

By the numbers: 2023

St. Louis Park Police Department
2023 Annual Report

SLP Police

Total calls for service:

50,333

Top calls for service:

1. TRAFFIC STOPS: 5,059
2. PARKING COMPLAINT: 1,401
3. ALARM: 1,091
4. INFORMATIONAL REPORT: 1,088
5. SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY/PERSON/VEHICLE: 2,109

Part 1 *
crimes reported

- **52 crimes against persons** (assault, robbery, rape)
 - **1,583 property crimes** (theft, burglary, vehicle theft, arson)
- * Includes theft, burglary, motor vehicle theft, aggravated assault, robbery, rape, arson and homicide*

1,635

Part 2 **
crimes reported

- ** Driving while intoxicated (DWI), narcotics, vandalism, forgery/fraud, criminal sexual conduct, disorderly conduct, other assault, obscenity, stolen property, fleeing police, gambling, liquor violations and weapons offenses**

1,067

Traffic stops: 5,059
Warnings: 3,507
Citations: 625

All other stops were cleared: assisting motorists; linked to a police report or tows.

Animal calls:

733

(general, bark, bite, cruelty, coyote, dangerous dog, at large, wildlife)

Animal impound:

84

Busiest day of the week is **Friday**.

Busiest time of the day is **9 p.m.**

2023 budget

Total budget: \$13,048,059

Personnel cost: \$11,868,497 (91%)

Top citations:

1. Snow emergency parking restrictions: 484
2. Traffic Regulation/Vehicle Registration/Plates: 379
3. Speed: 256

234 gun permits issued
58 solicitor permits issued

Reports/arrests/DUIs

REPORTS 7,936

ARRESTS 993

DUI ARRESTS: 163



St. Louis Park
MINNESOTA

Letter from the chief



In 2023, as I wrote my first message as police chief, our department had tremendous opportunities ahead to demonstrate our absolute commitment and resolve to those we serve. We've not only achieved a great deal since then but also have set the groundwork for many more steps forward. Here are just a few highlights from the year. Behavioral health response continues to be one of our most significant priorities. Collaboration is critical to creating successful response systems, as they require innovative methods, flexible designs, and data-driven practices and processes. In 2023, our dedicated team of behavioral health officers began to lay the foundation for this work that also incorporates a dedicated social worker. Our in-house 9-1-1 dispatch center is critical for behavioral health response as well, with call diversion strategies that began in 2023 to better match caller needs to call response.

K9 Maverick was welcomed to our family last year. Maverick is trained in explosives detection, a unique skill that provides a critical level of protection and response capability for our community. Planning has already begun to provide a second K9, possibly as early as 2025. This will allow a K9 to be available for all shifts.

Three new officers joined our team, bringing our department to nearly fully staffed. A great amount of time and energy continues to be directed to officer recruiting and hiring, which is an issue that has challenged police departments across the country. The innovative Pathways to Policing program along with the creativity and hard work of many at our police department has resulted in the addition of quality candidates to our team.



As I look at what lies ahead for our department and the community, I continue to have a tremendous sense of optimism and pride. I know the work we do has a profound impact on the community we serve, and how we continue to prepare for and perform that work matters to each of you—it matters to all of us at the St. Louis Park Police Department as well. Building trust and legitimacy with everyone in our community must always be the enduring work of our profession and is what defines the strength of that connection. I am proud of the members of our police department whose actions and values support this work each day, in turn continuing to foster the amazing relationships that form the community of St. Louis Park.

In the next year, we remain steadfastly committed to three goals: continuing to strengthen our police-community relationship, creating safe communities for all, and building a police culture that is reflective of our community's values and ideals. I am honored to serve as your police chief. I am committed to the energy and action this role demands, and on behalf of all the members at the St. Louis Park Police Department, we thank you for your trust and support.

Bryan Kruelle, St. Louis Park chief of police

Mission and philosophy

The mission of the St. Louis Park Police Department is to provide a safe place to live, work, go to school, and visit, through quality service, community partnerships and professionalism. Our philosophy includes our strong commitment to community-oriented policing, delivering effective and efficient services to everyone, and providing a healthy, positive work environment for employees. Through this mission and philosophy, our police department supports the city's overall goal of providing quality, collaborative, responsive services to community members.

Quality



Behavioral Health Unit

Police officers are more likely than any other emergency responders to encounter a community member experiencing a mental health crisis. Since 2019, the St. Louis Park Police Department has partnered with Hennepin County Behavioral Health to bring a senior social worker into the police department and out in the community alongside officers. Following a short-term case management model, our social worker partner receives referrals from officers and establishes connections between people in crisis and the services they need. In 2023, 290 referrals were made to help community members access help and care. New in 2024 is the creation of the Behavioral Health Unit. Two officers have been assigned to respond to crisis calls seven days a week and follow up with people involved in behavioral health incidents. They are teamed with the embedded social worker to address chronic behavioral health issues and provide needed resources. Because of this focus, they are able to direct people to the most appropriate supports. This new program will continue to adapt to the needs of our community.

Pathways to Policing

Our participation in the Pathways to Policing program is intended to address a decrease in the number of police officer applicants and to attract candidates of color, women, and others with diverse backgrounds. The program focuses on candidates with college degrees who are interested in a career in law enforcement but may not have the means or ability to attend a law enforcement academic program while continuing their current careers. In 2023, we selected three Pathways to Policing candidates who successfully completed the program and were sworn in as police officers in January 2024.

Field training

Our police officer field training program is designed to encourage new officers to use a proactive mindset to identify and solve problems in our community. In 2023, six new officers participated in field training, which included over 450 hours in a squad car with an experienced training officer, following over 80 hours of department orientation and initial training. In addition, new officers receive three days of customized firearms and response to resistance training. Each new officer receives about 700 hours of field training.

Responsiveness



**Turn in your unused
or expired medication
for safe disposal**



Drug Take Back Day

Over the course of two events in spring and fall, 260 pounds of prescription drugs were collected as part of National Prescription Drug Take Back Day. The program aims to provide a safe, convenient, and responsible means of disposing prescription drugs, while also educating the general public about the potential for abuse of medications. The quantity of unused and expired medications collected at these events continues to increase every year.



Medicine disposal

As part of Hennepin County's coordinated medicine disposal program, a medicine drop box is available in the police department lobby 24 hours a day, seven days a week for collection of household medicines. In 2023, 1,420 pounds of medications were collected in the lobby drop box—an amount similar to the previous year. Acceptable items include prescription, over-the-counter, and pet medicines. Visit www.hennepin.us/medicine for a complete list of accepted medicines.

Police substations (COP Shops)

To provide district police officers with resources in the neighborhoods they serve, the police department operates several substations (COP Shops) throughout the city. COP Shops are equipped with all the necessary resources for officers to write reports, meet with community members and maintain a presence in the neighborhoods. COP Shops are located at:

- The Shoppes at Knollwood, 8332 Highway 7
- Excelsior and Grand, 4717 Park Commons Drive
- The Shops at West End, 1623 West End Blvd.

Community groups and outreach



Police multicultural advisory committee

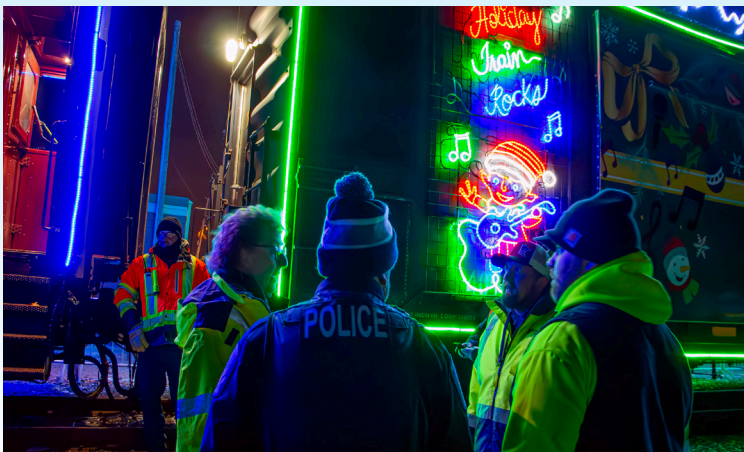
The police multicultural advisory committee (PMAC) was created in July 2015 with the mission of enhancing communication and understanding between law enforcement and the community and creating an inclusive environment for all. In addition to attending regular monthly meetings, members participate in outreach events and police department training.

Chaplains program

The volunteer chaplains group members serve as professional, nondenominational support resources to provide confidential spiritual guidance and counseling for department staff, their families and the community we serve. The department wants to expand membership in its chaplains group. If you have an interest in serving as a chaplain, please reach out to Officer Ken Sysko through the department's general line.

Holiday Train

The Canadian Pacific Holiday Train, 1,000-feet long with thousands of LED lights and live music returned to the community Dec. 11, 2023. Hundreds of visitors enjoyed the festive occasion and our department provided safety and security coordination for the event. Donations collected at this event benefit STEP (St. Louis Park Emergency Program) and more.



Police advisory commission

The police advisory commission's goals include increasing awareness of police department capabilities and services, fostering community involvement and input in police services, and encouraging positive interactions between the police and our community. In 2023, working with a police department member staff liaison, the commission discussed ways to assess community satisfaction with police services, and received reports on new police policies and initiatives.

Annual winter coat drive

In November, the St. Louis Park Police Department collected numerous coats for the Salvation Army. During the drop-off event, officers met several notable Twins baseball players, past and present, along with T.C. Bear.

Neighborhood Watch

Neighborhood Watch is a volunteer program that teaches proven crime prevention techniques and builds relationships between neighbors working as block captains and the police department. Block captains help maintain the safety and well-being of their neighborhood by coordinating Neighborhood Watch activities for their block. To see if your block is organized and has a block captain, view the Neighborhood Watch block captain interactive map online at bit.ly/SLPPDvolunteer.

Citizens' Police Academy

Citizens' Police Academy: This year's Citizens' Police Academy provided 12 community members with insight on the police department's work helping and providing service to the community. This program is open to adults who live or work in St. Louis Park and occurs on an annual basis in the fall.

Catalytic converter marking events

To assist in preventing catalytic converter thefts, the city sponsored three catalytic converter marking events in collaboration with the outstanding staff at our city public works maintenance facility, and private auto maintenance shops in St. Louis Park. Hundreds of catalytic converters were marked at these events in 2023. Dozens of other vehicle owners received CATGUARD kits, provided by a State of Minnesota pilot program, to mark their catalytic converters on their own time.

Youth activities and outreach



Youth activities

- Skateapalooza helps build trust between officers and the community and introduces kids to skateboarding. The police department partners with 3rd Lair for this outdoor summer event at Carpenter Park.
- Safe-At-Home Alone, a cooperative effort between our officers, St. Louis Park Public Schools Youth Enrichment, and the Fire Department, took place in May 2023, and gave 8–11-year-olds from our community the basic safety awareness needed to be safe at home for short periods without an adult. Participants learned about calling 9-1-1, basic first aid, and safe, fun activities.
- Fishing with a Cop in Wolfe Park attracts hundreds of community youth over its three midday sessions in the spring and summer. All are welcome and no registration is required.
- Basketball in the Park has been held at Ainsworth Park for more than a decade. In 2023, 50 kids and adults participated in eight weekly events, with games, education, and food for everyone.
- Jobs in the Park, in partnership with St. Louis Park Public Schools, educates and connects youth with job opportunities with the city parks, recreation, and maintenance divisions. It also provides information on how to search, apply and interview for jobs, benefiting 12 young people from our community in 2023.
- Cops and Kids Holiday Shopping: Officers and civilian department members shopped with a select group of middle school students to purchase holiday gifts for their families. After shopping with participating young people, the adult participants assisted kids with gift-wrapping, had pizza together, and presented the families with a gift card to assist in purchasing a special holiday meal. Thank you to donor community organizations, and Cub Foods and Target for their support!



Community outreach, education, and support

The community outreach group, aided by other department members, led numerous events benefiting our community, including safety talks at senior living facilities, armed attacker preparedness classes for businesses, teen driving safety classes with AAA, safety education classes with Scouts BSA troops, and block parties.

Toys for Tots

In December 2023, the St. Louis Park Police Department partnered with AAA of Minneapolis and Parkway Pizza to collect toys for the annual Toys for Tots drive. The drop-off vehicle parade ended at KARE11 in Golden Valley, where collected toys were passed along to the U.S. Marine Corps Forces Reserve for distribution.

New Americans Academy

The New Americans Academy is a program for newly arriving Americans made possible in collaboration with Adult Options in Education. This program occurs on Wednesdays for six consecutive weeks in the spring. This program provides insight on the police department as well as a range of topics from driver safety to voting.

Pink Patch Project

The St. Louis Park Police Department joined the Pink Patch Project, selling collectible pink uniform patches during the month of October to help bring awareness and an end to breast cancer.

Lights On!

For some members of our community, a broken turn signal or taillight possibly means choosing between paying for the repair or covering an important family expense. Officers can provide a Lights On! voucher to a driver of a vehicle with broken lights instead of writing a citation. Visit www.lightsonus.org for more.

Patrol and dispatch



Bike patrol

In 2023, multiple patrol and reserve officers participated in the police department's bike patrol unit. The unit provides hundreds of hours of nontraditional patrol for the city. Between June and September, these officers can be seen on bikes out in the community, patrolling areas requiring extra protection, participating in outreach events, and making positive contacts with young people.

Dispatch center

The 911 communications center is staffed by eight full-time dispatchers, four part-time dispatchers, and a dispatch supervisor with over 20 years of public safety experience. St. Louis Park remains one of only two fully staffed dispatch centers in the five-county metro area. In 2023, the team handled 55,085 phone calls (23,242 911 calls and 31,843 calls to non-emergency lines). The National Emergency Number Association sets the goal to answer 95% of 911 calls within 20 seconds. We are proud to announce that our dispatchers' answer time exceeds the rate of 98% of calls answered in less than 10 seconds. New technology in 2024 will allow automated safety callbacks of hangup callers and technology-assisted responses to further improve speed and efficiency in dispatch.

Patrol Officers

The patrol division includes six sergeants and 30 patrol officers who work a combination of 10- to 12-hour shifts. The shifts overlap to provide optimal coverage during peak periods of activity. Our officers are encouraged to make connections with community members and groups to better address crime, quality of life issues, and community safety. A grant for a DUI/traffic enforcement officer for 2022-23 improved traffic safety on roads and highways in the evenings, weekends, and holidays. In the last four months of the year, this position resulted in the arrest of 117 drivers for DWI offenses.

Juvenile response officers

Two juvenile response police officers (JROs) are assigned to enhance safety in our schools during the school year, helping and supporting students, teachers and school administrators.

Emergency Response Units



Crisis negotiations team

In 2023, the crisis negotiations team (CNT) was made up of one sergeant, six officers, and a dispatcher. All team members receive an initial 40 hours of basic crisis negotiator training, alongside other negotiators from around the region. Team members learn to use the specialized communications equipment and tactics necessary to de-escalate people in crisis and bring about the change in behavior necessary to resolve a dangerous situation. Most team members complete a week-long advanced training course in the first two years of their assignment. CNT members train a minimum of four times a year with consortium partners and regularly attend state and national training conferences. During practical exercises and simulations, the team works closely with other negotiators from the Eden Prairie, Edina, Hopkins and Minnetonka police departments.

In 2023, crisis negotiators assisted the SWAT team with emergency callouts, serving as the direct point of contact with people in crisis and those responsible for life-threatening conduct or behavior. The CNT exists to ensure our department is prepared to establish crisis communications in an emergency and provide helpful communication to neighbors and others about the purpose of the police action they are observing.

SWAT team

The St. Louis Park Police Department SWAT team includes two sergeants, 11 officers, and two St. Louis Park firefighters who are trained as tactical medics. SWAT officers have a minimum of two years' police experience, demonstrate elevated firearms proficiency and physical capabilities, and are evaluated by SWAT team supervisors to assess their professionalism and decision-making abilities. Additional required monthly training develops the capability to resolve intense and dangerous situations safely. In 2023, SWAT team members focused on armed attacker responses and conducted several training events in the community at places of worship, schools, and entertainment venues. Team members receive 40 hours of specialized tactical training and additional instruction each month throughout the year.

K9 team and task forces



K9 Team

Our first K9 officer joined the department in July 2023. K9 Officer “Maverick” is a German Shepherd from Slovakia, born in 2022. Starting in July 2023, Maverick and his partner, K9 Handler Officer Matt McNeely, attended a 16-week training course where they learned to work together to track people, locate evidence, and detect explosives. After starting regular patrol shifts together in the fall, Officer McNeely and K9 Maverick continue to train weekly to further develop their working relationship and capabilities.

Task force collaboration

Investigators participate in three task force teams with agency partners from area police and sheriff’s agencies and state law enforcement. These are aimed at preventing and investigating drug activity, investigating crimes of violence, and addressing the threat posed by electronic crime affecting credit cards, bank accounts, and others involving mobile devices, computers, social media accounts, and the internet.

- **Drug Task Force:** The St. Louis Park Police Department works with the Southwest Hennepin Drug Task Force, consisting of officers from Eden Prairie, Edina, Hopkins, Minnetonka, St. Louis Park and the Hennepin County Sheriff’s Office. The task force works together to conduct undercover operations and drug enforcement.
- **Violent Crime Reduction Unit:** The St. Louis Park Police Department recently joined a new state task force focused on reducing violent crime. A grant-funded St. Louis Park police investigator has been assigned to the task force and to work collaboratively with other state and local investigators.
- **United States Secret Service Electronic Crimes Task Force:** The St. Louis Park Police Department is one of only a few departments that have an investigator in the United States Secret Service Electronic Crimes Task Force. The task force officer receives specialized training, equipment and software paid for by the Secret Service that allow investigators access to the latest investigative techniques needed to investigate cyber-crime, crypto currency fraud and for device exploitation.

Support services



Community service officers

Community service officer-cadets (CSOs) provide support to department operations, such as maintaining police equipment, addressing street parking problems, supporting administrative functions, and giving tours to visitor groups. The department employs at least five part-time CSO-cadets. Tuition reimbursement benefits are available to this group to support their educational success.

Records

The records section collects, processes, distributes, and maintains all the department’s data and reports, in accordance with federal and state data practice laws and established records retention rules. Almost 8,000 police reports were written by officers in 2023. Working with investigators, records personnel managed more than 35 pre-employment background investigations. This involved meeting with candidates, assisting with background forms and releases, reviewing the completed packets and sending numerous employer and reference information requests before final review and summation by the investigator. Records personnel also respond to public data requests, including requests for bodycam and squad camera video. At least six complex cases with multiple videos related to each incident were requested, reviewed, and had redaction applied by records staff in 2023. The records team also received and processed requests that led to issuing 234 permits to purchase firearms in 2023, along with 58 solicitor-type permits for the City of St. Louis Park. The records group works collaboratively with prosecutors to prepare a complete and accurate case file. Almost 600 cases were submitted by the records group for charging consideration.

Response to resistance review

Response-to-resistance reports are required from officers when force is used that is greater than routine handcuffing. Our officers responded to 50,333 calls for service in 2023 and force was used or a weapon displayed 183 times — meaning a use or threat of force occurred in only 0.36% of the officers’ contacts with people.

Recognitions



Robert Linnell Officer of the Year

The 2023 Robert Linnell Officer of the Year Award, voted on by all police officers in the department, was presented to Investigator Bobby Brewer (pictured above, at right, with Chief Kruelle). His peers noted his leadership as field training officer, use-of-force instructor and firearms instructor. They also cited his efforts and initiative in patrol work (arresting a significant number of violent offenders throughout the year), his respect and fairness shown for community members, and his status as a trusted, positive role model for his fellow officers.



Civilian Employee of the Year

The Civilian Employee of the Year Award went to retired dispatcher Marv Solberg (pictured above). His peers noted his expertise and knowledge about communications, information systems and software; his leadership and teamwork; and his dedication to his colleagues.

Member retirements

Investigator Troy Peek and Dispatcher Marv Solberg retired from the department in 2023. Congratulations to them both!

OUR LOCATIONS:

Police Station (Staffed 24 hours a day):

- 3015 Raleigh Ave. S., St. Louis Park

Substations/"Cop Shops" (Staffed when available):

- Excelsior and Grand, 4717 Park Commons Drive
- The Shops at West End, 1623 West End Blvd.
- The Shoppes at Knollwood, 8332 Highway 7

Police information and administration: 952.924.2600
Non-emergency police dispatch number: 952.924.2618
Always call 9-1-1 for emergencies

Volunteers



Police reserves

The police reserves unit is made up of nine volunteer community members ranging in age from 18 to more than 70. The growing number of reserve officers will continue to be an important asset to the department. Their hours of volunteer service increased from 740 in 2022 to 835 in 2023 as they assisted patrol officers, represented St. Louis Park at functions in neighboring communities, and participated in major city events. Police reserves train and meet monthly under the direction of police officer coordinators.

Police explorers post #3505

The St. Louis Park Police Explorers Post #3505 is one of the longest-running law enforcement explorer posts in the nation. The volunteer program offers youth ages 14 to 21 a chance to learn the duties and responsibilities of police officers. Explorers meet weekly to participate in role-playing, classroom discussions, and social exercises directly related to a future career in law enforcement. Participation in our program also provides valuable life skills beneficial in many careers, including relationship building, teamwork, public speaking, and knowledge of government systems. Explorers apply their experience from the program in competitions and scenario-based exercises at an annual state conference and biennial national conference. Fundraising by the group supports training, equipment, conference registrations, and travel expenses.

