

Annual Report

2017

Friendswood Police Department

Friendswood Police Department

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Despite a slight increase in the crime rate in 2017, Friendswood continues to be one of the safest cities in Texas.

Overview

Each calendar year, the Friendswood Police Department reports crime statistics to the FBI through the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) program. After Federal review, these statistics become official and they are useful in tracking year-to-year incidents and trends. This document contains UCR data for the calendar year 2017 (January 1, 2017 through December 31, 2017). The report is organized by crime category (violent and property) and by type of crime within each category. The report contains analysis of current trends and identifies challenges for the future. The Uniform Crime Report index crime rate increased during 2017 compared to 2016. The crime rate remains low, preserving Friendswood as one of the safest cities in Texas.

Highlights

Friendswood is a safe place to live and work. The Friendswood Police Department utilizes strategies to assure crime control, traffic safety, reduce emergency response times and enhance the profession of law enforcement. The audited 2016 crime statistics validated by the FBI are presented in the table below.

City	Population	Offenses	Crime Rate
Friendswood	39,402 ¹	329	8.35
Sugar Land	90,088	1,537	17.06
Missouri City	75,607	1,407	18.61
Deer Park	34,156	657	19.24
Pearland	112,814	2,225	19.72
League City	101,436	2,019	19.90
Alvin	26,100	701	26.86
Pasadena	154,648	4,699	30.39
Galveston	50,667	2,015	39.77
Texas City	48,095	2,008	41.75
Houston	2,334,338	124,816	53.47
Webster	11,213	903	80.53

¹ The FBI provides yearly population totals for UCR participating agencies (based on current Census data estimations.)

Historical Data

	1977	1987	1997	2007	2017
Population	9,000	20,157	29,053	36,823	40,634
Number of Sworn Officers	14	31	40	56	64
Crimes per 1,000 residents	51.56	30.56	15.52	15.45	8.91
Total UCR Part I Crimes	464	616	451	569	371

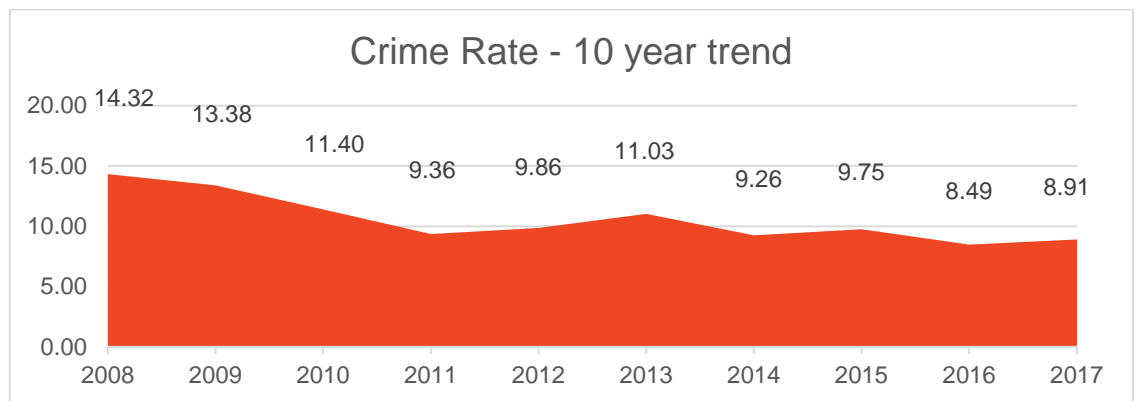
Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR)

The Friendswood Police Department participates in the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) program, along with most law enforcement agencies across the country. UCR is a standardized process of collecting information on crimes on a national basis, identifying crimes by their nature, not by what they are called in each individual state. UCR makes possible the analysis of crime trends primarily through the Crime Index. To track the variations in crime, the UCR data collection program uses a statistical summary tool referred to as the Crime Index. Rather than collecting reports of all crimes that were committed in a particular year, UCR collects the reports of eight index crimes. The crimes in this group are all serious, either by their very nature or because of the frequency with which they occur, and present a common enforcement problem to police agencies. Arson is an index crime in the matrix of reported offenses. Each crime in the index is defined and grouped into two categories – crimes against persons and crimes against property.

Crimes Against Persons	Crimes Against Property
Murder/Homicide	Burglary
Sexual Assault/Rape	Larceny/Theft
Robbery	Motor Vehicle Theft
Aggravated Assault	Arson

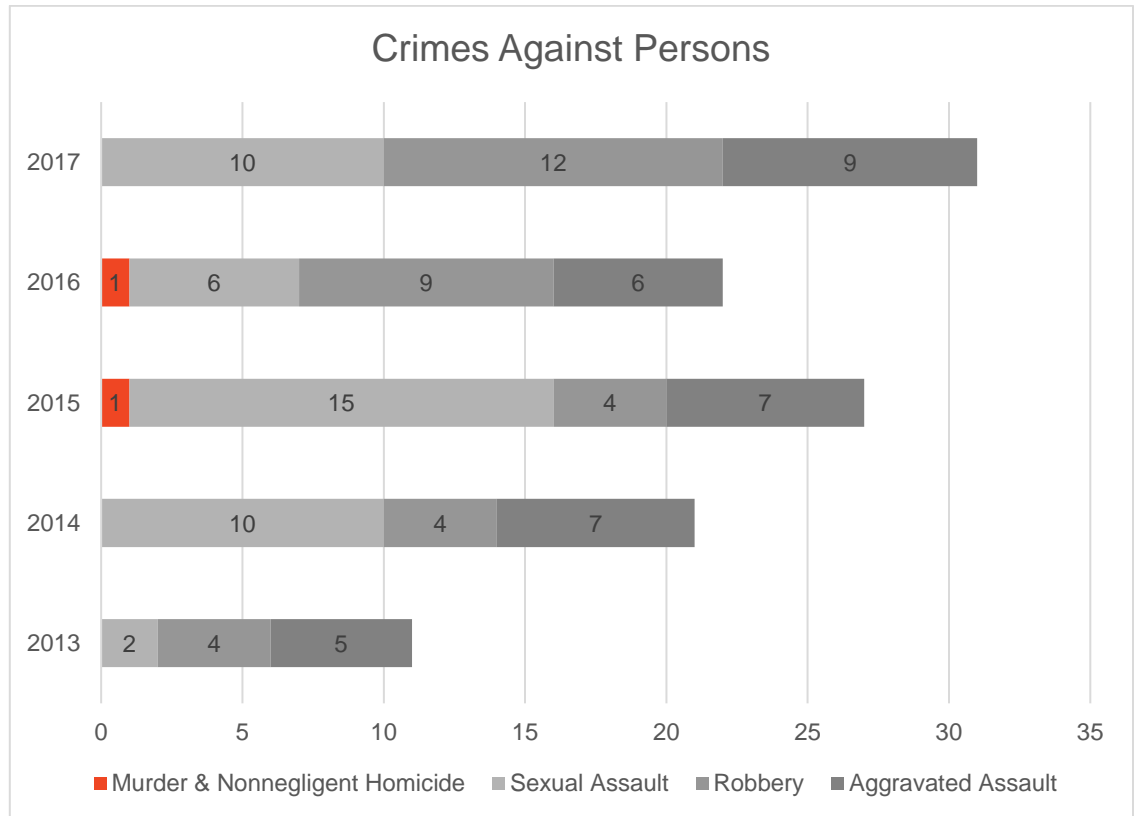
Crime Rate

The crime rate is calculated by adding up the total Part I UCR crime of a city, dividing the sum by the total population and then multiplying by 1,000. The crime rate reflects the rate of crime as it impacts fixed population and does not consider the many visitors that come into the city to work, recreate or visit Friendswood residents.



UCR Part I Crimes

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Murder & Non-negligent Homicide	0	0	1	1	0
Sexual Assault	2	10	15	6	10
Robbery	4	4	4	9	12
Aggravated Assault	5	7	7	6	9
Violent Crime	11	21	27	22	31
Burglary	89	70	61	36	56
Theft	311	249	279	265	255
Motor Vehicle Theft	18	20	17	16	19
Arson	1	3	3	0	1
Property Crime	419	342	360	317	331
Total Index Crime	430	363	387	339	362

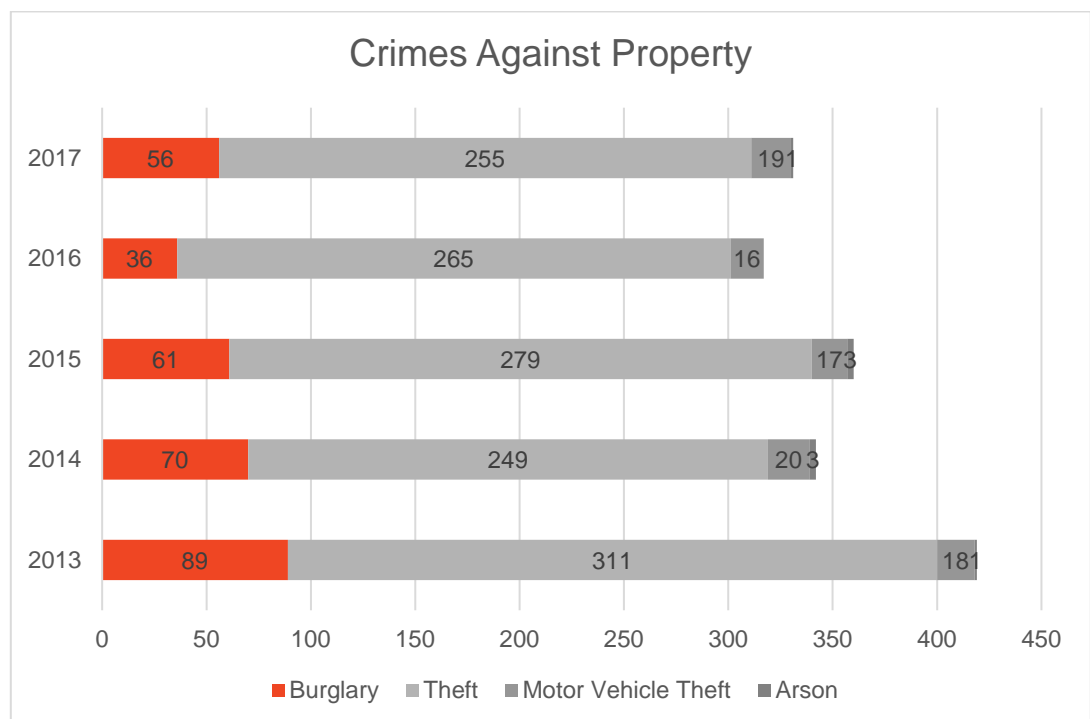


Aggravated Assaults

During 2017, there were 9 reported aggravated assaults. The number of aggravated assaults increased in 2017 over the 6 cases reported in 2016. A review of all reported aggravated assaults in 2017 showed 7 were committed with the use of firearms. Of those seven, three were committed by suspects who were non-residents.

Robbery

Robbery is a violent crime that frequently results in injury to the victim. Included in this category are assaults to commit actual or attempted robberies. During 2017, there were 12 reported robberies and 6 of those robberies involved a firearm. In every case of robbery involving a firearm, the suspects were non-residents.



Burglary

There were a total of 56 structure burglaries during 2017; 33 of those burglaries occurred in the months following the flooding by Hurricane Harvey. A review of the 33 burglaries reported since Hurricane Harvey show that 20 of those burglaries involved homes or businesses damaged during the flood. Residents in the flood-affected homes left their homes vacant during renovation and repairs. The criminal element has targeted these homes and homeowners.

Theft

There were a total of 255 thefts reported in 2017. 81 of those thefts were thefts from motor vehicles (burglary of a motor vehicle).

UCR Part II Crimes

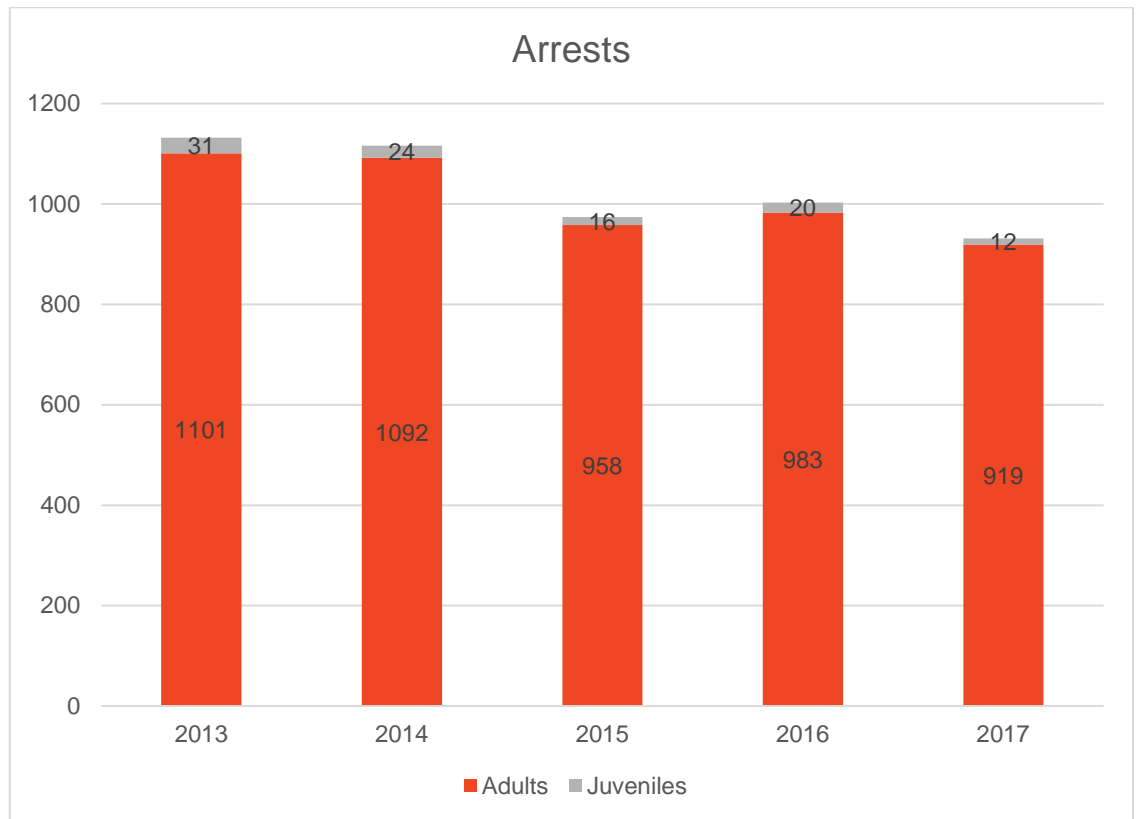
Part II Crimes are other crime classifications outside those defined as Part I Crimes of the Uniform Crime Reporting. For the purposes of UCR, these crimes are not tracked for the number of crimes reported; however, UCR does track arrests on these crimes. This report will include Part II Crimes as reported to this Department. For the purposes of this annual report, statistics will be reported in accordance to UCR standards. These types of crimes represent the vast majority of the work of the Department. Part II Crimes are listed as follows:

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Criminal Mischief/Vandalism	114	79	106	72	89
Driving Under the Influence	177	148	117	104	121
Drugs/Narcotics	264	306	257	262	143
Forgery/Counterfeit	22	41	41	38	34
Fraud	149	188	236	205	156
Liquor Law Violations	21	18	20	18	8
Runaway	20	19	12	4	14
Sex Offenses	9	11	6	3	7
Simple Assault	135	152	150	126	107
Weapons Violations	22	28	24	34	24
Other Offenses	453	443	406	451	330
Total Part 2 Crimes	1386	1433	1375	1317	1033

The number of Part II offenses decreased 22% – 1033 in 2017 compared to 1317 in 2016.

Arrests

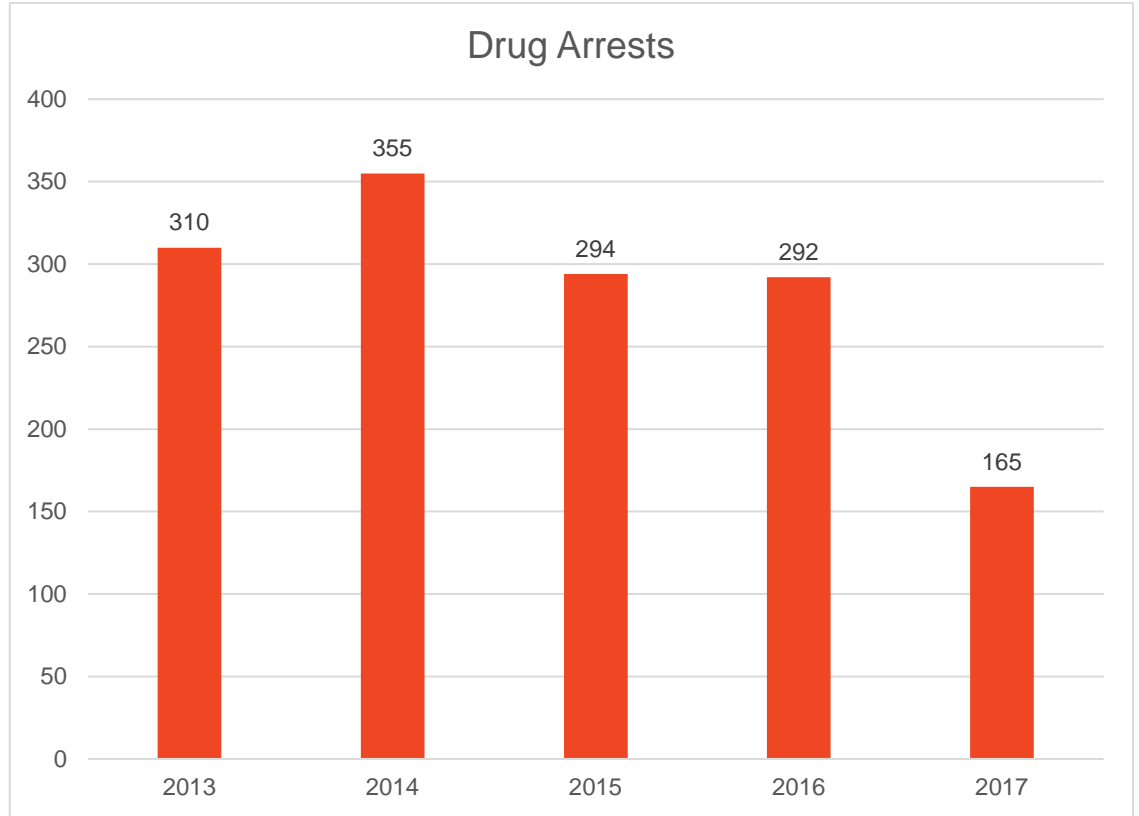
There was a decline in the number of arrests in 2017 – 919 in 2017 compared to 983 in 2016. This is a 7% decrease in arrests.



An analysis of arrest data shows that 75 percent of the arrest activity undertaken by the Police Department involve persons who do not reside within the City. This statistic highlights major areas of concern for the community: organized criminal activity in the region, an increase in population/mobility through the city and finally, the large amount of illegal drug-related activity in the greater Houston area.

The effect of spillover crime from adjacent communities is created because of the ease that criminals travel from one community to another. Friendswood borders Pearland, League City, Houston and Alvin. Criminals maximize their opportunity to commit crimes in areas with the highest expected net payoff per crime given their mode of travel. Jurisdictional boundaries are usually not a factor. In fact, criminal episodes of burglary, robbery and theft frequently cross jurisdictional boundaries.

Drug-related Arrests



Drug-related arrests are down. There were 165 drug-related arrests in 2017 compared to 292 in 2016. Arrests in the Penalty Group 1 classification (opiates & LSD) were 48% of the arrests, followed by marijuana at 20%.

Traffic Data

In 2017, officers issued citations for 4,614 infractions – compared to the 6,329 violations cited in 2016. The overwhelming majority were issued for unsafe driving. Examples of this are speeding, failure to yield right-of-way and failing to stop for traffic control devices.

High visibility enforcement measures help to control crime due to increased officer visibility that traffic stops generate. Criminals who regularly see officers in a particular area will likely avoid the area when shopping for a location to victimize citizens.

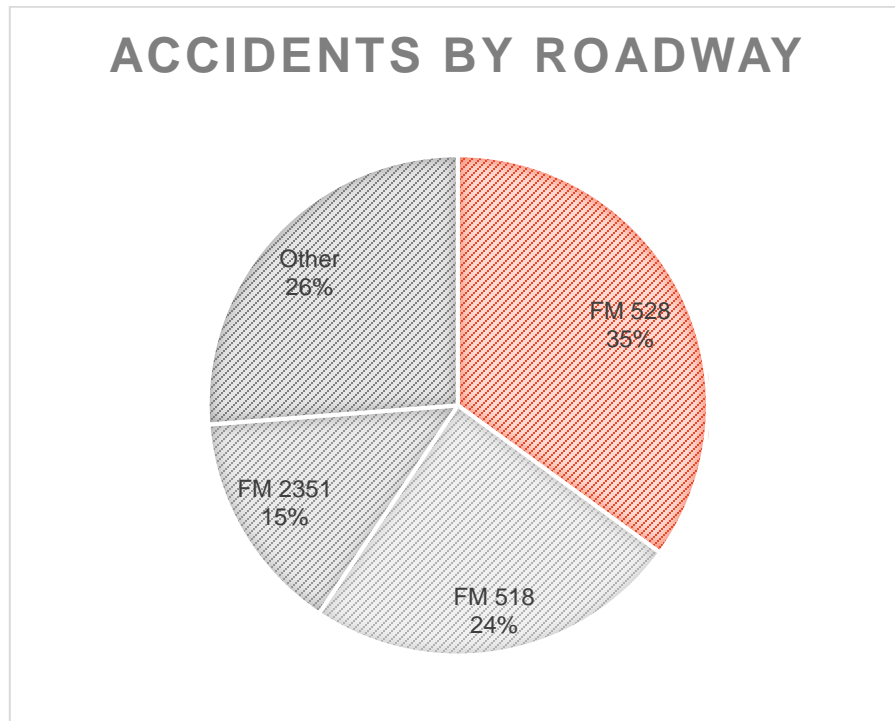
The most common complaint received from residents involves traffic issues such as speeding, reckless driving and crashes. The total number of crashes decreased 4 percent in 2017 – 555 in 2016 and 534 in 2017.

Crashes

There was one fatal crash on Friendswood roadways in 2017. It occurred on June 26 at 2:54 p.m. in the 300 block of E. Parkwood Avenue. A Volkswagen, driven by a 60-year old Houston woman, turned in front of an oncoming vehicle. She did not survive the crash. Parkwood (FM 528) is one of the busiest roadways in Friendswood.

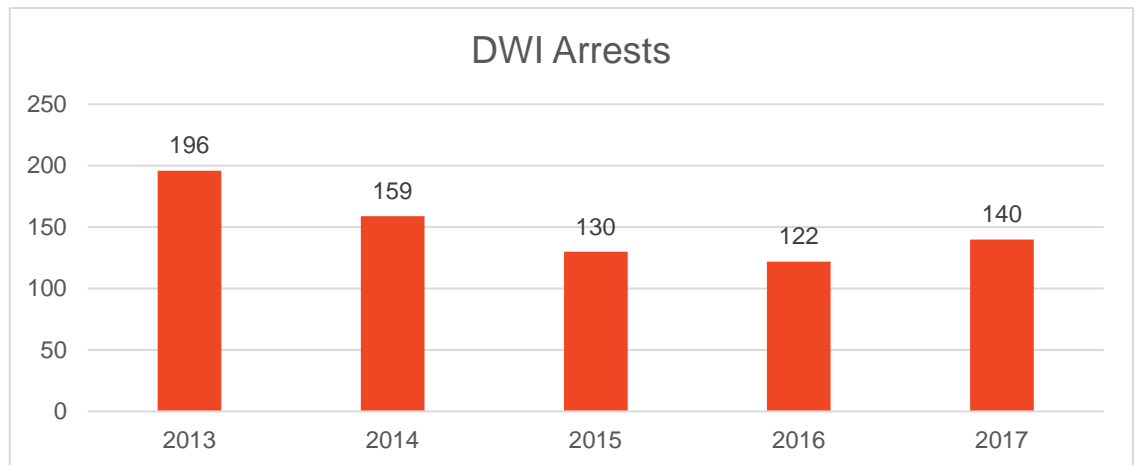
	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Fatalities	2	1	2	2	1
Injury Accidents	93	85	96	98	113
Non-injury Accidents	402	410	466	455	420
Total Accidents	497	496	564	555	534

The most frequent crash locations are on the three farm-to-market roadways, accounting for 74 percent of the reported crashes. Targeted enforcement is employed on these roadways based on the frequency of crashes. The Department continues to take proactive measures in order to improve safety on all city roadways.



Driving While Intoxicated

The Department works diligently to enforce Texas DWI laws and remove impaired drivers from our roadways. Through DWI education and enforcement, the roadways can be safer.



In 2017, there was a 15 percent increase in DWI arrests – 122 in 2016 compared to 140 in 2017.

School Crossing Guards/School Zone Enforcement

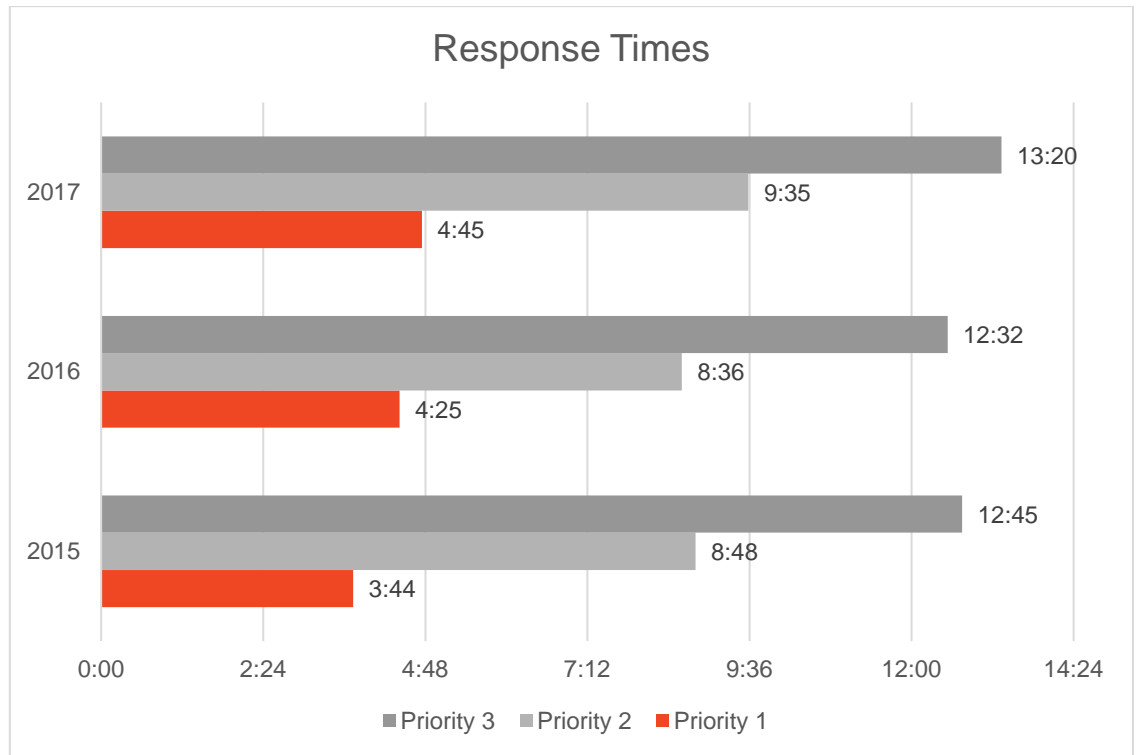
Many of our school children are able to get to and from school safely each day because of school crossing guards. This program is a cooperative effort with the Friendswood Police Department, Friendswood Independent School District and Clear Creek Independent School District. This program is an important part of the Police Department's overall strategy of maintaining high visibility in the community.

Our well-trained crossing guards help to accomplish the following goals:

- Discourage children from behaving unsafely near traffic, such as darting into the street without looking or crossing against a traffic signal.
- Use existing gaps in traffic to help students cross safely.
- Alert motorists that pedestrians are in the process of using the school crossing.
- Observe and report any incidents or conditions that present a potential safety hazard to the school children or the guard.

Calls for Service/Response Times

Calls for service include those calls where a person telephoned police to request an officer's response. In 2017, there were 16,258 calls for police service, an increase of 3 percent from the 15,804 calls for service in 2016. This increase is due in part to the more than 900 logged requests for water rescue during the Hurricane Harvey floods.



Priority 1 calls are defined as those requiring an immediate response and presence of law enforcement to protect individuals from injury, life-threatening, or other emergency situations.

Priority 2 calls are events reported of an occurrence and there are no indicators of risk or threat associated with Priority 1 calls. Examples of Priority 2 calls are thefts and accidents involving damage only.

Priority 3 calls are events that require an officer to respond where the situation will not deteriorate if the assigned officer is not immediately available. Examples of Priority 3 calls are vehicle unlocks and reports of criminal mischief that occurred earlier.

Special Services

Crime Prevention

The crime prevention program addresses quality of life issues and offers numerous community safety programs to the citizens of Friendswood. Programs sponsored by the crime prevention office include: home inspections, Rape Aggression Defense (RAD) program, child safety seat inspections, neighborhood crime prevention/safety programs, National Night Out, and problem-oriented policing (POP) patrols.

School Resource Officer Program/Drug Abuse Resistance Education

The Friendswood Police Department, along with the Friendswood Independent School District, continue this strategic partnership in the community, please an emphasis on providing a safe and healthy environment for school-aged children thrive. Both programs provide high quality police services in order to improve the quality of life for students and faculty of the schools in Friendswood. These officers develop relationships with the children while working together with the school district to identify and resolve issues affecting public safety in our schools and community. Monthly school safety meetings are used to discuss school issues, emergency management, public safety needs, as well as other student safety topics.

Police K-9 Units

The Friendswood Police Department has two dual purpose police K-9s. K-9 "Ajay", a male German shepherd, is a dual purpose narcotics detection and patrol K-9. His service began in 2012 and his handler is Officer Brandon Blair. Ajay's capabilities include: narcotic detection, criminal apprehension, tracking with article detection, open area and building searches for suspects, area article searches, officer and handler protection and search for missing persons.

In 2017, Ajay is responsible for finding 19.94 grams of marijuana and 15 grams of methamphetamine and .30 grams of cocaine. Ajay completed 38 vehicle searches for narcotics, 5 building/area searches for suspects, 8 building/area searches for narcotics, 2 evidence searches and 2 suspect apprehensions.

"Yoery", a male Belgian Malinois, is a dual purpose explosives detection and patrol K-9. His service began in 2013 and his handler is Officer Carlos Granillo. Yoery's capabilities include: explosive detection, criminal apprehension, tracking with article detection, open area and building searches for suspects, area article searches, officer and handler protection, and search for missing persons. Given that explosives are the primary method used by terrorists to inflict suffering, Yoery's ability to sniff out explosives has become integral to security operations on every level.

Yoery successfully apprehended a suspect and completed 7 evidence searches with 2 evidence finds.

Crime Victim Assistance Program

For the past 19 years, the Friendswood Police Department has successfully secured grant funding for the Crime Victim Assistance program. This grant is an 80 percent reimbursement grant that funds the salary of a full-time crime victim liaison. Victims of crime receive many services through the program, including crisis counseling, advocacy, information and referral. Gina Mendez has more than 20 years of crime victim liaison experience and brings a wealth of knowledge, support and networking contacts to provide crime victims with everything they need to effectively deal with the trauma of victimization.

Future Challenges and Opportunities

Challenges

Rising citizen expectations

Citizen expectations are high regarding crime reporting, emergency response effectiveness, citizen care, public safety and public engagement in police work. People are becoming more distanced from each other and expect police officers to step in for matters – big and small.

Changing nature of criminal activity

Increasingly, criminal activity is organized, global, digital, and operating across complex networks. Crime is becoming more mobile and sophisticated. Criminals easily move around, both nationally and internationally, use sophisticated equipment and technology, and are increasingly better at covering their crimes. Criminals across the globe use the Internet to conduct cybercrime and fraud that often is outside the scope and jurisdiction of local and State law enforcement.

Future leaders

A priority for the police department is training and developing future leaders. Recruitment, preparation and professional development will affect the success of the police department. Predicting the future is complicated and nearly impossible. Often, unforeseen and uncontrollable events dictate modifications to the business model of the agency. This is especially true during natural disasters, such as Hurricane Harvey. Terrorist activities and active shooter events have transformed how police train and respond to events.

Mental Health

Law enforcement encounters with people with mental illnesses are particularly challenging. These encounters often take more time than other calls for service, require officers to have special training and skills, and may depend on the availability of community mental health resources for successful outcomes. Typically, officers have repeat contacts with the same individuals who have unresolved mental health needs and are mostly in response to a person with mental illness committing a minor offense, but occasionally, involve violent situations, risking the safety of all involved.

Opportunities

The Friendswood Police Department is answering these challenges by engaging citizens, empowering police officers, optimizing ways of working, predicting and improving services, evaluating current partnerships and proactively managing change.

Although predicting the future is difficult, the department analyzes current trends and emerging technology. To function effectively in the future, the department will need to adapt and to train in new techniques in response to change. At the same time, criminals will work hard to outwit new programs as a challenge to law and order.

Video surveillance is becoming commonplace and the police department is capitalizing on this technology to effectively detect and dissuade criminal activity. The Department uses public and private systems to identify and apprehend suspects. As technology improves, this will become a more widespread, essential tool for police.

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