

***HOUSTON COUNTY  
SHERIFF'S OFFICE***



***2015 ANNUAL REPORT***

## *Sheriff's Message*

Dear Commissioners and Citizens of Houston County,

It is my pleasure to submit to you the 2015 annual report on the activities, programs and accomplishments of the Houston County Sheriff's Office.

The Annual Report of the Sheriff's Office is to inform our commissioners and citizens we serve, about the work of the Sheriff's Office as a whole. Houston County is a wonderful place to live and raise our families and I sincerely believe the services we provide is work worth doing.

The Houston County Sheriff's Office is divided into four distinct service divisions: *Civil, Criminal, Emergency Management/Court Security and Correctional*. As a whole, the Sheriff's Office works diligently serving the people of Houston County. We would like to show you what our dedicated staff and volunteers are doing and what our office has accomplished.

Nationwide we are at a time of great distress and law enforcement struggles to build strong community support under public scrutiny. One of our everyday goals is to restore and preserve the public's trust in their Sheriff's Office. Without your support and trust, we cannot function in a positive and efficient manner. We have good, dedicated staff and we can do this through accountability, fair and professional contact with our citizens and transparency to the people.

I am proud to serve as your Sheriff and I encourage you to contact me with questions you may have about the operation of the Houston County Sheriff's Office. Questions regarding information in this report may be addressed to me at the Houston County Sheriff's Office, 306 South Marshall St. Ste 1100, Caledonia, MN 55921, or phone: (507) 725-3379, Email [mark.inglett@co.houston.mn.us](mailto:mark.inglett@co.houston.mn.us)

It is my wish that you find this annual report informative and give an understanding of the services we provide and what the costs of those services are.

Sincerely,

*Mark A. Inglett*  
*Houston County Sheriff*



## ***Changes In Operation***

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With the end of year 2015, I completed my first year in office serving as your Sheriff. This was a year of considerable change, adjustment and learning. We began the year with not only a new Sheriff, but a new Chief Deputy as well. Travis Lapham began serving as our Chief Deputy on January 20<sup>th</sup> 2015 and has been a tremendous asset to the agency. I consider myself lucky, as we have very dedicated and experienced staff and this has made my transition to Sheriff less complicated by allowing me to focus on learning the position. Our direction will be to continue to serve our citizens with accountability, integrity and professionalism as we continually find new programs to offer and improve our services to our citizens. I believe we always must strive to improve.

***Records Management:*** One of the largest changes in operation was the implantation of a new public safety records management system, (RMS) for the Sheriff's Office. Chief Deputy Lapham was tasked with serving as the project manager for this implementation and he has far exceeded my expectations. Houston Count IT Director, Andy Milde was also instrumental in this implementation. We went live with the system in May of 2015 and the program provides for much more effective system by eliminating redundancy and providing more detailed records and simplified data storage. Another critical component of the implementation is all public safety agencies in the county are now linked together and we can more efficiently share information amongst each other.

***Computer Aided Dispatch:*** Along with the implementation of the RMS, we also implemented a computer aided dispatch, (CAD). Our 911 dispatch center is a critical component of ensuring public safety. The system provides for fast, accurate information for critical decisions. The system is a customizable dispatching solution that provides real time information to our staff and reduces data entries and errors.

***Mobile Technology:*** We are living in a technology world and law enforcement is no different. With our court systems moving to electronic format even with things as simple as a traffic tickets, it was necessary for us to keep up with the technology advancements to function. As a part of the RMS and CAD system implementation, we were able to implement mobile data terminals in our agency squads. Currently, all of our patrol units and our general investigator are outfitted with mobile data computers. In addition to making our deputies more efficient, it will create a safer and more effective work environment. This will also keep us compliant with the court requirements as well as increase our visibility as many of the reports that were formerly done in the office can now be completed in the field.



I am pleased to inform you that \$25,000.00 of the cost for the mobile implementation was paid for through grant funds which the county had previously been awarded but had not yet utilized. I worked with Houston County Finance and the Foundation to re-allocate these funds to the implementation of mobile computers.

**Restructuring:** Another significant change was the reclassification of the Captain position. After careful consideration and modification of the duties and responsibilities, I reclassified the Captain to a Lieutenant position. This position now serves as the Lieutenant of Investigations. With the size of our agency and duties of this position, I could not justify it being classified at the rank of Captain.

## ***New Programs***

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**ALICE:** In February 2015, Deputy Matt Seitz attended instructor training from the ALICE institute. ALICE stands for *Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, and Evacuate*. ALICE is a program that teaches age appropriate, proactive strategies to improve the chances of survival during an active shooter event. We have partnered with Caledonia and La Crescent Police Departments and have held staff introductions to Caledonia Public, (high school, middle school and elementary), St. Mary's Elementary, La Crescent Public, (high school, middle school and elementary), and Houston Public Schools, (high school, middle school and elementary). The next step will be to hold student training seminars this year and we look forward to continuing the training and the partnership with our area schools to help make our schools as safe as possible.

**Re-Organization of the Sheriff's Posse:** We have worked hard to re-organize the Sheriff's Posse and while it has been slow to implement, we are now at a point that we have a viable group of volunteers organized to assist the Sheriff's Office when the need arises. Membership is approx. 20 members at this point. Credit must also be given to a group of former Posse members that felt strongly about the resources they could offer. They have spent hours helping re-organize and I am grateful for their dedication. We have been holding regular meetings and trainings and we now have a reliable means of paging the members utilizing a program that is available through our new computer aided dispatch system.

**Prescription Drug Disposal:** In October of 2015, we introduced a secure collection point at the Sheriff's Office for the disposal of unused prescription drugs. This drop box has been available 7 days a week for the convenience of our citizens. About 70 % of the cost of the collection unit was paid for with grant funds from a partnership with Houston County Public Health. It has drawn attention from our local media and our citizens are utilizing the program. From October to December 2015, we collected 32 pounds of medications. I am proud to offer this free program to our citizens. I think this is the most cost effective thing we can



do to get prescription drugs out of the hands of people that should not have them and out of environment.

**Social Media:** While this is not a new program to the Sheriff's Office, we have actively stepped up the communication. We are using social media as a means of engaging with and informing the public with our *Facebook* page. The concept is working and we for the most part receive positive feedback from our citizens. We have received tips on outstanding warrants and other information we have been able to utilize in investigations. The "likes" continue to grow. In fact, our Facebook likes increased by 1,160 during 2015 and we have grown to a total 3,149 page likes at year end.

**New Look:** We have designed and implemented a new look for our agency squad cars with a new design for the graphics. I believe it provides a more modern look and makes our squads more identifiable as Sheriff's Office squad cars. We will implement the change over time and through attrition. So far, we have put the design on the one new vehicle purchased in 2015 and two other vehicles that had been damaged.



**New Water Patrol Boat:** In 2015 we were able to secure federal grant funding through the State of Minnesota to purchase a new water patrol boat. The previous patrol boat was approx. 8 years old and was not very conducive to navigation on the river. The boat was too large and was difficult to get into waters that were off the main channel.

After researching boats and evaluating our needs, we selected a 2016 Crestliner boat. The patrol boat will be much safer to navigate on the river and we will be able to access waters off the main channel. We look forward to putting it into service this coming spring. Total cost for the purchase was \$39,293, completely funded through the grant.



## ***Records and Administration***

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There are currently two full-time Administrative Assistants in the Sheriff's Office. The primary role of the Administrative Assistants is to provide confidential assistance to the staff along with the responsibility for carrying out administrative details and other support services as required. The Administrative Assistants collect, process, disseminate and maintain office records in accordance with Federal and State Data Practices laws and Records Retention requirements. They have a multitude of duties and responsibilities too numerous to cover and are the "backbone" of the Office. Their primary duties include:

- Provide information and assistance to the public at the front window and by phone.
- Transcription / data entry and organizing and maintaining a variety of records.
- Send notification to schools that juvenile offender attends for all tobacco, alcohol or drug violations per Minnesota Statute.
- Perform criminal histories, background checks, driver's license and vehicle inquires as necessary through the State MNCJIS (Minnesota Criminal Justice Information System) in compliance with BCA regulations in accordance with Data Practices.
- Process Permit to Carry applications as well ensure necessary background checks have been satisfied.
- Prepare crime and incident statistics reports.

Particularly noteworthy, in 2015 the Administrative staff processed in excess of 400 gun permit applications through the Sheriff's Office.

### ***Permits to Carry***

New Applications:.....**218**

Renewals: ..... **24**

***Permits to Purchase: .....172***

## ***Patrol Division***

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The patrol division provides all of the front line services to our citizens and visitors. There are currently 6 fulltime deputies and 2 Patrol Lieutenants that staff shifts 24 hours a day 7 days a week. The patrol division serves under the direction of the Chief Deputy. One of our patrol Lieutenants also serves as our K-9 handler with K-9 *Chance*. Deputies are responsible for answering calls for service, providing assistance to the public as well as other agencies, warrant arrests and serving



civil process papers. We have a busy Sheriff's Office and I am fortunate to have the dedicated staff that we do. During 2015, deputies responded to 3,978 calls for service. That is a monthly average of 331.5 calls for service per month.

***Toward Zero Death Initiative:*** The Sheriff's Office is committed to traffic safety and participates in the state funded Toward Zero Death Enforcement Program which is a campaign through the Office of Traffic Safety. The primary goal is to reduce the number of traffic deaths throughout Minnesota. Deputy Steve Garrett is the coordinator for the program and is responsible for scheduling extra enforcement shifts throughout the year and event reports. This year, Caledonia, La Crescent, Houston, and Spring Grove Police Departments also participated in the program. Houston County Sheriff's Office also serves as the fiscal agency for all law enforcement in the county.

***Fatal Crashes:*** Fatal crashes are a primary reason the Sheriff's Office will always be committed to traffic safety. In 2015, there were 4 fatal crashes in Houston County with 5 people losing their lives as a result of these crashes. Each fatal crash represents families' lives that will be changed forever.

- March 7, 2015, 2 vehicle crash on County Road 9 in Houston Township; adult male and female both died as a result of this collision.
- April 11, 2015, 1 vehicle motorcycle crash on County Road 4 in Black Hammer Township; adult male died as result of this crash.
- October 1, 2015, 2 vehicle crash on Hwy 44 in City of Caledonia; adult male died as a result of this crash.
- October 17<sup>th</sup> 2015, 1 vehicle ATV crash in Crooked Creek Township; adult male died as a result of this crash.

## ***Investigations Division***

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The investigations division consists of one Investigations Lieutenant and one investigator primarily assigned to the South East Minnesota Violent Crime Enforcement Team. (formally the SE MN Drug Task Force) The Investigations Lieutenant serves as the general investigator for the Office and is also responsible for assisting the patrol deputies with any investigations they are working on. This area of responsibility includes the investigation of crimes against persons; sexual assaults; burglaries; theft; crimes against children and vulnerable adults; and property. The Investigations Lieutenant is also responsible for overseeing and maintaining evidence as well as the evidence room. The Investigations Lieutenant is frequently requested to assist local agencies with investigations as well.



The SEMVCET investigator is primarily responsible for narcotics investigations throughout the county. He has had a busy year. Narcotics investigations are time consuming and our investigator has worked diligently to put together cases.

In 2015, our narcotics investigator was responsible for 31 drug related arrests with 26 of those being felony level crimes. 24 drug related search warrants were served in Houston County.

- 5 cases involved arrests for methamphetamine
- 5 cases involved arrests for marijuana
- 4 cases involved arrests for prescription drugs.

*Narcotics Seized: Meth: 163.5 grams Marijuana: 5 pounds and 13 live plants*

## ***Emergency Management Division***

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There is currently one fulltime deputy assigned to Emergency Management. This position also provides security to the court. A portion of the duties and responsibilities include the development and revisions of our County Emergency Operations Plan. In the event of natural disasters, it is the Emergency Managements duty to locate emergency aid and resources, as well as provide the documentation to apply for state and federal aid. The court security responsibilities consume a lot of the deputy's time. Regularly this deputy is required to be in the courtroom the majority of his week.

## ***Corrections Division***

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The Correctional Division currently consists of the Jail and our 24 hour emergency dispatch center. This division is responsible for the supervision of persons incarcerated under the Sheriff's Custody. It is staffed by a Jail Administrator who oversees the day to day operations of the detention center as well as the dispatch center. There are currently an additional 14 full time jailer/dispatchers that staff the detention center and dispatch 24 hours a day 7 days a week. In 2015, the jail averaged a daily population of 25.3 inmates, which is an increase from 2013 and 2014.

Average Daily Population:	<u>2013</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>
	21.8	21.4	25.3

A detention center is an extremely expensive facility to operate. It is also difficult to budget for due to the many unforeseen expenses that can come up when you're housing people.



Examples would be emergency medical events and medications. Jail Administrator Mark Schiltz and I worked hard this past year to establish relationships with surrounding counties to offer inmate housing to them. I am pleased to inform you that as a result, the jail was able to generate \$ **172,769** in revenue to help offset the operational costs of a detention center. This was a **384%** increase in the previously budgeted amount. As a result, the jail was able to come in at **\$142,986** under the budget.

## ***Budget Overview***

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Without question, the Office of the Sheriff is one of the more expensive entities of county government to operate. I don't believe the Sheriff's Office should be in the business of making money because we are in the business of public service and safety. However, I do believe that we should constantly search to bring in as much revenue as we can to help offset this burden to the tax payers.

In addition to the \$20,028 in fees we collected for various services we perform, we received a very generous donation of \$5,000 from a private party to help offset the cost of outfitting the newly purchased K-9 vehicle. We are very grateful for that donation. We also submitted requests for reimbursements to the State to help offset the training costs incurred. We were reimbursed \$3,665 for training. We also received a reimbursement of 103,683 in state police aid.

In addition, we applied for and were awarded \$137,709 worth of grants throughout the year. Portions of grant funds were received after January 1, 2016 so they are not all reflected in the 2015 year end budget. It should be noted that the grant totals are reflective of combined grant requests for the Sheriff's Office, Emergency Management, and Water Patrol.

I will highlight the revenues we received below.

### ***Revenue Highlights:***

Sheriff Office Fees:	\$20,028
Post Board Reimbursement: Training	\$3,665
State Police Aid:	\$103,683
Donation: K-9 program	\$5,000



Overtime Reimbursement: SEMVCET	\$3,914
<b>Total fees, donations, and reimbursements:</b>	<b>\$136,290</b>

**Grants:**

Federal Boat & Water Grant:	\$5,000
State of MN Boat & Water Grant:	\$5,371
Federal Boat & Water Equipment Grant:	\$39,293
MN BCA Adaptor Grant:	\$5,000
EMPG Grant:	\$17,847
Hazard Mitigation Grant:	\$35,010
Reallocated Funds: Arlin Falk Foundation:	\$25,000
Interop SHSP Grant:	\$1,166
Office of Traffic Safety - TZD Grant:	\$4,022
Public Health:	\$480
<b>Grant Totals:</b>	<b>\$138,189</b>
<b>Combined Total Revenue:</b>	<b>\$274,479</b>

**Final Result:**

The 2015 budget was approved prior to my taking office. The approved budget for the Sheriff's Office operating expenditures was **\$1,449,015**, and Sheriff's Office revenues were budgeted at 170,280.

Actual 2015 expenditures were \$1,621,925 and actual revenues were \$169,165. When balancing the net expenditures to the revenue, the net amount expended on police services was **\$1,452,760**. The result is an **overage** of **\$3,745**. The increase in expenditures and the overage can primarily be attributed to the implementation of the records management system. The previous administration had budgeted for the purchasing of the RMS and CAD system. However, the mobile portion of the system and maintenance agreements had not been adequately funded in the 2015 budget. Below is a breakdown of the actual costs and the cost of 24 hour law enforcement services per citizen.



<u>Expenditures</u>	<u>Revenues</u>	<u>Actual Cost</u>	<u>Cost Per Citizen</u>
Budgeted: \$1,449,015	\$170,280	\$1,278,735	
Actual: \$1,621,925	\$169,165	\$1,452,760	\$80 / Year \$320 Family of 4 / year

The population of 18,214 is based on 2014 preliminary data from the Minnesota State Demographic Center

## ***Statistical Data***

<b>Total Calls for Service</b>	<b>3,978</b>	<b>Average 331.5 per/month</b>
<b>Traffic Stops</b>	<b>**06-01-15 - 12-31-15</b>	<b>** 779</b>
Warnings Issued	<b>**06-01-15 - 12-31-15</b>	<b>** 593</b>
Citations Issued		<b>620</b>
DUI Arrests		<b>33</b>
<b>Motor Vehicle Crashes</b>		<b>219</b>
Property Damage		<b>189</b>
Personal Injury		<b>22</b>
Fatal		<b>4</b>
Hit & Run		<b>3</b>
<b>Water Patrol</b>		
Total Patrol Hours on the River	<b>May-October</b>	<b>202.75</b>
Total Number of Watercrafts Observed		<b>2,065</b>
Total Number of Watercrafts Stopped		<b>86</b>
<b>Domestic Disturbance</b>	<b>74</b>	
<b>Theft Reports</b>	<b>49</b>	
<b>Burglary Reports</b>	<b>19</b>	
<b>Welfare Checks</b>	<b>141</b>	
<b>Tobacco Compliance Checks</b>	<b>26</b>	
<b>Agency Assists</b>	<b>748</b>	
<b>Paper Service</b>	<b>325</b>	
<b>Forfeitures</b>	<b>5</b>	
<b>Sheriff Sales (Foreclosures)</b>	<b>8</b>	

