

# Meeker County Sheriff's Office

## 2022 Activity Report



### Mission Statement

*To provide high-quality professional services with honor, integrity, and courage. These services shall preserve the peace and safeguard the lives and property of all Meeker County residents through a proactive partnership with the community and our public safety partners.*

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# Sheriff Preface



The 2022 year-end report is part of a continued effort to provide information to the public about your Meeker County Sheriff's Office. The Sheriff's Office saw a call for service increase of 14.6% from 2021. The calls where we saw the biggest increases were Mental Health, Child Abuse, Drug Crimes, Threats, Thefts, Vandalism and Domestic Assault calls. We did see a decrease in Burglary, Criminal Sexual Conduct, and Fraud calls. You will find all the statistical information relating to calls for service in this report.

With the continued increase in Mental Health related calls, we have been looking for innovative ways to properly and more effectively handle these calls. In 2022 the Sheriff's Office enhanced our Public Safety Community Paramedic program by hiring a full-time paramedic to improve our response to mental health and medical calls in the county. We previously contracted this position for one day a week. In addition to this program we remain committed to working with our partners at Meeker County Social Services and Woodland Centers to better serve the needs of those we encounter who are in a mental health crisis.

The most unique and challenging issue facing the Sheriff's Office in 2022 was staffing which is compounded when you look at the increased call load. The staffing shortages and lack of applicants has forced us to look at unique staffing solutions. The staff at the Meeker County Sheriff's Office has stepped up to ensure we serve the people of this county to the best of our ability. I am grateful and appreciative of all the men and women of this office who have worked diligently, day in and day out, to put their best forward to ensure our office is the best it can be. We have not waived from our mission statement and work hard to provide high-quality professional services with honor, integrity, and courage. I can't thank the staff enough for their hard work and professionalism!

I would also like to thank the people of this county, personally and on behalf of this office, for your support. It is your support and trust in this office that allows us to be efficient and responsive to our community. We have slowly returned to the prominent

community engagement effort we had before the pandemic. These partnerships and opportunities are invaluable on many levels. It allows us to show the public who we are and allows us to earn your trust. Building that trust and having that open communication is what we need to best service this county.

I hope you find this report informative and that it gives you insight on the operations of the Meeker County Sheriff's Office. As we look to 2023, we will continue to make recruitment and retention of staff a priority while maintaining our high standard of public service. With the pandemic in our rearview mirror we look forward to many more community engagement opportunities and seeing you throughout the year.

Respectfully,



Brian Cruze  
Meeker County Sheriff

## Meeker County Sheriff's Office

326 N Ramsey Avenue  
Litchfield, MN 55355

Dispatch	320-693-5400
Toll-Free	866-333-3366
Jail	320-693-5415
Records	320-639-5414
Confidential Tip Line	320-693-5411
Watkins Station Office	320-764-6792

### Website and Social Media

Website: <http://www.co.meeker.mn.us/217/Sheriff>



Twitter [@MeekerCoSheriff](https://twitter.com/MeekerCoSheriff)  
Facebook at [Office of the Meeker County Sheriff](https://www.facebook.com/OfficeoftheMeekerCountySheriff)



## Dispatching Services



The Meeker County Sheriff's Office Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) is responsible for handling all emergency and non-emergency calls for all agencies in Meeker County. The dispatcher is then responsible for assigning and dispatching the appropriate emergency responders to the reported incident.

The Meeker County PSAP received 6,703 911 calls in 2022 and received 20,531 administrative calls in 2022. A total of 27,234 calls were fielded in the Meeker County PSAP in 2022. This represents a slight increase from 2021. This is an average of 75 calls per day and does not include outbound calls or 911 rebid calls. A rebid is a term used when we attempt to get a better location on a cellular 911 call.

While the actual number of calls into the PSAP was up slightly, the number of calls that generated a Call For Service (CFS) went up 7.6% from 15,573 to 16,761 calls in 2022 for all agencies. The Meeker County Sheriff's Office calls for service for 2022 were 8,693 which represents a 14.6% increase in CFS from 2021.

In 2021 the Meeker County PSAP brought the text-to-911 answering point in-house. We provided our dispatchers with the equipment and software necessary to handle the texts ourselves. Before 2021 Meeker County was part of a regional approach to answering text-to-911 calls.

With the last installation of 911 software in 2017, we look towards a software upgrade in 2023 so we can continue our transition to Next Generation (NG) 911. As NG911 moves forward our goal is to improve our ability to manage, locate and transfer calls better to enhance public safety. It will also provide opportunities to utilize technology and receive on-scene pictures and videos that can be provided to responding emergency units.



# TEXT-TO-911

CALL if you can

Text if you **CAN'T**

## ABOUT TEXT-TO-911

- Text-to-911 is now available throughout Minnesota. The service was deployed in December 2017.
- Text-to-911 can be the first contact option for individuals who are deaf, deafblind, hard of hearing or those with speech impairments.
- Text-to-911 should only be used when a person can't safely make a voice call.

### Examples:

- When someone must stay quiet to remain safe.
- If peer pressure is strong.
- Text-to-911 is a discreet way to report domestic violence, home invasions, human trafficking, and suicidal individuals.

## HOW TO TEXT 911

1. Enter the numbers 911 in the "To" field.
2. Text your exact location and type of emergency.
3. Send the message.
4. Promptly answer questions and follow instructions.

**TIPS:** Use simple words. Do not use abbreviations, emoji's, pictures or slang (BRB, IDK, THX, 2day and BTW). Do not text and drive!

Texting 911 with a false report is a crime. If you accidentally send a text to 911, send another text, or call 911 to let the dispatcher know that there is no emergency.

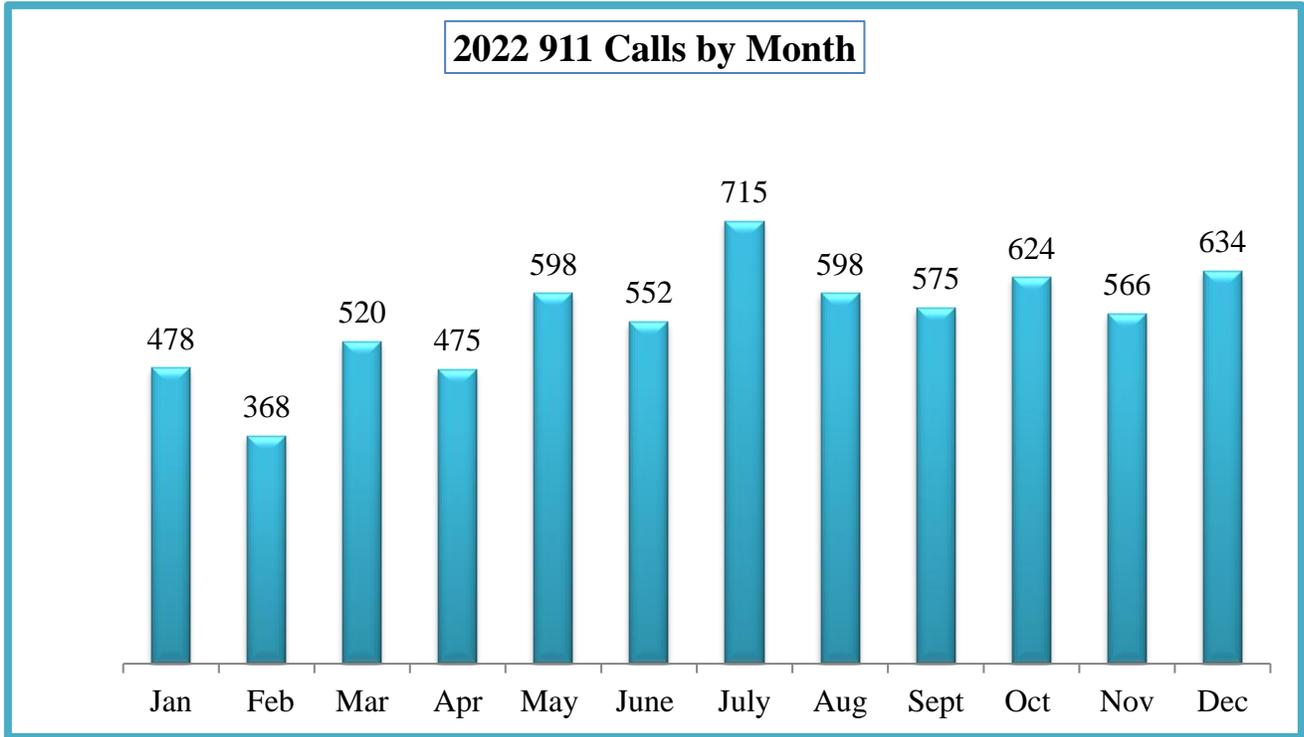
## DID YOU KNOW?

Emergency response may be lengthened due to the time it takes for a text to 911 to be typed and sent. Delivery speed is not guaranteed.

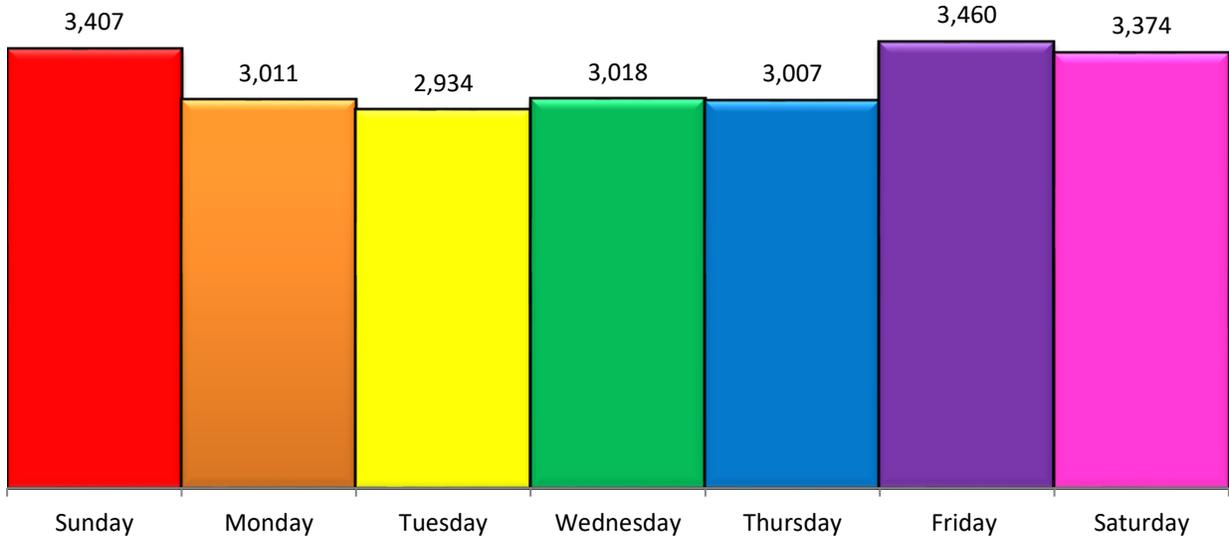
- Dispatchers prefer calls so they can get cues from background noise and voice inflections.
- If you text to 911, dispatchers will ask if they can call you.
- Location is not as accurate with text as it is with a call. Be sure to text your exact address.
- A text or data plan is required to use Text-to-911.
- Texts to 911 will get a bounce back message if you are roaming.
- Texts to 911 have a 160 character limit, can get out of order, or may not be received.
- There is no language translation service for texts to 911.



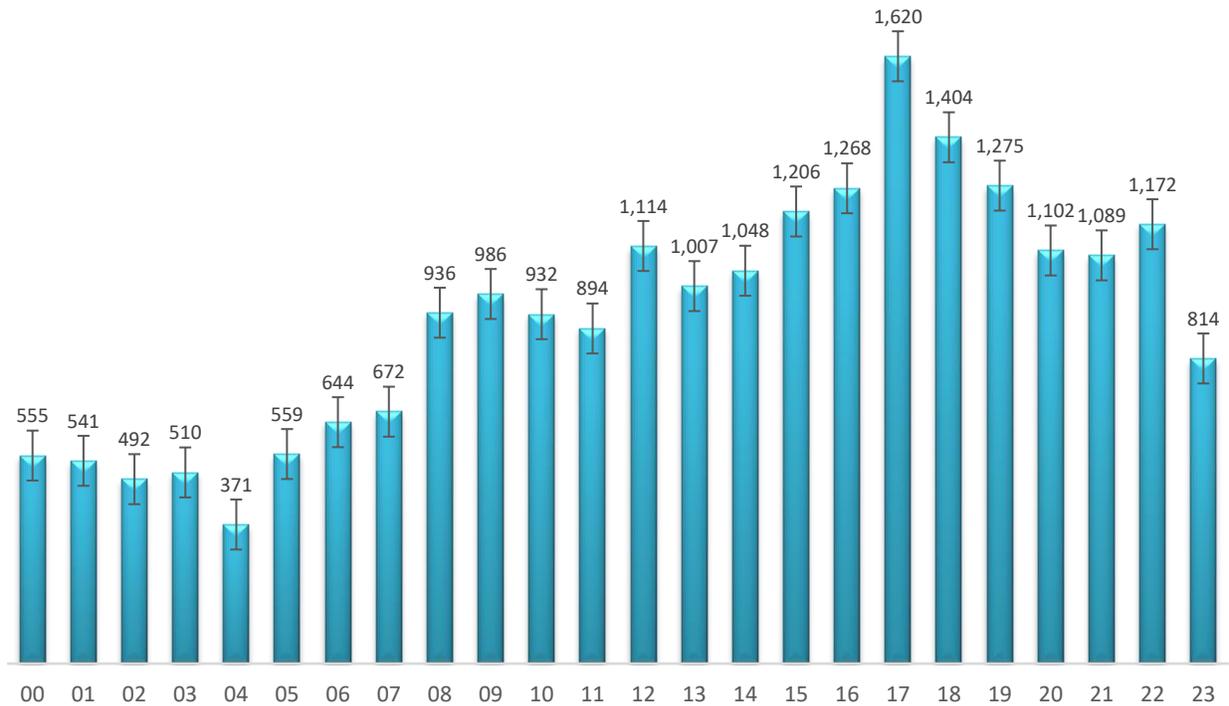
**2022 - 911 calls for Meeker County: 6,703**



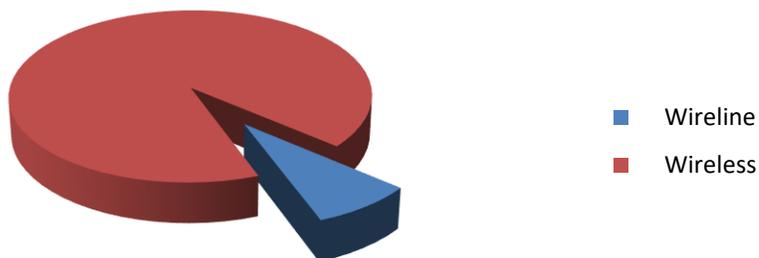
## 911 Call Volume by Day of Week Report Period 1/1/22 - 12/31/22



## 911 Call Volume by Hour of Day Report Period 1/1/22- 12/31/22



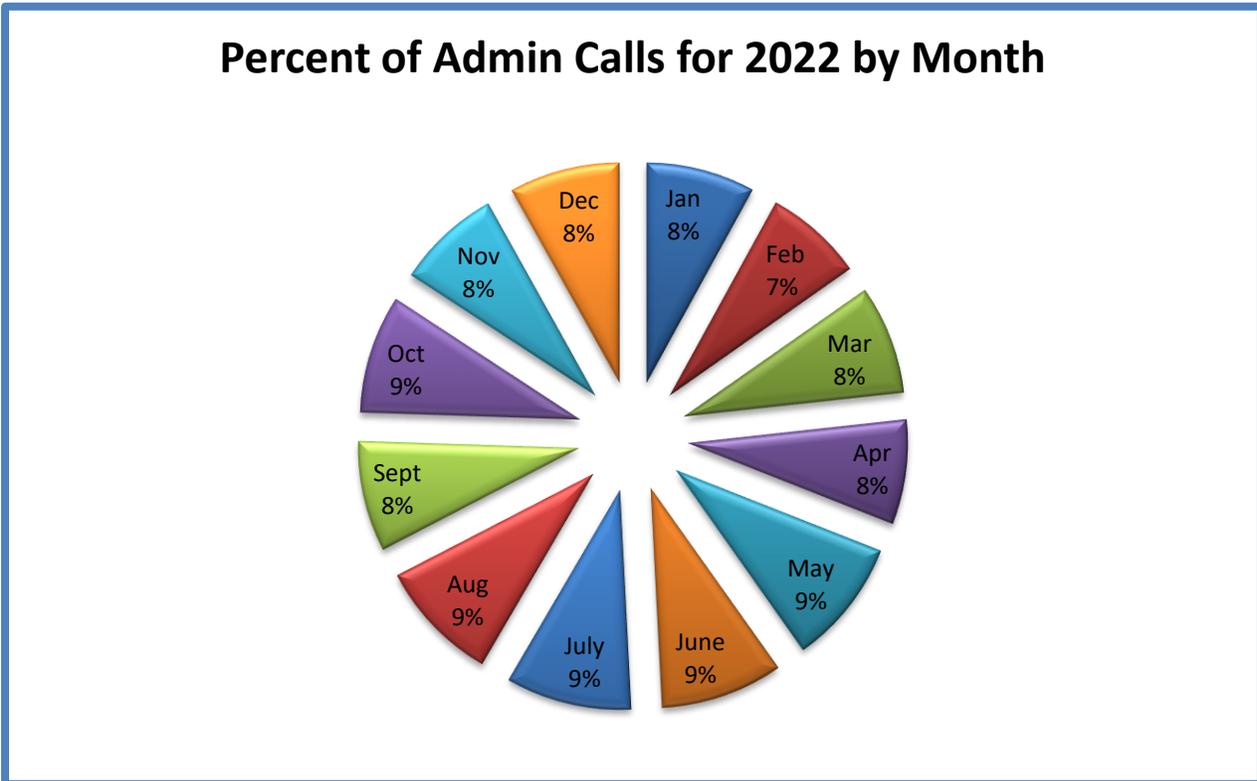
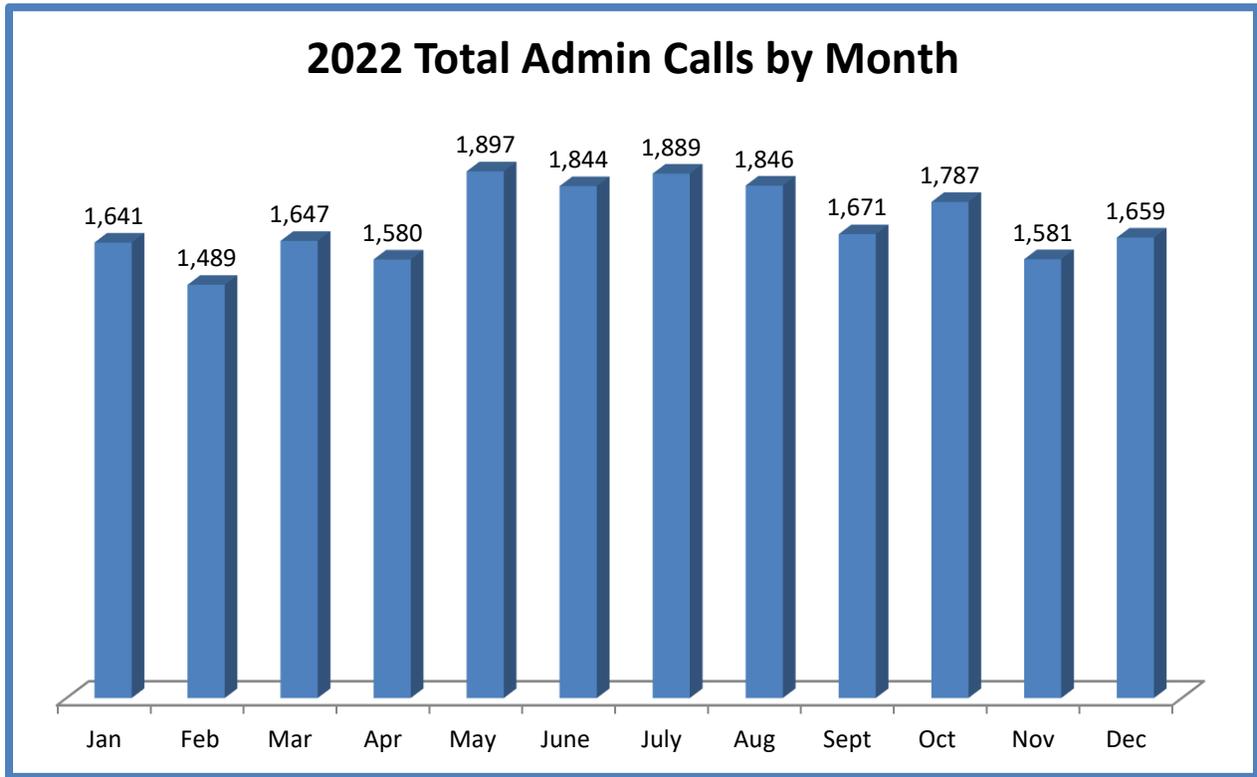
### 911 Calls by Cell Phone/Land Line Report Period 1/1/22 - 12/31/22



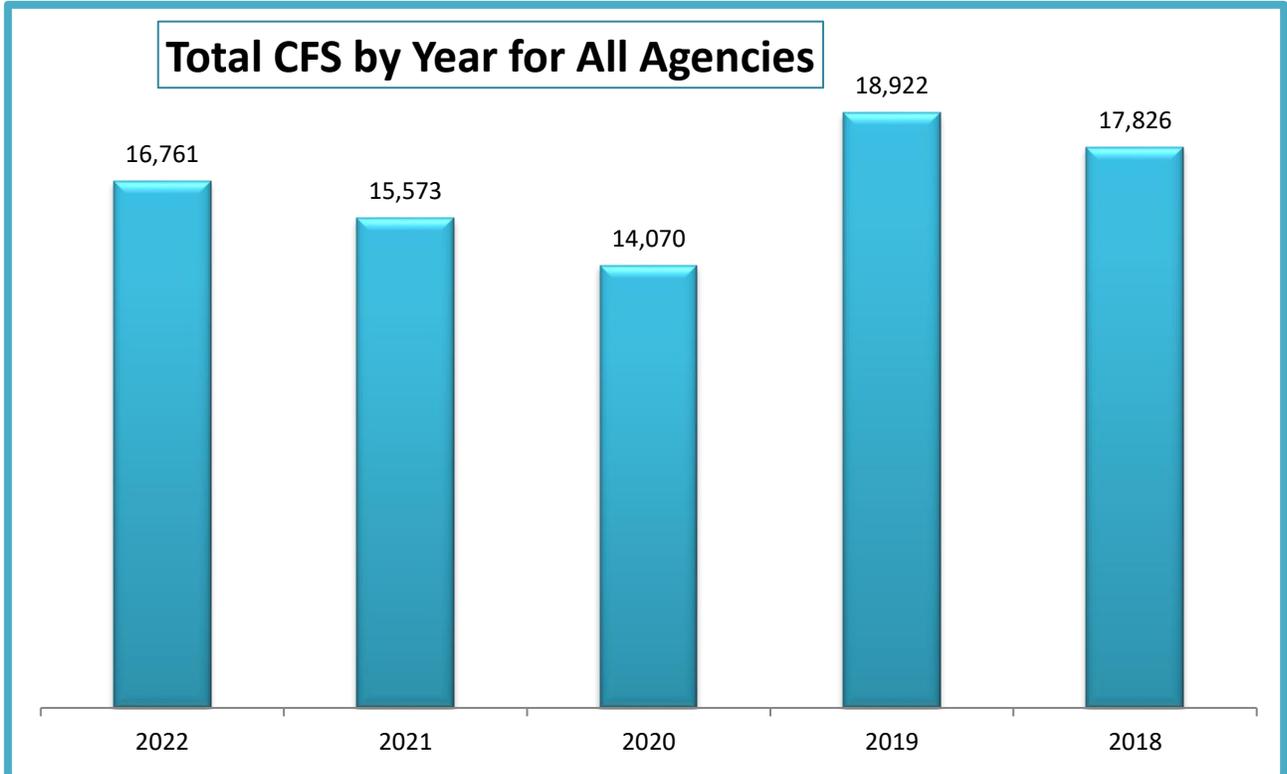
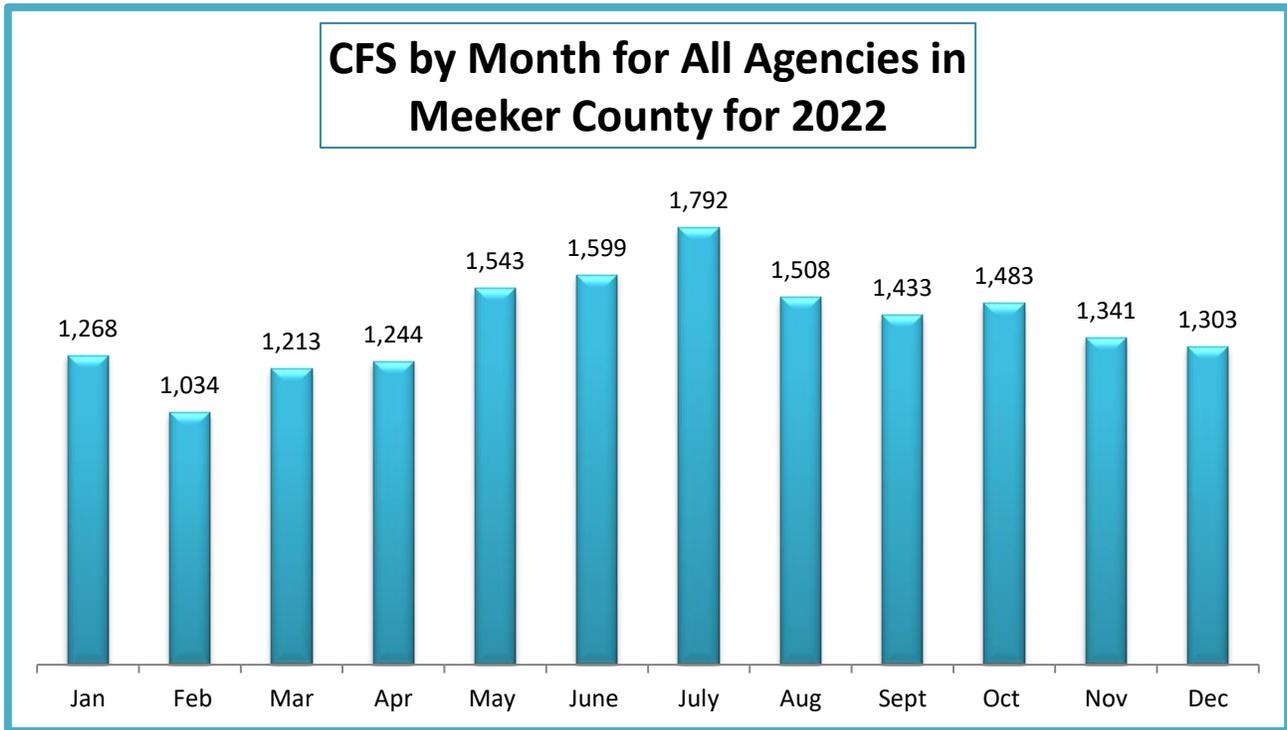
Type	Total	Percentage
■ Wireline	546	8.15
■ Wireless	6157	91.85
<b>Total:</b>	<b>6703</b>	<b>100%</b>

When we receive a cellular 911 call, we are set up to receive identifying information, including locations, with those calls. There are times when we don't initially receive all of that information so we "re-bid" the call in an effort to get this information from the cellular provider. In 2022 our dispatch center re-bid 15,508 911 wireless calls.

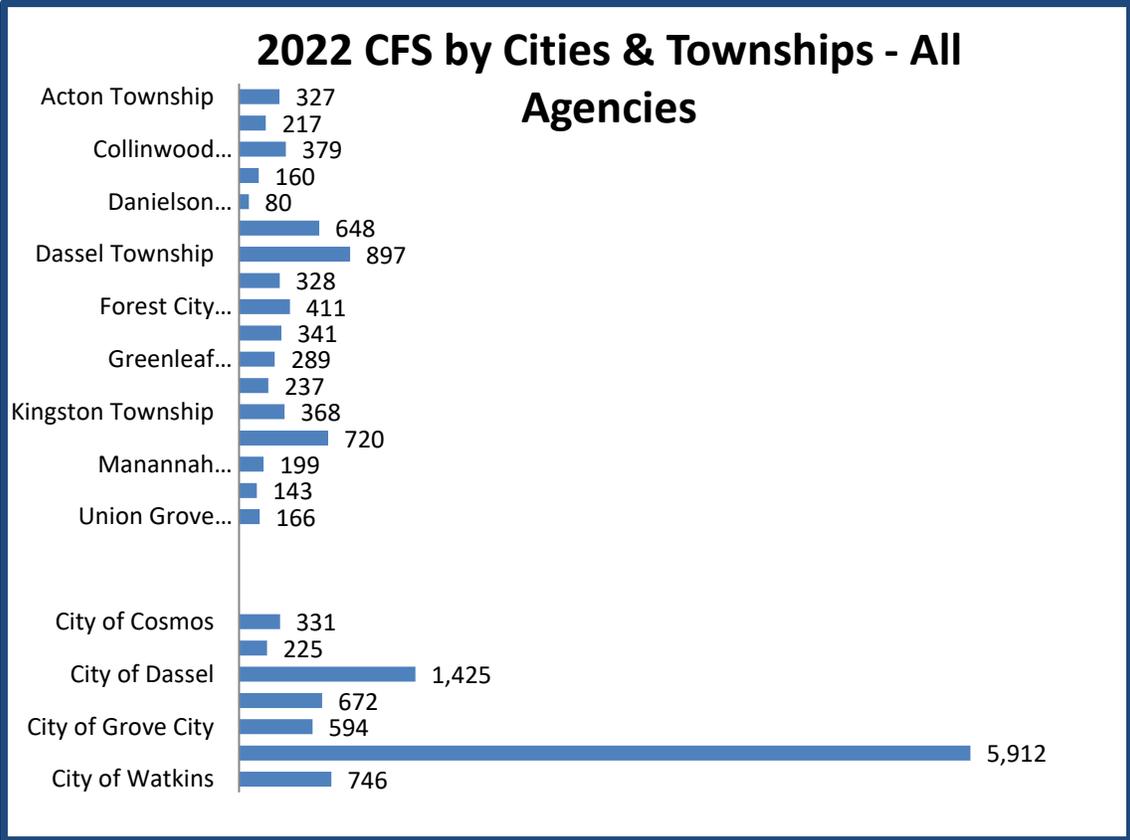
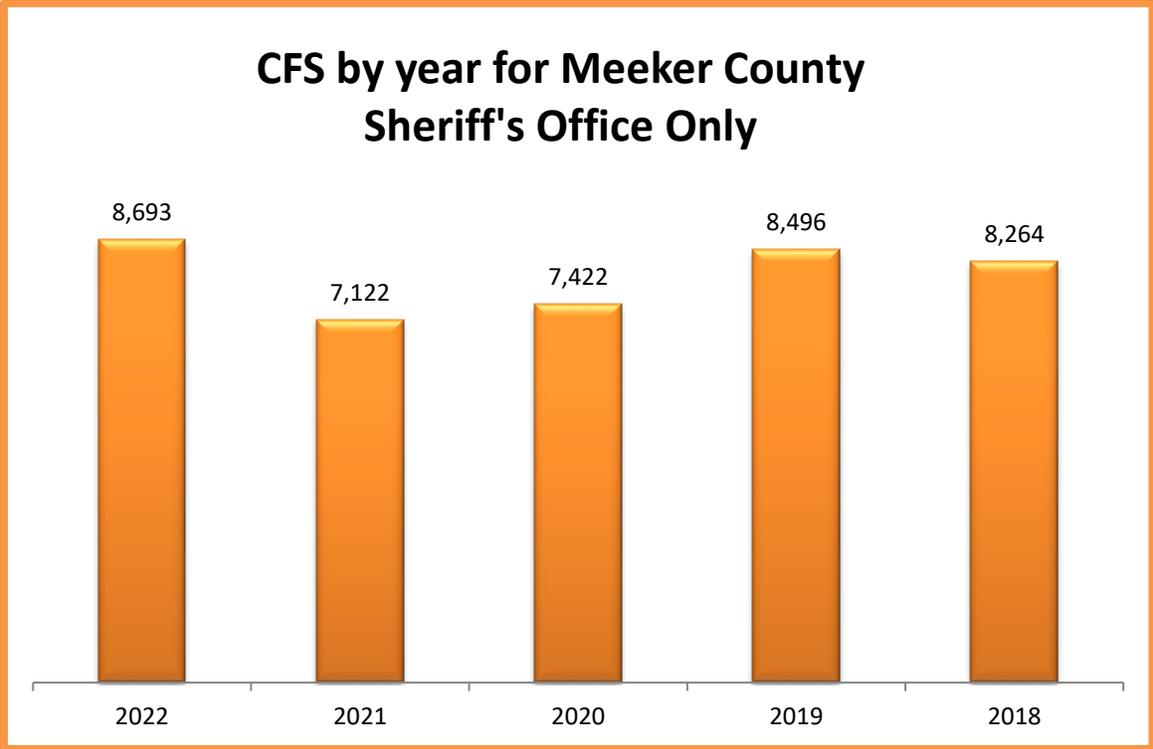
**2022 Total Administrative calls for Meeker County: 20,531**



**2022 Total Calls for Service (CFS) for All Agencies in Meeker County: 16,761**



**2022 Total Calls for Service for Meeker County Sheriff’s Office only: 8,693**

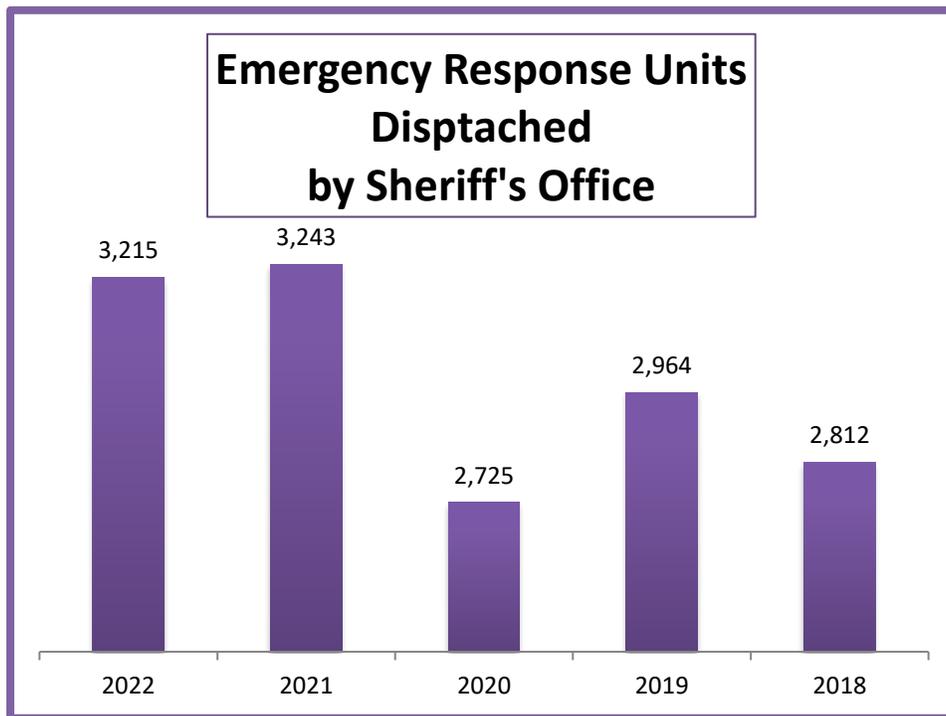




**Emergency Response Units Dispatched**  
**by Meeker County**  
**Sheriff's Office Dispatch Center**



Agency	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018
Cosmos Ambulance	81	68	58	75	75
Cosmos Fire & Rescue	36	24	16	28	31
Dassel Fire & Rescue	399	352	291	315	312
Eden Valley Fire	39	38	44	40	41
Eden Valley Rescue	123	168	124	120	110
Grove City Fire Department	38	25	29	24	79
Grove City Rescue	84	77	62	72	79
Litchfield Fire Department	124	114	124	115	118
Litchfield Rescue	429	692	477	472	455
Mayo Ambulance	1,213	1,152	998	1,103	1,042
Watkins Fire Department	58	33	31	24	27
Watkins Rescue & Ambulance	591	500	471	576	443
<b>Total:</b>	<b>3,215</b>	<b>3,243</b>	<b>2,725</b>	<b>2,964</b>	<b>2,812</b>





CodeRed is a free community notification system implemented by the Meeker County Sheriff's Office. The system is used to notify you of emergency and non-emergency events that could impact your safety. These notifications can go to landlines, cell phones, text messages, and email. Code Red is also available through a mobile app on your smartphone. To sign up for this free service go to our website and click on the CodeRed banner: [www.co.meeker.mn.us/217/Sheriff](http://www.co.meeker.mn.us/217/Sheriff)

## **Patrol Services**

Meeker County Deputies patrol the county, respond to medical emergencies, vehicle crashes, respond to mental health calls, serve civil process papers, diffuse civil disputes, enforce criminal and traffic laws, respond to Calls for Service (CFS), and initiate criminal investigations.

Two of the leadership direction statements given to deputies to follow while out on patrol are 1) “Meeker County Sheriff’s Office personnel will work towards improved quality of life for all residents through pro-active patrols with an emphasis on investigations directed toward drunk driving and illegal drug activity.” 2) “Meeker County Sheriff’s Office personnel will work towards improved community relationships through pro-active community interactions (i.e. community events, presentations, training, etc.).” The high expectations of these directives will result in a more professional patrol unit that keeps public safety as a top priority.

With the updated records software, we are able to get more detailed reports on specific calls. This provides a more comprehensive look at activity and allows a more focused approach to dealing with certain issues and/or crimes.

The 2022 total activity for Meeker County Sheriff's Office Deputies is as follows:

Criminal Call for Service	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018
Abuse/Neglect/Maltreatment	7	9	10	0	0
Abuse/Neglect/Maltreatment-Child	184	156	119	193	225
Arson	0	0	2	0	0
Assault	14	21	16	112	60
Domestic Assault	111	79	100		
Burglary	29	39	25	45	38
Criminal Sexual Conduct	26	33	28	2	12
Damage to Property	54	61	73	65	61
Damage to Property -Mailbox	17	10	22	15	18
Domestic Abuse No Contact Order (DANCO) Violation	18	14	13	14	7
Drug Crimes (including drug paraphernalia)	61	44	63	33	43
Forgery	2	2	0	3	5
Fraud	18	30	24	6	3
Harassment	64	62	43	62	51
Harassment Restraining Order (HRO) Violation	12	6	4	8	8
Homicide	0	1	0	0	0
Kidnapping/False Imprisonment	0	0	0	0	0
Order for Protection (OFP) Violations	12	9	12	18	14
Ordinance Violations	61	58	62	68	79
Pursuit - Vehicle on Foot	12	10	12	4	5
Robbery	1	0	0	1	1
Search Warrants Executed	21	1	6	8	12
Theft/Stolen Property	145	109	110	104	139
Threats	50	30	40	30	33
Trespass	44	38	32	25	27
Vandalism	27	1	5	0	0
Vehicle Thefts	14	11	29	17	22
Warrant Arrests	119	73	69	0	0
Weapon Violations	4	1	1	6	10

\*\*Prior to 2021 all assaults were counted in one category. Beginning in 2021, domestic assaults were given their own statistical category.

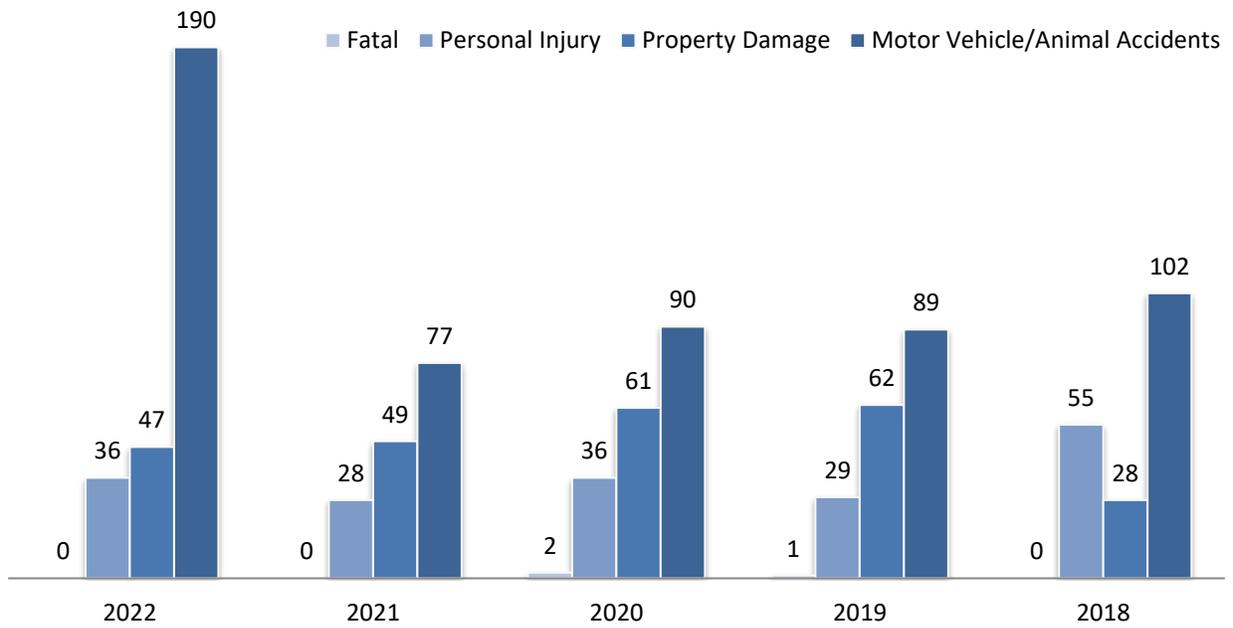
Other Calls for Service	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018
9-1-1 Hang Ups/Misdial	226	142	262	115	89
Alarm	233	191	194	156	175
Animal Complaints-Dog	196	186	155	182	229
Animal Complaints- All Other	152	163	146	97	95
Assist Other Agencies	159	157	199	577	534
Civil Complaints	241	195	213	241	188
Deer Possession Tags Issued	26	23	42	38	35
Disturbance/Disorderly	83	73	99	37	52
Emotionally Disturbed Person	114	57	53	1	1
Fire	93	100	89	78	109
Juvenile Trouble	82	35	75	27	58
Medicals	456	148	196	256	246
Noise Complaints	27	30	33	43	46
Nuisance	10	6	12	12	12
Public Assists	438	388	288	262	297
Runaways	26	7	19	12	16
Scams	67	150	112	144	123
Shooting Complaint	15	22	27	17	22
Suicidal Individual	30	16	46	0	0
Suspicious Activity	332	298	370	292	315
Vacation Checks	17	11	12	24	36
Vehicle Unlocks	46	61	61	69	75
Vulnerable Adult	74	43	36	47	79
Welfare Check	340	251	198	177	151

## Meeker County Sheriff's Office Traffic Enforcement

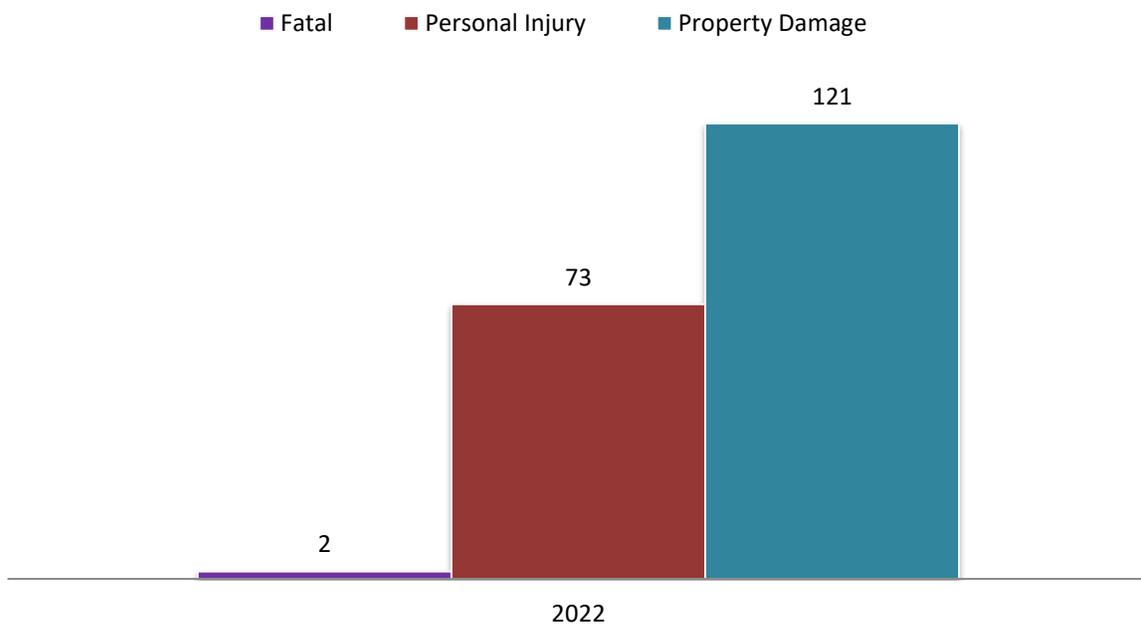
Traffic Violations	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018
Distracted Driving/Hands-Free Violations	6	10	9		
Driver's License Violations	67	54	51	35	26
DUI	55	78	62	39	29
Drugs/Drug Paraphernalia	15	14	18		
Motor Vehicle Registration	24	18	17		
Open Bottle	3	7	6	1	1
Parking Violations	19	13	3	0	2
Reckless/Careless Driving	6	10	17	7	4
School Bus Violations	8	3	4	3	3
Seat Belt Violations	2	5	6	16	22
Speed	202	264	256	208	146
Stop Sign Violations/Yield Violations	4	15	15	5	14
Under 21 Alcohol Consumption	9	20	16	1	2
Vehicle Registration Violations	3	7	7	3	21
All other citations	287	271	219	213	138
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>710</b>	<b>789</b>	<b>706</b>	<b>531</b>	<b>408</b>

Other Traffic-Related Calls	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018
Traffic Stops	2737	2235	2253	2685	2457
Abandoned Vehicles on Roadway	44	53	71	144	139
Driving Complaints	238	227	210	248	311
Motorist Assist	143	82	102	105	154
Traffic Hazards	147	88	86	98	74
Vehicle Off Roadway	92	59	63	105	65

## 2022 Meeker County Sheriff's Office Reported Traffic Accidents



## 2022 Total Traffic Accidents for All Agencies in Meeker County



## **Meeker County Contract Deputies**

The Meeker County Sheriff's Office contracts with Dassel, Grove City, and Watkins for full-time policing services, and Cosmos for part-time policing services. The 2022 total activity for each contract city is as follows:

Contract Town Activity	2022 Calls for Service
Cosmos	259
Dassel	1260
Grove City	523
Watkins	578

2022 Criminal Calls for Service	Cosmos	Dassel	Grove City	Watkins
Abuse-Neglect-Maltreatment	0	1	3	0
Assault	1	0	3	1
Burglary	1	5	2	4
Child Abuse - Neglect- Maltreatment	11	27	18	19
Check Forgery	0	0	0	0
Criminal Damage to Property	10	8	15	2
DANCO Violation	0	1	1	3
Disorderly Conduct	0	1	0	0
Disturbance	5	4	6	7
Domestics	7	10	6	14
Drugs/Paraphernalia	1	2	3	2
DUI	1	6	0	2
Forgery	0	0	0	1
Harassment/Stalking	3	8	11	7
HRO Violations	1	1	2	3
Homicides	0	0	0	0
Identity Theft	0	0	0	0
Lost/Found Property	2	9	4	3
Motor Vehicle Accident	1	10	5	6

Order for Protection (OFP) Violation	0	5	2	0
Pursuit Vehicle/Person	0	0	0	1
Robbery	0	0	0	0
Scams/Swindle	2	4	2	2
Sex Crime Offense	2	1	3	2
Stolen Vehicle	2	1	1	0
Tamper w/MV	0	0	0	0
Thefts	13	26	18	6
Threats	5	6	12	2
Trespass	1	3	4	2
Weapons Offenses	0	0	1	0

2022 Other Calls for Service	Cosmos	Dassel	Grove City	Watkins
9-1-1 Hang Ups	7	7	2	3
9-1-1 Mis or Accident Dial	2	13	1	1
Abandoned/Stalled Vehicles	0	8	1	2
Agency Standby/Assist	5	3	8	10
Alarms	13	23	24	12
Animal Complaints	6	33	21	17
Arrest Warrant	6	15	4	0
Assist Other Agencies	0	0	0	0
ATV Complaint	0	1	0	1
Burning Complaint	0	0	0	0
Carbon Monoxide Alarm	0	0	0	0
Debris on Roadway	0	0	0	0
Deliver Emergency Messages	0	0	0	0
Driving Complaints	1	24	17	8
Escorts	0	7	0	0
Fire Calls	4	7	5	5
Funeral Escort	0	0	0	0
Gas Drive Off	0	0	1	16
HAZMAT/Chemical Spill	0	1	0	0
Medicals	13	56	19	43
Motorist Assist	0	15	2	3

Noise Complaints	0	1	7	3
Ordinance Violations	1	13	5	19
Public Assist	16	58	29	63
Shooting Complaint	1	0	0	0
Suspicious Activity/Person/Vehicle	7	72	27	28
Tobacco Violation	0	0	0	0
Traffic Stops - Citations /Warnings	43	568	88	77
Unsecure Doors - Residential & Business	1	3	0	3
Vacation/Security Checks	0	1	1	0
Vehicle Lock Out	1	14	2	5
Welfare Check	14	30	40	27

## K-9 Services



MCSO K-9 Maverick and Deputy Welz

We received a new K-9, Maverick, in 2022. Maverick is a purebred German Sheppard from Slovakia. Maverick and his handler, Deputy Welz, spent 12 weeks together training in 2022 before Maverick was put out on regular patrol. Maverick is United States Police Canine Association (USPCA) certified in patrol and narcotics detection. Our previous K-9, Chase, went with his handler when his handler took a position at

another department. The new agency reimbursed the County for the cost of Chase resulting in a budget neutral acquisition of our new K-9, Maverick.

## Investigative Services

The Meeker County Sheriff’s Office currently has three full-time detectives responsible for investigating criminal activity including child abuse/neglect, vulnerable adult crimes, welfare fraud, sexual assaults, financial crimes, fraud, computer/internet crimes, thefts, burglaries, death investigations (natural, suicide and homicide), robberies, etc. Of the 8,693 Calls for Service received by Meeker County Sheriff’s Office in 2022, 333 were forwarded to the detectives for further investigation. The detectives are also responsible for background investigations of potential new hires as well as internal affairs investigations.

Meeker County contracts with Midwest Medical Examiner’s Office for coroner services. Death Investigators respond to the scene of reported deaths and work with the Sheriff’s Office to complete the death investigation. Of the 186 reported deaths in Meeker County in 2020, nine autopsies were performed as a part of those death investigations. "Reportable, Declined" includes deaths that were investigated but the actual death certificate was signed by a local M.D. The following is a report by the Medical Examiner’s Office for reported deaths for all of Meeker County:



Meeker County Deaths	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018
Motor Vehicle Accident	1	2	2	2	3
Natural	10	7	10	6	8
Non-Motor Vehicle Accident	8	1	4	3	9
Reportable, Declined	113	108	165	139	162
Suicide	7	3	5	4	1
Homicide	0	1	0	1	0
Drugs/Substance Abuse	1				
Accident, Not Otherwise Specified	1				
<b>Total</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>183</b>

## Drug and Gang Investigations

The Meeker County Sheriff’s Office has two detectives assigned to the CEE-VI Drug and Gang Task Force. CEE stands for Cooperative Enforcement Effort and the Roman numeral VI stands for the original six counties that were a part of the cooperative when it was formed in 1990. The CEE-VI Drug and Gang Task Force currently consists of the following counties: Meeker, Chippewa, Kandiyohi, Swift, and Yellow Medicine. There is federal, state, and local funding used for this initiative. The funding includes a per capita charge of \$5.00 in each member county. The counties that provide personnel are reimbursed for salary and benefits. This year we saw record methamphetamine seizures and a sharp increase in arrests in Meeker County. The following is the reported activity for all of Meeker County:

CEE-VI Drug Task Force Statistics	2022	2021	2020
Arrests	60 (6 gang)	46 (1gang)	54 (4 gang)
Drug and/or Gang Presentations		2 for 65 people	1 for 41 people
Searches	42	28	26
Children Removed	7	10	7
Asset Seizures			
Cash	\$8,004.00	\$37,701.00	\$79,257.00
Vehicles	0	2	1
Hand Guns	12	1	4
Long Guns	28	8	1
Drugs Seizures			
Cocaine	None	87.30 grams	3.20 grams
Fentanyl/FRS Pills	1064.00 pills		
Fentanyl/FRS Powder	0.10 grams		
Hashish	None	None	None
Heroin	None	None	.70 grams
Marijuana	771.30 grams (1.70 lbs)	1654.30 grams (3.65 lbs)	6675.30 grams (14.72 lbs)
Marijuana - concentrate	None	None	None
Meth	1415.31 grams (3.12 lbs)	4849.71 grams (10.70 lbs)	8333.79 grams (1.84 lbs)
Prescription	59.00 pills	15.00 pills	52.00 pills

## **Kandiyohi - Meeker SWAT**

In 2020 we formed a partnership with the Kandiyohi County Sheriff's Office SWAT team. SWAT stands for Special Weapons and Tactics. While we recognized a need for a specialized team in Meeker County, we didn't have the call load, resources, or financial means to create an independent team based on sporadic needs. By joining an established team, we have access to resources, training, and knowledge that would otherwise not be available to us. With this partnership, the team is available for high-risk incidents throughout Meeker County. In return, we have personnel dedicated to the unit that can be utilized in Kandiyohi County. Kandiyohi County Sheriff's Office SWAT is a long-standing, well-established unit that is highly respected throughout the region.



Once this partnership was formed the name was changed to reflect the new team and is currently referred to as Kandiyohi Meeker SWAT. We currently have five members of the Meeker County Sheriff's Office assigned to this team. The utilization of this team is based on an established threat matrix which means the team is only used in high-risk situations. This is meant to better protect the public and the deputies assigned when those situations arise.

In 2022, the threat matrix was reviewed on seventeen occasions and the Kandiyohi Meeker SWAT team was utilized three times in Meeker County. The Kandiyohi Meeker SWAT team responded to a multi-day standoff south of Dassel. During the standoff, the suspect was barricaded in his home while shooting at SWAT members. SWAT teams from Wright County, McLeod County and Hutchinson Police were also called. The standoff ended with the arrest of the individual without further incident.

In 2021, Meeker County received an armored Humvee from the Federal Government at no cost to be utilized by the team. Thanks to some generous donations, the Humvee was upgraded and outfitted with necessary emergency equipment. This armored Humvee allows deputies better protection and the ability to approach unknown situations safely. It enhances public safety in a time when gun-related calls are on the rise and gun violence, in general, is becoming more prevalent. As with the team itself,

the armored Humvee is meant to better protect the public and the deputies assigned to those high-risk situations.

## **Meeker County Safe Roads Coalition**

The Meeker County Sheriff’s Office is partnered with the Toward Zero Deaths (TZD) Meeker County Safe Roads Coalition. This coalition brings the State TZD philosophy to the local level. The Joyride program and School Safety Day are an example of the work from this coalition. Joyride is a program that gives those who are celebrating at local bars an opportunity to get a safe and sober ride home. School Safety Day brings first responders into the school to educate our young drivers on the serious consequences of distracted driving and driving under the influence. The coalition also works on bringing traffic education to the public at various health and community expos along with setting up child safety seat inspections.

### **What is TZD?**

The Toward Zero Deaths approach is based on the belief that even one traffic-related death on our roads is unacceptable. This “zero deaths” idea was first adopted in Sweden in 1997 as "Vision Zero" and since then has evolved to several state Departments of Transportation (DOT), including Minnesota, that have identified zero deaths as a core objective in their Strategic Highway Safety Plans.

TZD uses a data-driven, interdisciplinary approach that targets areas for improvement and employs proven countermeasures, integrating the application of education, enforcement, engineering, and emergency medical and trauma services (the “4Es”). A combination of strategies from different focus areas is often most effective for solving a particular problem.

## **Mental Health Response**

Meeker County patrol deputies often times are the first responder for someone in a mental health crisis. While our deputies are trained to handle these situations, we recognize they are not the best resource for the person in crisis. We have seen an increase in these calls in recent years, especially during the pandemic. Through our

partnership with Meeker County Social Services and Woodland Centers, the Sheriff's Office started a pilot program in 2020 to address mental health calls. This program allows the patrol deputies on scene to directly contact a mental health provider via telecommunications through tablets the deputies are issued. This gives the deputies the tools they need to assess the situation better and provide initial services on scene. Too often, we don't have the tools to make a proper assessment which means the person requires transport to a hospital for evaluation. Partnering with the Mental Health Professionals from Woodland Centers allows the deputies to better assess the person's needs while on the scene. Services are provided immediately to those assessed as being in a mental health crisis.

In addition to the telecommunication services, the Sheriff's Office also utilizes Woodland Centers' Mental Health Urgent Care Team. This team can respond to the scene and provide in-person assistance to those in immediate need as well. Our goal with these partnerships and programs is to get people who are in mental health crisis the proper resources as quickly and efficiently as possible.



### **Public Safety Community Paramedic**

In 2023, we hired a Public Safety Community Paramedic full-time. Before 2023 we contracted this position for one day a week. By bringing the position in-house, we can provide services 5 days a week. The program is designed to supplement our medical and mental health response in the county.

The Public Safety Community Paramedic functions as a member of the County Public Safety / Social Service / Public Health team, providing assessment and care to persons with medical, behavioral, mental health, social, and chemical dependency needs. They identify persons in need and assist in providing limited medical care to them, connecting these people with the available community and medical resources for future assistance. They also provide emergency response assistance to acute medical needs in the community when available to do so.

Provided Services Include:

- Mental Health Response
- Wellness Visits, Chronic Disease Monitoring and Education
- Medication Review and Medication Management
- Administration of Immunizations and Vaccinations
- Laboratory Specimen Collection
- Hospital and Emergency Room Discharge Follow-up Cares
- Provides home and environment safety assessment which includes: Falls Assessment, and the need for durable medical equipment for independent living.
- Researches, contacts, and schedules medical, mental health, and social service appointments.
- Responds to scheduled healthcare, mental health, social services, or chemical dependency appointments with persons needing assistance.
- Responds to medical emergencies and assists our partner emergency response units.

## **2023 Automated External Defibrillator Grant**

In 2022, the Meeker County Sheriff's Office received a grant to upgrade all of our Automated External Defibrillators (AED) in our patrol squads. The updated AED captures information about each deployment which allows us to give feedback to the deputy in an effort to improve their CPR efforts. We received 30 AEDs with this grant. The following is a news release reference the grant that was used to update our office along with other law enforcement agencies throughout the State of Minnesota.

## **\$18.8 Million Helmsley Charitable Trust Grant to Fund Life-Saving New Technology for Law Enforcement at the Meeker County Sheriff’s Office**



In an ongoing effort to improve the cardiac system of care in the Upper Midwest, The Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust have awarded an \$18.8 million grant to the University of Minnesota Medical School. The grant aims to provide law enforcement officers and first responders across Minnesota with more than 8,300 automated external defibrillators (AEDs) to improve cardiac arrest survival rates. The grant includes funding for 30 AEDs for the Meeker County Sheriff’s Office.

“Seconds count during a cardiac arrest,” said Walter Panzirer, a Helmsley trustee. “We know in Minnesota first responders often have great distances to cover. This funding will ensure those who get to the scene before EMS arrives give patients a better shot at survival.” Data from Minnesota CARES (Cardiac Arrest Registry to Enhance Survival) shows that 70 percent of out-of-hospital cardiac arrest incidents happen in homes, where AEDs placed in public facilities can be less effective. AEDs should be applied within the first 3 to 5 minutes for the best possible outcome.

Studies conducted by the American Heart Association demonstrate a dramatically higher survival rate for cardiac patients shocked by law enforcement, who are generally first on the scene, especially in rural areas.

The AEDs analyze heart rhythms throughout CPR, reduce pauses and allow for improved blood circulation to increase the odds of survival. Using Wi-Fi connectivity, these self-monitoring devices can report their status to a centralized online data repository, allowing law enforcement agencies to know their devices are ready or in need of maintenance. The information collected will also allow the Center for Resuscitation Medicine to improve response to cardiac arrest and demonstrate how swift law enforcement response gives patients a better chance of survival.

To date, the Helmsley Charitable Trust has invested more than \$500 million to improve access to quality healthcare in rural America, \$72 million of that in Minnesota.

### ***About the Helmsley Charitable Trust***

*The Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust aspires to improve lives by supporting exceptional efforts in the U.S. and around the world in health and select place-based initiatives. Since beginning active grantmaking in 2008, Helmsley has committed more than \$3 billion for a wide range of charitable purposes. Helmsley’s Rural Healthcare Program funds innovative projects that use information technologies to connect rural patients to emergency medical care, bring the latest medical therapies to patients in remote areas, and provide state-of-the-art training for rural hospitals and EMS personnel. To date, this program has awarded more than \$500 million to organizations and initiatives in the upper Midwest states of North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Wyoming, Minnesota, Iowa, and Montana. For more information, visit [www.helmsleytrust.org](http://www.helmsleytrust.org).*

## **D.A.R.E. Program**



In a typical school year millions of school children around the world will benefit from D.A.R.E. (Drug Abuse Resistance Education), the highly acclaimed program that gives kids the skills they need to avoid involvement in drugs, gangs, and violence. D.A.R.E. was founded in 1983

in Los Angeles and has proven so successful it is now being implemented in 75 percent of our nation’s school districts and in more than 52 countries around the world.

The Meeker County Sheriff’s Office provides this program to the 5<sup>th</sup> grade classes in both the Atwater Cosmos Grove City (ACGC) and Eden Valley-Watkins (EVW)



school districts. D.A.R.E. Deputy Josh Case is assigned to EVW and D.A.R.E. Deputy Sara Miller was assigned to ACGC. This past year Deputy Sam Swisher went to D.A.R.E. Instructor training and will take over the D.A.R.E. program at

ACGC in 2023. In 2017 we updated our D.A.R.E. program to the new curriculum

called “Keepin’ it REAL,” which puts an emphasis on decision-making skills instead of drug lectures. D.A.R.E. envisions a world in which students everywhere are empowered to respect others and choose to lead lives free from violence, substance abuse and other dangerous behaviors. At the completion of our 10 week program, we host a D.A.R.E. graduation for the families of the D.A.R.E. students. As a special treat, we bring in a magician who, through a very entertaining magic show, reinforces the D.A.R.E. teachings.



2022 ACGC DARE Class



2022 EVW DARE Class

## **Snowmobile / Boat and Water / OHV Patrols**

The Meeker County Sheriff's Office is responsible for Snowmobile, Off Highway Vehicle (OHV), and Water Safety patrol and enforcement. Patrol deputies and seasonal water patrol deputies work these patrols year round. Grant monies received from the State of Minnesota help with enforcement efforts and needed equipment.

### **Snowmobile Safety Enforcement Grant**

The Snowmobile Safety Enforcement Grant for fiscal year 2022 was \$2,767. The fiscal year runs from July 1, 2021, through June 30, 2022. We received 2 snowmobile complaints in 2022 and one report of a snowmobile accident.



### **OHV Safety Enforcement Grant (Off-Highway Vehicle)**

The Meeker County Sheriff's Office received \$4,973 for the OHV Safety Enforcement Grant fiscal year 2021. The fiscal year runs from July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022. We received 27 OHV complaints in 2022 and investigated two injury OHV accidents.

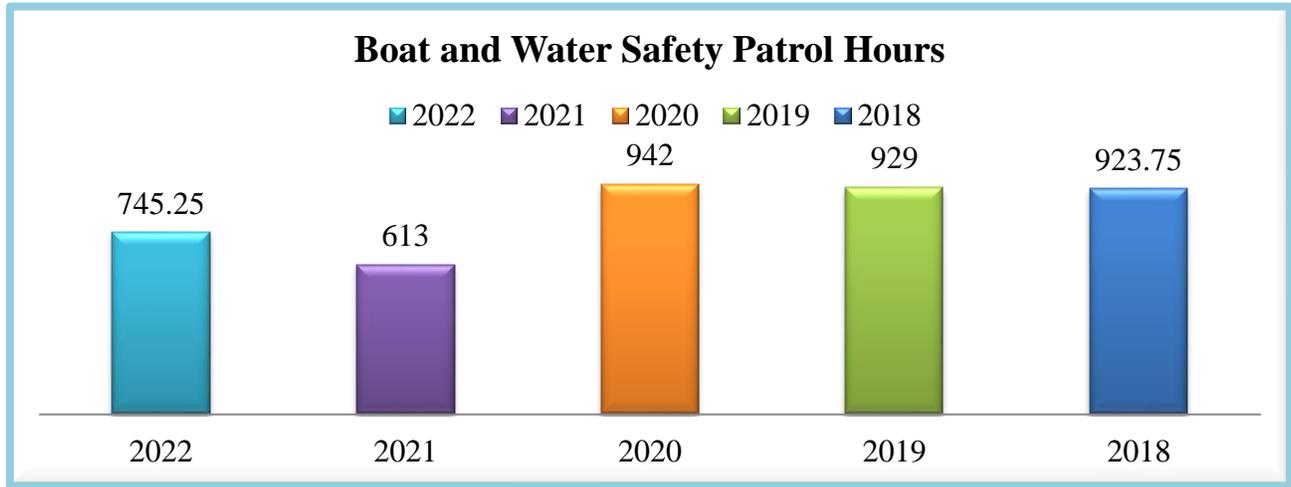


### **Boat and Water Safety Grant**



The Boat and Water Safety Grant runs from January 1, 2021, to June 30, 2022. The grant for the 2022 fiscal year was \$5,785. The Meeker County Sheriff's Office also partnered with the county Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) program and has additional resources for dedicated AIS inspections. We received 10 boating complaints, investigated three boating accidents and had one boat injury. In 2022, the total AIS

hours were 77.75 for which the AIS committee reimbursed the Sheriff’s Office \$1,367.79.



Boat and Water	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018
Complaints	10	7	14	17	11
Temporary Structure Permits	26	24	26	25	46

## Training

The Meeker County Sheriff’s Office remains committed to making the Sheriff’s Office the best it can be and one the public can be proud of and trust. This is achieved through continued professionalism and highly trained Sheriff’s Office personnel. The Minnesota Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) Board is responsible for licensing Peace Officers in the State of Minnesota. As a requirement of this license, each deputy is required to complete a minimum of 48 hours of continuing education every three years. It is not uncommon for deputies to have two to three times the minimum number of hours. We train on all aspects of law enforcement including those we rarely encounter. The public expects we will be trained and able to handle whatever situation



we encounter. We take this responsibility very seriously and spend countless hours each year to better our skills and knowledge of this job. In addition to all the law enforcement training, deputies are also certified Emergency Medical Responders (EMR). Deputies routinely respond to and provide EMR level services on a variety of medical calls in the county.

## ICLD

All full time employees are enrolled in the Institute for Credible Learning and Development (ICLD) leadership program through a partnership with the Minnesota's Sheriff's Association (MSA). The leadership program is a comprehensive, career-long leadership education and developmental program. Participants complete an in-depth journey by addressing relevant topics and proven theories offered by ICLD.

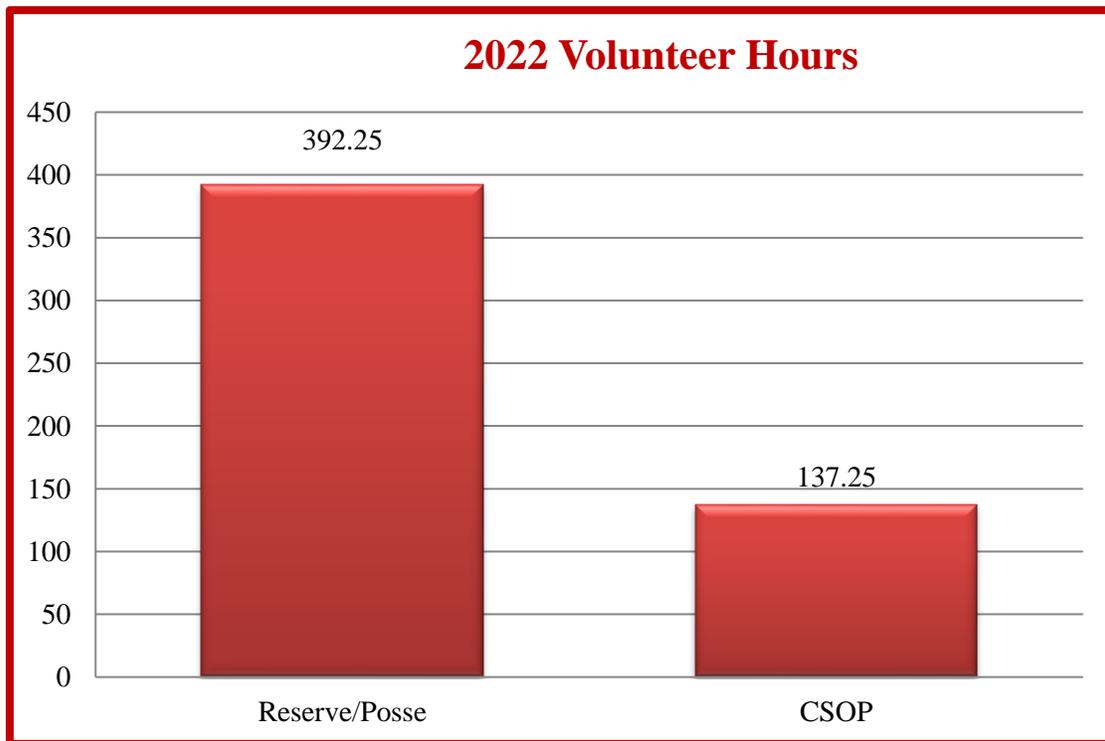


A majority of law enforcement professionals attending the ICLD program report the following positive outcomes:

- Increased officer safety.
- Increased organizational thought.
- Reduction in stress.
- Reduction in citizen complaints.
- Increased capacity in character building behaviors.
- Increased accountability and responsibility.
- Increased personnel engagement and job satisfaction.
- Improved personal self-awareness and decision-making.
- Improved integrity of personal and professional conduct.
- Enhanced personnel civic mindedness and involvement in the community.
- Increased cross-cultural awareness, understanding and tolerance.
- Increased ability to develop partnerships with community representatives.

# Community Engagement

Due to the COVID pandemic and restrictions on public gatherings, our opportunities for community engagement in 2020 were diminished greatly but began to rebound in 2021 and 2022. While still limited, we were out in the public at events whenever possible. The bigger events included National Night Out, the Meeker County Fair, Shop with a Cop, and Litchfield’s Trunk or Treat. Even with reduced public events in 2022, Reserve Deputies, Sheriff Posse, and Community Service Officer – Paramedics still volunteered over 500 hours in 2022.



## National Night Out

National Night Out is a nationwide annual event held on the first Tuesday in August. The goal of National Night Out is to enhance relationships between neighbors and law

enforcement with an emphasis on ensuring a true sense of community. These positive interactions are a great opportunity for the public to see law enforcement on a personal level. The Meeker County Sheriff's Office was a part of four organized events in 2022; Dassel, Grove City, Litchfield, and Watkins.



### Shop With A Cop

Through generous donations from the Litchfield Police Association, Meeker County Sheriff's Deputy Association and private donors, local law enforcement is able to help families make Christmas a little brighter for their children. Based on need, children are selected and then paired with a member of law enforcement for an evening of Christmas shopping. It's a fun night and a great positive interaction for all attending.





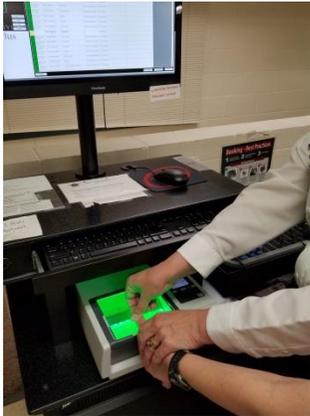
Detective Schutz and Deputy Watt handing out “I Got Caught” coupons. “I Got Caught” is a program to re-enforce safe bicycle, skateboarding, rollerblading activities by rewarding the child displaying safe riding with a free ice cream cone coupon.



While assisting with traffic control at the Litchfield Candy Cane parade, Sheriff Cruze came across some special visitors to the parade.

# Meeker County Jail

The Meeker County Sheriff's Office Jail is responsible for housing inmates awaiting court, as well as those who are sentenced for misdemeanor and gross misdemeanor offenses. The average daily population for 2022 was 26 inmates per day. The Jail also boards inmates from other counties and the Minnesota Department of Corrections (DOC). The Meeker County Sheriff's Office charged \$60.00 per day in 2022 for inmates who were boarded for other jurisdictions. The boarding revenue received for 2022 was \$231,989. The average stay for all inmates booked into our facility in 2022 was 15 days.

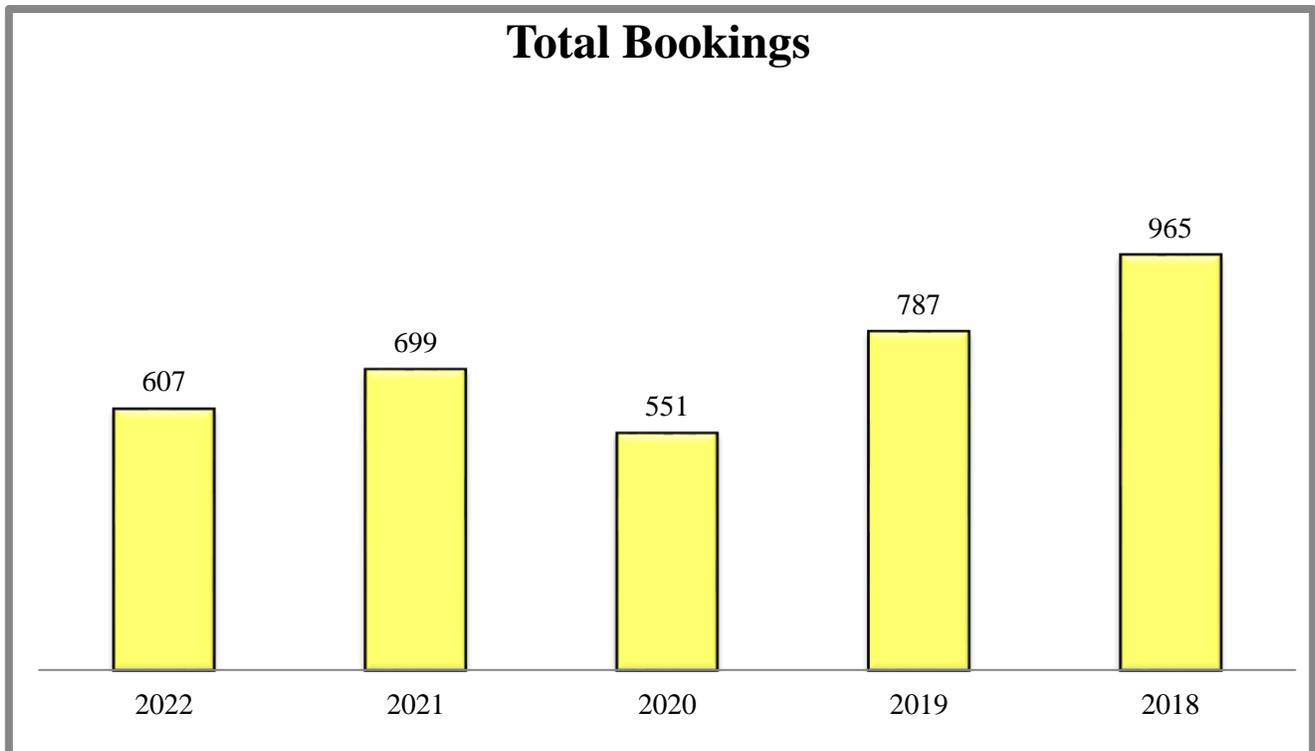


In an effort to address inmate mental health in our jail, we have teamed with Meeker County Social Services for a new pilot program in 2020. Through this partnership we have a designated Social Worker to address the mental health needs of the inmates. The Social Worker and our Jail Programmer work together to identify inmates with mental health issues and the Social Worker works to find the appropriate resources to address those needs. The Social Worker will meet with the inmate as needed and will set up assistance and resources when the person is released. Our goal is to provide the inmate proper resources upon release to address their mental health needs to reduce the possibility of future arrest.

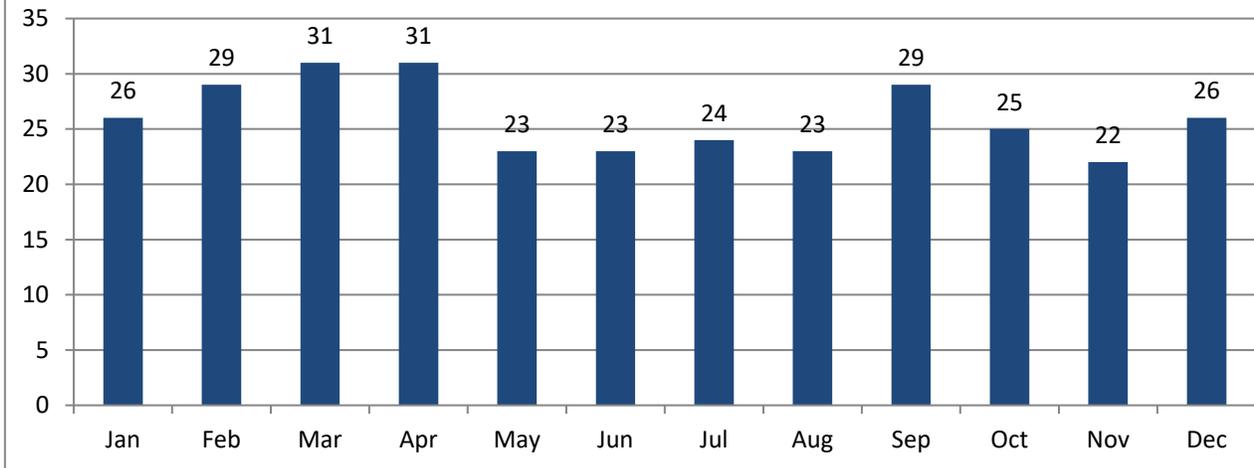
The Meeker County Jail has approximately 14 Jail Programs with volunteers who come into the jail on a weekly and monthly basis. Programs include NA, AA, Public Health, Minnesota Adult Teen Challenge, Social Services and many local church groups. Our volunteers that come into the jail to have programs for inmates at times spend a combined 60 hours per week volunteering. Our Jail volunteers are greatly appreciated by staff as those people in custody that attend programs have shown much more compliant behavior than those that do not attend. National studies have shown that Jail Programs can reduce the recidivism rate by up to 20% in county jails. Our staff is very appreciative to our volunteers for taking the time to come into a jail setting and help those people in custody.



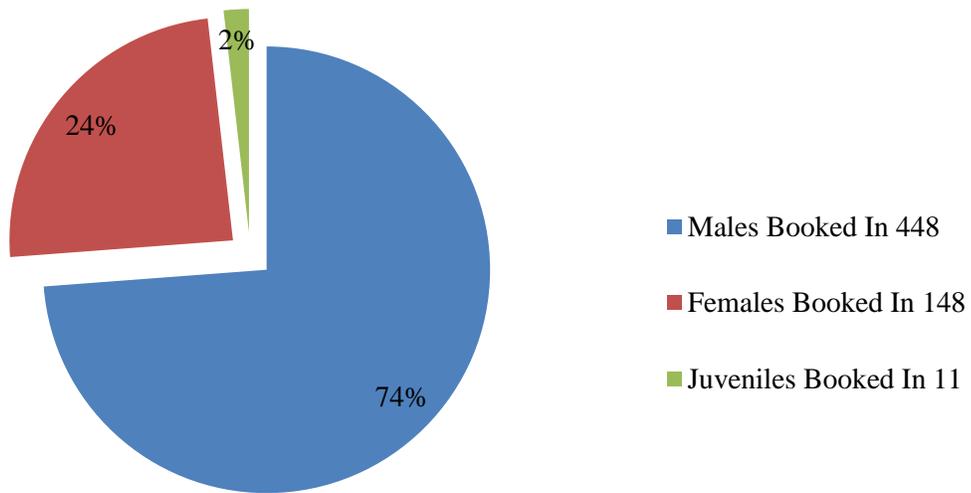
Jail Volunteer Tom Mathies received the Volunteer of the Year Award from the Minnesota Sheriff's Association for year 2022.

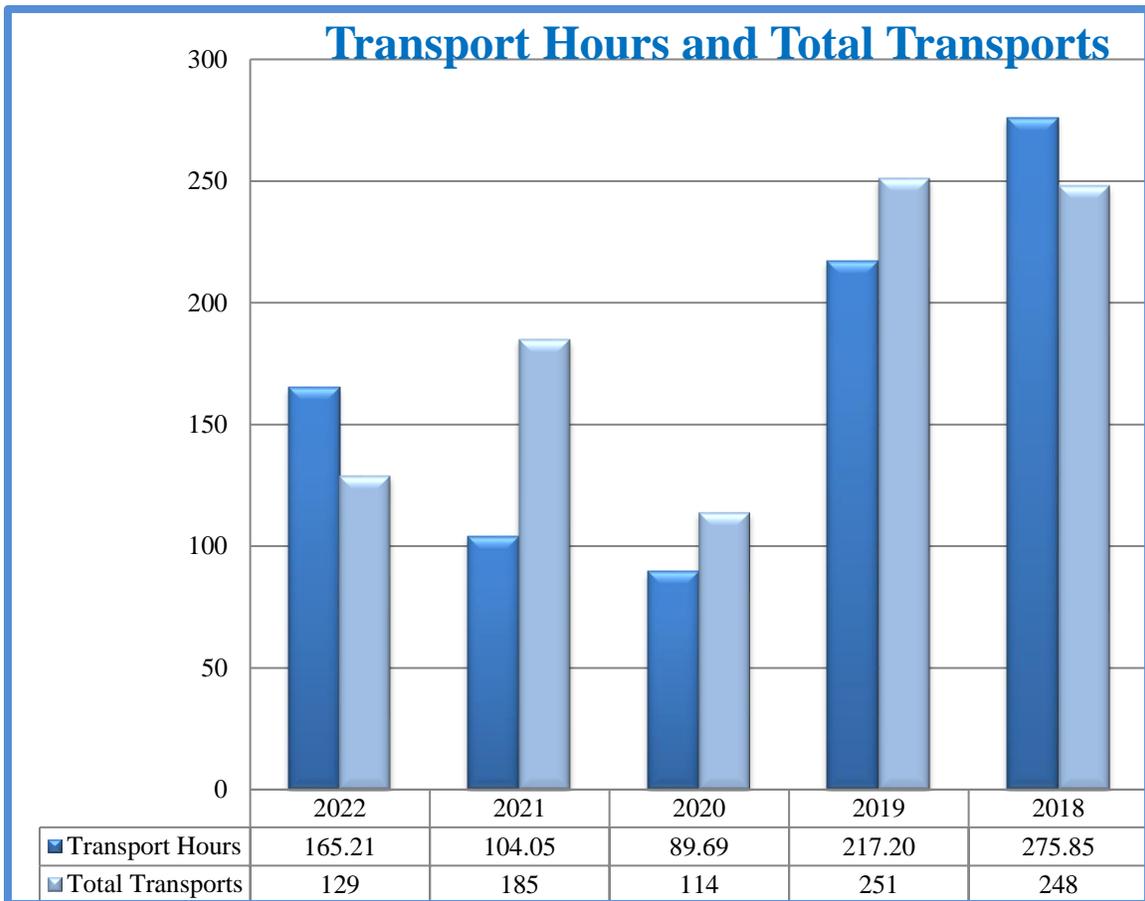
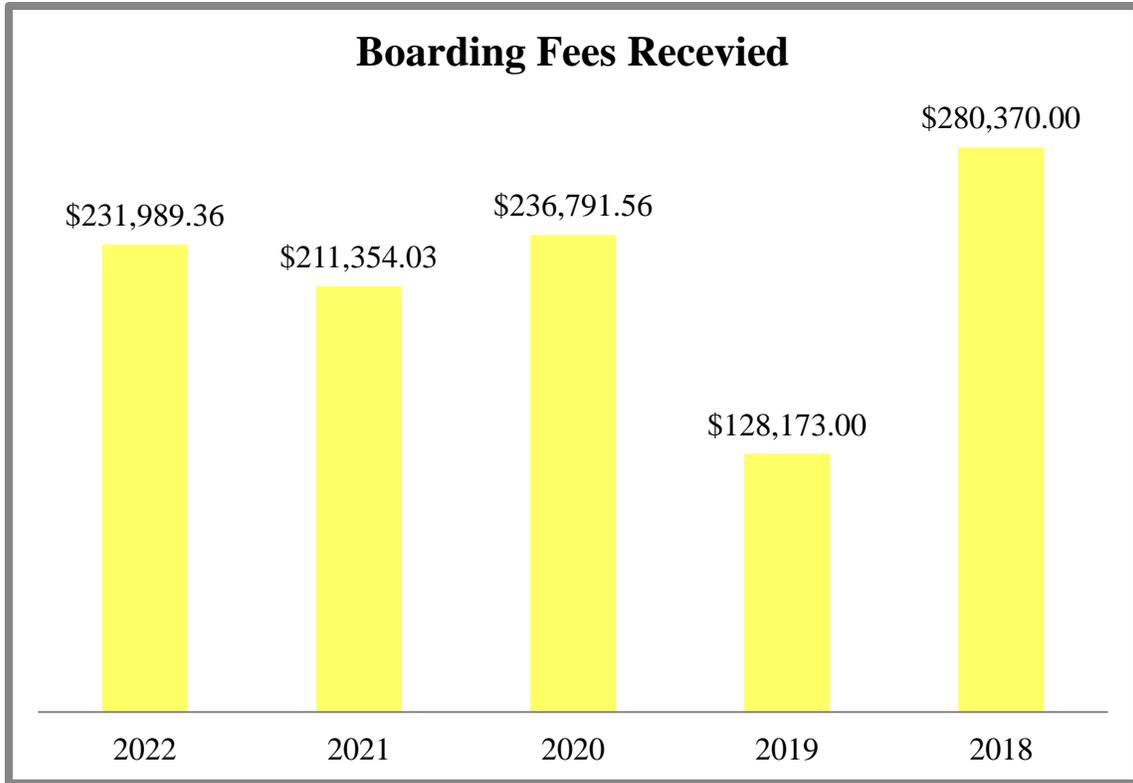


### 2022 Average Daily Count by Month



### Percentage of Bookings for 2022 Total Booked: 607





## Court Security

The security of the Meeker County Courthouse is the responsibility of the Sheriff’s Office. In 2018 we installed a security checkpoint on the court level. This checkpoint is staffed during all hours court is in session. This is in addition to armed bailiffs and a court security deputy. In 2022, 82 knives, 1 firearm, numerous scissors, bullets, multi-tools, mace, razor blades, and other sharp metal objects were seized. Nineteen warrant arrests were made at the checkpoint. Court security remains a high priority for Meeker County and we continue to explore options to improve prisoner movement in public areas to ensure public safety. Sheriff Cruze fully supports these initiatives to improve security and safety in the Meeker County Courthouse.



## Civil Process Services



In 2022, the Meeker County Sheriff’s Office served a total of 435 civil process papers. The most common types of papers a deputy sheriff serves include Summons & Complaints, Subpoenas, Mortgage Foreclosures, Orders, Evictions, Writs of Recovery, Writs of Execution, Orders for Protection, Harassment Restraining Orders, and Affidavits. In 2022, the Sheriff’s Office collected \$19,552.70 in civil process service fees.

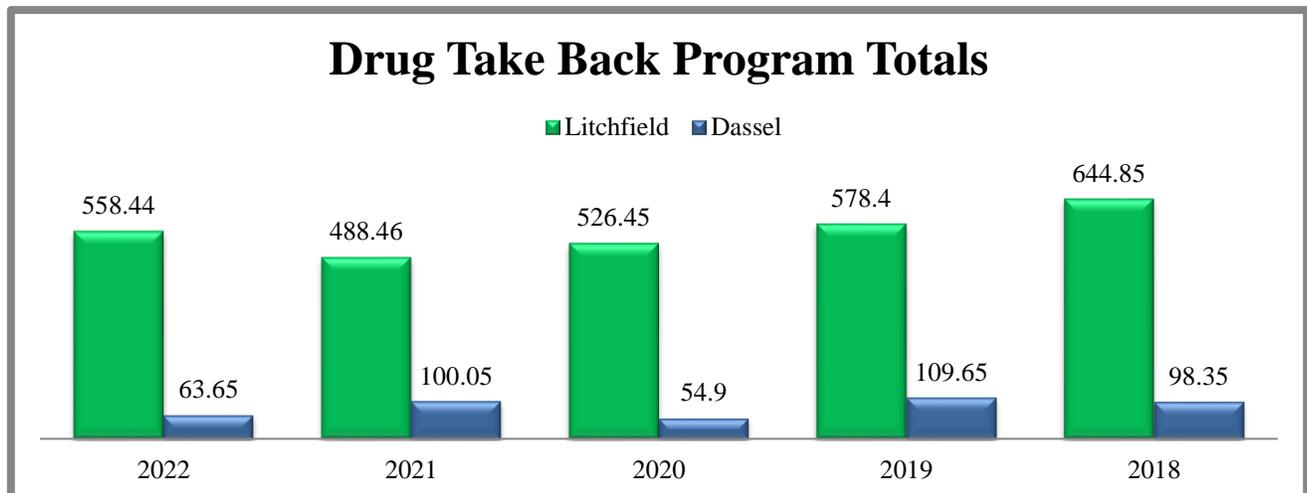
SHERIFF FEES 2022		
911 recordings (911 calls, radio traffic on data CD/DVD)	\$ 30.00	Per hour (1 hr minimum charged)
Animal Fees:		
~ Dangerous Dog Registration Fee	\$ 100.00	Per year
~ Dangerous/Potentially Dangerous Dog Review Hearing	\$ 500.00	Per hearing
~ Pound Pickup Fee	\$ 50.00	Per animal
~ Impoundment Fee	\$ 5.00	Per day (charged after first 24 hours)

Audio/Video Recordings on CD/DVD	\$ 30.00	Per hour (1 hr minimum charged)
Background Check: In-House	\$ 5.00	Per person (for private business or agency. Does not include government agencies or branches of the Armed Forces)
<b>Civil Process Fees:</b>		
~ Notice of Intent to Redeem	\$ 100.00	Per notice
~ Paper Service	\$ 80.00	Up to 3 attempts, mileage included
~ Each Additional Attempt	\$ 30.00	Mileage included
~ Additional Papers at Same Address	\$ 30.00	Mileage included
~ Return of Unserved Process	\$ 80.00	Mileage included
~ Redemption of Property Mortgagor	\$ 250.00	Per redemption
~ Sale Notice - Posting 3 Copies	\$ 80.00	Per parcel
~ Sheriff Sales	\$ 90.00	Per sale
~ Writ of Execution Commission Service	6%	Per writ/\$20 minimum charged
~ Writ of Execution Service	\$ 84.00	Per writ
<b>Deputy Time:</b>		
~ Standard	\$ 65.00	Per hour (3 hr minimum charged)
~ Deputy: Squad Required for Roadway Escorts	\$ 85.00	Per hour (3 hr minimum charged)
~ Deputy: Reserve/Posse time	\$ 20.00	Per hour
<b>False Alarm Fees:</b>		
~ 4th & 5th in a Year	\$ 25.00	Each
~ 6th & Subsequent in a Year	\$ 50.00	Each
Fax: Sent or Received	\$ 0.25	Per page
Firearms Storage Fee	\$ 1.00	Per day per gun (30 day minimum charged)
<b>Gun Permits:</b>		
~ Meeker Residents: New	\$ 40.00	Per permit
~ Meeker Residents: Renew	\$ 35.00	Per permit
~ Out-of-State Residents: New	\$ 75.00	Per permit
~ Out-of-State Residents: Renew	\$ 70.00	Per permit
~ Purchase/Transfer Permit	Free	Per permit
~ Replacement Cards	\$ 10.00	Per permit
Impound Storage Fee	\$ 15.00	Per day (effective 5 days after date of Notice of Impoundment letter)
<b>Jail Fees:</b>		
~ Fingerprint Cards: Out-of-County Resident	\$ 15.00	Per card
~ Fingerprint Cards: Meeker Resident	Free	Per card
~ Booking Fee	\$ 25.00	Per booking
~ Boarding Fee	\$ 60.00	Per day
~ Boarding Fee: Special Management Inmate	\$ 100.00	Per day
~ Pay-for-Stay Fee	\$ 25.00	Per day
~ Huber Fee	\$ 25.00	Per day

~ Huber Urinalysis Fee	\$	30.00	Per sample
~ Inmate Doctor Fee	\$	15.00	Per in-house visit
~ Inmate Nurse Fee	\$	5.00	Per in-house visit
~ Probation Urinalysis Fee	\$	10.00	Per sample
~ Probation Portable Breath Test fee	\$	5.00	Per test
<b>Photographs:</b>			
~ Burned Onto CD/DVD	\$	10.00	Per CD/DVD
Records Clerk	\$	25.00	Per hour (for persons requesting documents in large volume that are time consuming, 1 hr minimum in addition to document fee)
<b>Reports/Documents:</b>			
~ Copies Printed	\$	0.25	Per page
~ Copies on CD/DVD	\$	10.00	Per CD/DVD
Scanning	\$	10.00	Per page CD/DVD
Typing Reports/Records Services	\$	20.00	Per hour (1 hr minimum charged)

## **Drug Take Back Program**

The Meeker County Sheriff’s Office continues this free service to Meeker County residents. This service provides a safe and secure manner of disposing of unused and expired medications. The Sheriff’s Office has two Take Back boxes, one at our main office in Litchfield and one at the Dassel Office at the Dassel City Hall. In 2022 we disposed of a total of 622.09 pounds of prescription drugs.

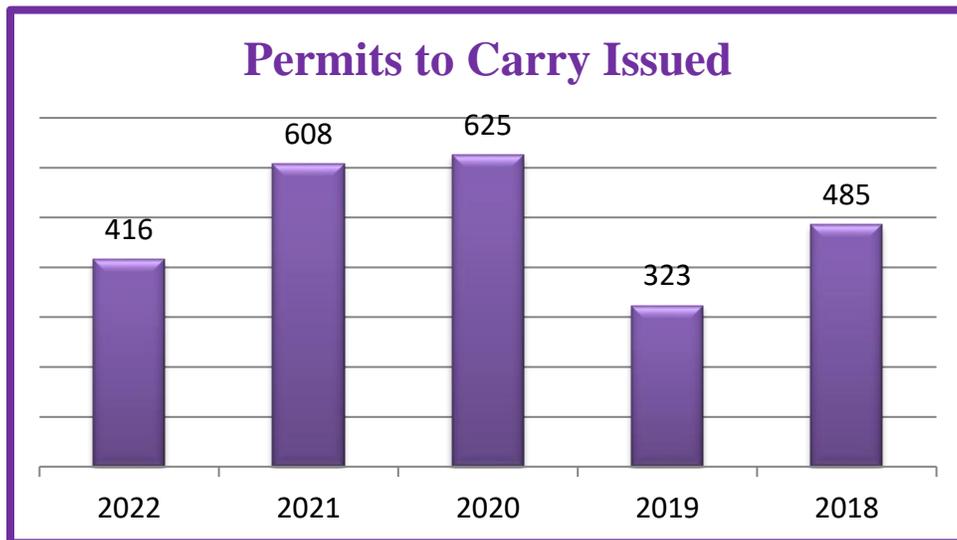


## Gun Permits

The Meeker County Sheriff is responsible for issuing all Permits to Carry in the county and all Permits to Purchase for all residents who don't live in a city with an independent police department. In 2022 the Permit to Carry application fee was \$40.00 with renewals costing \$35.00. For each Permit to Carry approved, by law, \$10.00 for new and \$5.00 for renewal applications is submitted to the MN Bureau of Criminal Apprehension (BCA). Each year a report is made to the BCA in reference to our permit activity. This report can be viewed at: <https://dps.mn.gov/divisions/bca/bca-divisions/administrative/documents/2021-Permit-to-Carry-Report.pdf>

**Permits to Purchase:** In 2022, there were 189 Permits to Purchase issued.

**Permits to Carry:** In 2022, there were 416 Permits to Carry issued.



# **Meeker County Emergency Management**

Meeker County Emergency Management, under the direction of the Sheriff, has multiple areas of responsibility to include planning, preparedness, mitigation, response and recovery. Our planning objectives and our response efforts focus on saving lives, protecting property, meeting the needs of victims, reducing the effects of an emergency on essential facilities and utilities and minimizing the disruption on our community's financial livelihood. Our preparedness process includes multiple plans, whole community input, other county agencies, neighboring county emergency managers and regional planning.

Meeker County Emergency Management hosted a discussion and exercise for how donations following a disaster or emergency event. Staff will continue to work on the County Donations Management Plan to integrate after actions learned from the discussion and the exercise in 2024.

Emergency Management staff aided churches in the Litchfield and Kingston areas to enhance their preparedness planning and safety awareness for medicals, fires, natural disasters, and human caused events.

Emergency Management also update the County Hazard Mitigation Plan this year. Emergency Management formed a Hazard Mitigation Task Force with representatives from county departments, cities, townships, schools, and additional stakeholders. This task force worked to identify cost-effective and sustainable actions to reduce or eliminate the long-term risk to human life or property from natural hazards. This plan is updated every five years and reviewed by Homeland Security Emergency Management (HSEM) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) before implementation.

# Budget



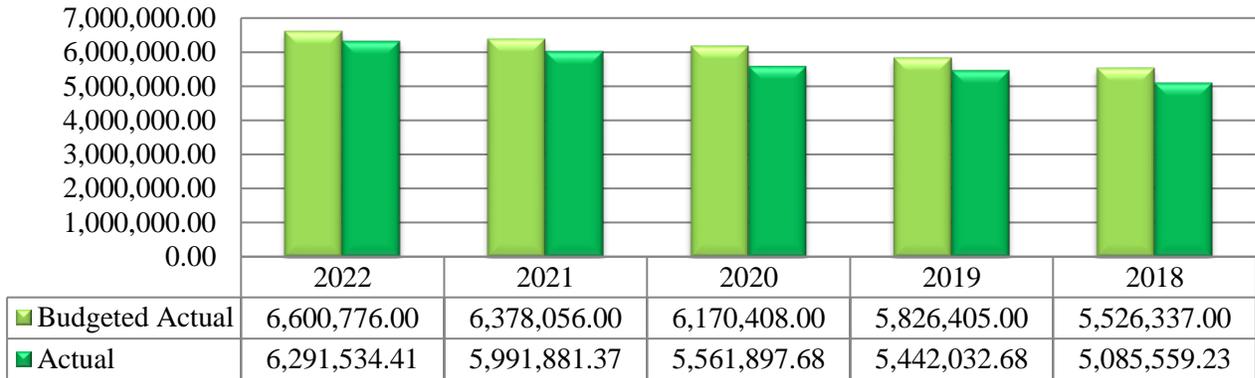
The following figures are taken from the end-of-year Revenue Expenditure Budget Report. The actual expenses for 2022 were 3.3% under budget mainly due to staffing shortages. The actual costs to run the Sheriff’s Office come from levy dollars of \$4.5 million (72%) and revenue for service/grant monies of \$1.8 million (22%). The jail revenue received in 2022, \$296,780, represents 19% of the actual jail expenditures.

The vast majority of the budget for the Sheriff’s office is for personnel-related expenses (salaries, insurance, overtime, on-call, etc.). In 2022, 76% of the actual expenses in the Sheriff’s Office were personnel related. The remaining 24% was used for operational purposes including training, equipment, maintenance agreements, supplies, vehicle repairs, fuel, etc.

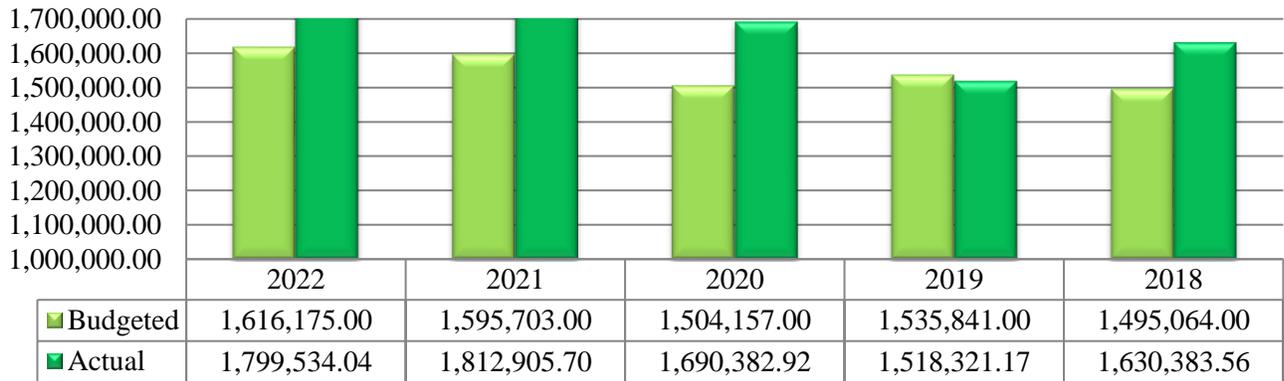
## 2022 Budgeted vs. Actual

Department	Budgeted Expenses	Budgeted Revenue	Budgeted Net	Actual Expenses	Actual Revenue	Actual Net
Sheriff	6,250,583.00	1,479,020.00	4,771,563.00	6,118,607.45	1,567,448.25	4,551,159.20
Emergency Management	82,486.00	23,822.00	58,664.00	79,686.76	35,119.47	44,567.29
Enhanced 911	137,478.00	98,333.00	39,145.00	124,042.05	194,676.84	-70,634.79
Wireless Communications	130,229.00	15,000.00	115,229.00	63,755.20	2,289.48	61,465.72
<b>Total:</b>	<b>6,600,776.00</b>	<b>1,616,175.00</b>	<b>4,984,601.00</b>	<b>6,386,091.46</b>	<b>1,799,534.04</b>	<b>4,586,557.42</b>

## Budgeted vs. Actual Expenses - Historical Review



## Budgeted vs. Actual Revenue - Historical Review



## Budgeted vs. Actual Net - Historical Review

