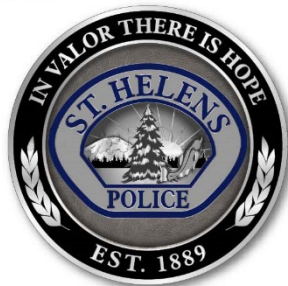


# *St. Helens Police Department*

## **2024 Annual Report**



*The mission of the St. Helens Police Department is to work with all citizens to make our city a place where people live safely, and to promote individual responsibility and community commitment.*



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## **St. Helens Police Department**

The St Helens Police Department provides quality and professional law enforcement services to the citizens of St. Helens. The St. Helens Police Department cooperates with local, state, and federal law enforcement, in addition to partnering agencies, keeping the community safe.

Administrative Staff - Police Administration staff are responsible for coordinating police department efforts with other local law enforcement and criminal justice agencies, regional, state, and national organizations to ensure the safety of department personnel and our community. Staff are responsible for the annual reports, scheduling, training, and updating policies and procedures.

Patrol – Consists of two shifts of uniformed patrol officers. These officers provide emergency responses, traffic enforcement, criminal investigations, routine patrol functions, community engagement, and events.

Investigations Division (Detectives)- Provide professional and thorough investigations of reported criminal activity, with information received from other agencies or based on a patrol officer's original report. These investigations are complex, detailed, and require our detectives' full-time attention.

Code Enforcement – Ensures the livability of our city by enforcing city ordinances, responding to animal complaint calls, and abandoned vehicles.

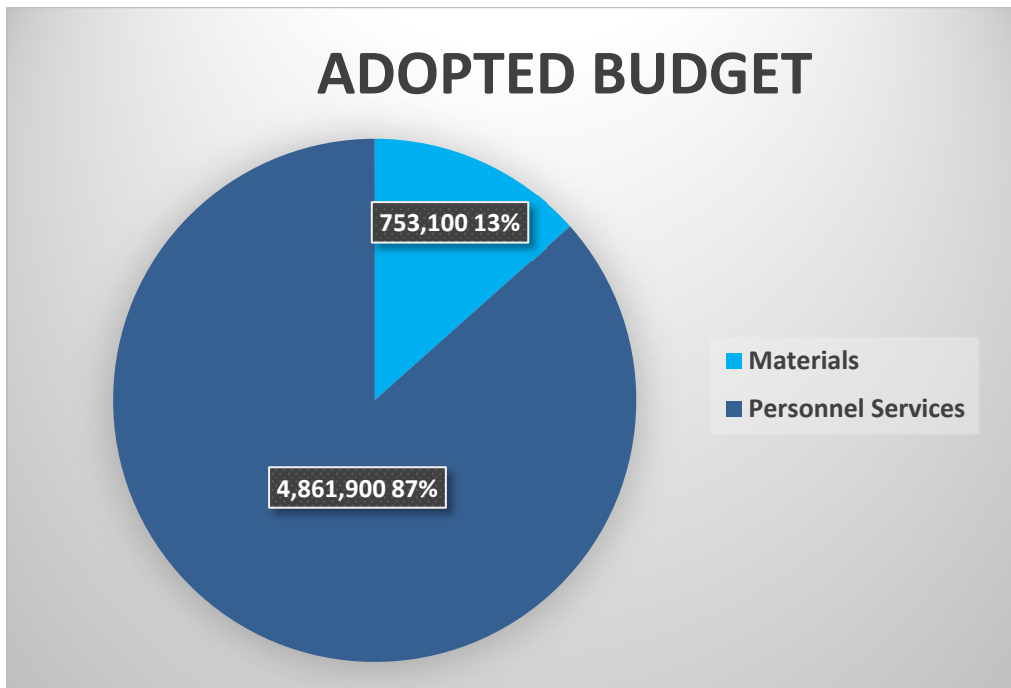
Records / Evidence – Responsible for entering and maintaining all reports and records as well as receiving, processing, and storing all evidence and department property.

Staffing – The proposed budget includes 22 sworn positions. Those positions consist of the Chief of Police, Lieutenant, three Sergeants, two Detectives (one Detective Sergeant and one Detective), and 15 Patrol Officers. Additionally, we have three non-sworn positions: two Records / Property and Evidence Specialists and one Code Enforcement Officer. Currently there are three open Police Officer positions and one open Records / Property and Evidence Specialist position.

## DEPARTMENT BUDGET

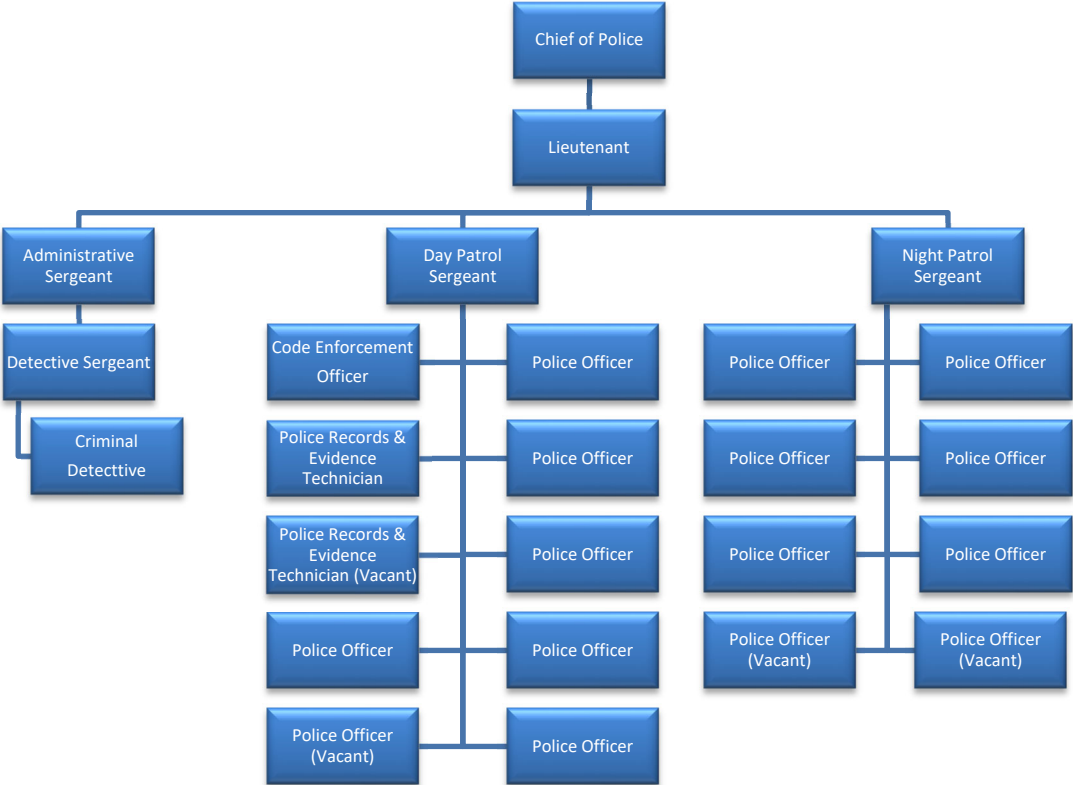
The following table compares the size of the St. Helens Police Department and its budget between fiscal years 2020-21 through 2023-24.

	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Population	13,915	14,560	14,371	14,437
Total Budget	\$3,819,000	\$4,302,000	\$5,200,000	\$5,615,000
Sworn Personnel	20	20	22	22
Non-Sworn Personnel	3	3	3	3
Department Personnel Total	23	23	25	25
Officers Per Thousand Residents	1.43	1.37	1.53	1.52



**The total budget for the St. Helens Police Department during FY 2023-24 is \$5,615,000**

# 2024 DEPARTMENT STRUCTURE



# 2024 ITEMS OF INTEREST

## COMMUNITY EVENTS –

The St. Helens Police Department is a proud participant in our local community events, and 2024 was no exception. The St. Helens Police Department hosted several booths, handed out swag, and enjoyed engaging with the citizens in our community.

### CITIZENS DAY AT MCCORMICK PARK –



**PARTNERHSIP WITH THE ST. HELENS SCHOOL DISTRICT-** The St. Helens Police Department along with the Columbia County Sheriff's Office joined in welcoming students back to the 2024-2025 school year.





CIVIL WAR 2024-  
Scappoose High School vs St. Helens High School.  
The St. Helens Police Officers Participated  
in the years long Civil War football game.

**NATIONAL NIGHT OUT** – St. Helens Police Department hosted a booth along with many other local agencies from across the county at the Columbia County Sheriff’s Office for National Night Out. The night focuses on developing partnerships with local agencies and citizens.



The St. Helens Police Department participated in numerous community events such as supporting mental health at the Nami Walk, providing extra patrols during the 13 Nights on the River events, having fun at the Library's Vehicle Petting Zoo, handing out toys and treats at Trunk or Treat, and visiting Creekside Junior Academy.

**NAMI WALK** – Participated in Nami Walk in support of St. Helens mental health.



**LIBRARY VEHICLE PETTING ZOO**



**13 NIGHTS** - Officers patrolled on foot while engaging with the community at 13 Nights on the River





**KIWANIS PARADE**



**CREEKSIDE JUNIOR ACCADEMY**

**TRUNK OR TREAT**



**IN THE KNOW –**

**POLICE ACADEMY GRADUATION** – Patrol Officer Johnathon Sprinzl graduated from the Oregon Police Academy on March 1, 2024.

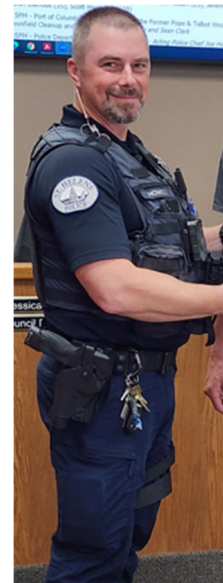


**NEW HIRE** – On September 16, 2024, the St. Helens Police Department welcomed new hire, Officer Mark Kletke.



**YEAR OF SERVICE AWARDS -**

Officer Jeremy Howell was honored for his 25 years of service. Officer Howell was also the recipient of the Community Impact Award for his commitment to the St. Helens community by embodying the principles of service, compassion, and integrity. The St. Helens Police Department is proud to have Officer Howell as part of our agency.



Officer Raethke: Five years of service



Officer Massey: Five years of service



## RETIREMENTS-

**SERGEANT Jon Eggers** was hired on September 13, 1999, as a patrol officer. He served in that position until July 1, 2019, when he was promoted to sergeant. He retired from the St. Helens Police Department in 2024 as a sergeant. Additionally, he served as the St. Helens Police Department's K-9 handler for 20 years.

As K-9 handler, Eggers worked with St. Helens K-9 Bosco who served from 2003-2010, Lykos who served from 2010-2014, and Ryder who served from 2016 to 2023.

Throughout his years of service at the St. Helens Police Department, Sergeant Jon Eggers received numerous awards including Supervisor of the Year, Lifesaving Awards, Exemplary Service Awards, a Meritorious Service Award, and Community Service Awards. He honorably retired from the St. Helens Police Department in September 2024.



**OFFICER Matt Molden** was hired on October 20, 1999. Officer Molden served as a sergeant for several years and received several awards including the Life Saving Award and Exemplary Service Award. Officer Molden honorably retired from the St. Helens Police Department in October 2024.



Sergeant Eggert and Officer Molden were highly respected by fellow officers and our community. We are grateful for their service and wish them well in retirement.

**OFFICER OF THE YEAR – Jamin Coy**



**Patrol Officer Jamin Coy** was selected as the St. Helens Police Department’s Officer of the Year. Officer Coy was described as one of the hardest working officers. He was recognized for his professionalism, courage, and dedication. He never hesitated to fill open shifts and responded to assist his fellow officers at all hours. In 2024, Officer Coy was involved in two calls where his actions helped save the lives of St. Helens citizens. He also assisted in apprehending a suspect who stabbed and nearly killed a St. Helens resident.

## PROSECUTION OF JUSTIN MORTON –

Justin Morton was arrested on January 22, 2024, on charges of Unlawful Manufacturing of Methamphetamine, Unlawful Delivery of Methamphetamine, Unlawful Possession of Methamphetamine, Driving While Suspended, Unlawful Possession of Firearm, and Probation Violation.



**William Bigley** was arrested on January 24, 2024, for an outstanding warrant for three counts of Sexual Abuse I and a single count of Unlawful Sexual Penetration I. Bigley was lodged at the Columbia County Jail.

Bigley's arrest was the result of a three-week investigation that started from a report made to the St. Helens Police Department. Investigators presented the case to a Columbia County Grand Jury, which indicted Bigley on all charges.

**Colten Thompson** was arrested on Wednesday, February 21, 2024. Thompson was interviewed by investigators and transported to the Columbia County Jail where he was lodged for three counts of Sexual Abuse II, three counts of Sexual Abuse III, luring a Minor, Online Sexual Corruption of a Minor II, and Encouraging Child Sexual Abuse II.

Thompson's arrest was the result of a six-week investigation which started from a report made to the St. Helens Police Department. The investigation revealed that Thompson had sexual contact with a minor. Investigators completed their investigation and lured Thompson to Campbell Park where he was arrested.

**Anthony Trenkler** was indicted by a grand jury on September 26, 2024, on three counts of Sexual Abuse in the First Degree, four counts of Attempted Sexual Abuse in the First Degree, Sexual Abuse in the Second Degree, five counts of Sexual Abuse in the Third Degree, and Furnishing Alcohol to a Person Under 21 Years of Age.

The indictment capped a two-week investigation that was initiated after Trenkler was arrested on September 6, 2024, on charges related to a sexual abuse report received by the St. Helens Police Department. The St. Helens detectives identified additional victims related to Trenkler's work as a cheerleading coach at Vault Elite Cheer in St. Helens.

**Eric Stearns and Mark Collins** were arrested in November 2024. St. Helens officers arrested one current and one former St. Helens High School teacher on sexual abuse charges.

Stearns and Collins' arrests capped a two-month investigation that was initiated by the St. Helens Police Department regarding allegations of historical sexual abuse which occurred at St. Helens High School. Stearns was a current teacher at St. Helens High School at the time of his arrest and Collins was a retired teacher. After receiving reports of the alleged sexual abuse, St. Helens detectives immediately conducted interviews and obtained a subpoena for records related to the allegations. Former student victims were identified, and additional potential victims were also identified.

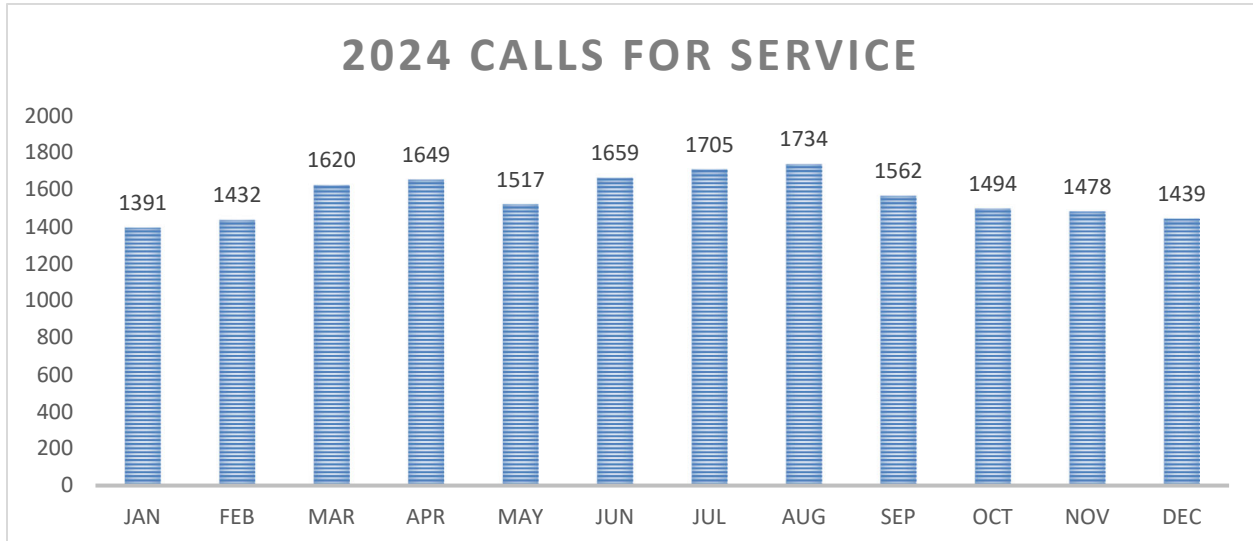
**Kathryn Wagner**, turned herself in on November 27, 2024, to Columbia County Sheriff's Office deputies in St. Helens on Criminal Mistreatment and Official Misconduct charges related to her employment as the St. Helens High School principal.

Wagner's arrest was the result of a two-month investigation initiated by the St. Helens Police Department regarding allegations of historical sexual abuse which occurred at St. Helens High School. On November 12, 2024, St. Helens detectives made two arrests of one current and one former high school teacher on sexual abuse charges. During the investigation, detectives discovered evidence that critical mandatory reports related to the abuse were not completed.



## ST. HELENS POLICE STATISTICS

The St. Helens Police Department receives dispatch services from the Columbia 911 Communications District (C-COM). A “call for service” is a request for police service in which an officer is dispatched, or an incident is found by an officer and the officer initiates a call. The following graph details the total calls for service as documented by C-COM each month during the calendar year.



The St. Helens Police Department recorded a total of **18,680** calls for service during the 2024 calendar year. January and February showed the greatest decrease, while June and July recorded higher calls for service than in 2023.

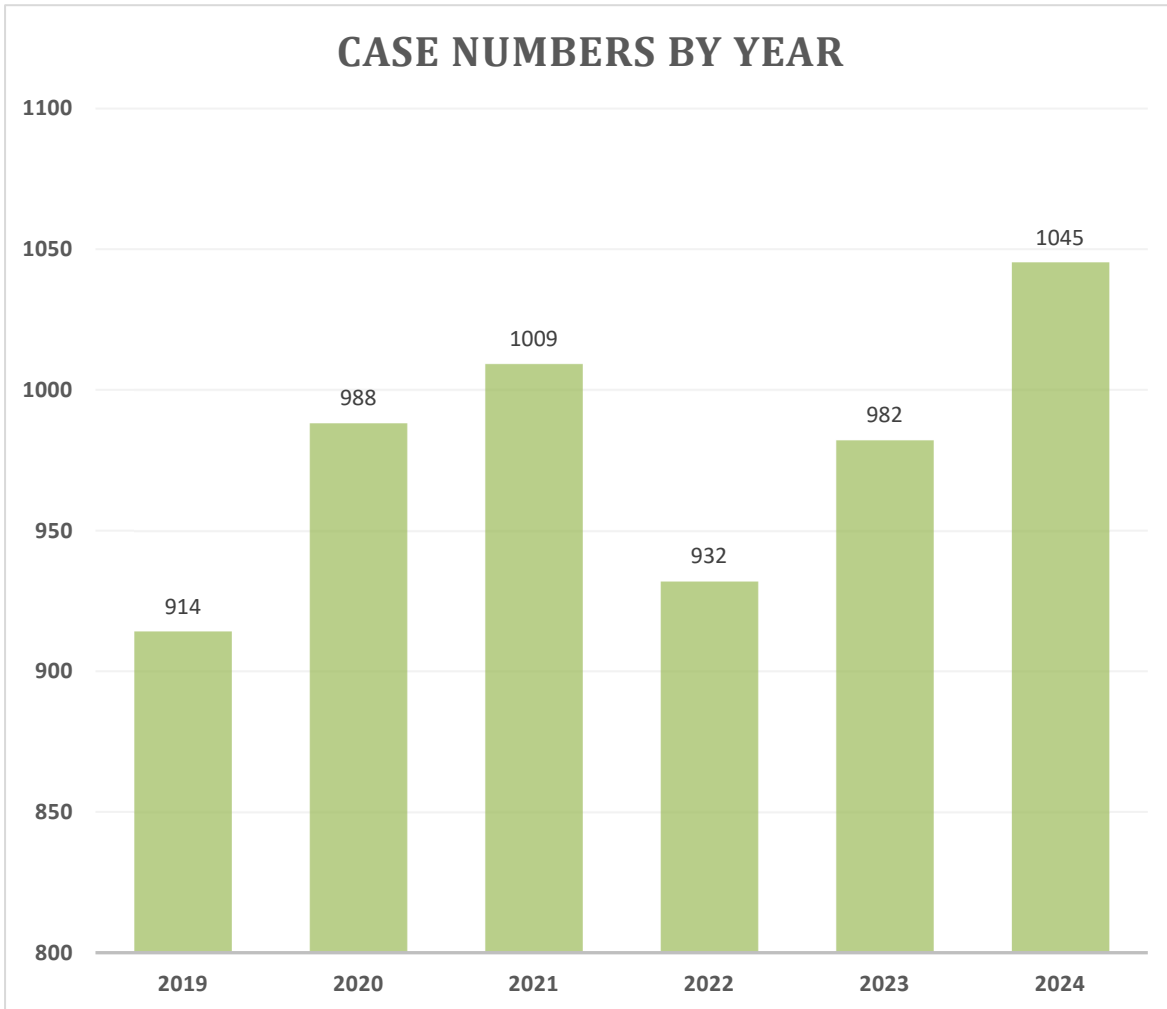
When a call for service is received by C-COM it is assigned a call type. Once again in 2024, next to officer-initiated traffic stops, “Follow Up” and “Suspicious Circumstances, Person, or Vehicle” continue to be the most common type of call for service. This statistic accentuates the proactive work of our officers who self-initiate this call type when they see something out of the ordinary. It also lends to the positive relationship the community has with our department and the citizenry’s readiness to engage with our services.

The table below details some of the most used call types over the past five years.

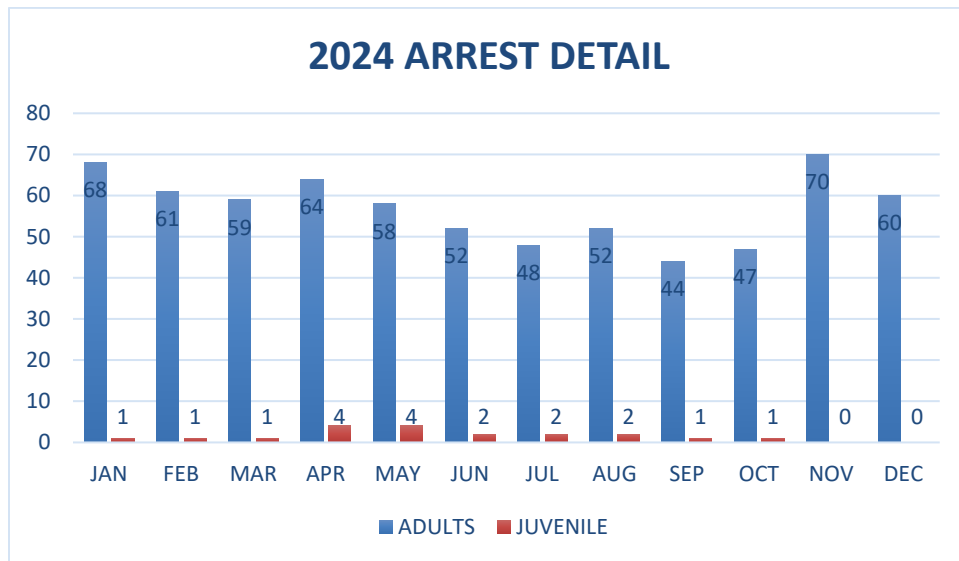
	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2023</u>	<u>2024</u>
<b>Total Dispatched Incidents</b>	16,941	17,131	15,967	15,800	18,680
<b>Suspicious (Circumstances, Person, or Vehicle)</b>	1,792	1,595	1,609	1,573	1,805
<b>Assist Public</b>	1,132	1,243	1,101	1,332	1,236
<b>Theft</b>	367	376	366	332	319
<b>Disturbance/Fight</b>	319	279	214	209	251
<b>Welfare Check</b>	426	392	412	483	678
<b>Domestic Violence</b>	270	268	270	343	331
<b>Juvenile Calls for Service</b>	258	225	255	327	424
<b>Traffic Complaint</b>	258	284	304	262	277
<b>Alarm Silent/Audible</b>	277	308	452	667	334
<b>Harassment</b>	324	344	344	306	415
<b>Criminal Mischief</b>	158	118	135	143	111
<b>Traffic Accident</b>	133	152	133	151	159
<b>Suicide (Threat or Attempt)</b>	127	102	102	157	170
<b>Abandoned 911/Hang up</b>	76	74	151	185	749
<b>Drug Activity</b>	87	53	57	82	92
<b>Hit and Run</b>	73	86	76	77	103
<b>Prowler</b>	40	41	47	52	33
<b>Assault</b>	47	50	62	49	40
<b>Burglary</b>	42	50	39	53	44
<b>Sex Crime</b>	70	47	54	53	93
<b>Death Investigation</b>	25	14	22	22	15

2024 Abandoned 911 Calls had a drastic increase due to some kids learning about 911 and exploring calls.

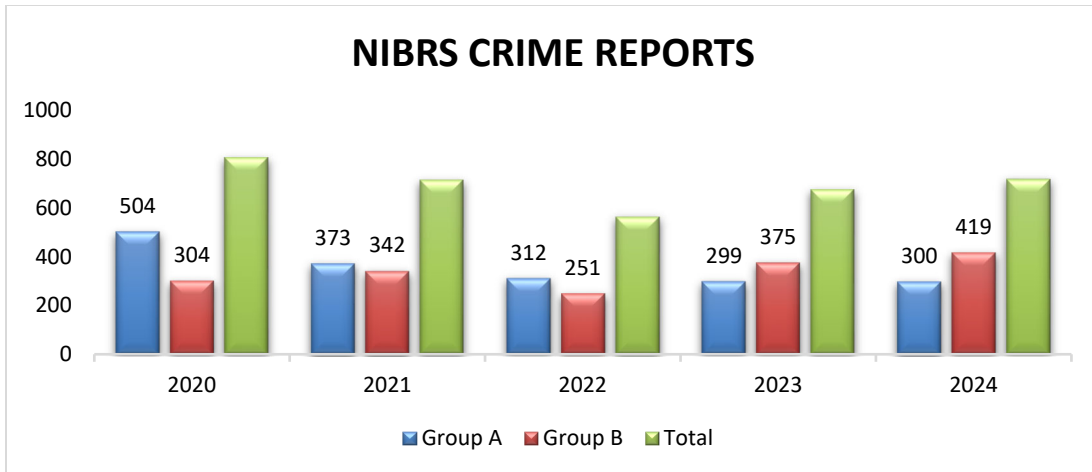
Not every call for service generates a police report. In fact, most of our calls for service are handled informally without any administrative action being taken. When it is necessary to write a police report, the report is assigned to a case number. The St. Helens Police Department used **1,045** case numbers in 2024. The following graph details the case numbers used during the past five (5) calendar years.



St. Helens police officers are also responsible for arresting criminal suspects. Many of these suspects are arrested as part of a criminal investigation, while others are the subject of outstanding arrest warrants. In some cases involving juvenile arrests, the suspect is taken into physical custody; however, most of these cases involve a simple referral to the Columbia County Juvenile Department. During the 2024 calendar year, the St. Helens Police Department was responsible for the arrest of 702 adult offenders and 19 juvenile offenders. The following chart details 2024 arrests by month.



The St. Helens Police Department submits all crime data to the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) of the FBI. NIBRS is a nationwide, cooperative statistical effort of more than 18,000 city, university and college, county, state, tribal, and federal law enforcement agencies voluntarily reporting data on offenses reported or known. Through NIBRS, the Police Department reports data on each offense within 52 specific crimes identified as Group A offenses such as Assaults, Rape, Robbery, Drug Offenses, and 10 other categories identified as Group B offenses such as Warrants, Trespassing, and DUII.



Our department receives this data from the Regional Justice Information Network (RegJIN). RegJIN is a multi-agency shared Records Management System designed to provide a common platform for police reports to increase collaboration between regional law enforcement agencies. As part of our agency’s contract with RegJIN they collect and report our NIBRS relevant data to the FBI, and we in turn look at those numbers as part of our annual statistical self-analysis.

To evaluate the data in more detail, it may be helpful to see just a few of the offense categories and compare.

Data collected over the past four (4) years.

		2021	2022	2023	2024
<b>Group A</b>	Rape	6	2	9	7
	Robbery	3	1	3	1
	Assault Felony*	18	33	29	42
	Assault Misdemeanor	53	57	66	54
	Burglary	32	35	24	22
	Theft**	119	90	104	113
	Theft of Vehicle	37	37	18	15
	Vandalism	33	32	32	26
	Drug Offense	22	16	14	20

<b>Group B</b>	Warrants	221	188	217	221
	Disorderly Conduct	34	30	36	42
	DUII	63	104	79	99
	Trespassing	56	46	43	57

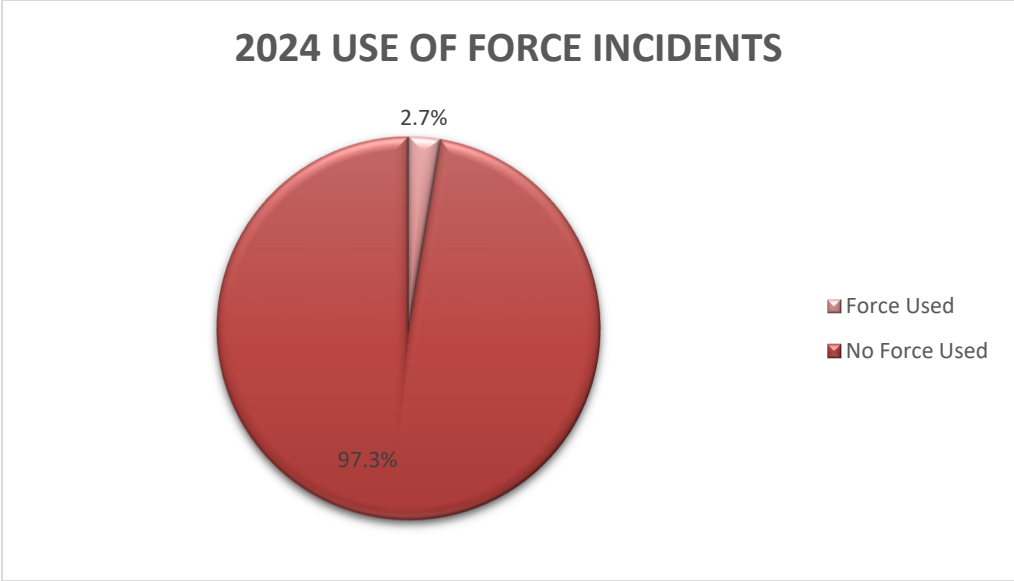
\* Simple Assault Felony includes aggravated assault. Additional Felonies include rape, robbery.

\*\* Theft includes several types of larcenies, theft of services, and shoplifting.

In a very small percentage of arrest incidents force is used to effect the arrest. For reporting purposes, physical force is defined as any use of a firearm, taser, oleoresin capsicum spray (OC) and other weapons, active counter strikes, or other physical force applied to a combative or resistive person. Use of force does not include mere presence, verbal commands, passive contact, or routine handcuffing techniques.

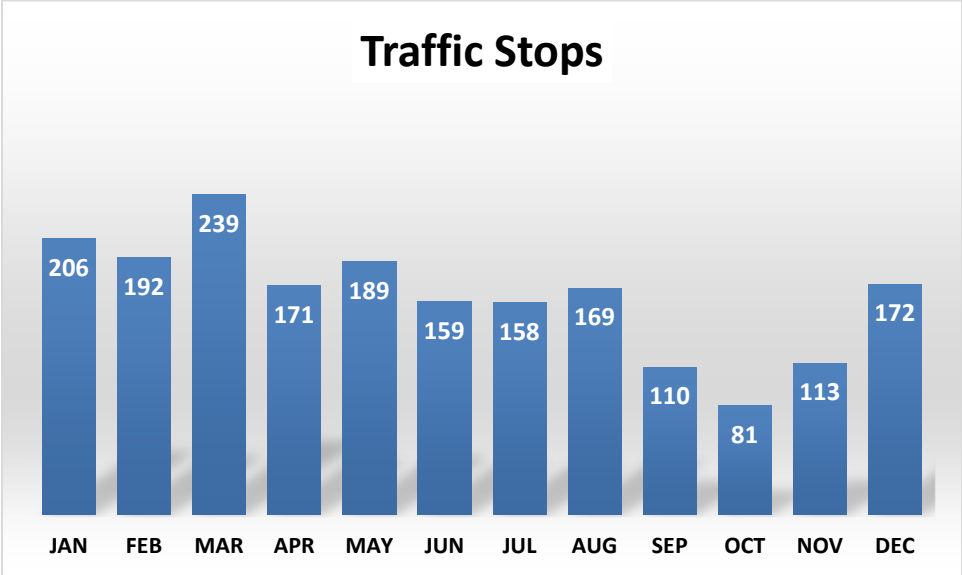
- During 2024, force was used in **19** of the 702 arrests, or 2.7% of the time.
- The most common type of force was Takedowns.

The St. Helens Police Department prides itself on its expert de-escalation training and field implementation. These techniques allow officers to avoid the use of force in complicated and tense situations.



In addition to calls for service, officers from the St. Helens Police Department are actively engaged in traffic enforcement. The focus of our traffic enforcement efforts is not based on issuing citations; rather it is aimed at changing or modifying unsafe driving behavior. The St. Helens Police Department conducted **1,959** traffic stops and issued 522 citations, to include E-citations, during the 2024 calendar year. This translates to approximately 73% of all traffic stops resulting in warnings. The following graph details the number of traffic stops each month over the past year.

## 2024 Traffic Stops Data

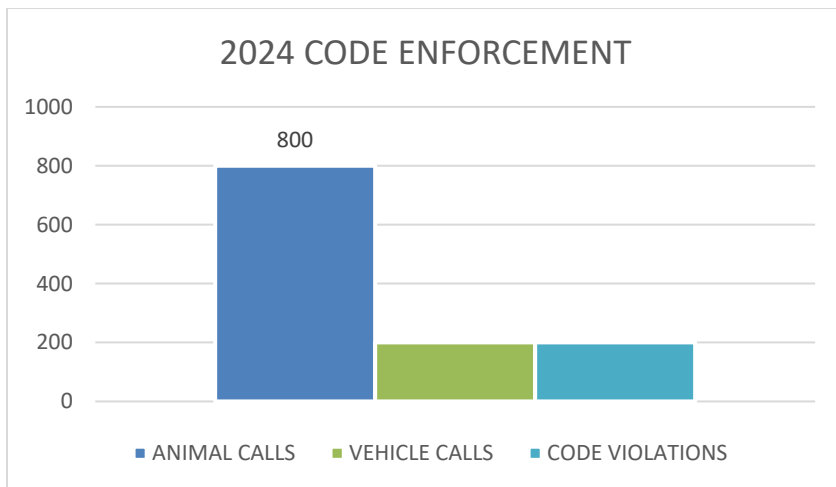


# CODE ENFORCEMENT

In 2024, St. Helens Police Department Code Enforcement Officer Medina responded to a total of 800 animal complaints; 200 city code violations - which include camping, noise complaints and littering; and 200 parking complaints - which include abandoned vehicles. Code Enforcement and sworn police officers continue to respond to citizens' concerns, ensuring the safety of our community and livability within St. Helens. Our department continues to engage the community daily and not just in emergency or enforcement situations.



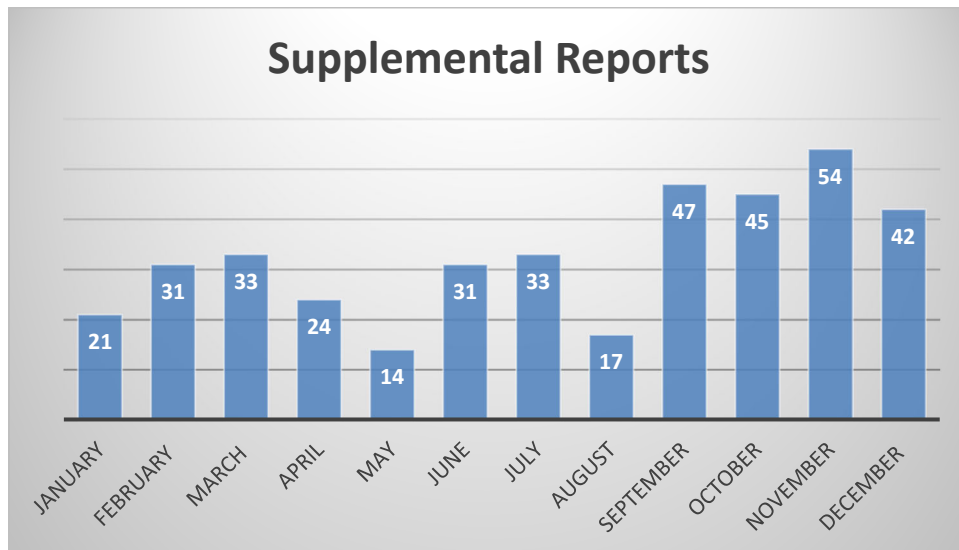
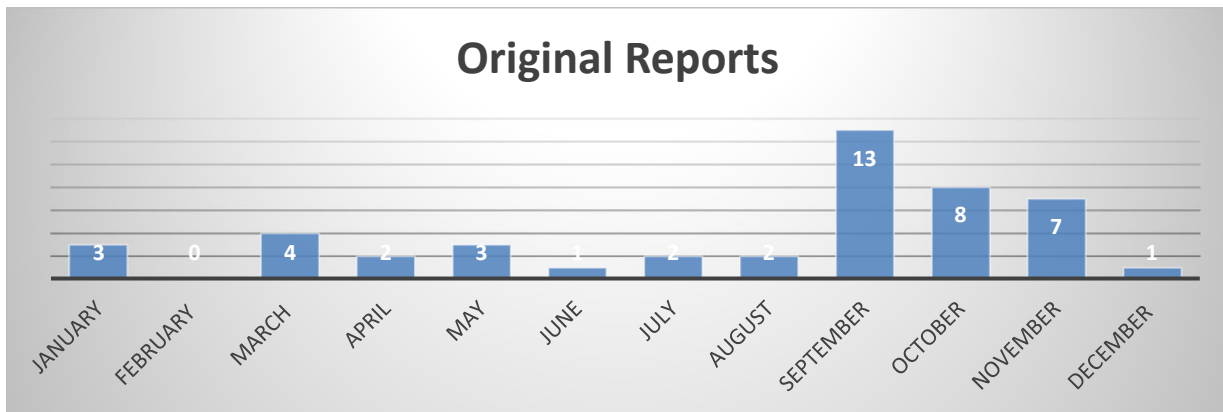
## CODE ENFORMCENT STATS FOR 2024



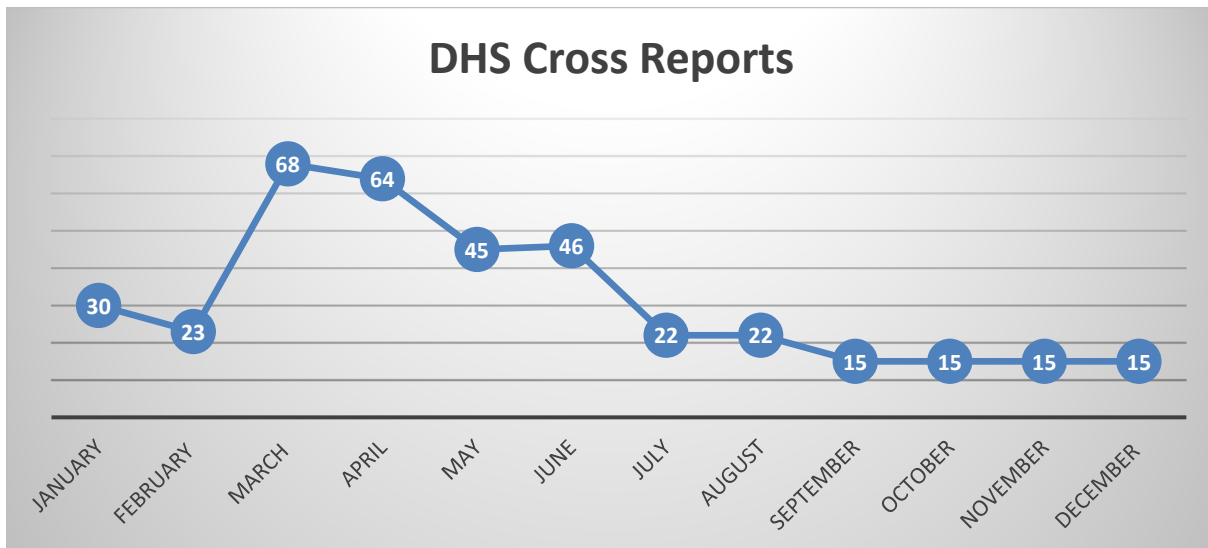


# INVESTIGATIONS DIVISION

The St. Helens Police Department Investigations Unit is essential to the department. Detectives completed a total of 818 reports in 2024. These reports did not include the review of 380 Department of Human Service Child Abuse reports, which were sent to the St. Helens Police Department in 2024. St. Helens Police Detectives review all child abuse reports that are forwarded to the St. Helens Police Department. The spike in September – November 2024 was due to the arrests of Stearns and Collins following investigations at the St. Helens High School. Supplemental reports are follow-up investigative reports from officers and detectives as they gather information about each case. There was a total of 392 supplemental reports.



St. Helens Police Detectives completed 60 Search Warrants in 2024. These Search Warrants have resulted in the seizure of electronic emails, personnel files, child pornography, the recovery of stolen property, bank statements related to financial elder abuse, cellular telephone GPS data, and digital devices that were suspected of being used in the distribution and possession of child pornography.



## DEPARTMENT MEMBERS



Acting Police Chief Joe Hogue

Serving St. Helens since July 1, 1998

Police Sergeant Jose Castilleja  
Serving St. Helens since August 6, 2007



Police Sergeant Evin Eustice  
Serving St. Helens since August 2, 2016



Police Sergeant Jon Eggers (Retired)  
Serving St. Helens since September 13, 1999



Police Sergeant Doug Treat

Serving St. Helens since July 20, 2020



Detective Sergeant Matt Smith

Serving St. Helens since July 20, 2020



Patrol Officer Dylan Gaston

Serving St. Helens since June 3, 2015



Patrol Officer Jamin Coy

Serving St. Helens since July 15, 2015



Detective Kolten Edwards

Serving St. Helens since November 5, 2018



Patrol Officer Brandon Haflich

Serving St. Helens since November 28, 2022



Patrol Officer Adam Hartless

Serving St. Helens since April 3, 2017



Patrol Officer Jeremy Howell

Serving St. Helens since October 3, 2004

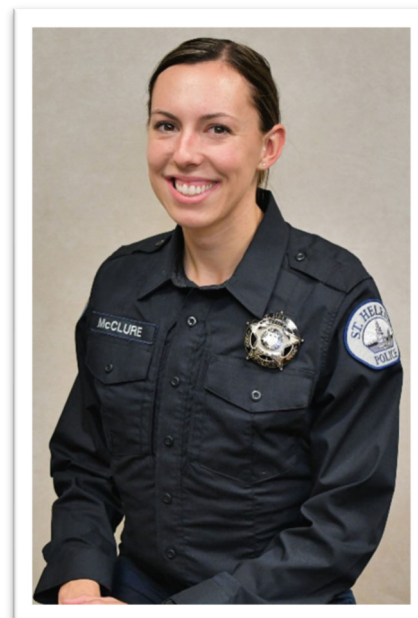
Patrol Officer Luke Marshall  
Serving St. Helens since June 30, 2021



Patrol Officer Terry Massey, Jr.  
Serving St. Helens since March 4, 2019



Patrol Officer McKenzie McClure  
Serving St. Helens since June 30, 2021







Patrol Officer Matthew Molden (Retired)

Serving St. Helens since October 21, 1999



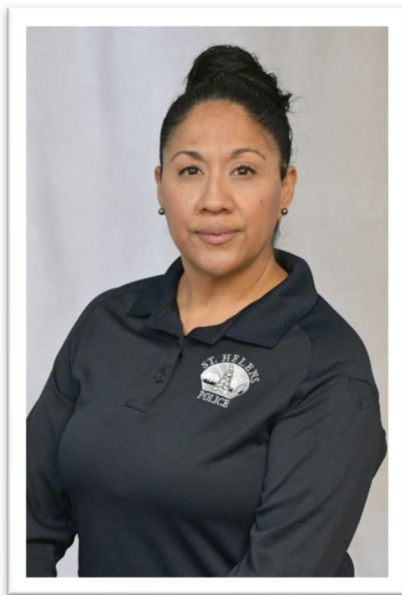
Patrol Officer Adam Raethke

Serving St. Helens since June 10, 2019



Code Enforcement Officer Everardo Medina

Serving St. Helens since September 1, 2022



Police Records & Evidence Specialist Pati Ruiz

Serving St. Helens since November 9, 2020

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The members of the St. Helens Police Department would like to take this opportunity to thank our city leaders and the citizens of this community for their continued support. The relationships shared by this department are vital to our efforts to prevent crime and to our mission of creating a safe community.

## 2024 ELECTED OFFICIALS

### MAYOR

Rick Scholl

### CITY COUNCILORS

Jessica Chilton (Council President)

Mark Gundersen

Russell Hubbard

Brandon Sundeen

### CITY OF ST. HELENS STAFF

John Walsh (City Administrator)

Crystal King (Communications Officer)

