

Watsonville Police Department

Annual Report



2022



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A MESSAGE FROM YOUR CHIEF OF POLICE

It is an honor as my first year as Chief of Police for the City of Watsonville, to share with you our department's 2022 annual report. This report briefly summarizes the outstanding work that the women and men of the Watsonville Police Department have accomplished during the year.

As many know, being in law enforcement has never been easy, and it takes a special person to be a part of this profession. The members of the Watsonville Police Department have taken on this role so that others may flourish and be safe. Our staff embodies the ideology of community engagement and focuses on proactive and responsible policing of our City.

This past year, we have had the opportunity to reconnect, strengthen and grow our relationships with our community. We continue to work with our nonprofit partners, other City departments, the school district, and many Santa Cruz County agencies. We do all of this to have a safe and thriving community.

On behalf of the Watsonville Police Department, we would like to thank everyone for your ongoing support; it means more than you know.

Jorge Zamora

WATSONVILLE POLICE

Our Why:

Impacting our community in positive ways every day through strong relationships and problem-solving

Our Mission:

Committing ourselves to public safety through engagement, education, enforcement, and professional development

Our Core Values:

Character, Competency, Compassion, Communication

Who We Are



70

SWORN POLICE
OFFICERS



18

FULL-TIME
PROFESSIONAL STAFF



2

PART-TIME
PROFESSIONAL STAFF



2

INTERNS



Jorge Zamora
Chief of Police



Thomas Sims
Asst. Chief of Police



Michael McKinley
Police Captain



Anthony Magdayao
Police Captain



David Rodriguez
Police Captain



Antonio Figueroa
Police Captain

2022 RETIREMENTS



Captain
Anthony Magdayao
28 years of service



Sergeant
Bryan Fuentez
26 years of service



Master Officer
Eddie Santana
25 years of service



K9 Axel
5 years of service

2022 PROMOTIONS



Chief of Police
Jorge Zamora



Captain
Donny Thul



Sergeant
Charles Bailey



Sergeant
Javier Ayala



Sergeant
Joey Perez



24/7 RESPONSE

We responded to 52,504 calls for service

We filed 4,784 police reports

We received 743 online reports



PROPERTY CRIME:

down 20%
(compared to 2021)



VIOLENT CRIME:

down 1%
(compared to 2021)

○ 17,851 items processed as evidence

○ 103 firearms seized

2022 HIGHLIGHTS



New Chief of Police Appointed

Longtime Watsonville Police Officer Jorge Zamora was sworn in as Watsonville's newest Chief of Police on January 10, 2022.

The 26-year police veteran became the 16th Chief of Police for the City of Watsonville and the first, first-generation Mexican-American to hold this role.

Community Services Division Created as Part of Department Restructuring

Early in the year, our department was restructured to include a Community Services Division to continue creating a healthy, safe, and thriving Watsonville. This division was tasked with restoring several of our community engagement and youth programs temporarily placed on hold because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Members are currently exploring new programs with other community partners.

The team reinstated the following programs in 2022:



Watsonville Police Cadet Program

The program allows young people between 14-21 years of age to explore the law enforcement field as a possible career choice. Cadets are rotated through various divisions to experience the many aspects of law enforcement. They also take on several roles during community events and serve as a liaison between the police department and youth in the community.



Agua con la Chota

Agua con la Chota, or "Water with a Cop," engages local farmworkers to speak about the topics that matter to them. The program was established by the Watsonville Police Department in 2017, in collaboration with community-based organizations, to help break down barriers and build trust between the community and the police. This outreach program also allows the police department to humanize the person behind the badge.



Post-Incident Team

Volunteers work directly with our officers and focus on helping residents after a serious incident in our community. The team's job is to go door-to-door after an incident to calm fears and rumors and to provide information about community resources and city services.



Guest Speaker Program

Community members can request police officer presentations for Neighborhood Watch meetings, business watch meetings, club meetings, church meetings, and schools. Officers cover topics such as crime prevention, personal safety, violence in the workplace, domestic violence, police services, K-9 program, drugs and gangs.

Department Launches New Team to Help Residents Impacted by Trauma

During the summer, our department launched a first-of-a-kind program in this region that provides additional resources to Watsonville residents impacted by trauma.

Our Trauma Informed Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) was formed with the help of several community partners. MDT is also a direct result of several recommendations made by the Ad-Hoc Committee on Policing and Social Equity, which was formed in 2020 to help shape the future of community policing and community programs in Watsonville.

The program coordinator focuses on connecting individuals or families who have endured a traumatic event to resources and services they could benefit from.



Funding Awarded to Improve Safety on Our Roads

Our department was awarded two grants totaling \$118,895 to help increase road, bicycle, and pedestrian safety.

A \$75,000 grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety will increase patrols throughout the community and provide other safety programs to help reduce the number of serious injuries and deaths on roads.

A \$43,895 grant focuses on funding activities emphasizing the safety of bicyclists and pedestrians. The grant programs will run through September 2023.

Thousands of Dollars Raised for Watsonville Police Activities League

More than \$10,000 was raised during our 12th annual Watsonville Police Activities League Golf Tournament. PAL uses the funds to serve our local youth and their programming.

Each year, PAL serves hundreds of youth through after-school programs, summer camps, self-defense classes, art classes, and our competitive soccer program.



Another Successful Pink Patch Project Campaign

The Watsonville Police Department presented the Katz Cancer Resource Center with a check for \$19,088.25 from our 2022 Watsonville Police Pink Patch Project campaign.

Every penny supports local Watsonville families impacted by breast cancer. The Watsonville Police Pink Patch Project is successful thanks to generous sponsors, community members, and volunteers who help grow this campaign every year!

For the past six years, our campaign has managed to raise nearly \$90,000.



NOTABLE CRIMINAL CASES



January 12, 2022

Officers arrested two suspects behind a plotted armed carjacking and a string of crimes.

The night before, the suspects pulled a knife on the car's owner and beat him before taking off in the car. Their crime spree, which included leading multiple law enforcement agencies on car chases, ended when the 17-year-old suspect crashed into a parked car on the 200 block of Arthur Road. Her passenger, an 18-year-old man from Soledad, was also arrested.



January 27, 2022

A brave mother fought off and disarmed a man who broke into her home in broad daylight. The mother and her children were opening the front door when the suspect slammed it shut from the inside. During a struggle, the suspect pulled a knife and threatened to stab the victims. The mother managed to yank the knife and pin him down until officers arrived.

Officers arrested the suspect for burglary, assault with a deadly weapon, possession of a controlled substance, and parole violation.



February 3, 2022

Two people were arrested following a lengthy investigation into the sales of a highly addictive and dangerous drug.

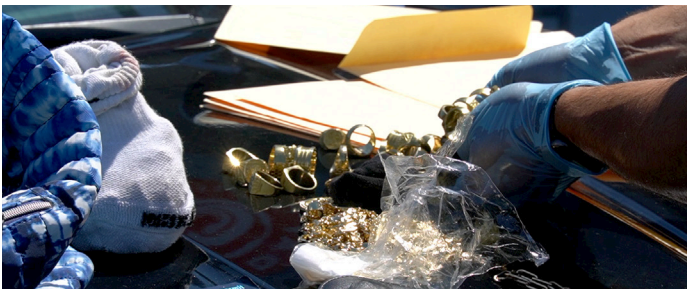
Members of our Special Investigations Unit and neighboring law enforcement agencies seized more than three dozen fentanyl pills and an illegally possessed gun. The suspects were taken into custody after officers simultaneously served two search warrants in the areas of Brewington Avenue and Bent Tree Court.



April 12, 2022

A multi-agency operation in Watsonville and Morgan Hill resulted in the arrest of two suspects at the center of a murder investigation.

The suspects, both 18 years old, are accused of confronting and fatally shooting Feliciano Martinez, 18, in the courtyard of an apartment complex on the 100 block of Riverside Drive.



August 19, 2022

A large amount of fake jewelry and money was seized from a group of out-of-town scammers who took advantage of several of our community members. Multiple victims reported that the suspects offered them "expensive" gold rings, necklaces, or bracelets in exchange for gas.

A community member later alerted us of their possible location. Officers were able to track down the group and arrest them at a local laundromat as they attempted to scam another resident.



September 8, 2022

In a matter of days, Detectives identified and arrested a 15-year-old male suspect accused of a fatal shooting on Sudden Street.

Officers found the suspect less than a block from where the 19-year-old victim was shot and killed. A gun was also recovered during the arrest.



October 18, 2022

Officers arrested a suspected arsonist accused of causing upwards of \$100,000 in damages to St. Patrick's Church.

The 36-year-old suspect was taken into custody less than 12 hours after setting the church on fire. He was booked into county jail on felony arson charges, including vandalizing a place of worship. Less than four months before this incident, officers arrested him for setting a local chapel on fire.



November 23, 2022

A 27-year-old man was arrested after firing several shots at a moving car on Marchant Street.

Within 30 minutes of the shooting, our officers obtained surveillance footage of the suspected shooter and arrested him just a few blocks from the crime scene. The suspect was carrying a loaded gun believed to have been used in the shooting.



December 5, 2022

Officers seized two loaded guns and nearly 200 grams of methamphetamine after arresting a man with several outstanding warrants.

The incident unfolded at a local motel on the 900 block of Main Street. Inside the hotel room, officers found two guns, one of which was stolen from Alameda County, and 183 grams of methamphetamine. The three-time convicted felon had one outstanding warrant out of Santa Cruz County and two from Monterey County for various crimes, including assault with a deadly weapon, burglary, battery, and several other charges.



December 20, 2022

A 65-year-old cyclist pinned underneath a stolen car is alive today thanks to the heroic actions of several good samaritans and Watsonville Police officers.

The incident unfolded near Main Street and Pacifica Avenue when officers attempted to pull over a driver in a stolen Honda. The driver jumped out of the moving car, and that moving car then struck the cyclist, pinning him underneath.

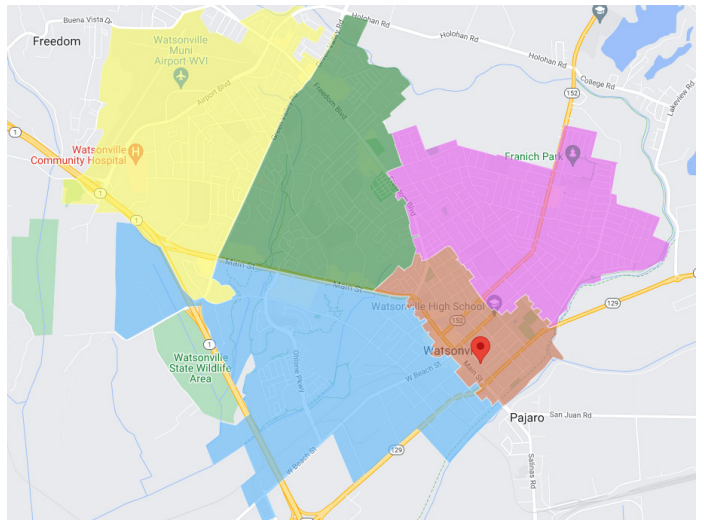
Officers and good samaritans jumped into action to lift the Honda and free the cyclist. The suspect was chased down by other officers and arrested within minutes of the crash.

PATROL DIVISION

The Patrol Division is the largest division within the Watsonville Police Department. These are the officers you see daily, patrolling and responding to your calls for service while providing 24/7 protection for the City.

This division is staffed with six patrol teams assigned to three daily shifts; the day shift, the swing shift, and the graveyard shift. During these shifts, officers are assigned to five geographical sectors or "beats."

In 2022, the patrol division responded to more than 52,000 calls for service, made 1,374 arrests, wrote 4,784 reports, and conducted 67 ride-alongs with community members.



SPECIAL ASSIGNMENTS



Traffic Unit

The primary duty of the Traffic Unit is to enforce traffic laws to ensure all drivers and pedestrians will be safe on the streets. The unit not only enforces traffic regulations but also investigates vehicle collisions within the City of Watsonville.

In 2022, officers in the Traffic Unit investigated 503 traffic collision reports, three of which were fatal. They also reviewed 15 hit-and-run collisions, issued 165 speeding citations, 300 distracted driving violations, 23 arrests related to street racing and reckless driving, 161 DUI arrests, and held two DUI Checkpoints.

K-9 Unit

In 2022, our department added two new police dogs on the streets. K9 Cruze and K9 Canelo are Belgian Malinois trained to work in a patrol function. They are partnered with K9 Officers Jay Garcia and Ruben Zendejas.

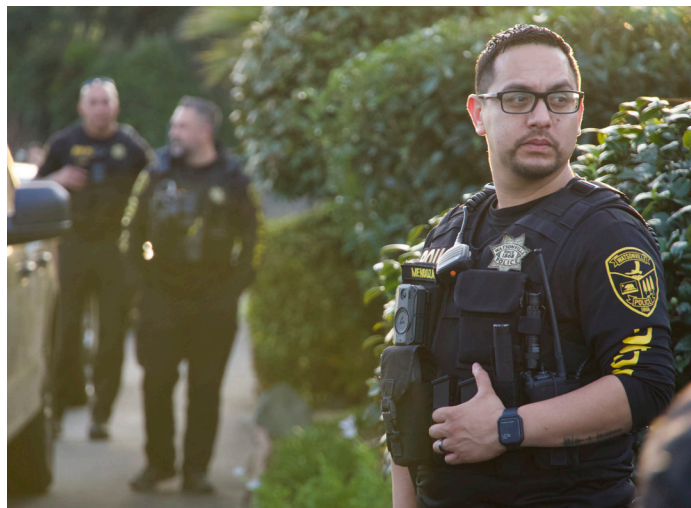
The unit was established in 1986, and since then, our department has used police dogs trained in apprehending suspects wanted for felony crimes, narcotics detections, tracking evidence recovery, handler protection, and building and area searches. Our K9's also participate in community events and dog demonstrations for local organizations.



Detective Bureau

The Detective Bureau has one Detective-Sergeant and six Detectives with special training to allow them to investigate cases such as sexual assaults, persons crimes, gang crimes, property crimes, and major crimes. They handle the behind-the-scenes work in generating warrants and paperwork related to cases and spend time in the field as part of their investigative duties.

The bureau reviewed 625 cases and served 148 search warrants/court orders in 2022.



Special Investigations Unit

The Special Investigations Unit (SIU) is tasked with investigating crimes connected to narcotics, firearms, and gangs while taking a proactive and progressive approach to fighting crime. The unit's daily responsibilities include street-level enforcement, crime suppression, and community engagement.

Members of the unit also work hand-in-hand with the Detective Bureau in operational planning, background, surveillance, collecting intelligence, and fugitive apprehension. Often, the unit is tasked with preparing and executing search and arrest warrants on targeted locations and suspects. In 2022, SIU members investigated nearly 200 cases.



Special Response Team

Our Special Response Team (SRT) consists of 18 specially-trained and experienced officers from within our department. Their objective is to protect the lives of community members and members of law enforcement during high-risk incidents.

SRT members train monthly and are on call 24/7 to handle high-risk situations such as search warrant services, resolve incidents involving barricaded suspects, conduct hostage rescues, and any other needs that arise and exceed the response capabilities of our patrol officers. In 2022, the team was deployed four times and held five active shooter presentations for the community.



Crisis Negotiations Team

The mission of the Crisis Negotiations Team is to safely resolve critical incidents such as hostage situations, barricaded persons, suicidal persons, terrorist acts, and anticipated barricaded or hostage situations.

Members of this team are specially trained negotiators who work closely with our Special Response Team. CNT members are on call 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, to provide assistance during critical incidents. In 2022, members responded to four incidents alongside our Special Response Team.

Crisis Assessment Response & Engagement Team

The Department's Crisis Assessment Response & Engagement Team (CARE) was established in 2016 to provide coordinated, professional, and compassionate police response to families and individuals affected by mental illness.

The team consists of one full-time Watsonville Police Officer and one Santa Cruz County Mental Health Clinician who respond to calls for service involving a person in a mental health crisis. This approach allows the officer to focus on the safety issues that could arise while the clinician focuses on the clinical needs of the person and helps ensure that the mental health crisis is addressed with the most appropriate service.





School Resource Office

The SRO's primary responsibilities are school safety on campus, building positive relationships with students, their parents & faculty, and serving as a liaison between the school district and the police department.

During the 2022 school year, our SRO was partnered on campus with a mental health clinician. The officer was specifically assigned to the Watsonville High campus but was also available to respond to incidents at any Pajaro Valley Unified School District school within the City of Watsonville, as needed.

Professional Standards Division

Our Professional Standards Division (PSD) is tasked with numerous responsibilities supporting our department's operations. Members of this division oversee recruitment, training, pre-employment background investigations, and promotional functions and investigate internal and citizen-generated complaints of alleged misconduct by department members.

PSD constantly reviews our policies and procedures while ensuring that our officers and professional staff are properly uniformed, equipped, and supported in their daily duties.

The team onboarded 10 new hires in 2022 and scheduled thousands of training hours for officers and staff.



Santa Cruz Auto Theft Reduction & Enforcement Task Force

The Auto Theft Task Force was established in 1998 and provides services primarily throughout Santa Cruz County. The task force is supervised by the California Highway Patrol and operated by the Santa Cruz County District Attorney's Office.

The team is composed of officers, deputies, and investigators from local jurisdictions, including the Watsonville Police Department. Their primary function is to recover stolen vehicles, investigate suspected auto theft operations, and educate local autobody shop owners about criminal practices.



Santa Cruz County Anti-Crime Team

The Santa Cruz County Anti-Crime Team is a local multi-agency task force of personnel and other resources from law enforcement agencies throughout Santa Cruz County, including the Watsonville Police Department.

The Santa Cruz County District Attorney's Office supervises and operates the team. The team focuses on preventing and reducing violent crimes, narcotics trafficking, and apprehending suspects responsible for those crimes.



COMMUNITY OUTREACH

One of our department's top priorities is building and maintaining solid relationships with our community. These relationships are critical to our department's success and contribute to making Watsonville a safer place for all.

Our community programs and annual events create opportunities to connect with residents and develop long-lasting partnerships.

In 2022, the department's Community Service Division organized nearly 40 school visits and presentations and participated in and hosted various special community events such as National Night Out, Coffee with a Cop, and Shop with a Cop, to name a few. Members of the division also managed our community-based programs: Agua con la Chota, WPD Youth Academy, WPD Cadet Program, and our Post Incident Team.





WATSONVILLE POLICE

We take extreme pride in our transparency and ongoing engagement with our community.

Our Communications Team works hard to provide timely and accurate information about incidents, crime trends, police department activities, and available community programs. One of our department's primary strategies for connecting with our community is through the use of several social media platforms.

CONNECT WITH US



**Like, Follow, Subscribe,
Download & Register**

Non-Emergency Police Dispatch: 831-471-1151

Crime Tips Anonymous: 831-768-3544

Records: 831-768-3370

Investigations: 831-768-3350

Police Chief's Office: 831-768-3300

Photo contribution from: Steve Kuehl