

Gaston County Police

2006 Annual Report



Proudly serving Gaston County since 1957



Table of Contents

Mission Statement.....	3
Message from the Chief.....	4
Awards and Recognition	5
Crime	
UCR Index Crimes.....	7
Gaston County Total Index Crimes.....	8
County Violent Crime Index.....	9
County Property Crime Index.....	10
Command Organization	
Overview.....	11
Organizational Chart.....	12
Community Policing Division Crime Statistics.....	13
Zone 1.....	14
Zone 2.....	14
Zone 3.....	15
Zone 4.....	15
K9 Unit.....	16
Marine Enforcement Unit.....	16
Investigations and Support Services Division	
Criminal Investigations Unit.....	17
Crime Scene Search Unit.....	18
Property and Evidence Unit.....	19
Special Investigations Unit.....	21
Emergency Response Team.....	23
Hazardous Devices Unit.....	24
Support Services	
Educational Services Unit.....	25
Employee Development Unit.....	27
Recruitment and Selection Unit.....	28
Victim Witness Unit/Accreditation.....	29
Police Information Processing Specialists.....	30
Communications Division.....	31
Animal Control Division.....	33
Administration	
Budget.....	35
Professional Standards Unit.....	36
Community Feedback Survey.....	37
Contact Information.....	39



The Gaston County Police Department began operation in 1957 with a chief, a secretary, and 23 sworn officers. Since its inception, the department has continually grown stronger and more proficient. By 1991, the Commission on Accreditation of Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) awarded accreditation status to the department making it the 190th internationally accredited police agency. Today, the

department employs 127 sworn officers who patrol a community of more than 85,000 residents and spans an area of over 270 square miles; and 80 civilian employees who provide essential services such as communications, information processing, planning and analysis, and animal control. Every member of the County Police is committed to promoting the department's standards and goals, which are best expressed through our mission and value statements.



OUR MISSION

To enhance safety and security through police services, which reflect our compassion and concern for the quality of life of all citizens.

OUR VALUES

- Fairness** We protect constitutional rights through impartial enforcement of the law. We are dedicated to treating citizens and our employees with dignity, respect, and equality.
- Integrity** We adhere to the highest moral and ethical standards. Honesty and sincerity serve as the foundation in dealing with each other and the community. In all we do, we have the courage and commitment to uphold these values.
- Respect** We will treat all people with compassion, tolerance, and dignity by providing professional law enforcement services through highly trained personnel accountable to our community.
- Service** We strive to improve the quality of life in partnership with the community. Our commitment is unwavering in the face of the many challenges confronting our officers.
- Trust** We demand honesty and accountability from every employee. This value fosters community and employee confidence in the department and allows for an open and honest relationship.

The Gaston County Police Department is pleased to present this Annual Report for 2006.

This year has presented a real challenge to the men and women of our Department. Our 911 Communications Division has struggled to recruit, train and maintain qualified telecommunicators. At Animal Control we have tripled our adoption rate, and yet have still dealt with a record number of unwanted animals. As police we have examined our crime data, and looked to other jurisdictions to find answers to address increases in crime.

In spite of the year's adversities, the Department has clung tightly to the concept of community oriented policing. Sir Robert Peale, credited as the father of modern policing said, "the police are the people, and the people are the police." The point of his quote being that it takes everybody in the community, not just police, working together to prevent crime and provide a better and safe environment.

Our primary objective – to provide quality services – rests on the strong relationships we have developed within our community. We have tried some new initiatives, and we have continued cooperative efforts with our public safety counterparts, and other community partners. By connecting with diverse groups, our members have been able to facilitate great accomplishments. One such effort includes the County's regional recognition by the Centralina Council of Government for the improvements made to the Queens Court/Queens Road community. This project materialized when a handful of residents contacted our department for help as crime began escalating in their neighborhood. Through efforts of the County Police, Code Enforcement, Animal Control, the Health Department and others, not just crime issues, but quality of life issues were resolved. Similar efforts were undertaken in numerous other neighborhoods throughout the County. These successes and others represent our best efforts. Officers engaged in active problem solving and crime prevention – working with other agencies and stakeholders – showing a real ability to impact crime.

Yet, despite our best efforts, the County followed the national trend of rising crime. Some increase was expected with our transition to the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) with its expanded crime definitions, but some is the result of a changing society. Although the County's increase in crime was not dramatic, we, and the rest of the state and country, are concerned. There are many factors that have been hypothesized to explain the growing numbers in violent crime. Criminal recidivism, educational system dropouts, drugs, gangs, the diversion of resources to homeland security are all popular themes and theories for the increase. Some analysts describe the national crime picture as a "gathering storm" others refer to a "simmering cauldron." Notwithstanding this bleak forecast, the County Police is committed to continuing to work with our communities to make them harder targets for criminals.

As you read our departmental highlights included in this year's report, remember that success stories are not accidental. They require vision, perseverance, and professionalism. The men and women of the County Police have worked hard to provide quality services that made our county not just safer, but better. We will continue to work with residents and business owners to solve problems and we will enforce the laws and pursue those who break them.

I hope you find our annual report both interesting and informative to read.

William Farley
Chief of Police

2006 Gaston County Employee of the Year:

Captain J.C. Dunivan

2006 Departmental Awards

Sworn Employee of the Year	Officer Lou Caliendo
Civilian Employee of the Year	Lorraine Ghorley
Telecommunicator of the Year	Clara Painter
Animal Control Employee of the Year	Steven Rector
Outstanding Service by Sworn Employee	Sergeant Myron Shelor
Outstanding Service by Civilian Employee	Jeanne Nation
Medal of Valor	Officer Lou Caliendo
Problem Solver Award	Officer Tommy Avery
Chief's Commendations	Officer Sandra Fisher; Genie Hyman Officer Brian Bolick; Office J.B. Lineberger
Outstanding Service in Unit, Squad, Section	Officer Tim Leophard; Kenneth Barr Detective Bob Battle; Officer Lorin Dingler Lynette Nixon; Officer Jonathan Marr Officer Sheldon Christy; Officer Lee Griffin
Outstanding Service by a Citizen	Dr. Bob Neunzig
Volunteer of the Year	Judith Johnson
Police Explorer of the Year	Morgan Painter
Community Watch	All Community Watch Groups Recognized
Chief's Commendations	Leon Moretz; Jena Koone; Sarah Neill

2006 Employees of the Month

	<u>Sworn</u>	<u>Civilian</u>
January	Officer Lou Caliendo	Kenneth Barr
February	Sergeant Myron Shelor	Lynn Preston
March	Officer John Gardner	Sherry McClain
April	Officer Eric Johnson	
May	Officer Jeff Bryant	Joe Smith
June	Officer Doug Hord	Paula Cloninger
July	Officer Brian Rogers	Laura Bumgardner
August	Officer Daniel Hawley	Cam Melton
September	Officer Mark Stewart	Anita Gemes
October	Officer Dan Caison	Cheryl Williams
November	Sergeant Steve Jentsch	
December	Officer Gerry Clemmer	Gail Page

***Centralina Council of Government
Excellence in Planning and Community***



**Centralina
Council of Governments**

The Centralina Council of Government (COG) presented Gaston County with an Excellence Award in Planning and Community Investment for its Queens Road/Queens Court Community Improvement Project.

The Queens Road/Queens Court community is a tight-knit, racially diverse neighborhood of about 200 residents living in 100 homes, and includes two churches. Residents recognized that their neighborhood was facing a threat to its stability as a result of escalating crime in the area. An entire section of the neighborhood was lined with abandoned homes, which were being used by drug dealers and users. Other crimes such as prostitution, assaults, and breaking and enterings were also on the rise. Compounding these problems, the neighborhood also lacked adequate water and sewer infrastructures.

The improvement project began when a group of concerned residents from the neighborhood contacted Gaston County Police Officer Joe Bill Lineberger, about organizing a community watch and increasing police patrols. It was quickly apparent that this community needed more than just police assistance to curb the criminal activity and revitalize the neighborhood.

After establishing a community watch program, police personnel contacted County Code Enforcement to address the vacant and dilapidated houses and other code enforcement concerns. Then residents began organizing litter clean-ups and the North Carolina Department of Transportation was called in to clean out clogged storm drains. A U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) was sought and awarded to provide infrastructure funding to serve all 100 homes in the neighborhood with city water. The grant was supported by the County Environmental Health Department and the City of Gastonia who agreed to serve the Queens Court Community through its utility system. A second CDBG grant was later awarded to extend sewer lines to several houses in the area, and the County Board of Commissions committed \$60,000 to extend a sewer line from its existing location to the edge of the project area.

The overall impact of the project was significant – reports of crime decreased by 22%, all 200 residents now have reliable, clean drinking water; the abandoned homes have been eliminated; and the community remains mobilized and empowered to do more. Through the on-going commitment and cooperation of numerous contributors, this project resulted in a long-term sustainable success, and while it has taken a long time to come to its fruition, it stands as a landmark of what can be accomplished when citizens, government, and stakeholders come together as one.

Project Contributors

Gaston County Police Department	NC Department of Transportation
Gaston County Planning and Code Enforcement	City of Gastonia
Gaston County Animal Control	City of Gastonia Community Development Office
Gaston County Environmental Health Department	City of Gastonia Engineering Department
Gaston County Public Works Department	NC Department of Commerce
Gaston County Grants Analyst	Kennedy Concrete and Utilities
Gaston County Board of Commissions	Benchmark-CMR, Inc.
Gaston County Public Information Office	Gethsemane Baptist Church
US Department of Housing and Urban Development	Queens Court Community Watch

Residents of the Queens Road/Queens Court Community

Uniform Crime Report (UCR) Index Crimes

In 1930, the FBI began the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program to compile data on eight “index crimes” – murder, rape robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, motor vehicle theft, larceny, and arson. Since then, new reporting guidelines were formulated and the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) was developed. The revisions in the new system are aimed at “enhancing the quantity, quality, and timeliness of crime data collection and improving the methodology used to compile, analyze, audit, and publish the collected crime statistics.” Under NIBRS crimes are divided into two groups with “Group A” offenses including the UCR index crimes as well as numerous other offenses. In total, the NIBRS Group A crimes are now expanded to encompass 22 criminal categories consisting of 46 separate offenses and Group B crimes are made up of an additional 11 public order type offenses. Other changes under NIBRS include the restructuring in definitions of certain crimes, such as rape and aggravated assault. This new and more detailed offense classification was changed in order to collect more information about each criminal incident as well as add greater uniformity to the crime data reported by each law enforcement agency.

As law enforcement agencies transition from UCR to NIBRS, concerns have arisen regarding the effects the expanded reporting process has on crime statistics. Many jurisdictions with historically lower crime levels have experienced some exaggerated changes in their crime rates as a result of the new criteria.

This year, the Gaston County Police Department made its transition to NIBRS. Some effects of the switch were experienced, especially in the categories of forcible rape and aggravated assault – both crimes receiving expanded definitions from their UCR counterparts. While some of the department’s violent crime increase can be attributed to the switch to NIBRS, it does not account for the total increase.

Numerous law enforcement agencies across the country are transitioning from UCR to NIBRS. Yet, the FBI has determined that until a majority of agencies have made the switch to NIBRS, they will continue to issue the national crime statistics based on UCR numbers.

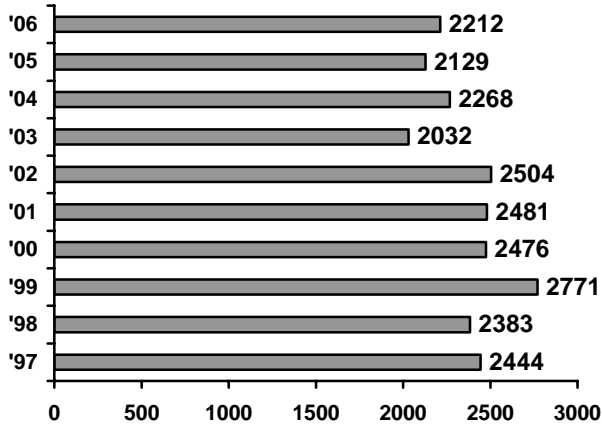
National Preliminary UCR Crime Statistics for January – June 2006:

According to the FBI’s *Preliminary Semiannual Uniform Crime Report*, during the first half of 2006, violent crime across the country increased 3.7% while property crimes experienced a 2.6% decrease, when compared with data from the same reporting period last year.

The report indicated that amongst violent index crimes, robbery offenses increased 9.7%, murder increased 1.4%, and aggravated assaults increased 1.2%. Forcible rape was the only category experiencing a decrease, which was negligible at less than 0.1 percent.

In the property crime category, burglaries and arson experienced increases of 1.2% and 6.8% respectively, however motor vehicle thefts decreased by 2.3% and larceny offenses dropped by 3.8 percent.

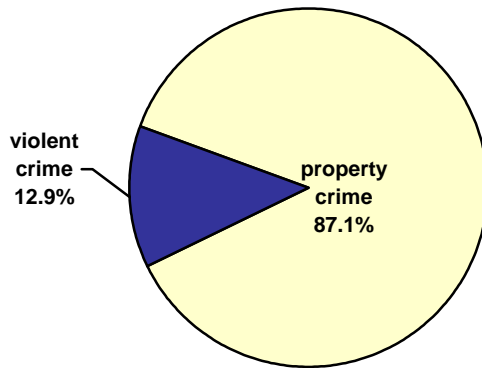
Total Index Crimes, 1997 - 2006



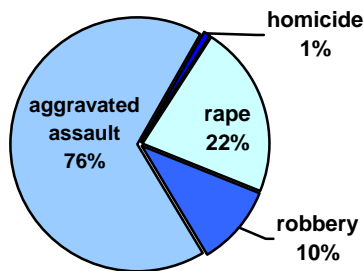
The total number of UCR index crimes occurring in Gaston County this year was 2,214 – a 3.9% increase over the 2,129 index crimes occurring last year. Violent crimes increased 39% when compared to last year with the most significant escalation seen in forcible rape and aggravated assault offenses. Moreover, property crimes experienced a slight increase of 0.1% from last year with reductions in burglaries and arsons and minor increases in motor vehicle thefts and larceny.

Violent Crime vs. Property Crime

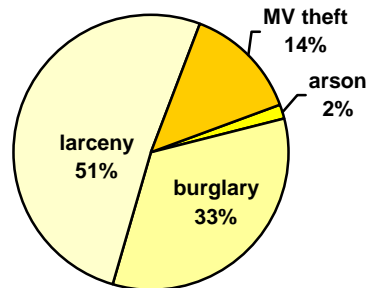
Violent crimes accounted for 12.9% of 2006 index crimes reported in Gaston County, while index property crimes accounted for the remaining 87.1 percent.



Percentages of Violent Crimes

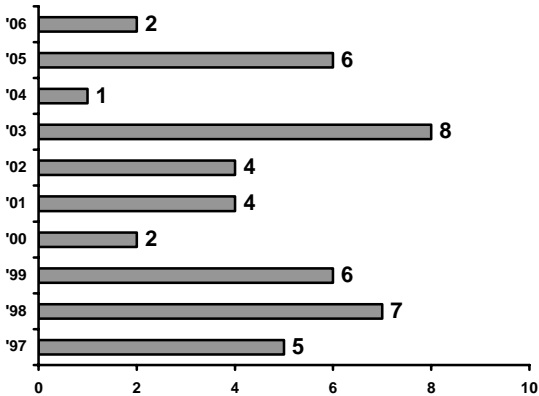


Percentages of Property Crimes

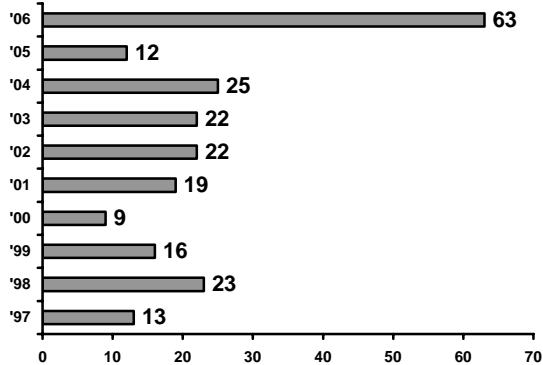


Gaston County Violent Crime Index

Total homicides, 1997 - 2006

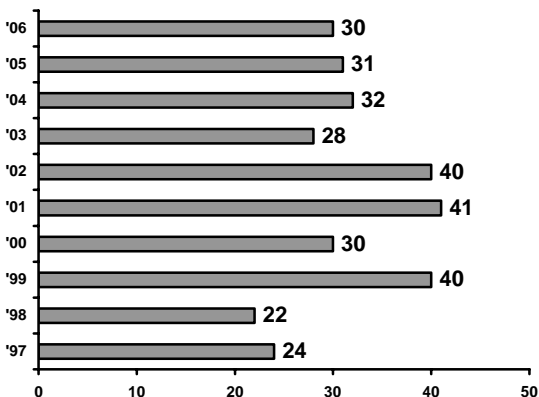


Total forcible rapes/sex offenses, 1997 - 2006

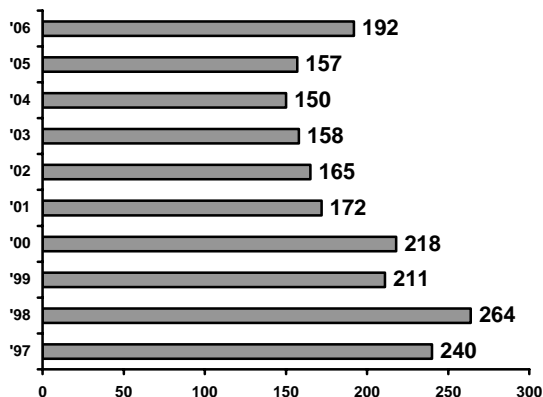


Violent crime in Gaston County this year increased significantly, with a total of 287 violent crimes occurring as compared with 206 crimes last year – a 39% rise. The most significant increase was seen in the number of forcible rapes/sex offenses occurring this year, up to 63, as compared with only 12 rapes last year. However this increase was largely a result of the offense being redefined for NIBRS crime reporting purposes to include rape and other forcible sex offenses. If viewed through UCR crime reporting criteria, we had 18 rapes and 45 other forcible sex offenses. The only other category experiencing an increase was a 22% rise in aggravated assaults – up from 157 incidents last year to 192 incidents in 2006. There was a modest decrease in the total number of robberies, falling to 30 occurrences this year from 31 incidents last year. Yet, the most significant change among the violent index crimes was the number of homicides reported, which fell from 6 occurrences in 2005 to just 2 incidents in 2006.

Total robberies, 1997 - 2006

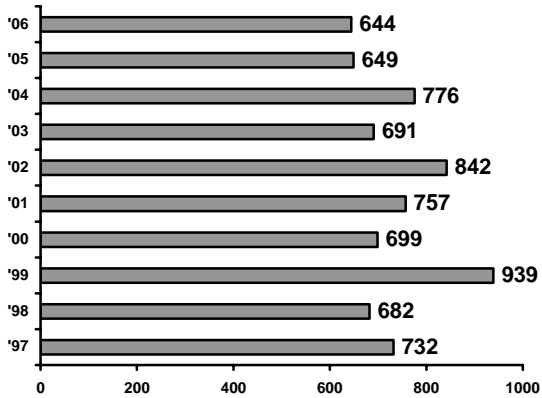


Total aggravated assaults, 1997 - 2006

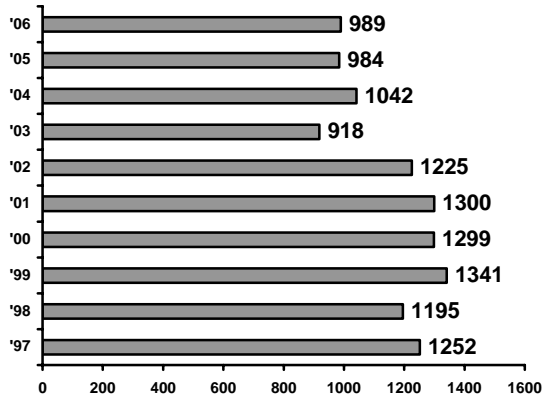


Gaston County Property Crime Index

Total burglaries, 1997 - 2006

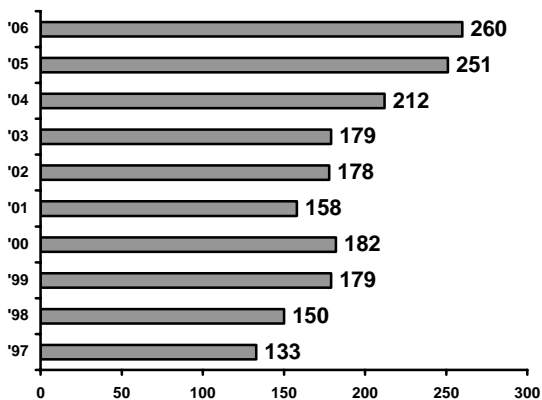


Total larcenies, 1997 - 2006

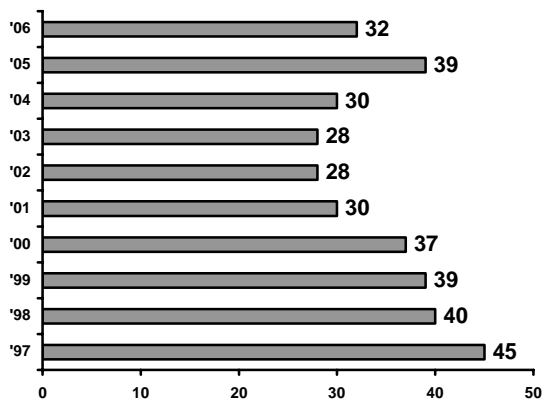


Property crime experienced a slight increase of 0.1% from last year. Minor decreases were seen in both the number of burglaries and arsons. Burglaries dropped to 644 incidents from 649, representing a 0.77% decrease, and arsons fell from 39 incidents last year to 32 in 2006 – an 18% reduction. However, increases were seen in both motor vehicle thefts and larceny offenses. Incidents of motor vehicle theft increased in 2006 by 3.5% to 260 incidents as compared with 251 incidents last year. Additionally, larceny offenses increased from 984 to 989 offenses, representing a 0.5% increase.

Total motor vehicle thefts, 1997 - 2006



Total arsons, 1997 - 2006



Office of the Chief

The Chief manages each division, which is commanded by an Assistant Chief or Director. Within each of the operating divisions are various units that carry out the department's operational and administrative functions. The Chief also directly manages all budgetary functions of the department as well as the Professional Standards Unit and Planning and Analysis.

Community Policing Division

The Community Policing Division is overseen by an Assistant Chief and is comprised primarily of uniformed officers assigned to one of four geographical areas known as zones, which are in turn commanded by a Captain. The officers assigned to each zone are further divided into squads that cover rotating 12-hour shifts, and are supervised by a Sergeant. The Community Policing Division is responsible for controlling and preventing crime through regular patrols, answering calls for service, apprehending offenders, enforcing criminal and traffic laws, conducting preliminary investigations, and working with the community to solve neighborhood crime problems. This division is also made up of two specialized patrol units, which are the canine unit and a seasonal marine patrol.

Investigative and Support Services Division

The Investigative and Support Services Division is overseen by an Assistant Chief and is comprised of the Criminal Investigations Unit (CIU), the Special Investigations Unit (SIU), and the Support Services Unit. The Division also consists of two specialty units, the Emergency Response Team (ERT) and the Hazardous Devices Team, whose specially trained members are available on an as-needed basis to assist in crisis situations. CIU is responsible for the investigation of major felony offenses, select misdemeanors, missing persons, unattended deaths, offenses involving juveniles, and the processing of forensic evidence. Property and Evidence is also included in this unit. SIU is primarily responsible for narcotics investigations, but is also charged with investigating gambling and prostitution offenses. The Support Services Unit includes Educational Services, which provides SRO's to county schools; Employee Development, which is responsible for employee training; Recruitment and Selection, which handles all aspects of the hiring process; Accreditation, which is responsible for maintaining all necessary information to maintain compliance with accreditation standards, and Police Information Processing, which is primarily responsible for maintaining the departments records and providing 24-hour access for both public and officer inquiries.

Communications Division

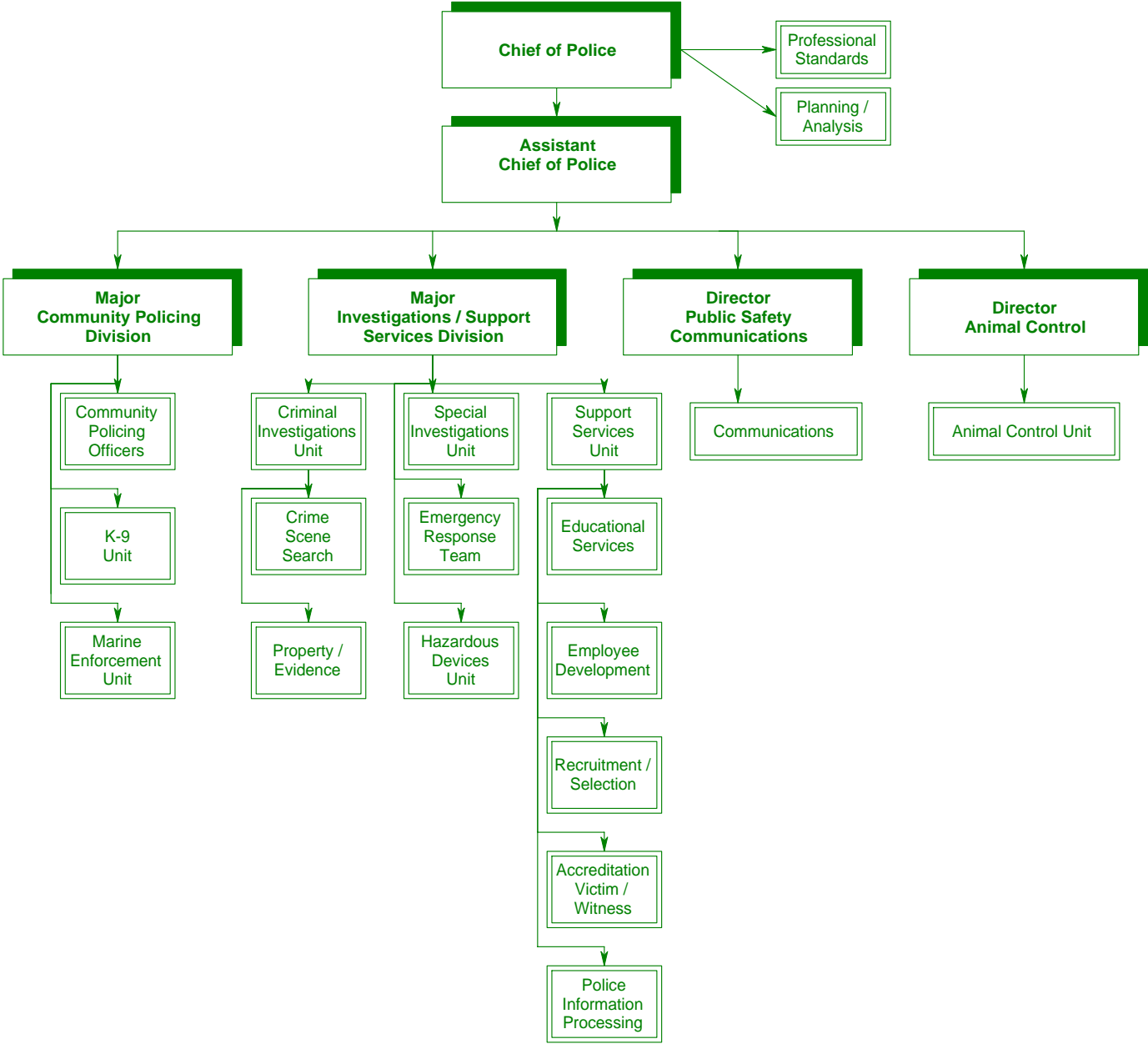
The Communications Division is led by a Director and comprised of 46 employees covering 4 shifts, who provide 24-hour coverage of emergency 911 calls and radio transmissions. The unit is charged with maintaining and operating the computer-aided dispatch system for police, fire, and medical calls, as well as receiving both emergency and non-emergency calls for service.

Animal Control Division

The Animal Control Division is led by a Director and comprised of 23 employees including 3 supervisors. Animal Control has the duty and responsibility to enforce animal related State statutes and County ordinances. Field operations are comprised of both sworn and non-sworn personnel, while administrative personnel provide general clerical, accounting, and informational services. The mission of the Animal Control Unit is not only to enhance the safety of county citizens, but also to ensure the proper care and treatment of animals.

The organizational chart for the Gaston County Police Department depicts the chain of command and indicates each Division and supporting Units.

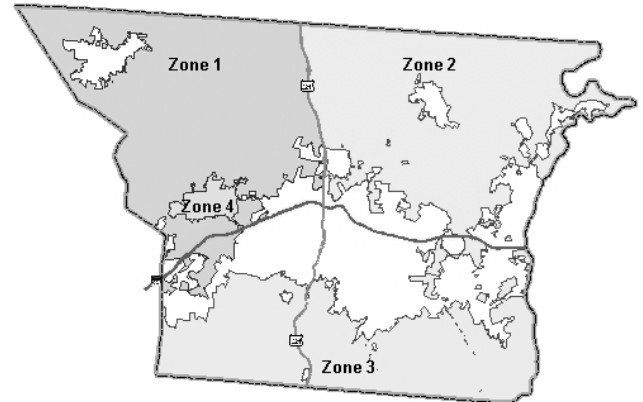
Gaston County Police Department



Community Policing Division

Policing Zones

- Zone 1 comprises the northwestern part of Gaston County and covers 100 square miles with over 20,000 residents.
- Zone 2 is located in the northeastern part of the County, covering 97 square miles with more than 30,000 residents.
- Zone 3 encompasses the southern unincorporated areas of Gaston County. This area represents over 75 square miles with nearly 28,000 residents.
- Zone 4 is the incorporated city limits of Bessemer City. This is predominantly an urban area spanning 4.4 square miles with a population of over 5,000 citizens.



ZONE STATS

	<u>Zone 1</u>	<u>Zone 2</u>	<u>Zone 3</u>	<u>Zone 4</u>
Traffic Citations	2,205	2,624	2,063	1,118
Traffic Accidents	8	17	7	132
Warning Citations	1,546	834	685	1,023
Arrestable Offenses	608	458	721	265
Warrants/Summons Served	1,076	943	1,191	402
NIBRS Group A Offenses:	<u>Zone 1</u>	<u>Zone 2</u>	<u>Zone 3</u>	<u>Zone 4</u>
Arson	13	6	10	1
Assault Offenses	221	319	226	109
Burglary/Breaking & Entering	146	246	197	42
Counterfeiting/Forgery	7	6	6	5
Destruction/Damage/Vandalism	92	156	147	61
Drug/Narcotic Offenses	117	145	168	71
Embezzlement	0	2	0	1
Fraud Offenses	18	44	39	22
Homicide Offenses	0	0	2	0
Kidnapping/Abduction	4	2	9	3
Larceny/Theft Offenses	198	363	247	126
Motor Vehicle Theft	64	95	70	24
Pornography/Obscene Material	0	0	3	0
Prostitution Offenses	0	0	1	0
Robbery	0	10	15	4
Sex Offenses, Forcible	17	20	13	4
Sex Offenses, Nonforcible	9	7	11	3
Stolen Property Offenses	11	7	13	6
Weapon Law Violations	7	12	13	10
Total NIBRS Offenses:	924	1,440	1,190	492

2006 Highlights

Zone 1

- Last year officers from Zone 1 began targeting the illegal sale of counterfeit items ranging from music CD's to purses and clothing. This operation was expanded and continued through 2006 with the lead officer becoming a sworn member of the North Carolina Anti-Counterfeit/Trademark Violation Task Force sponsored by the NC Secretary of State's Office. To date, officers of the Gaston County Police Department have been involved in investigations that have led to the seizure of nearly \$1 million worth of counterfeit goods. These investigations have taken place in Gaston, Lincoln, Cleveland, Buncombe, Cherokee, Haywood, and Mecklenburg Counties.
- As a proactive response to metal thefts in Zone 1, officers began an undercover operation targeting a local metal dealer. This investigation culminated with the arrest of the metal dealer and the recovery of stolen items.
- A part-time Highway Safety and Enforcement Team took to the interstate patrolling the I-85 corridor from US 321 to Cleveland County. The efforts of this team are to enforce all motor vehicle laws and to interdict drug traffic along the interstate. To date, the team has seized more than \$300,000 in cash and over 120 pounds of cocaine. Because of the success of the team, the Department of Immigration and Custom Enforcement supplied the team with mobile digital cameras.

Zone 2

2006 Highlights

- Officers received numerous drug and trash complaints in the area of Oakridge Mobile Home Park. To address the problem, officers conducted bi-weekly neighborhood canvasses to inform residents of actions taken and to gather information. Through partnerships with Code Enforcement, the Health Department, Animal Control and residents, officers were able to facilitate having trash cleaned up, correcting grading and open sewer problems, getting driveways paved, and removing dilapidated trailers from the property. Numerous arrests and citations were made for drug offenses and environmental violations. The project resulted in reducing crime and calls for service as well as improving the neighborhood environment.
- A resident on Killian Road was allowing his home to be used for drug use and sales and suspected prostitution. Zone officers monitored the location and identified numerous suspects and made several arrests. Officers utilized the Community Watch Association to help identify the problem and obtain other information. The resident was eventually arrested and the increased police presence in the area greatly reduced the criminal activity.
- Over a 3-month period officers received numerous calls for service at the Holly Hills Apartment complex. To help reduce the call volume, officers used neighborhood canvasses, surveillance, traffic enforcement efforts and Code Enforcement. As a result, 10 renters were evicted and the property manager implemented a new renter selection process. Since the evictions, the calls for service at the complex were reduced to just one...a call to have police remove one of the previous tenants from the property.
- Captain Dunivan was named Gaston County's 2006 Employee of the Year in recognition of his outstanding efforts in working with the Gaston County Parks and Recreation Department in reducing criminal activity in County Parks and enhancing the safety and security of park and facility users.

2006 Highlights

Zone 3

- The Officers in Zone 3 maintained active partnerships with the community through continued participation in the Gaston County Community Watch Association and by attending community watch meetings within the zone. Zone 3 currently has six active community watch groups that meet either monthly or quarterly to discuss community concerns and crime prevention strategies.
- Officers expanded their reach into the community through various safety and crime prevention initiatives. Some of these initiatives included a 55/Alive Driving Class, Home Security for the Elderly, Church Watch, and Identity Theft programs.
- The Officers in Zone 3 also participated in several children's safety programs. Some of these programs included Bicycle Helmet Safety, a Children's Fingerprinting class, Boys and Girl Scout programs, Safe Kids displays, Special Olympics, and the Buckle Bear program.
- Additional focus was placed on locating and identifying individuals suspected of criminal activity. Constant monitoring of these locations, and efforts by every officer including specialized units, led to multiple arrests and resulted in a reduction in property crimes.
- Police involvement in quality of life issues proved beneficial to several locations plagued with environmental hazards and concerns. Officers in Zone 3 partnered and worked diligently with other agencies such as Gaston County Code Enforcement, Gastonia City Code Enforcement, the Gaston County Health Department, and the Gaston County Attorney's Office to ensure that these problem areas were addressed to make the communities more desirable and healthy places to reside.

Zone 4

2006 Highlights

- Officers assigned to Bessemer City have focused on enforcement of the city's Youth Protection ordinances. During the summer months, while school is not in session, the city experiences an increase in crimes such as misdemeanor larcenies and vandalism reports. Local juveniles were charged with numerous violations. Through directed enforcement of the Youth Protection ordinances, including curfew enforcement, juvenile crime and disorder was reduced.
- Skateboarders continued to present a concern for the public and the City Council. While a skateboard park was discussed at several city council sessions, this alternative was not adopted. Thus, officers continued to strictly enforce the city's skateboard ordinance.
- Community involvement is an integral part of policing. As such, officers conducted several safety talks with various Community Watches and other civic organizations. In addition, safety tips were regularly published in the Bessemer City Newsletter and on the City's utility bills.

K9 Unit

The primary task of the six-team K9 Unit is to conduct specialized searches for weapons, narcotics, fugitives, and missing persons utilizing trained law enforcement dogs. The Unit is also responsible for answering routine calls, responding to crimes in progress, as well as performing street-level drug interdiction.



UNIT STATS

- In 2006, the K9 Unit responded to a total of 6,538 calls for service including 169 tracking searches, 701 narcotics searches, and 19 building searches. Additionally, the Unit responded to 196 calls to assist other agencies.
- The K9 Unit continued to have great success this year tracking and finding subjects nearly 50% of the time. The Unit also made 233 misdemeanor arrests and 213 felony arrests.
- The K9 Unit also participated in crime prevention by providing demonstrations to various civic organizations, Community Watch groups, and schools. These demonstrations were provided to showcase the capabilities of the canines while giving officers an opportunity to answer questions and provide crime prevention information. A total of 28 demonstrations were offered this year.

Marine Enforcement Unit

The primary functions of the Marine Enforcement Unit are to enforce boating laws, conduct safety inspections, remove navigational hazards, and provide assistance to boaters and other governmental agencies. The Lake Wylie Marine Commission and the Mountain Island Marine Commission granted the Marine Enforcement Unit authority over the waterway and shorelines of Lake Wylie. Several other law enforcement agencies also have concurrent jurisdiction over Lake Wylie, and the Unit works closely with each of these agencies in order to maintain the safety of all lake goers. The Marine Enforcement Unit began seasonal operations June 12, 2006 and continued full-time until August 28, 2006. Thereafter the unit operates on an as-needed basis.

2006 Highlights



- For the 2006 season the Marine Unit participated in the “Law Loaner” program through YAMAHA of Gastonia. Under the program the unit was able to lease two Yamaha wave runners. The wave runners were utilized for special events and for areas of the lake not accessible by larger watercraft.
- Unit members also performed several educational programs. Those programs included the Coast Guard Auxiliary Safety Inspection, the Commissioners School of Excellence, the Citizens’ Police Academy, and Citizens’ Police Academy for Youth.
- The unit participates annually in several community programs such as the Mountain Island Lake Flotilla, Bass Masters Championships, National Night Out, and the Fourth of July fireworks display on Lake Wylie.



Criminal Investigations Unit

The Criminal Investigations Unit (CIU) is responsible for conducting all major case investigations and follow-up investigations on selected cases. In addition, CIU is responsible for the case management of every officer. The Unit is comprised of a Captain, 2 Sergeants, and 6 Investigators. CIU receives most of its cases after officers in the Community Policing Unit have conducted a preliminary investigation and completed a report of their findings. These initial reports are an integral part of the Unit's ability to solve cases as they provide investigators with vital information and potential leads. Each case is reviewed daily to determine whether a case will stay with the initial officer or be assigned to an investigator.

Collaboration efforts also carry over to other law enforcement agencies as well. Every quarter, CIU either hosts or attends a multi-jurisdictional meeting of police personnel from State, Local, and Federal agencies to share information concerning criminal activity. This strategy has proven successful with several cases being solved through this information sharing.

The Crime Analysis Unit also plays a vital role in criminal investigations. Analysts provide "hotspot" maps and other important information such as methods of operation from crime reports within these hot areas. They also provide maps and reports that summarize crime activity in an effort to examine trends and discern patterns. Analysts are also called upon to search database records for vehicle and suspect information that may match those listed in reports to assist in developing leads on similar or related cases. In 2006, a concerted effort was initiated to provide neighboring jurisdictions with this information.

UNIT STATS

- CIU opened 491 general investigations and 151 juvenile cases during the year, compared to 472 general investigations and 146 juvenile cases in 2005.
- Arrests for the year were higher with 609 charges filed compared to 489 in 2005.
- Of the total cases investigated in 2006, 15% involved burglaries to residences, businesses, motor vehicles or other outbuildings, a 3% decrease from 2005.
- Larceny investigations accounted for 11% of the caseload, a 2% decrease from 2005.
- Missing Persons accounted for 20% of investigations, with juveniles responsible for 62% of the 20%.
- Sex offenses accounted for 20% (4% increase) of all investigations by the Unit.
- While violent crimes remained at 3%, it should be noted that 2006 had only 2 homicides as compared to 6 in 2005.
- CIU responded to 45 unattended deaths requiring preliminary investigations.
- The remaining 31% of investigations included offenses such as serious assaults, frauds and other types of crimes.
- Overall, there was a 4% increase in the caseload for CIU in 2006 as compared with 2005.

2006 Highlights

- In January 2006 a double homicide occurred in the early afternoon hours at the heavily traveled intersection of Highway 321 South and Little Mountain Road. This incident led to an innocent individual being murdered as he drove through the intersection. The case was the result of an apparent ongoing dispute that led to a shootout in the roadway with one of the suspects receiving gunshot wounds and later dying.
- On June 29th in High Shoals, CIU investigated an attempted murder that evolved from a domestic situation. The suspect had apparently become enraged by the breakup of the marriage and ended up shooting the victim while the victim was in a car. The victim and a witness were able to drive to a local fire department where police were called. The suspect was later apprehended without incident.
- In November 2006 Detectives were able to break up a motor vehicle theft ring, in which vehicles were being stolen from the Interstate and other locations. Detectives worked with surrounding agencies to develop the information that led to 10 cases being cleared by arrest. Additional cases in surrounding counties were also cleared as part of this investigation.

Crime Scene Search Unit

The Crime Scene Search Unit (CSSU) consists of 4 sworn officers trained in evidence identification, documentation, collection and preservation. The Unit's responsibility is to process and collect evidence from crime scenes that occur in the Gaston County Police jurisdiction and to assist area municipalities upon request. As a result of their excellent reputation, professionalism, and expertise the CSSU is utilized by many agencies within and surrounding Gaston County.

CSSU continues to maintain a high level of response to calls for service for the Gaston County Police Department and for many other law enforcement agencies seeking assistance. During the past year, the unit responded to 647 calls for service. In addition, CSSU was called upon 225 times to assist other agencies.

UNIT STATS

- The Crime Scene Search Unit conducted a total of 4,337 latent print comparisons of which 53 were identified. They also utilized the Automated Fingerprint Index System (AFIS) during the year for a total of 1,626 searches with 17 confirmed matches.
- CSSU is also responsible for fingerprinting prisoners and civilians. Civilians often request to be fingerprinted for job applications such as schoolteachers and day care operators. There were a total of 580 persons fingerprinted by CSSU this year.
- CSSU continues to use digital photography equipment for its crime scene processing. The use of digital photography continues to reduce the costs associated with film processing. There were 455 compact discs created utilizing this technology and 518 photographs developed for courtroom presentation as well as departmental purposes.

2006 Highlights

- This year in an effort to provide more accurate information from outdoor crime scenes, four Garmin Global Positioning Systems (GPS) were purchased. GPS units provide high accuracy when determining location. This piece of equipment allows CSSU to provide a more accurate picture of crime scenes and for reconstructing crime scenes when requested.
- The Crime Scene Search Specialists all participated and completed the President's DNA Initiative online training. This training consisted of six courses totaling 20 hours credit. This DNA initiative helps technology reach its full potential to solve crime, protect the innocent, and identify missing persons.
- In an effort to improve the use of the Laser Trajectory Finder the Unit purchased a Fogger system. This provides a dense fog that allows the Laser Trajectory to be photographed or filmed, enhancing its effect during courtroom presentation.
- As part of the Unit's efforts to educate the community about the department, CSSU often teaches classes at area schools. This provides the Unit with the opportunity to expose area students to the technical aspects of crime scene investigation. During the classes students are exposed to fingerprinting and photography. A mock crime scene is also set up which provides students with hands on training and experience of the many skills needed to work a crime scene.

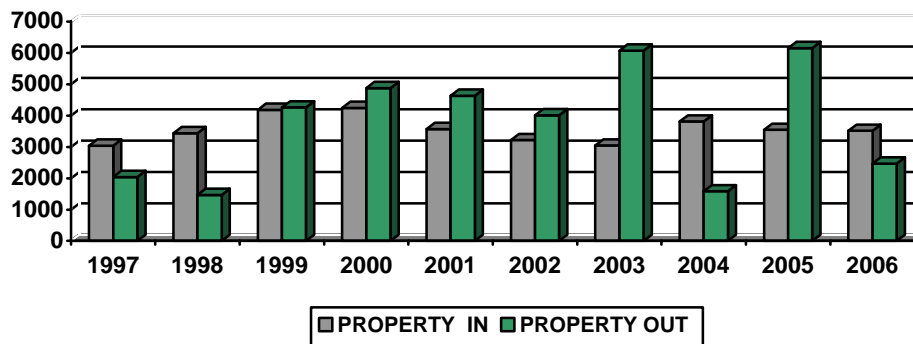
Property and Evidence

The Property and Evidence Unit is responsible for the storage and maintenance of all items seized by officers during a criminal investigation. In order for an item of evidence to be admissible in court, its “chain of custody” must be maintained. This means the evidence must be housed in a secure area and that each person having contact with the evidence is documented to later show at trial that the item is in the same condition as when it was first collected. To accomplish this the Unit has one sworn officer in charge of the evidence room, and each item of evidence is logged and classified using a modern bar code tracking system. Once a criminal prosecution has been completed, the evidence must be returned to the rightful owner, destroyed, or forfeited, depending on the disposition of the charges and the type of property seized. All illegal contraband is destroyed regardless of the disposition of the criminal charges.

UNIT STATS

At the end of 2006 the property and evidence room housed over 7,900 items of evidence. The graph and chart below reflect evidence entering and leaving the evidence room over the past 10 years.

PROPERTY ROOM ACTIVITY



Year	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Property In	3,425	3,439	4,182	4,246	3,571	3,221	3,045	3,811	3,546	3,513
Property Out	2,039	1,467	4,262	4,880	4,634	4,010	6,072	1,583	6,156	2,470

2006 Highlights

- During 2006, the Property and Evidence Unit was forced to limit the type of evidence taken to the secure smelting operation previously utilized due to a change in the company's policies. This change required that we shift the destruction method for about half of our evidence to the Gaston County Landfill. We continued to follow a strict procedure for evidence destruction, beginning with packaging the evidence and having the property officer and the Sergeant of Professional Standards transport it to the landfill. The destruction site is then made ready by the Supervisor of the landfill who witnesses his staff first crush the packages with the earth moving equipment, then cover the evidence with dirt, and finally pile mounds of garbage on top of the site. Photographs below depict each phase of destruction.



- The Property and Evidence Unit continued utilizing N.C. General Statute §15-12(b), which allows unclaimed bicycles to be given to non-profit organizations for charitable purposes. During 2006, the Unit donated 20 bicycles that were reconditioned and given to needy children.
- Court orders were obtained to turn over more than \$9,000 in abandoned money seized from crime scenes to the Gaston County School System.
- During 2006 the Gaston County Police began participating in a weapons tracing project sponsored by the U.S. Department of Justice, Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms Bureau (ATF). The project, called E-Trace, allows law enforcement agencies to track the sale and movement of a gun from manufacturer through each change of ownership. For all guns taken into the Gaston County Police Department's evidence room, the evidence officer accesses the ATF database via the Internet and enters descriptive data on the firearms as well as possessor identification information. The information entered by our property officer adds another link in the chain of movement for each gun seized.



Special Investigations Unit

The Special Investigations Unit (SIU) is a team of 5 investigators, 2 Sergeants and 1 Captain who conduct investigations involving narcotics, gambling, illegal alcohol, and prostitution in Gaston County. In 2006, the SIU opened 298 cases. During the course of those investigations, 169 people were charged with 1,420 counts of various “vice” related crimes. The SIU works closely with all municipal police departments in Gaston County as well as the North Carolina State Bureau of Investigation (SBI). Federal level cases were conducted in cooperation with the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).

2006 Highlights

- SIU and ICE agents conducted a joint investigation that resulted in a traffic stop in Gaston County of an individual driving a tractor trailer who had just delivered cocaine in Cabarrus County. The driver gave consent to search the cab area of the truck, and 55 kilograms of cocaine along with over \$90,000 cash was discovered in the sleeper area. The driver was placed in federal custody on cocaine trafficking charges.
- A three-month investigation in conjunction with SBI, ICE, and Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police resulted in the seizure of over 100,000 dosage units of the drug ecstasy. Six thousand (6,000) of pills, with a street value of over \$300,000, were seized in Gaston County.



- SIU initiated a federal investigation involving the smuggling of a high-grade version of crystal methamphetamine known as ‘Mexican Ice’ into Gaston County. This case was a success due to our positive working relationships with the U.S. Customs Department, the SBI, and the Hickory Police Department. The investigation resulted in 25 charges being filed against 5 offenders. A total of 6 ounces of crystal methamphetamine was seized having a street value of nearly \$35,000.
- Between May and August 2006, SIU investigated a large-scale cocaine trafficking network operating in multiple jurisdictions in our area. Through the cooperation of SIU with Cleveland County Sheriff’s Office, the SBI, Gastonia Police, Mt Holly Police, the NC State Highway Patrol and Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police, 9 individuals were federally charged for various cocaine trafficking offenses.

Special Investigations Unit

UNIT STATS

	<u>2006</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2004</u>
Cases Opened:	298	374	511
Cases Cleared:	260	186	318
Persons Charged:	169	123	272
Number of Charges:	1,420	1,151	2,293
Searches:	111	79	104
Surveillance Hours:	983	686	856
Undercover Buys:	153	172	211
Marijuana Plants Seized:	56	85	132
Other Marijuana:	56 pounds	277 pounds	177 pounds
Powder Cocaine:	74 kilos	59 kilos	13 kilos
Crack Cocaine:	682 grams	549 grams	919 grams
Other Pills:	18,631 dosages	3,631 dosages	3,572 dosages
Heroin (packets):	32	17	551
Methamphetamine:	220 grams	276 grams	59 grams
Cash Seized:	\$ 222,029	\$ 307,625	\$ 51,594
Street Value of Drugs Seized:	\$8,795,204	\$8,420,886	\$2,483,774



Emergency Response Team

The Emergency Response Team (ERT) of the Gaston County Police Department is a group of highly trained officers who are available 24 hours a day to respond to critical and high-risk incidents. When requested, the ERT assists other law enforcement agencies in Gaston County as well as neighboring jurisdictions. The ERT is divided into three teams that work closely together to accomplish a mission. The teams are Negotiators, Marksman/Observers, and Tactical Entry. Each has a designated team leader who reports to the ERT commander. All are unified in their goal to see every situation resolved peacefully and without injury to suspect, innocent bystander, or team member.

2006 Highlights

- The team schedules monthly training to maintain proper basic skills and gain effective knowledge of newly acquired equipment. Over 3,500 hours of training were logged in 2006 covering topics from basic building searches to advanced firearms tactics.
- Through Homeland Security funding, the ERT acquired forced-air breathing systems along with new chemical filtration masks that will provide tactical operators the ability to safely remain in a chemical environment longer than if they were only utilizing fire department type air tanks.
- In 2006, ERT took delivery of a Remington 'Eye Ball' camera system, which can be introduced into an environment and send live video images back to the command post. This tool will provide much needed information when deciding the best course of action to resolve a situation.



UNIT TRAINING OPERATIONS

- The ERT was a major contributor to a large-scale training exercise conducted in the Crowder's Mountain State Park in August 2006. The training tested interagency communication functions on the scene of a critical incident covering a wide geographic area and included the use of tactical teams and bomb squads from multiple departments.
- The York County (SC) Sheriff's Department SWAT team traveled to Gaston County to participate with the ERT in practicing bus assaults. Many of the York County tactical operators had never received training in dealing with hostage situations on buses. The Gaston County School System provided a bus for use during this training.
- The ERT hosted a Basic Tactical Operator's training course in Gaston County in October 2006. This school was geared toward new members to tactical teams. The training focused on tactics such as setting a perimeter around a target, communicating while inside structures, and basic room & building clearing. Attendees included GCPD as well as sheriff's departments from Catawba, Mecklenburg, and York Counties.
- A marksman/observer team from ERT traveled to Johnston County, N.C. to teach a basic sniper course to newly assigned sniper teams from organizations such as Fayetteville Police Department, Cumberland County Sheriff's Department, and the U.S. Army.
- ERT members worked closely with U.S. Army 7th Group Special Forces on a training operation held at Gaston College in the fall 2006. This operation took place at the College's fire academy campus and saw ERT members providing an opposing force for students from the Special Forces Advance Urban Combat School as they conducted a mock assault on the academy's fire tower.

Hazardous Devices Unit



The Federal Bureau of Investigation and the National Bomb Squad Commander's Advisory Board recognize the Gaston County Police Department's four-member Hazardous Devices Unit (HDU) as an Accredited Bomb Squad. The Unit received its first accreditation in 1999 and was reaccredited in 2004. Only bomb units with highly advanced equipment, rigorous and continual training, and meticulous operating procedures are eligible for accreditation.

All four members of the Hazardous Devices Unit are Certified Bomb Technicians. This certification is achieved after successfully completing an intensive 5-week curriculum held at the FBI Hazardous Devices School located at the U.S. Army Redstone Arsenal in Huntsville, Alabama. Additionally, members have also completed advanced courses in robotics operations and tactical explosive breaching.

UNIT STATS

- The Unit responded to 28 calls for service.
- 105 hours were devoted to activities requiring the assistance of Unit members.
- The Unit assisted 12 outside agencies.



2006 Highlights



- In 2006, the Hazardous Devices Unit (HDU) continued to participate with Gaston Emergency Medical Services and the City of Gastonia's Hazardous Materials Unit, as a Regional Response Team. The Regional Team trains together bi-annually, including practical exercises that combine planning and equipment with the experience of all units.
- The HDU trains on a monthly basis, in compliance with standards set forth by the National Bomb Squad Commanders Advisory Board.
- In 2006 the HDU, in conjunction with the Regional Response Team, responded to 28 calls for service in Gaston, Caldwell, Burke, Cleveland, Lincoln, Catawba and Iredell Counties.
- The members of the HDU train quarterly with the department's Emergency Response Team. Members from both units have attended explosive breaching training at Ft. Bragg, N.C.
- The Hazardous Devices Unit also assist Gaston County Schools with training faculty and administration members in bomb sweep procedures, bomb threats, and explosives recognition and response.



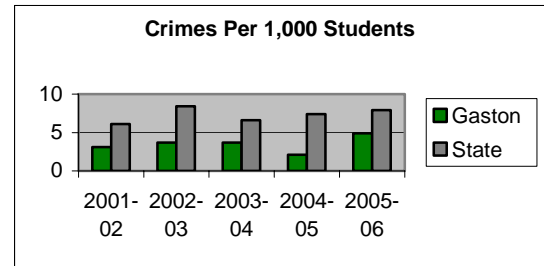
Educational Services Unit

The Gaston County Police Department continues to partner with the Gaston County Schools by implementing programs and courses aimed at keeping students and staff in a safe learning environment.

The Educational Services Unit is comprised of 10 School Resource Officers (SRO), who are assigned to each of the nine County High Schools plus Warlick Alternative School. The SRO Program for middle schools also continued in the 2005-06 school year, placing officers at each of the middle schools in the county. This program involves the use of off-duty officers in order to staff the middle schools on a daily basis. The SRO's primary duties are to ensure a safe school environment that is conducive to learning; to provide students and faculty with guidance in areas pertaining to law enforcement; and to organize classroom presentations on law enforcement related topics.

UNIT STATS

Recent figures released by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction indicate that crimes per 1,000 students in Gaston County Schools continued to fall below the state average. The 2005-2006 Annual Report on School Violence shows Gaston County Schools at 4.9 school crimes per 1,000 students, whereas the statewide rate increased this year to 7.9 crimes per 1,000 students.



2006 Highlights



The **Citizens' Police Academy for Youth** is held at the Department during summer vacation. Classes are held each day for one week. The CPA-Y is oriented to thirteen to sixteen year olds and is intended to give them an in-depth look at law enforcement. SRO's direct Academy activities and Department members teach each block of instruction. Classes cover various units including Crime Scene, Investigations, Vice Unit, Lake Patrol, Bomb Squad, and Emergency Response Team.



Class XXVII December 2006

The **Citizens Police Academy** is a seven-week program designed to provide Gaston County residents first hand information about how their Police Department works. The academy requires participants to attend classes each Saturday morning for seven weeks. Classes are held from 9:00am to 11:30am at the Gaston County Police Department. There is no fee to participate in the Academy. In December 2006, the Citizens Police Academy graduated its twenty-seventh class.

Several unit members assist with the **Commissioners' School of Excellence** held yearly at Belmont Abbey College. The Commissioners' School is a two-week residential experience for aspiring ninth graders to learn more about local government, civic organizations, and Gaston County in general. Our officers assist by acting as counselors, drivers, and chaperones.

Educational Services Unit



Fatal Consequences is a program designed to reduce teen drunk driving by changing attitudes and increasing awareness. The classroom portion of the program discusses hazards and penalties associated with drunk driving. The second part of the program gives students a practical look at how impaired vision affects driving. This is accomplished with the use of Fatal Vision (DWI simulation) goggles and a golf cart. While wearing the Fatal Vision goggles, students try to maneuver the golf cart through a course marked off with orange traffic cones. This provides students with a very real, but safe experience of how impaired sensory perception and bad driving are directly related.



The “**Saved By The Belt**” program started four years ago as a way to increase seatbelt usage among high school students. School Resource Officers promote seatbelt use in the schools using education, involvement, evaluation, and enforcement techniques. The educational component is accomplished through posters, lectures, and morning announcements. Each officer also conducts monthly traffic surveys. The surveys provide data to determine if extra enforcement measures need to be taken at the school to ensure teens are wearing their safety belts when behind the wheel of a car. In 2003, when this program began, the countywide rate of safety belt use was 74%. During the 2005-2006 school year the average rate of teen seatbelt use was 94%. The Highland School of Technology was the leader in seat belt use among the county’s nine high schools.



Silence Hurts is an on-going program designed to reduce school violence by encouraging students to speak out when they hear rumors of potential violence in school. The students may communicate anonymously through several means: the Crime Stoppers phone line, notes placed in drop boxes located in schools, and on-line using their school sponsored website. Through this program, students take the initiative to assist school officials prevent school violence before a tragedy occurs.

The **School Safety and Violence Education Program**, established several years ago, continues to serve as a resource for educators. This program provides training to school faculty in law enforcement related topics including the use of SRO’s, drug usage and recognition, bomb detection, violence prevention, and domestic violence awareness. In addition to providing useful information, this training also counts as educational credit toward the renewal of teaching certificates.



Employee Development Unit

The Employee Development Unit is responsible for preparing, conducting, and coordinating the training of new recruits as well as providing in-service and on-going training for existing employees. The NC Training and Standards Division mandates that every sworn law enforcement officer receive a minimum of 24-hours of in-service training each year. This year's mandated courses included: Legal Update; Methamphetamine Awareness; Juvenile Minority Sensitivity (Gang Awareness); Ethical Awareness; Law Enforcement Driver Training; Explosive Recognition and Bomb Training; and Firearms/Use of Force. The compliance tracking and reporting for this requirement are also responsibilities of the unit.

UNIT STATS

<u>Type of Training</u>	<u>No. of hours</u>
Roll-Call	458
Specialized	1,914
Advanced	2,577
Field Training	2,360
State In-Service	2,738
Dept. In-Service	1,867

2006 Highlights

- Beyond the state mandated courses, the department conducted additional in-service training, which included such topics as: Hazardous Materials Awareness; Blood borne Pathogens; Probation and Parole Informational Sessions; Property and Evidence Updates; Crime Analysis for Patrol Officers; Response to Nuclear Events; Response to Active Shooter; and Problem Solving Policing.



- The department also used its five training rooms to host training for its members. These sessions included specialized K9 training; Basic Crisis Negotiations; an H&K Armorers Course; New World Software Orientation; New Employee Orientation; a Commercial Motor Vehicle Criminal Interdiction Course; Law Enforcement Officers Killed and Assaulted (LEOKA) Analysis; and PRISM Firearm Simulator Training. The training rooms were also used for other department functions such as gang awareness planning sessions; Police Explorer monthly meetings; telecommunications certification sessions; a tactical paramedics course; Crime Stoppers; the North-State Law Enforcement Officers Association executive board quarterly meeting; a two-day Department of Justice live gang web cast; the departmental awards ceremony and countless other meetings.

- The Gaston County Police Department was one of only two agencies selected to participate in the filming of case scenarios for the up-coming 2007 in-service training video on law enforcement responses to special needs individuals. The Department was selected in part for its involvement and commitment to advocating solutions other than arrest and incarceration for special populations.



- We also participated in a Gang Awareness Conference with the Juvenile Crime Prevention Council. The training unit coordinated a two-day event at the Schiele Museum hosting area law enforcement and community leaders and planners. Featured speakers were FBI Gang Initiative Experts from across the country and a Boys and Girls Club speaker who discussed identifying gang members and resources for combating gangs. Participation for the event totaled approximately 300 attendees.

Recruitment & Selection



The Recruitment and Selection Unit reviewed 496 applications during 2006. The applications received were for vacant positions for police officer, police information processing specialist, animal control specialist, animal control aide, and telecommunicator. This year, a total of 25 applicants successfully completed the Department's hiring process. One (1) police information processing specialist, 17 telecommunicators, 5 police officers, and 2 animal control personnel were hired.

UNIT STATS

Year	Total # of Applicants	Total # of Persons Hired	Hiring Rate/Applicants
2002	455	24	5%
2003	336	21	6%
2004	316	22	7%
2005	394	21	5%
2006	496	25	5%

2006 Highlights

- The CitiCall Assessment Program continues to be the first step in the hiring process for telecommunications positions. This is the second year this testing procedure has been used. During 2006, 318 applicants were tested for telecommunicator positions. One change made in the testing process this year is that now applicants must complete 16 modules, including an initial reading comprehension block, within a two-hour time limit. Applicants must make a score of 80 or above to continue in the application process. Of the 318 applicants tested, 75 passed the test making this a very effective tool in screening telecommunicator applicants.
- This year, the Unit participated in four job fairs, sponsored by local colleges and universities. At these events, the Gaston County Police Department's recruitment CD was distributed to prospective applicants. This CD includes an overview of the Department's functions and philosophy.
- The Recruitment and Selection Unit continues to identify online job posting sites that provide free job listings, including such sites as: America's Job Bank, North Carolina Justice Academy, and Army Career and Alumni Program.
- The Recruitment and Selection Unit continues to update colleges and universities with current recruiting information, and is dedicated to recruiting and hiring qualified college graduates.
- In an effort to recruit and hire qualified minority applicants, the Unit identified 34 minority churches in Gaston County and mailed departmental recruitment posters and information sheets to these churches as well as 16 minority colleges within out state.

Accreditation



Law enforcement agencies can become internationally accredited through the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA). CALEA's accreditation program requires agencies to comply with the highest standards in four (4) primary areas: policy and procedures, administration, operational procedures, and support services. The benefit of accreditation is that each accredited agency operates under specific standardized guidelines. In order to maintain a department's accreditation status, CALEA professionals review standards every three years to ensure the department's on-going compliance. Constant evaluation of the department's policies, procedures, and operations is required to meet and exceed the existing standards.

The Gaston County Police Department received initial accreditation in 1991, becoming the 190th law enforcement agency internationally to receive accreditation. Since then, CALEA has re-accredited the department four times, most recently in 2005. The department is currently working on CALEA 5th edition standard revisions.

Victim/Witness Coordinator

The victim-witness coordinator provides assistance to victims and witnesses of all types of crimes and other traumatic incidents, and serves as the direct contact for all victims of domestic violence. Services offered through this Unit include emotional support, ensuring victims are informed of their rights, and helping victims find and obtain appropriate resources and referrals. In 2006, the Unit contacted over 160 victims either directly or through the mailing of domestic violence information packets.

Police Information Processing

The Gaston County Police Department is committed to being accessible to the public at all times; therefore, the Records Unit maintains a twenty-four hour operation at the Franklin Blvd. location. The Unit is available to provide information and services to the public as well as department personnel.

The main responsibility of the Records Unit is the maintenance, storage, and retrieval of police records. The Unit provides twenty-four hour access to the department's NCIC records and is also available to complete officer and other agency requests for checks of computerized criminal history's, Administrative Office of the Court records, Motor Vehicle records, and various other inquiries.

The Bessemer City substation still has as its primary function the data entry of pawn tickets. The staff continues to complete 'Pawner and Item' searches upon request and to monitor entries for possible matches to previously stolen property. The staff at the Bessemer City substation also provides assistance to visitors and officers by accessing the records software and NCIC/DCI as requested. This office is staffed between 6 a.m. and 6 p.m. daily.

UNIT STATS

	<u>2006</u>	<u>2005</u>
Phone Calls	80,162	70,518
Warrant Checks	3,324	2,854
Warrants Processed For Service	4,191	4,973
Computer Services Rendered	46,244	60,013
Pawn Ticket Entries	37,098	47,528
Visitors Greeted	8,450	N/A
Crime Stoppers Calls	559	N/A

2006 Highlights

- The New World 'Law Enforcement Records Management Software' (LERMS) was installed and went live department-wide in April 2006. This implementation was the biggest challenge of 2006 for the Records Unit, and the department as a whole. Specific impact on the Records Unit came from a new mobile reporting program and procedure for how officer documentation electronically merges with the system, as well as the transition to the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) crime reporting. Questions regarding the switch to NIBRS are still being addressed and are resulting in on-going changes.
- The N.C. State Bureau of Investigation completed a DCI audit in December 2006. This audit reviews servicing agreements; user certifications; terminal security; and accuracy and timeliness of DCI transactions. N.C. S.B.I. permits no more than a 10% non-compliance rate for auditing purposes. Due to the efforts of the entire Records Unit staff, the department was out of compliance by only .018 percent.

Communications

The 911 Communications Division is a multi-agency, multi-jurisdictional Dispatch Center that remains committed to providing the highest levels of reliable emergency services. We continue to aggressively seek to implement programs and upgrade equipment to further promote the safety and welfare of the residents of Gaston County as efficiently, economically and with the greatest degree of professionalism possible.

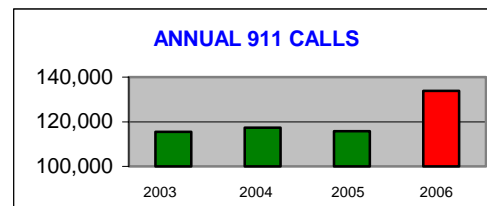
The major priority addressed in 2006 was to continue improving and upgrading existing technology and systems to raise the overall quality of services delivered. We also continue to address issues of employee recruitment and retention.

2006 - CALLS FOR SERVICE	
COUNTY POLICE	92,409
GASTONIA POLICE	143,967
LOCAL TOWNS	13,888
ANIMAL CONTROL	3,505
COUNTY FIRE DEPT	13,669
GASTONIA FIRE DEPT	12,937
GEMS	27,352
RESCUE SQUADS	33,583
OTHER TOWNS	1,859
MISC. CAD ENTRIES	58,099
TOTAL	401,268



UNIT STATS

- A total of 17,213 hours were devoted to training, with 3,841 hours (23% of total hours) dedicated to basic training of new-hires.
- National Incident Management (NIMS) training became a Federal mandate and a condition for receiving numerous grants and federal funds. Our agency is in full compliance with the NIMS standard.
- The Communications Center provided 836 incident histories in response to external requests for information. We also created 309 CD audio files of telephone and radio traffic. These requests required 590 hours of processing time.
- The Gaston County Communications Center received 133,846 911 emergency calls in 2006. This is a 15.5% increase from last year. Even with this significant increase, 90% of 911 answering times were rated within the “Good or Better” categories. This ever-increasing call volume poses a continuing challenge in light of our on-going struggle with staffing vacancies and employee turnover.



- A total of 677,469 telephone calls were handled by this agency. Total Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) entries for 2006 were 401,268.
- The types of 911 calls received has continued the trend away from conventional “wired” telephones toward cellular and now VoIP (or Internet) devices. Yet, these emerging technologies bring with them new issues for Communications Centers regarding how to reliably receive and process these new call sources.

911 CALL SOURCES	
WIRELINER PHONES	57,564
CELLULAR PHONES	76,030
VoIP SYSTEMS	252
TOTAL 911 CALLS	133,846

- The County operates its own paging system for notifications to Emergency First Responders and authorized Administrative personnel. A total of 137,110 pages were transmitted last year.

2006 Highlights

Communications

Current Project Update

- We are currently completing installation of the final components of the County’s 6-year Public Safety “radio refarming” project. This project has upgraded or replaced communications hardware and infrastructure to significantly improve the reliability of our communications.
- A new radio transmitter site was established which has helped alleviate chronic poor-reception for First Responders in the northwestern sections of the County, including Cherryville. Additional receiver sites are also currently under construction, greatly improving our overall radio reception of units calling the Communications Center from the Crowder’s Mountain and Southpoint areas.
- A significant effort continues to be devoted to maximizing the reliability and utility of the new CAD system that was installed as a component of the County’s Integrated Public Safety Information Management Platform purchased from New World Systems.



Technology

- The Communications Center replaced its telephone and radio message recording system with an industry-standard unit that will provide more reliable recordings as well as more versatile search and playback capabilities, making the retrieval and reporting process more accurate and efficient.
- Stand-alone VHF and UHF radio transceivers were installed in the Communications Center providing another layer of redundancy in the event we lose transmit or receive capability off our main systems. This allows us to maintain communications with field units until normal operations are restored.
- A new tower replaced the out-dated radio tower outside the Communications Center.

Communications Interoperability

- Gaston is the lead County in an eleven-county consortium that is constructing a Regional Radio System aimed at enhancing communications interoperability as part of a Federal Homeland Security initiative. To that end, this year three new communications towers were erected in Gaston County, with two directly funded by Homeland Security grants (Cherryville and South Point towers).
- These towers assist in establishing compatibility with other radio systems allowing Gaston units to directly communicate with emergency personnel from surrounding counties and at the State level. Through the installation of a Motorola MotoBridge device, we are able to patch together any combination of frequencies that emergency units in the 11-county region are operating on to enable direct, unit-to-unit communication. The towers also permit the County to discontinue leasing telephone lines and antenna space on commercial structures resulting in annual savings of about \$20,000.
- These projects were made possible through partnerships with the cities of Charlotte and Cherryville, the Gaston County Board of Education, and the South Point and Crowder’s Mountain Fire Departments.

Staffing

- This agency continues to address the problem confronting the Emergency 911 Telecommunications field in general, in trying to attract and retain qualified and successful employment candidates. We continue to use the CritiCall pre-employment abilities-testing software to assist in screening out less-qualified candidates early in the hiring process. This helps reduce the high percentage of new-hires that are rejected within a year, thus saving the County significant training and salary expense, as well as reducing the percentage of newly hired personnel versus veteran telecommunicators.

Animal Control

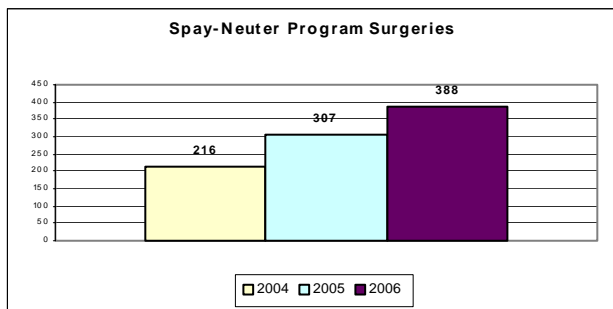
This was another exciting year at Animal Control, filled with new and continuing initiatives aimed at increasing pet placement, enhancing and expanding our relationships with animal humane/rescue groups, and continuing efforts for the Division's operations to be less reliant on County tax dollars.

The Animal Control section is pleased to identify and share some of our 2006 accomplishments. It is certainly believed our combined efforts in realizing these accomplishments further support our mission to provide animal-related services, which reflect our professionalism and concern for public health and the legal treatment of animals.

2006 Highlights

Spay-Neuter Program

While animal placement is at an all time high, sadly, animal impoundment and the unfortunate necessity of animal euthanasia remains unacceptably high due to Gaston County's pet overpopulation. Animal Control efforts continue to be geared towards the education of pet owners not only in legal responsibilities, but also the vital need to help reduce the number of unwanted animals being born in our community by having pets spayed or neutered.



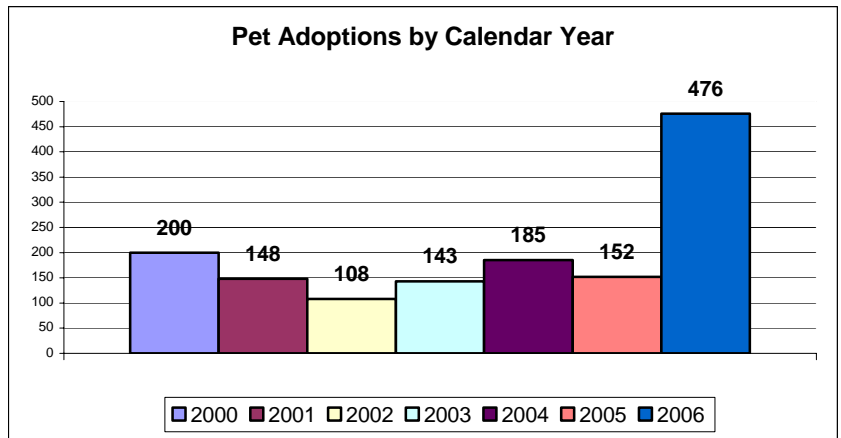
UNIT STATS

- Over the last five years, Animal Control averaged 147 animal adoptions per year. Yet in 2006, we adopted 476 pets, representing over a 223% increase in adopted pets! Perhaps even more dramatic was a 415% increase in kitten adoptions alone; 20 kittens adopted in 2005...103 kittens adopted in 2006.
- Initiated in March 2006, the number of animal rescue claims is dramatic, as evidenced by the overall claim figures. With 499 total humane/rescue group animal claims, this figure even surpasses our 476 "traditional" adoptions, and combined, the 975 animal placements is unprecedented.
- County pet owners were again encouraged to take advantage of our Low-Cost Spay-Neuter Program and in 2006, participating veterinarians performed 388 animal surgeries. This represents a 26% increase over the 307 surgeries performed in 2005. This figure continues our 3-year trend of increased participation in the Spay-Neuter Program since its inception in 2004.
- Animal Control continues to become more self-sufficient and, in turn, less reliant on County tax dollars. Increases in animal license and permit fees were included in the latest Gaston County Fee Schedule. Thus, as expected, license revenue increased from \$365,186 in 2005 to \$489,266 in 2006. Moreover, Animal Control saw its total collected revenue grow to \$715,895 in 2006, a 44% increase over last year. This figure constitutes 65% of the division's FY05-06 actual operating expenses, whereas last year's total revenue figure represented only 46% of actual expenses for that fiscal year.

2006 Highlights

Adoptions

In an effort to increase the number of pets adopted and further enhance our commitment to a community-wide approach to animal control and placement; significant modifications were made to animal shelter adoption practices in 2006. After careful consideration among representatives of the County Attorney’s office, our local Health Department, various animal humane/rescue organizations and Animal Control, our animal shelter adoption protocol was revised, eliminating the previous requirement of a valid rabies vaccination for adoption consideration. This revision essentially allows more animals to be made available for adoption. The resulting public response and subsequent adoption numbers have been nothing short of incredible.

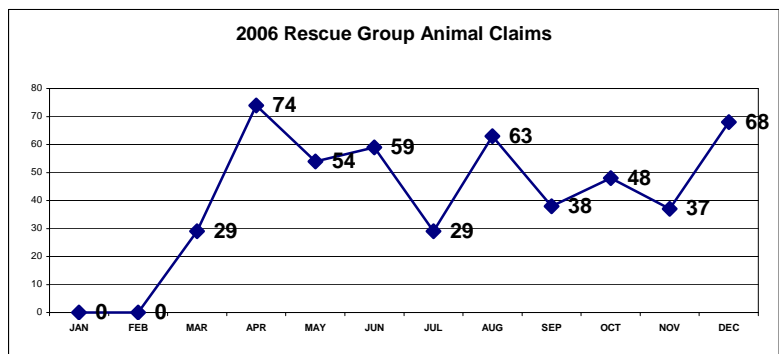


Citizens are visiting Animal Control to look for pets to adopt, children are playing and interacting with prospective pets, and inquiries about lost/found/available pets are growing in unparalleled numbers. Clearly, the adoption revisions have been well received by our community, with an incredible increase in the number of animals being adopted as the obvious result.

Rescue Group Animal Claims

In addition to the availability of more animals for adoption, humane groups and animal welfare organizations are now encouraged to “claim” sheltered animals not selected for adoption. Long recognized as a vital resource in the placement of unwanted animals, volunteer representatives from these groups and Animal Control personnel work together as never before, sharing information about available animals through various individual, group and internet networks, as well as expanding pet availability awareness opportunities through more traditional avenues of print and broadcast media.

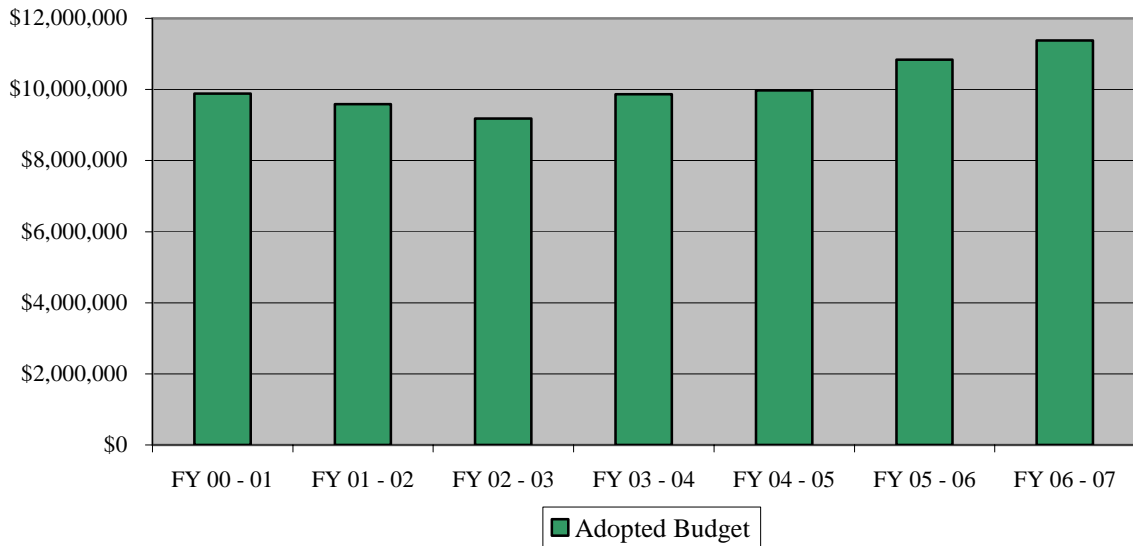
Most importantly, upon confirmation of their tax-free agency status and signing of a waiver of responsibility, animal humane and rescue group representatives may now enter into an agreement with Animal Control, whereby the group “claims” an animal not selected for adoption, agreeing to perform any necessary veterinary care and having the animal spayed or neutered. Outside of our standard adoption-medical contract, these animals are made available to qualified groups at a nominal cost or, with higher volume groups, an annual permit may be purchased for unlimited animal claims at no additional cost.



Budget

YEAR	ADOPTED BUDGET
FY 2006 – 2007	\$11,380,474
FY 2005 – 2006	\$10,842,973
FY 2004 – 2005	\$9,974,704
FY 2003 – 2004	\$9,868,183
FY 2002 – 2003	\$9,186,598
FY 2001 – 2002	\$9,584,531
FY 2000 – 2001	\$9,887,523

Adopted Budget



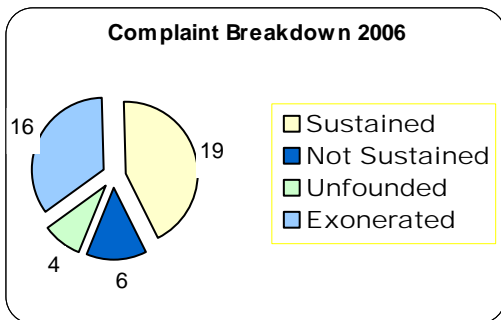
Professional Standards

UNIT STATS

In 2006, the Unit investigated a total of 45 complaints involving 10 non-sworn employees and 35 sworn employees.

Non-Sworn Employees: **Sustained-9**
 Not Sustained- 0
 Unfounded-0
 Exonerated-1

Sworn Employees: **Sustained-10**
 Not Sustained-6
 Unfounded-4
 Exonerated-15



Complaints	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Improper Actions	12	14	12	38	25
Violation of Policy	11	6	17	3	12
Demeanor	11	9	13	7	4
Criminal Misconduct	2	0	0	1	0
Excessive Force	6	4	5	1	4
Civil Rights Breach	0	1	0	0	0
Total	42	34	47	50	45

The employees of the Gaston County Police Department provide direct public safety services to many individuals every day. However, some citizens have questions, concerns, or complaints about the Department or the conduct of individual employees. The Department's Professional Standards Unit conducts objective investigations of complaints made against any Police, Animal Control, or Telecommunications employee.

As each complaint is investigated, a determination is made as to whether there is sufficient evidence to sustain the allegation and take disciplinary action. If there is insufficient evidence to sustain the allegation, the disposition of the complaint is then categorized based on the level of mitigating evidence. The following is a list of possible dispositions of employee complaints:

- **Sustained:** The investigation disclosed sufficient evidence to prove the allegation clearly.
- **Not Sustained:** The investigation fails to discover sufficient evidence to clearly prove or disprove the allegation made against the employee.
- **Unfounded:** The investigation indicates that the alleged act or omission complained of did not occur or did not involve police personnel.
- **Exonerated:** The investigation indicates that the act or omission complained of did occur but was justified, lawful, and/or proper.

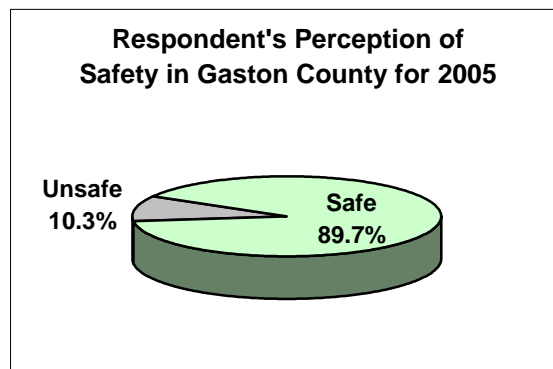
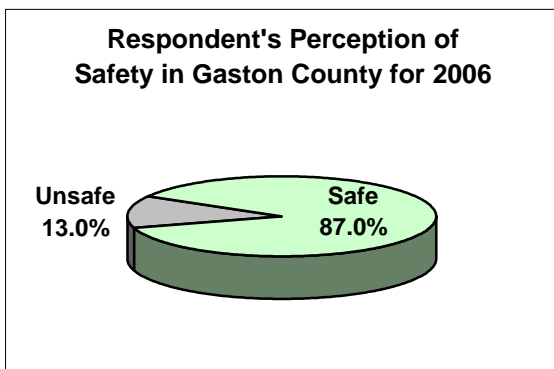
The Gaston County Police Department strives for continuous improvement in the level of service we provide to our citizens. The Professional Standards Unit meticulously investigates all complaints and views each one as an opportunity to improve our service and communicate more effectively. Moreover, information gathered through the complaint process assists the Department in the reduction of future complaints.

Community Feedback Survey

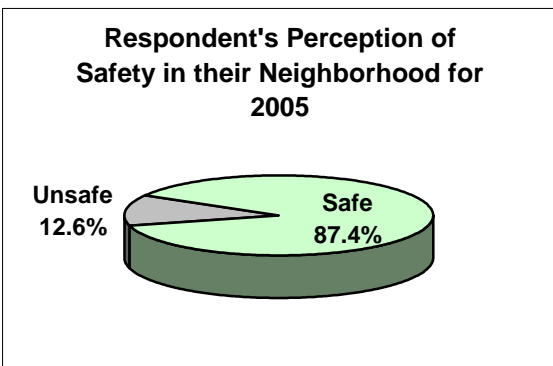
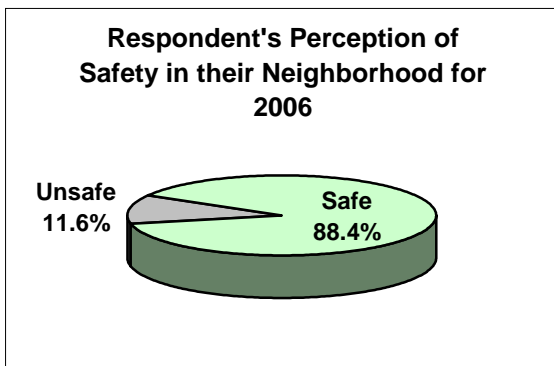
The Gaston County Police Department contacted over 1,000 individuals who had called for police services in 2006 to participate in this year's community feedback survey.

The survey results indicate that of the individuals contacted, 44.5% stated they had been victims of crime in Gaston County. Yet, 87% indicated that they felt safe in the County with most responders perceiving the overall County crime rate as being stable. Eighty-one percent (81%) of the survey takers had met with a County Police Officer at least once during the year. These encounters were for reporting a crime 48.6% of the time; seeking general assistance 44.6% of the time, and all other police encounters making up the remaining 6.8%.

Gaston County residents reported a declining sense of safety within the County. This year's survey results show that 87% of citizens feel safe in the County compared with 89.7% reported last year.

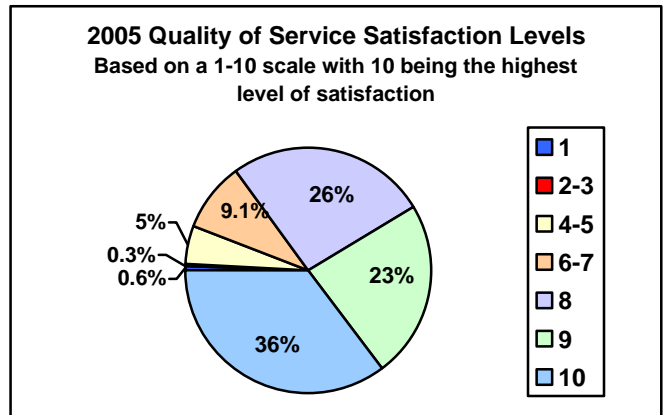
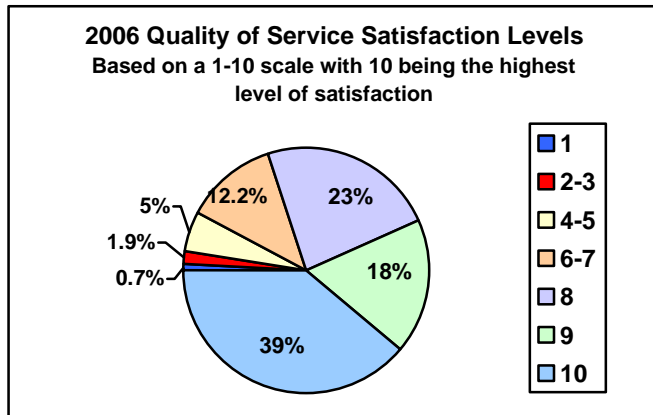


Yet, in neighborhoods, Gaston County citizens reported a growing sense of safety in 2006. The perception of neighborhood safety rose slightly from 87.4% last year to 88.4% this year.



Community Feedback Survey

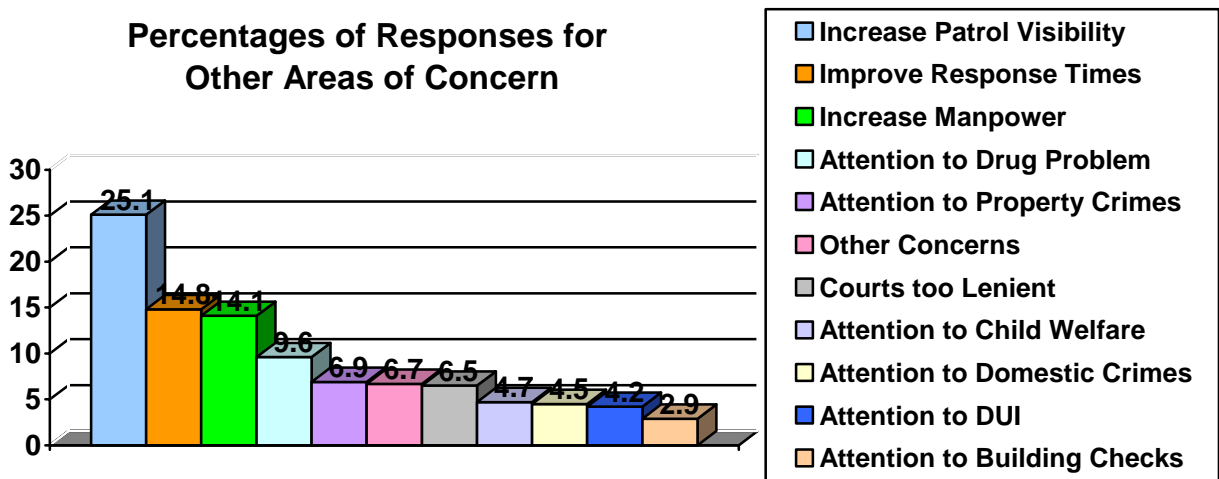
The feedback from the survey also reveals high levels of satisfaction with the quality of service provided by County Police Officers. Survey takers were asked to rank their level of satisfaction with quality of service on a scale from 1 to 10, with 10 being the highest level of satisfaction. The charts below indicate the results provided this year as compared with last year's rankings:



The level of satisfaction with the quality of service provided by the Police Department remained high with 80% of the 2006 survey takers rating their satisfaction level at an 8 or higher.

Finally, survey takers were asked if they had other comments or concerns with the Police Department specifically or with the criminal justice system. The following is a list of the top five responses, which account for 71% of all responses:

1. 25.1% said that the police should increase their patrol visibility;
2. 14.8% thought police response times needed to improve;
3. 14.1% stated that the police department needs more manpower;
4. 9.6% felt the police needed to pay more attention to drug problems; and
5. 6.9% thought police needed to pay more attention to property crimes.



Gaston County Police Department

420 W. Franklin Blvd.

P.O. Box 1578

Gastonia, North Carolina 28053-1578

Website: www.co.gaston.nc.us/gastonpd

General Information: (704) 866-3320

