who gave the ultimate sacrifice. The team represented the Department in over ten events this past year.

### Hunter Safety Program

The Police Department continues to provide free Hunter Safety education to both children and adults each year. This program is offered twice a year during the Spring and Fall. Essential to the program's popularity are its volunteers, comprised of current and retired police, fire, and city employees as well as volunteers from the community. As a leading program in the state, it was featured this year on the Michigan Outdoors public access channel. Equipment and supplies are generously provided by community members as well as hunting/fishing organizations. The program continues to exhibit a display during the annual Sportsmen For youth event at the county fairgrounds.



**Muskegon County Emergency Response Team**



The Muskegon County Emergency Response Team (ERT) is a multi-jurisdictional unit comprised of 18 sworn law enforcement officers and two firefighters. This includes five members of the Norton Shores Police Department assigned as tactical operators. Two members of the Norton Shores Fire Department are assigned as Tactical Medics. The team's mission is to respond to critical / high- risk incidents involving armed individuals. The team has spent the last fourteen months training new operators to become an active team. The team plans on becoming active again by mid FY2020.