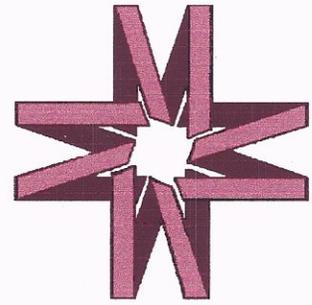


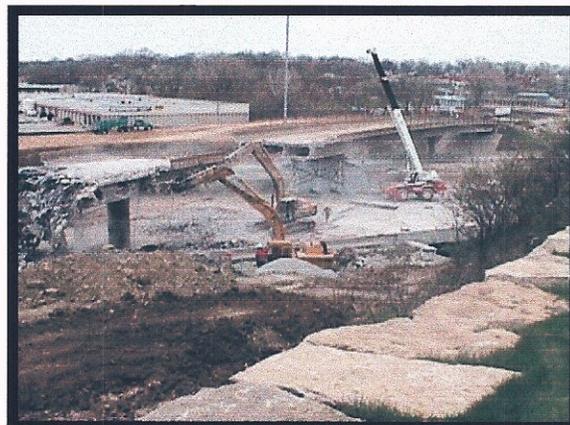
# MERRIAM POLICE DEPARTMENT 1998 HIGHLIGHTS AND STATISTICS



*Flood damage along Streamway Park, south of 67th Street.  
October 4, 1998*



*Minor injury three-car accident where one of the vehicles  
flipped over onto a stopped Merriam police car.*



*Demolition of the Antioch Road bridge over Interstate 35  
during spring 1998.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

The City of Merriam continues to demonstrate that it is a progressively managed community. In 1998 much work was done to ensure that the City would continue to grow and prosper. The City has demonstrated that its primary mission is to improve the quality of life for its residents and businesses.

Merriam is widely known for the high quality level of service that is provided. This success is possible for two reasons: (1) professional city employees that are committed to excellence; and (2) the high degree of dedication and support that these employees receive from the Mayor and City Council.

This document was compiled and organized by Chief Kenneth Sissom. It has been written to chronicle the 1998 events and experiences of the Merriam Police Department. It is written in a series of reports listed by category. Its purpose is to illustrate the activities and provided services through narrative form, statistics, charts and graphs.



## **MERRIAM POLICE DEPARTMENT MISSION STATEMENT**

We, the Merriam, Kansas Police Department, are a community-oriented police department. We are committed to providing the highest quality of police services by empowering our employees to work co-actively with the community toward the goal of improving the quality of life within Merriam. We pledge to maintain the highest level of respect for an individual's rights and human dignity.

Our purpose is to provide safety and security for all persons within our city with responsive and professional services utilizing compassion and concern.

Our mission is accomplished within the moral and legal standards of our community, through a partnership of the community and the employees of the

**MERRIAM POLICE DEPARTMENT.**

**NOTE:**

The Mission Statement and Organization Values were developed by a committee of Merriam Police Officers with the assistance of a group of concerned citizens in June 1993.



# MERRIAM POLICE DEPARTMENT

Kenneth Sissom  
Chief of Police

9000 W. 62<sup>nd</sup> Terrace  
Merriam, KS 66202-2815

Phone (913) 722-7760  
Fax (913) 677-1061

The Honorable Mayor Irene French  
City of Merriam, Kansas

Dear Mayor French,

Anyone connected with the City of Merriam would attest that 1998 was a year of many unusual challenges. In an effort to make a point, I would like to illustrate two of those challenges in this letter. As you recall, on June 23rd the city was suddenly ravaged by a "straight-line wind" that uprooted trees knocked out electricity and closed eight different roads in Merriam. That storm hit almost without warning. Similar to a tornado, high winds cut a swath from 72<sup>nd</sup> and Switzer, northeast to 57<sup>th</sup> and Lowell, causing a half-mile of damage on either side of that line. As a result of the high winds a house caught on fire at 57<sup>th</sup> and Hadley. The Merriam officers who were not assisting the Fire Department with the house fire were attempting to clear streets blocked from fallen trees and power lines. In the end there was several thousands of dollars in damage, but luckily no one was seriously injured in the storm.

Less than four months would go by before another extreme act of nature occurred that wasn't so sudden. On October 4th, the ground was already soaked with rain, when the weatherman called for more thunderstorms. The Johnson County area was put under another seasonal flood warning. Little did we know, this time it would be the real thing.

It was on a Sunday during the middle of a Kansas City Chiefs football game that the downpour began. In less than two hours Merriam and areas south and west would receive over 7 inches of relentlessly hard rain. The three on-duty Merriam police officers were keeping an eye on Turkey Creek, watching the rushing waters as they rose gradually. Within minutes, as the water upstream arrived, Turkey, Antioch and Quail Creeks were all overflowing with floodwaters. Again, without any specific warning, the severe storm was beyond the control of our officers. Six other officers were called in to assist while several intersections, businesses and homes flooded. Merriam Drive looked like a rushing river, with cars from business parking lots floating down toward Turkey Creek. Motorists became stranded, standing on the tops of their cars. The homes along Grandview and Kessler Streets, south of 72<sup>nd</sup>, were also underwater.

As off-duty officers began to arrive to help the police, fire and public works employees, order was restored and assessment of the damage began. By the end of the year, damage estimates would run into the millions. Once again we were very lucky that there were no serious injuries or lives lost. Kansas City, Missouri, was not so lucky.

Mayor French, I am sure that there is no one more aware of the two incidents described above. I decided to write about these issues in my annual letter to you because they illustrate the courage and resolve that is present in each and every employee of the city. We should all be very proud of their performance during those two extremely stressful incidents, but the success can not be pinned on any individual. It was the City of Merriam, acting as a professional organization, that was able to react with such courage and success.

As I reach my twentieth year as an employee for the City of Merriam, I could not be more proud of the men and women I work alongside of and under my command. I want to publicly thank you, along with City Administrator Eric Wade and all the members of the City Council, for your unwavering loyalty and support. Let's hope 1999 is a little quieter.

Sincerely,

Kenneth Sissom, Chief of Police

# ORGANIZATIONAL VALUES

## PARTNERSHIP:

We are committed to working in partnership with the community and each other to identify and resolve issues which impact the community, ourselves and other professional agencies.

## DEDICATION:

We are committed to providing the highest quality of law enforcement service to the community with the goal of enhancing the quality of life within Merriam.

## RESPECT:

We are committed to the respect of individual rights, human dignity and the values of all members of the community and the department.

## INTEGRITY:

We value the adherence to the rule of law, to the Constitutions of Kansas and of the United States, and to utmost honesty. We are committed to nurturing the public trust by holding ourselves accountable to the highest standards of professionalism and ethics.

## COMMUNITY:

We value working with Merriam's diverse community to ensure the safety and security of our neighborhoods. We are committed to the highest level of communication and cooperation with both the residential and business communities of Merriam in an effort to reduce crime and increase the feeling of security and well-being within the city.

## EMPOWERMENT:

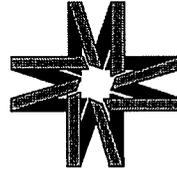
We are committed to empowering our employees and the community to resolve problems by creating an environment that encourages solutions that address the needs of the residential and business communities.

## ORGANIZATIONAL GROWTH:

We value the creation of an environment which focuses on solving problems through teamwork, participation, cooperation and enthusiasm, fostered by decisive, professional leaders who support creativity and innovation.

**Mayor and City Council**

**City Administrator**



**Chief of Police**

**Assistant Chief of Police**

Police Chaplain

DARE Officer  
Crime Prevention

Lead Investigator / Corporal

Regular Investigator

Directed Patrol Unit / Corporal

Animal Control Officer

**Administrative Sergeant**

Information Specialist II

Information Specialist II

Part-Time Info. Specialist I

6 Part-Time School Crossing Guards

**Patrol Sergeant / Shift 1 Supervisor**

Corporal / Assistant Supervisor

4 Regular Police Officers

**Patrol Sergeant / Shift 2 Supervisor**

Corporal / Assistant Supervisor

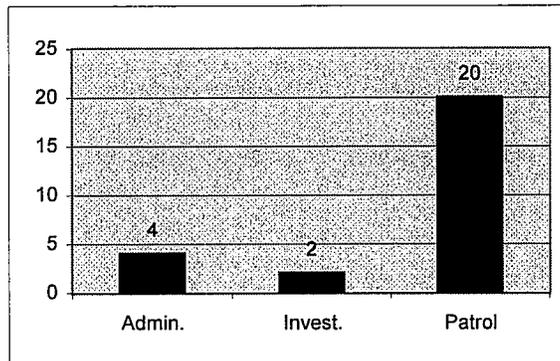
5 Regular Police Officers

**Patrol Sergeant / Shift 3 Supervisor**

Corporal / Assistant Supervisor

5 Regular Police Officers

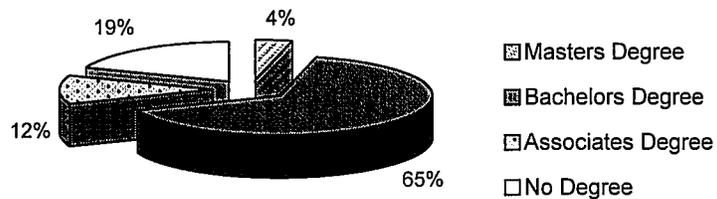
**Support Functions:**  
Including Fingerprinting,  
Photographic Services, Facility  
Maintenance, Property Function,  
Alarm Program, Tow Company  
Coordinator, Press Liaison Officer



<b>POLICE DEPARTMENT ROSTER</b>			
<b>12/31/98</b>			
<b>RANK</b>	<b>NAME</b>	<b>ASSIGNMENT</b>	<b>TENURE'</b>
Chief of Police	KENNETH SISSOM	Administration	19
Asst. Chief of Police	BILL LIETZKE	Administration	18
Sergeant	BOB SMITH	Administration	21
Sergeant	RANDY DAVIS	Patrol	17
Sergeant	TIM BURNETT	Patrol	16
Sergeant	AL JONES	Patrol	15
<b>Average tenure for Staff Officers =</b>			<b>17.67</b>
Corporal	DAN KELLERMAN	Patrol	14
Corporal	MIKE DANIELS	Investigations	11
Corporal	LORI VICTORINE	Patrol	10
Corporal	ROBERT SCHLUBEN	Patrol	8
Corporal	DARREN MCLAUGHLIN	Patrol	9
Master Police Officer	JOAN HUETTENMUELLER	Patrol	13
Master Police Officer	CHARLIE SWEANY	Patrol	8
Master Police Officer	TODD SPARKS	Patrol	8
Master Police Officer	GERRY EICKHOFF	Patrol	7
Police Officer	CHARLIE YOCUM	Investigations	21
Police Officer	JEFF MAGEE	Patrol	11
Police Officer	LARRY BIRT	D.A.R.E.	10
Police Officer	TROY DUVANEL	Patrol	4
Police Officer	STEVE GRIGSBY	Patrol	3
Police Officer	TODD ALLEN	Patrol	2
Police Officer	GREG LENKIEWICZ	Patrol	1
Police Officer	SCOTT MCGAHA	Patrol	<1>
Police Officer	JOHN WALTON	Patrol	<1>
Police Officer	BARRY MARTENS	Patrol	<1>
Police Officer	BRAD FERRIS	Patrol	<1>
<b>Average tenure for MPOs &amp; P.O.s =</b>			<b>7.2</b>
Animal Control Officer	DAVE THOMAS	Animal Control	11
Information Specialist 2	LISA ALDRICH	Clerical	7
Information Specialist 2	KAREN GIBSON	Clerical	6
Information Specialist 1	OPEN PART-TIME POSITION	Clerical	0

**Education Level of Officers**

<u>Education Level</u>	
Masters Degree	1
Bachelors Degree	17
Associates Degree	3
No Degree	5



**The average age for Merriam Police Officers is 34 years of age.**

# Crime Statistics



## INTRODUCTION:

The collection of crime statistics is required by the Kansas Bureau of Investigations. The information collected is used for local, state and federal databases to compare rates with previous years to get a picture of the amount and types of crimes that are happening in a given area.

Within the police department, we use statistics to plan patrol strategies for the coming year in hopes of reducing crime. While it is difficult to accurately predict crime statistics, one thing is certain — the statistics will vary from year-to-year. This is especially true for a small city like Merriam.

There are many factors that can alter crime statistics which cause this variance. The factors can include economic conditions, weather, incursion of drugs, gangs, organized crime, development of new businesses and the increase or decrease of law enforcement presence in the community.

## CRIME RATES FOR 1998:

As predicted above, there were fluctuations in some of the crime rates when 1998 is compared to the previous year.

While most types of crimes remained stable, there were categories with notable changes. Burglaries were on the rise in 1998 compared to the year before. Business burglaries rose a remarkable 41%, residential burglaries rose 21% and auto burglaries rose 14%. One reason for the dramatic increase can be found in the statistics themselves. For example, last year business burglaries dropped in half. This year they have moved back up to their "normal pace." Auto and residential burglaries are higher than normal this year. The reasons are not known.

Another area where there is an explainable increase is forgeries. This increase is directly related to the development of Merriam Town Center. In 1996 there were 10 reported cases of forgery. This

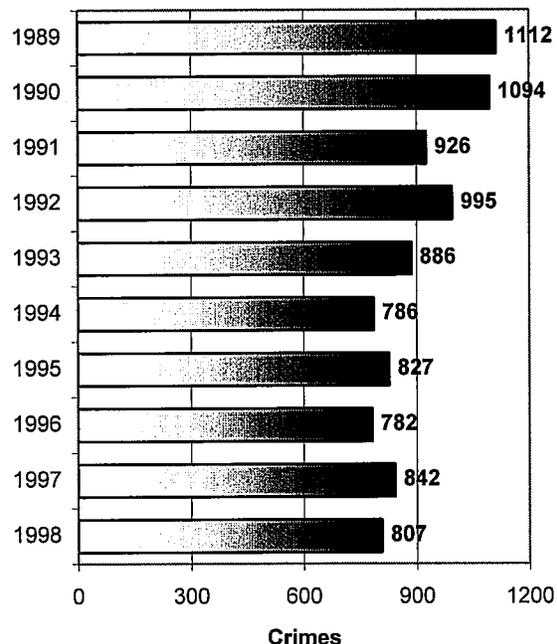
has skyrocketed to 131 cases in 1998. Most of this increase is directly attributed to Merriam Town Center — specifically Hen House and Home Depot. This number will continue to increase for the next few years as our retail business increases.

## PART ONE CRIMES:

Each year, we are required to report Part-One Crimes to the KBI and FBI. The 1998 statistics are listed below. There was a 4% decrease in Part-One Crimes. A more complete breakdown of crimes is listed on the following page.

Part-One Crimes	1996	1997	1998
MURDER	0	0	1
RAPE	7	6	9
ROBBERY	12	9	11
AGG. ASSAULT	18	37	31
BURGLARY	256	256	303
THEFT	429	431	376
AUTO THEFT	68	98	72
ARSON	3	5	4
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>782</b>	<b>842</b>	<b>807</b>

Part-One Crimes Last 10 Years

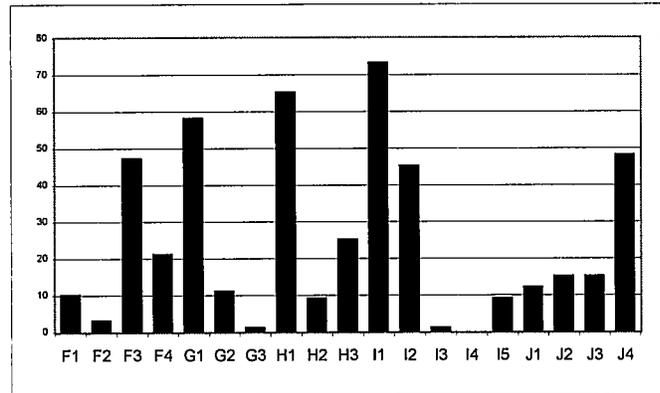
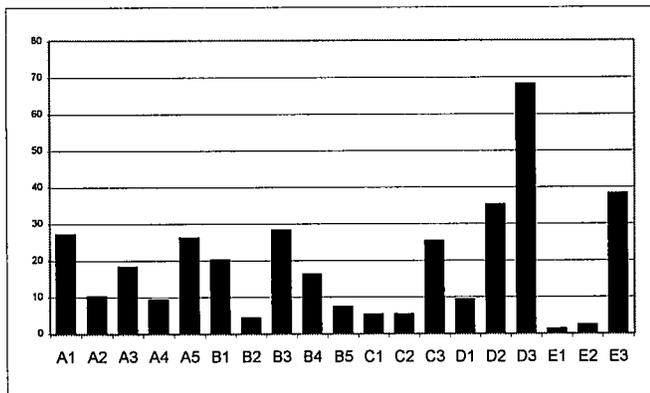
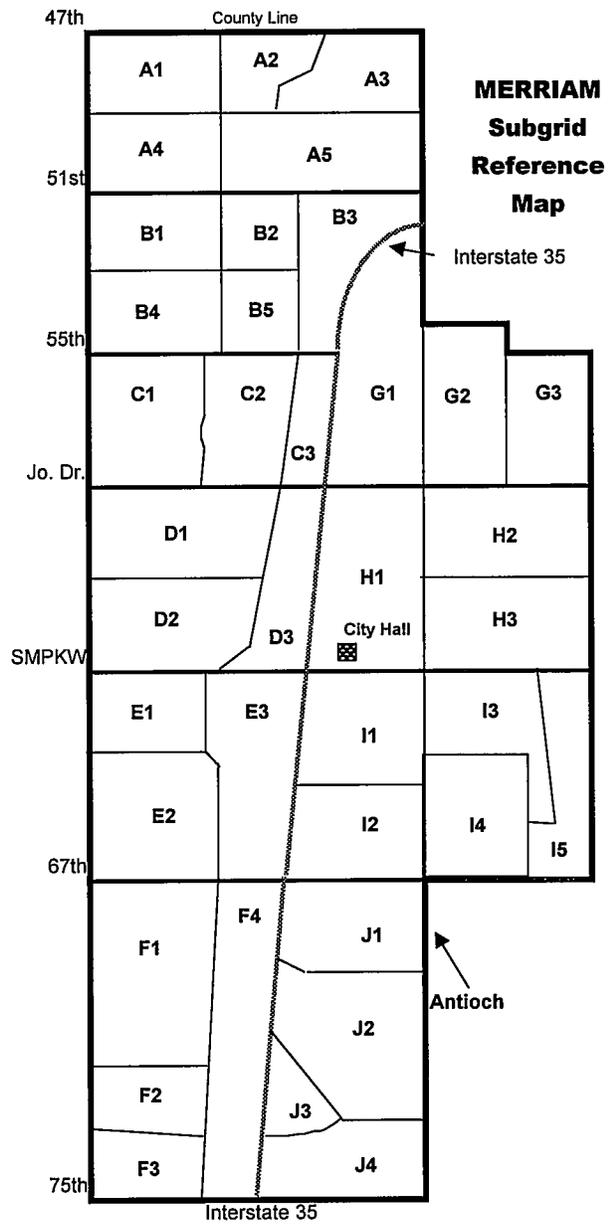


# Part One Crimes / 1998

## By Location

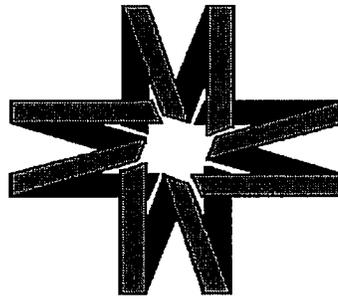
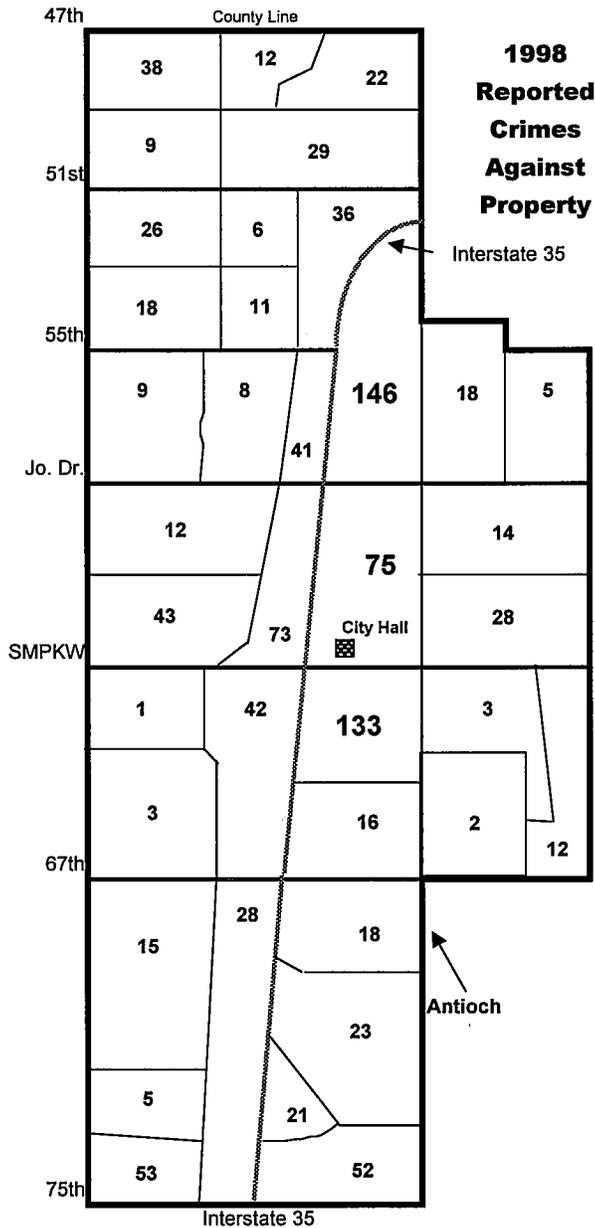
Grid	1996	1997	1998
A1	33	49	27
A2	16	13	10
A3	13	18	18
A4	21	18	9
A5	90	52	26
B1	60	45	20
B2	17	20	4
B3	98	56	28
B4	13	12	16
B5	11	12	7
C1	21	11	5
C2	17	21	5
C3	46	36	25
D1	20	28	9
D2	91	58	35
D3	41	50	68
E1	8	1	1
E2	3	2	2
E3	55	36	38

Grid	1996	1997	1998
F1	17	23	10
F2	6	5	3
F3	65	66	47
F4	12	15	21
G1	57	20	58
G2	23	18	11
G3	6	9	1
H1	104	105	65
H2	25	12	9
H3	46	36	25
I1	139	168	73
I2	37	38	45
I3	6	7	1
I4	0	0	0
I5	9	10	9
J1	25	17	12
J2	23	28	15
J3	32	21	15
J4	71	83	48

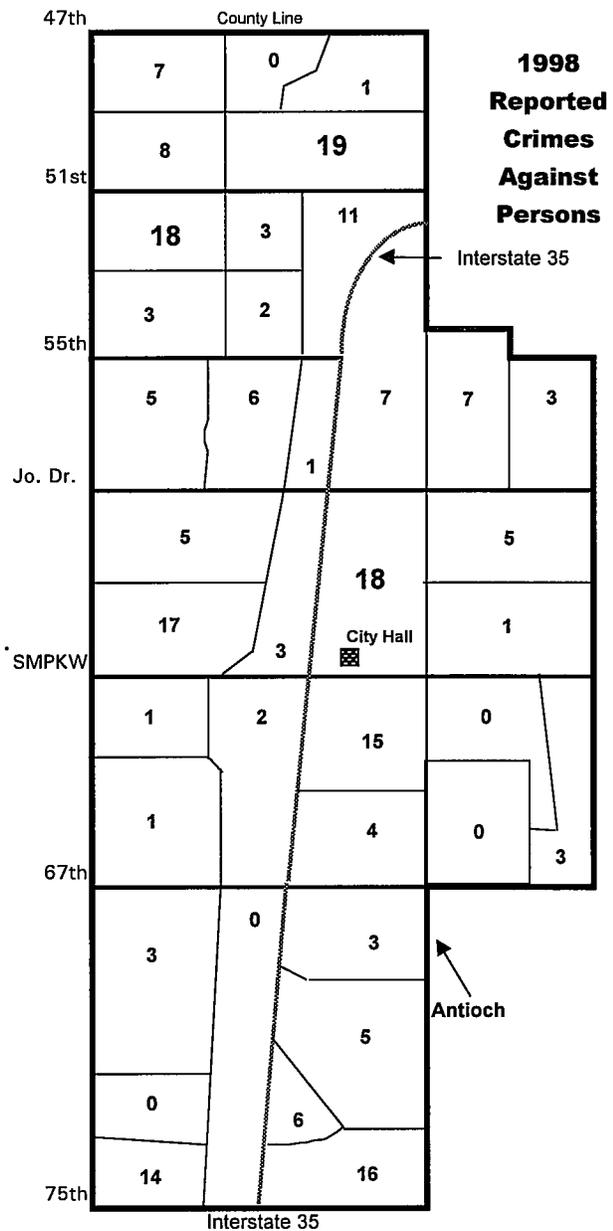


# 1998 REPORTED CRIMES IN MERRIAM, KANSAS

TYPE OF CRIME	1996	1997	1998	TYPE OF CRIME	1996	1997	1998
Aggravated Arson	1	0	1	Forgery	10	53	131
Arson	3	5	4	Furnishing Alcohol or CMB to Minor	0	1	7
Aggravated Assault	9	21	19	Habitual Traffic Violator	4	10	19
Aggravated Battery	9	16	12	Harassment by Phone	37	34	37
Aggravated Burglary	6	11	10	Homicide	0	0	1
Aggravated Sodomy	1	0	1	Indecent Liberties with a Child	0	1	2
Aggravated Indecent Liberties	1	2	2	Indecent Solicitation of a Child	2	0	0
Aggravated Kidnapping	0	0	3	Interference with Parental Custody	0	1	0
Aggravated Robbery	8	5	7	Intimidation of a Victim/Witness	1	0	1
Aggravated Sexual Battery	0	1	1	Kidnapping	0	0	2
Assault	1	0	5	Lewd and Lascivious Behavior	5	3	4
Battery	102	118	104	Littering	5	5	3
Burglary to Auto	171	161	187	Minor in Possession of Alcohol	4	6	12
Burglary to Business	43	19	32	Obstructing Legal Process	14	14	17
Burglary to Residence	43	41	52	Pedestrian Under the Influence	0	0	1
Burglary to Storage Area	12	25	22	Possession of Controlled Substance	48	56	42
Child In Need Of Care	19	38	25	Possession of Drug Paraphernalia	1	1	7
Child Abuse	0	0	3	Possession of Marijuana	0	0	0
Computer Trespass	0	3	0	Possession of Stolen Property	7	5	8
Conspiracy	0	0	1	Possession of Stolen Auto	0	0	0
Criminal Damage - Felony	35	22	24	Promoting Obscenities	0	0	1
Criminal Damage - Misdemeanor	140	106	101	Rape	10	7	9
Criminal Deprivation of Property	10	11	15	Robbery	5	4	4
Criminal Discharge of a Weapon	1	5	6	Sexual Battery	0	1	2
Criminal Sodomy	0	1	0	Sexual Exploitation of a Child	0	0	1
Criminal Threats	28	26	29	Stalking	0	1	0
Criminal Trespass	20	14	16	Theft of Lost or Mislaid Property	15	10	31
Criminal Use of a Financial Card	4	4	5	Theft of Services	3	2	11
Criminal Use of a Weapon	3	5	1	Theft of Auto	68	98	72
Cruelty to Animals	0	0	1	Theft of Auto (Attempted)	13	12	5
Disorderly Conduct	41	66	53	Theft - Felony	66	67	60
Disturbing the Peace	1	0	0	Theft - Misdemeanor	355	364	316
Escape From Custody	0	0	2	Truancy	0	3	0
Falsely Obtaining a Prescription	1	3	3	Violation of a Court Protection Order	0	11	7
Falsely Reporting a Crime	0	0	1	Worthless Check	1	2	2
TOTAL OF CRIMES REPORTED PER YEAR					1387	1501	1563



**City of Merriam, Kansas  
Sub-Grid Maps  
1998**



These two Merriam maps illustrate crimes that were reported by victims in Merriam.

The top map illustrates the number of "property" crimes, including burglaries, thefts, forgeries, frauds and vandalisms.

The bottom map illustrates the number of "persons" crimes, which include murder, rapes, robberies, assaults and batteries.

NOTE: Some minor crimes such as disorderly conduct and telephone harassment are not represented on these maps.

Top  
Ten

# Critical Incidents



## INTRODUCTION:

Each year, officers of the Merriam Police Department respond to over 15,000 incidents ranging from motorist assists and animal control calls to aggravated assaults, kidnapping and deaths. As a new feature in this year's Annual Report, the "Top Ten Critical Incidents" of the year have been selected and reviewed below.

The following incidents are listed in chronological order as they occurred in 1998.

♥ **JANUARY 15 – POLICE PURSUIT AND FELONY ARREST:** Officer Todd Sparks was leaving the dry cleaning business at 75th and Switzer when he observed a vehicle driving at an excessively high speed, east on 75th. Because the speeding driver posed a serious threat to other motorists the officer began to follow the car. Soon he found that officers from the Shawnee Police Department were chasing the driver who was the suspect of a rape that just occurred in western Shawnee. Officer Sparks continued to follow the pursuit from a distance, in case they needed assistance. Suddenly, in the vicinity of 95th and Quivira, the rape suspect jumped out of the car that turned out to be stolen from the rape victim. He then ran into busy Oak Park Mall. Officer Sparks was in the vicinity and witnessed the man enter the mall. He began a foot chase as the man was running through the mall. Being in good physical condition, Officer Sparks nearly ran down the suspect to make an arrest when the man tried to take a store clerk hostage, holding a ballpoint pen to the clerk's neck. Officer Sparks tackled the man and makes an arrest, with the assistance of a J.C. Penney's Security Officer. The man had raped a woman in Shawnee that morning and attempted to rape another woman earlier in Lenexa.



♥ **FEBRUARY 13 – PUBLIC NUDITY IN A MERRIAM BUSINESS:** Operating with intelligence information from an informant, Merriam officers being assisted by deputies from the Johnson County Sheriff's Office raided a drinking establishment on Merriam Drive and discovered one semi-nude dancer and three other scantily clothed dancers in a hidden bar room that adjoined the main bar. One arrest was made, due to a felony warrant on one of the strippers, and seven complaints were later issued.

♥ **FEBRUARY 17 – HOMICIDE ON SHAWNEE MISSION PARKWAY:** At 3:20 a.m., a Shawnee woman was driving her friend and son home from a KCMO casino when she noticed that she was being followed by a carload of men. She exited I-35 onto westbound Shawnee Mission Parkway when suddenly the men in the car began shooting at the victim's car. Over a dozen bullets struck the car, one of which fatally injured the 23-year-old son who was sitting in the back seat. The suspects followed the victim for four blocks and finally fled the area when the victim driver pulled into an open business at Shawnee Mission Parkway and Eby. The Metro Squad was called in to assist Merriam investigators. After six days of intensive investigation, a good suspect had been developed. After hundreds of hours of investigation this case is still unsolved. The main suspect was arrested in December for another unrelated homicide in Kansas City, Missouri.

♥ **MARCH 21 – ASSIST KCMO ON A KIDNAPPING AND CARJACKING:** In the early morning hours a car was stolen containing a woman and two young children. The woman fell from the moving car but the children remained with the stolen car and the carjacker. KCMO PD began a frantic search for the stolen car and the two children but they were not found. Later in the morning, Merriam officers were notified that the stolen car involved in the kidnapping and carjacking was parked in the 5500 block of I-35. Officers found the car but it was unoccupied. They quickly began a wide-area search. In this process they received a report that a man and two children were earlier seen walking on the RR tracks, northbound. Merriam Officer Troy Duvanel calculated where the

suspect and children should be based on this report. He went to 18<sup>th</sup> Street and I-35 near the RR tracks where he located the three and arrested the kidnapper. The children were unharmed and were returned to their mother at the police department.

- ♥ **APRIL 7 – ASSIST KANSAS CITY, KANSAS, DRUG ARREST:** During the evening shift, Merriam officers were asked to assist Kansas City, Kansas Police homicide detectives and agents from the Kansas Bureau of Investigations who wanted to interview a man registered as a guest at a Merriam motel. After the officers received consent to enter the room they quickly observed an exposed large baggie of marijuana. This prompted a detailed search of the suspect's room which also revealed ammunition for an assault rifle. The search was extended to the suspect's car, parked in the parking lot. There they found the assault rifle and scope, along with over 4 pounds of methampetamines. This is the largest methamphetamine seizure in Johnson County's history. The suspects fled an active drug lab in Kansas City prior to it being raided. They came to Merriam to hide out from the KCK PD.



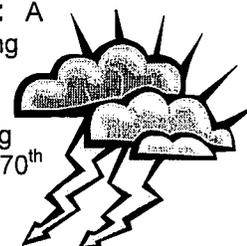
- ♥ **MAY 26 – CONSTRUCTION SITE ACCIDENT:** A 41-year-old construction worker was walking behind a dump truck filled with 35 tons of asphalt. It is believed that he stopped walking to light a cigarette and the truck driver did not notice. The truck driver inadvertently backed over the man, dragging him for 31 feet over fresh asphalt. When the driver noticed something was wrong he found the man was found trapped under the tandem wheels of the truck. Merriam Fire Department efforts finally freed the man and Med-Act transported the injured man to KU Med Center with severe trauma. In the operating room at KU everything below his navel had to be amputated. The man remained in critical condition until July 9th when he finally succumbed to his severe injuries.

- ♥ **JUNE 23 – SEVERE STORM WITH STRAIGHT-LINE WINDS:** A severe thunderstorm with high winds struck the city in the early morning hours, knocking out traffic signals at Johnson and Antioch, Shawnee Mission Parkway and Mastin and 75<sup>th</sup> and E. Frontage Road. Several of the orange barrels on Johnson Drive were relocated by high winds. A second storm struck the city later in the evening with 80-100 mph straight-line winds hitting an area from 72nd and Switzer to 57<sup>th</sup> and Lowell, from southwest to northeast. Several large trees were uprooted. Numerous power lines were knocked down. One house fire was reported and several transformers exploded or caught fire. At least ten roads were closed due to downed trees or power lines. Merriam Public Works and the Fire Department were call out along with a number of off-duty police officers to handle these weather related problems which resulted in thousands of dollars in damage.

- ♥ **JULY 29 – AGGRAVATED BATTERY ON INTERSTATE 35:** During the evening hours, a couple were driving north on I-35 when suddenly, without warning, a heavy object entered the windshield of their car, striking a young woman passenger in the head. A large, grapefruit sized rock was lobbed from East Frontage Road onto the moving vehicle by an unknown person. The woman receive a very serious head wound which required a long stay in the Intensive Care Unit, to be followed up by therapy and plastic surgery. The suspect is still unknown.

- ♥ **AUGUST 19 – MERCANTILE BANK ROBBERY:** During the morning hours, a man walked into the bank and handed the clerk a note announcing the robbery. No weapon was displayed. He ordered the clerk to surrender a small quantity of cash and then fled the bank on foot. An area check was made to no avail. The case was turned over to the FBI for further investigation. On August 24<sup>th</sup>, Merriam Investigator Mike Daniels received a tip identifying a suspect. When the FBI did not return our repeated calls, Investigator Daniels followed up this lead and made an arrest for the robbery. The man made a full confession.

- ♥ **OCTOBER 4 – SEVERE THUNDERSTORMS AND FLOODING:** A heavy storm, producing 5" to 7" of rain in less than two hours, occurred during the evening hours causing Turkey Creek and Quail Creek to swell out of their banks and submerge low lying areas. Numerous high water rescues were performed by police and fire units. Consolidated Lumber, businesses along Merriam Drive and several of the homes on Kessler and Grandview, south of 70<sup>th</sup> Street, were worst hit. Damage was estimated in excess of \$1,000,000.



# Administration



## INTRODUCTION:

The administration function of the Merriam Police Department is segregated into three main responsibilities — Personnel, Budget and Professional Standards. While these are all important functions, they are predominately designed to help support the overall mission of the department. The Administration Unit currently consists of the Chief of Police, the Assistant Chief of Police and one Administrative Sergeant. There are also two full-time and one part-time Information Specialists that work in this unit taking care of the clerical needs of the department. The only other employee assigned to the Administration Unit is the DARE / Crime Prevention Officer, who works at the direction of the Chief of Police.

## PERSONNEL REPORT:

In the 1997 Annual Report, turnover was the issue. With the resignations and retirements that occurred in 1997, the department found itself short-handed, in need of manpower replacement.

During 1998, four new police officers were hired. Three of them had no experience and were sent to the police academy. One was already state certified, having come from the Shawnee Mission School District Police. As the year came to a close, all authorized positions in the Merriam Police Department were filled. There were still two officers on light duty — one due to an on-duty injury and the other due to pregnancy.

Currently there are four officers who work in the Administration Unit. There are two officers working in the Investigations Unit and the remaining 20 officers work in the Patrol Unit. This is an excellent ratio which indicates that the clear majority of the department (20 out of 26 commissioned police officers) is dedicated to patrolling the streets of Merriam to increase citizen safety, working to prevent crime and providing an appropriate police response to crimes and other problems as they occur.

## BUDGET REPORT:

The approved annual budget for the Merriam Police Department for 1998 was \$1,416,626. According to the December 1998 Expenditure Report the department finished the year spending \$1,397,408 or 98.6%.

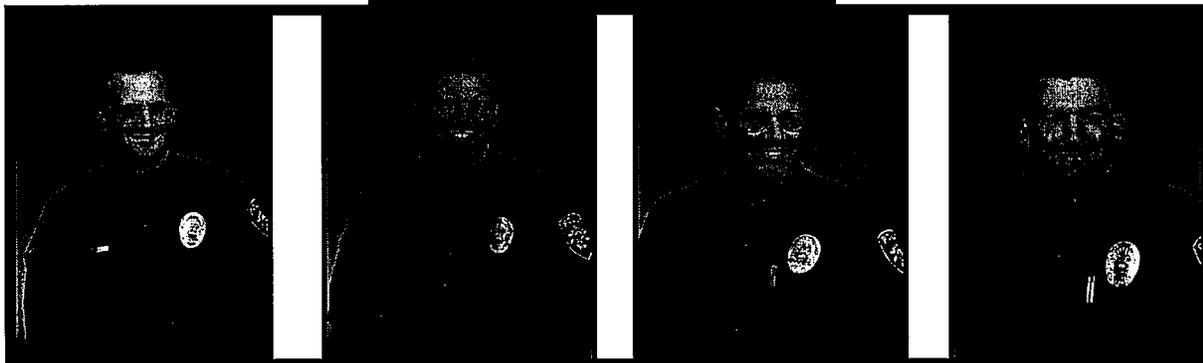
While it is the goal to come in at the end of the year under the budget, it is important to point out that there were some unexpected expenditures that occurred during 1998.

**Vehicle Repair and Replacement Costs:** These costs were drastically over budget. Most of the costs are attributed to the unforeseen replacement needs of a police car that was wrecked in July. Fortunately the other driver's insurance company paid for the car replacement. As the wrecked police car had 40,000 miles on it at the time of the accident, the insurance settlement was not enough to completely cover the cost of a new car.

During the year there were also a number of very expensive repairs that went beyond the expected budgeted amounts. Three cars in the police fleet were plagued by engine and transmission failures.

One car alone cost the department over \$7,200 in repairs.

## New Officers Hired in 1998



Officer Scott McGaha

Officer John D. Walton

Officer Barry Martens

Officer Brad Ferris

**Metro Squad Costs:** Another area involving unexpected costs come under the heading of the Metro Squad. The department had not been involved in a full-fledged Metro Squad Investigation for several years. The department has always set aside \$1,500 in the budget in case a Metro Squad was called in Merriam. Unfortunately in 1998 we found that the costs have gone up drastically.

The costs for the February Hollingsworth homicide investigation using the assistance of the Metro Squad was over \$4,000. The 1999 Budget has been properly adjusted for any future homicide investigations.

**Overtime Costs and Comparisons:**

In 1998, Merriam police officers worked 4,978.25 hours of overtime. This represents a 12% increase over 1997. The chart below shows the breakdown on overtime costs, department-wide. There are two predominate reasons for the increase. First, it takes new officers longer to write reports due to inexperience and secondly, there was a lot of overtime connected with the investigation of the homicide in February.

The Administration is always looking for ways to cut down the hours of overtime without sacrificing services to the citizens. The overtime rate should start to drop as our new officers become fully trained and more competent in their work.

**PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS:**

One of the assigned functions of the Assistant Chief is to conduct internal investigations when necessary. He is also charged with making sure that proper procedures are followed by all officers.

The department currently requires special reports and investigations in three areas. The areas in-

clude: 1) officer complaints; 2) vehicle pursuits; and 3) use of force incidents.

**Officer Complaints:** When a citizen makes a complaint against an officer it is originally investigated by the officer's supervisor. If the complaint is serious in nature or can not be resolved by the supervisor, it is forwarded to the office of the Assistant Chief. He conducts the investigation and concludes by forwarding the results with a recommendation to the Police Chief. During 1998 there were no serious officer complaints investigated.

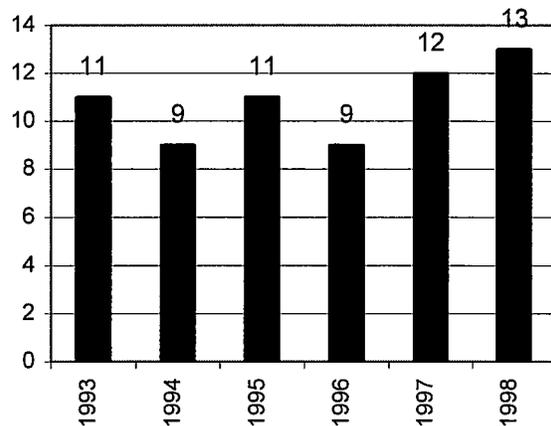
**Vehicle Pursuits:** The department has a very strict vehicle pursuit policy. When an officer engages in a pursuit it is closely monitored by the on-duty supervisor. They have direct authority to discontinue a pursuit at any time. ALL vehicle pursuits are investigated by the on-duty supervisor and the Assistant Chief to make sure they are in compliance with written department policy.

During 1998 there were only a small number of police pursuits involving Merriam officers. All of these pursuits were found to be in compliance with department pursuit policy.

**Use of Force Incidents:** As with pursuits, officers are required to report all use of force incidents. A special report that is specific to use of force details the circumstances that led up to the force incident. It also documents the amount of force used and the results. The reports are reviewed by the on-duty supervisor and forwarded to the Administration Unit where they are reviewed by the Assistant Chief and ultimately the Chief of Police.

During 1998 there were 13 incidents where an officer had to use force to effect an arrest. This is an extremely low number when it is compared to the fact that the department made 1,125 arrests.

OVERTIME TYPE	1997	1998
COURT	474.5	551.25
TRAINING	716	757.75
REPLACEMENT	789.5	668.25
REPORTS	310.75	488.5
LATE CALLS	192.25	197.5
HOLIDAY ON/OFF DUTY	1340	1333
INVESTIGATIONS	213.75	498.25
OTHER OVERTIME	301.75	483.75
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>4338.5</b>	<b>4978.25</b>



# Patrol Statistics



## PATROL DIVISION:

Patrol is the largest unit of the police department. Twenty officers or 76.9% of the commissioned force are assigned to patrol the streets, respond to calls for service and proactively enforce the laws of the state and city. The majority of the police department's work is done by these officers.

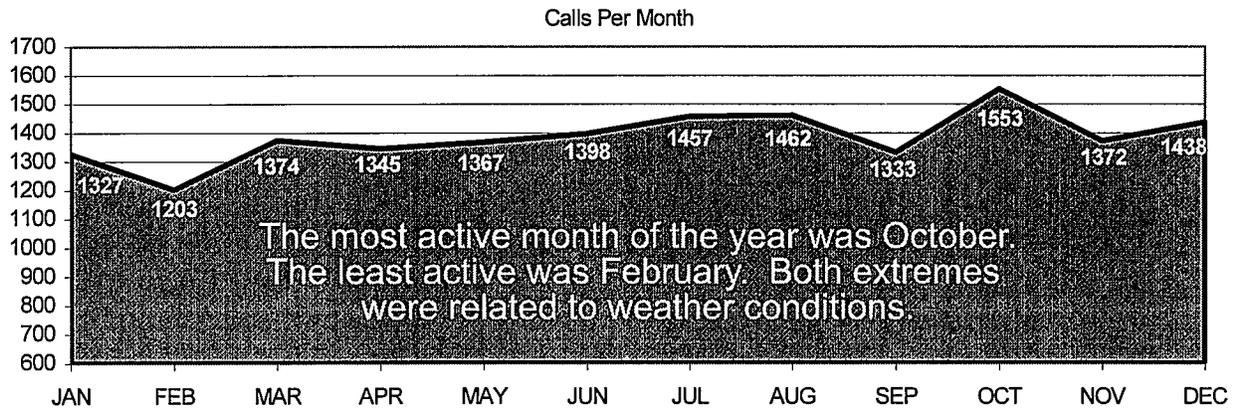
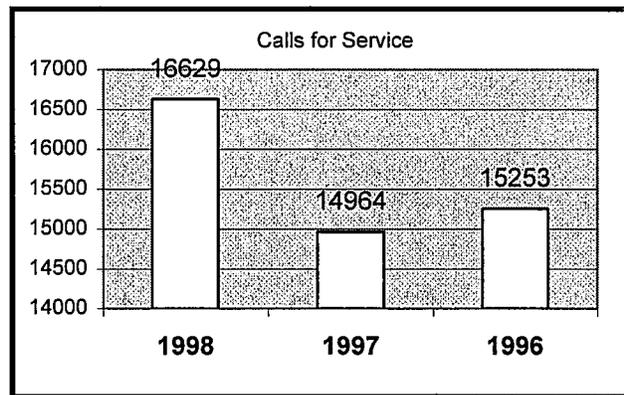
## CALLS FOR SERVICE:

For the most part, police service is driven by the calls received from citizens and businesses. Each year the number of these calls for service varies due to weather, changing crime trends or even the style of policing.

The Merriam Police Department has been involved in Community Policing since 1993. One of the by-products of this philosophy involves a strengthened relationship between the police and the general public. This will result in increased cooperation that will many times increase the number of calls for police service. As the public becomes more accountable for problems in their neighborhoods, the more they involve the police at an earlier stage of problem development, which can result in an increase in police calls for service. Suspicious ac-

tivities are more likely to be reported when there is increased cooperation and trust between the police and the public.

In 1998 the Merriam Police Department experienced a 10% increase in calls for service.



## AN AVERAGE PATROL SHIFT:

There is an average of four officers per shift throughout the year. This will include one supervisor and three regular officers. The average police officer drives **47.1** miles during his or her tour of duty. This number represents a **6% increase** over 1997. In total, police officers drove **151,592** miles on patrol.

Each day a shift of officers can expect to handle over fifteen calls for service. These calls will generate an average 1 arrest and 3.25 offense, accident or incident reports. This will take an officer off the street for an average of 56 minutes of their eight-hour shift, or approximately 12% of their on-duty time. The average officer will also write a little over 2 traffic tickets.

**REPORT WRITING:**

One of the most underestimated aspect of policing is the amount of paperwork that is required. A patrol officer will spend a significant portion of his or her time writing police reports. The amount of time will vary from day-to-day, depending on the number of calls for service received and the type of activities that may require a report. A log is kept listing the number of minutes spent writing reports during the shift. This data is used to evaluate officer efficiency and report writing proficiency.

The most common types of police reports are:

<u>Report Type</u>	<u>Percent of Total Reports</u>
<b>Offense</b>	<b>21%</b>
<b>Arrest</b>	<b>32%</b>
<b>Accident</b>	<b>30%</b>
<b>Other Incident</b>	<b>17%</b>

In 1998, Merriam officers spent **3,395** hours writing police reports, representing a **8%** increase over 1997. As a result, **3,612** new case files were created. This is the third year that officers are typing reports on the computer. The increase in report writing time corresponds with the fact that more reports were written. This increase was also influenced by the number of new officers hired and trained in 1998.

**SELF-INITIATED ACTIVITIES and RANDOM PATROL:**

An officer's self-initiated activity is measured in four categories:

- Patrol miles driven per shift;
- Number of arrests made;
- Traffic enforcement; and
- Completion of special assignments.

**Patrol Miles:**

In 1998, police officers in Merriam drove a total of **151,592** miles patrolling the streets. This represents an **8%** decrease in the number of miles driven, compared to 1997. One of the factors that has caused a decrease in miles driven over the past couple of years is Community Policing. Officers are spending more time out of their cars interacting with citizens.

Each year citizens and business owners give many complementary remarks on the department's high patrol visibility. This visibility

has increased the feeling of security by residents and businesses, and has contributed to the reduction of some types of crimes.

**Traffic Enforcement:**



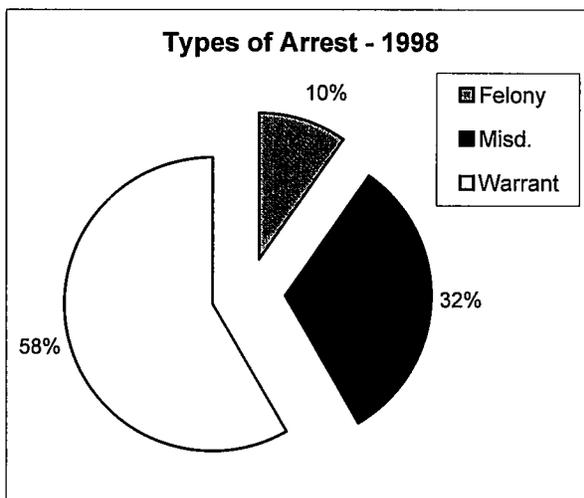
In 1998, Merriam police officers issued **6,859** traffic tickets to motorists. This number represents a **12%** decrease, compared to 1997. The number of new officers has contributed to this decrease. It should reverse in 1999, as these officers will be fully trained and more productive. A breakdown on the types of tickets can be found on page 17.

**Arrests:**

In 1998, the Merriam Police Department made **1,125** arrests. This is an **8%** decrease over 1997. This decrease is also attributed to the higher than normal amount of new under-trained officers.

Of the arrests made, **42%** were for felony, misdemeanor or traffic charges and the remaining **58%** were for outstanding municipal and district court failure to appear warrants. During the year **76** persons were arrested for domestic violence related crimes. Out of 1,125 arrests there were only 13 cases where a Merriam officer had to use force. This is an excellent arrest / use of force ratio.

An arrest breakdown is listed below.



**Special Assignments:**

During 1998 officers were involved in directed patrol and special surveillance at various areas throughout Merriam, including Town Center, and in the various neighborhoods.

# Traffic Accidents



## INTRODUCTION:

One of the fundamental duties of any police department is to investigate motor vehicle accidents. The City of Merriam has 66 miles of roadway within its borders; of that, roughly 3 miles consist of interstate highway. According to the County Economic Research Institute, Inc. (CERI), "An average of 142,630 vehicles pass along Interstate 35 (both northbound and southbound) south of the interchange with 75th Street on an average weekday. This is the highest traffic volume at any location in the county." Also listed in the same study is the intersection of Shawnee Mission Parkway and Antioch. Over 50,000 cars use this intersection on an average weekday.

With the types of roadways that run through Merriam, coupled with the high number of businesses and general drive-through traffic, the problem of traffic accidents is a full-time challenge for the department.

## ACCIDENT RATES:

In 1998, 869 state accident reports were written by the Merriam Police Department. This represents a **12.6%** increase in accidents over 1997. While this increase is unfortunate, it is also another statistic that more closely represents the normal number of accidents during a year's time (see chart >>>>).

There was one fatality accident involving a pedestrian working in the construction area on Johnson Drive, just west of Slater. There were no criminal charges resulting from that accident.

In reviewing the streets and highways that are considered high-traffic locations, there were notable increases on Interstate 35, Antioch Road, Johnson Drive and Merriam Drive. The closure of the Antioch Road bridge over I-35 is believed to be partially responsible for this increase.



*Merriam Police Unit 4 was involved in a non-injury accident at 58th and Merriam Drive on July 8, 1998*

## ACCIDENT STATISTICS:

Accident Types	1996	1997	1998
Total Reported	873	760	954
Fatalities	0	1	1
Injury Accidents	170	129	168
Hit and Run	107	57	120
Private Property	132	161	121
Alcohol Involved	27	17	18

## TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS BY LOCATION:

### SHAWNEE MISSION PARKWAY

Total Accidents = 143 (1997 = 139)  
Injuries Involved = 39 or 27%

### JOHNSON DRIVE

Total Accidents = 114 (1997 = 91)  
Injuries Involved = 29 or 25%

### INTERSTATE 35

Total Accidents = 131 (1997 = 89)  
Injuries Involved = 18 or 14%

### ANTIOCH ROAD

Total Accidents = 63 (1997 = 42)  
Injuries Involved = 13 or 30%

### 75TH STREET

Total Accidents = 93 (1997 = 84)  
Injuries Involved = 19 or 20%

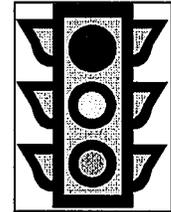
### MERRIAM DRIVE

Total Accidents = 38 (1996 = 43)  
Injuries Involved = 4 or 10.5%

### 67TH STREET

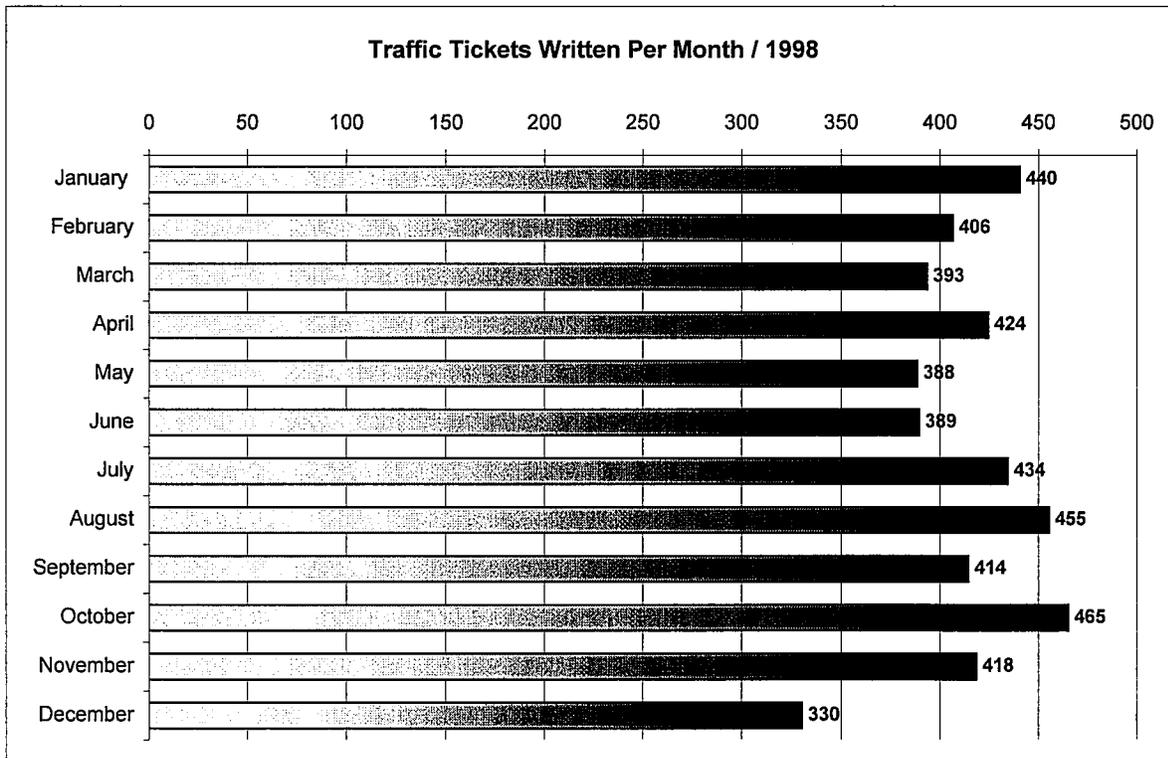
Total Accidents = 27 (1996 = 20)  
Injuries Involved = 6 or 22%

	Assorted Speeding	Stop Sign	Drunk Driving	No Insurance	No/Expired Tags
January	205	19	12	132	72
February	212	25	6	101	62
March	225	12	7	111	38
April	238	31	10	107	38
May	194	19	13	118	44
June	216	18	10	97	48
July	245	18	8	114	49
August	215	25	13	133	69
September	205	41	13	103	52
October	233	22	11	134	65
November	224	23	10	110	51
December	159	15	9	92	55
<b>Totals</b>	<b>2571</b>	<b>268</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>1352</b>	<b>643</b>



1998  
Traffic Citations  
by Type

	No Drivers License	All Traffic Signal	No Seat Belts	Assorted Parking	All Others	Monthly Totals
January	36	21	6	9	69	440
February	39	19	2	21	64	406
March	32	16	2	9	73	393
April	30	22	5	7	42	424
May	19	29	5	6	109	388
June	40	33	73	7	55	389
July	42	36	68	5	43	434
August	59	29	49	6	52	455
September	45	60	40	10	45	414
October	36	37	27	8	59	465
November	44	33	28	9	68	418
December	34	24	8	10	55	330
<b>Totals</b>	<b>456</b>	<b>359</b>	<b>313</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>734</b>	<b>4956</b>



# **Investigations Unit**



## **INTRODUCTION:**

The Investigations Unit is comprised of two full-time investigators. The lead investigator is a corporal and the other investigator is a regular officer, assigned there from patrol. The unit supervisor is the Assistant Chief of Police, who assigns their cases and is responsible for day-to-day unit operations.

The lead investigator is assigned to the unit on a permanent basis. Permanency allows this officer to become proficient in all types of criminal investigations, and make all the necessary contacts to make his or her job more effective. The second officer is assigned to investigations for one year. This allows one officer to get away from the normal patrol duties and learn new police skills. The officers assigned to this unit are required to be independent and reliable. There is very little supervision of their daily activities due to the nature of this assignment.

In addition to the two full-time investigators there is a group of officers that are trained as evidence technicians. They work normal patrol shifts. If a crime is reported that requires evidence recovery, these specially-trained officers are called to assist. This keeps us from calling out investigators and reduces overtime. It also helps by cross-training officers in different skill areas.

## **DETECTIVE UNIT SUMMARY FOR 1998**

This year the Investigative Unit followed up **\*374** cases. Of those cases, **71** were cleared with an arrest or by exception.

The investigators and assistant investigators were called out **22** times. The unit worked a total of **52** hours of overtime.

### **1998 Assigned Cases:**

- 135 Thefts
- 28 Telephone Harassments
- 23 Hit and Run Accidents
- 21 Forgeries
- 20 Criminal Damage / Vandalism
- 21 Batteries
- 22 Auto Thefts
- 19 Assaults
- 18 Burglaries
- 13 Robberies
- 12 Child In Need of Care Cases (SRS)

- 9 Rapes
- 7 Unattended Deaths
- 6 Criminal Threats
- 7 Disorderly Conducts
- 8 Miscellaneous Ordinance Violations
- 4 Family Offenses
- 5 Special Assignments
- 6 Credit Card Violations
- 7 Narcotic Violations
- 3 Criminal Trespassing
- 1 Sex Offense
- 2 Missing Person
- 3 Homicide
- 4 Weapons Violation
- 4 Disorderly Conducts

\* These numbers include cases held over from 1997. There are also some cases that are still currently open and are not included. This will account for any differences between the listed totals.

## **METRO SQUAD SYSTEM:**

The police department has been a member of the Kansas City Area Metro Squad for many years. This squad was designed to assist small metro-area cities when they have to investigate a homicide. These cities can request the Metro Squad and within 24 hours, a dozen or more specially-trained and experienced detectives will respond and launch an intensive and focused investigation. This system has proven to be very effective in investigating homicides and has been used as a model in many other metropolitan areas of the country. Nearly every homicide that Merriam has had over the past 20 years has been investigated by the Metro Squad. Our department currently has seven officers that are trained to work on the Metro Squad.

## HOMICIDE – Metro Squad Case #257

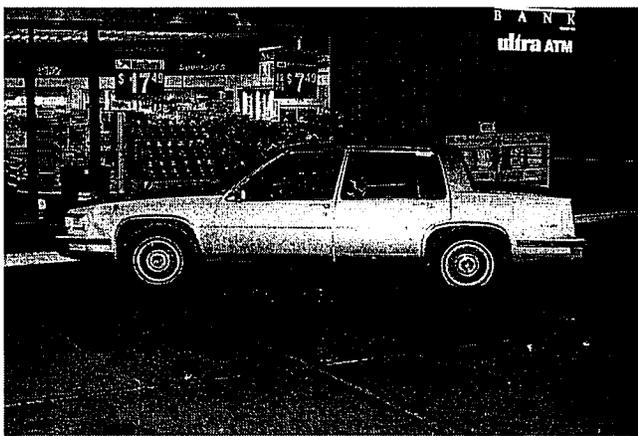
**VICTIM:** Clem R. Hollingsworth, IV    **DATE OF DEATH:** February 18, 1998

**LOCATION OF CRIME:** Shawnee Mission Parkway and Interstate 35

During the early morning hours of February 18, 1998, the Merriam Police Department was called to investigate the first reported homicide since 1992. A man named Clem R. Hollingsworth, IV, was riding in the back seat of his mother's vehicle when he was shot to death by a group of unknown men riding in another car. It was apparent that the killing was planned and the ensuing investigation developed a number of likely suspects.

A formal request was made for the assistance of the Kansas City Metro Squad to assist in the Hollingsworth homicide investigation. At 1 p.m., just nine short hours after the incident, a squad of 19 investigators assembled at the Merriam Police Station. They were supported by a staff of 6 other Merriam Officers and 2 information specialists. Officers on the squad came from the Lenexa, Overland Park, Olathe, Prairie Village, Shawnee, Fairway, Kansas City Kansas and Missouri Police Departments. We also received assistance from the Johnson and Wyandotte County Sheriff's Offices and the District Attorney's Office in Olathe.

The squad was active for seven full days where they followed up 136 investigative leads, taking over 1,574 man-hours to complete. When the squad disbanded no arrests had been made in the case, although three solid suspects, believed to be responsible for the murder, were developed. The case was turned back over to the Merriam Police Department. Lead Investigator on the case, Mike Daniels, has invested over 300 additional hours following up post-Metro Squad leads on the case. It still remains unsolved...



*Vehicle that Clem Hollingsworth was riding in when he was killed. This car was covered with over a dozen bullet holes.*

### OTHER NOTEWORTHY / HIGH PROFILE INVESTIGATION CASES IN 1998

In addition to the February 18th homicide case listed above, there were five other high-profile or serious investigative cases worked in 1998. They are listed in chronological order for review:

- 1 In April, investigators were notified that a child pornographer was working from an apartment in the El Conquistador complex. The suspect was corresponding with people via the Internet. A detailed and complex investigation lead to the arrest and conviction of a 22-year-old suspect. This person was convicted and is now a registered sex offender.
- 2 In July, a woman was hit with a large rock while she was a passenger in a vehicle on I-35. Two detectives spent multiple hours investigating this case. Unfortunately, no suspects were developed.
- 3 In August investigators worked a bank robbery at the Mercantile Bank, 8700 Shawnee Mission Parkway. Through our direct investigation, a suspect was developed and an arrest was made.
- 4 In November, a Merriam daycare worker was accused in a child abuse case. After a thorough investigation the daycare worker was cleared of the crime and the victim's father later admitted guilt.
- 5 Also in November another very serious child abuse case was investigated, involving three children visiting relatives from Wichita. The Merriam investigator worked with the Wichita PD on the case. A suspect was developed and later charged with the related crimes.



# Animal Control



## INTRODUCTION:

The function of animal control has been a responsibility for the Merriam Police Department for many years. The Merriam Police Department has one full-time employee that is assigned to take care of all animal related problems. Handling these problems requires special training and equipment. It is a difficult and technical job requiring special skills. The current employee assigned to Animal Control has over 19 years of municipal animal control experience.

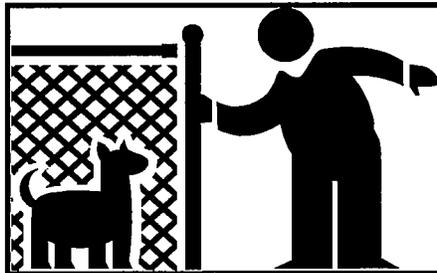
## ACO ACTIVITY SUMMARY:

During 1998 the Animal Control Officer (ACO) handled **1,382** requests for service. In addition to this, police officers handled an additional **237** animal calls while the ACO was not available. This represents a 4.6% increase over 1997. The total number of animal related calls in 1998 were **1,619**.

In 1998 the Animal Control Officer spent the majority of his time patrolling the city looking for animal problems and violations. He has also assisted the department with other non-animal control duties such as filling-in as school crossing guard and working in the police department's front office.

Greater emphasis was placed on routine patrol for stray animals through 1998 which resulted in an increase in impounds, enforcement actions and investigations.

During the summer months of 1998, the Animal Control Officer was assigned to work two weekend days per month to patrol the city parks and neighborhoods for leash law violations. The times worked were varied from mornings to afternoons to maximize effectiveness in patrol.



## ORDINANCE UPDATES:

During 1998 the Animal Control Officer completed a long-term project of updating the city's animal control ordinances. On July 27, 1998, the revised edition of Chapter Four was added to the Merriam Municipal Code. The revisions included a section that better defines "humane treatment" of animals.

A new section of the chapter was added to prepare for new pet care businesses. This chapter is entitled "Standards of Care for Commercial Establishments."

## 1999 UNIT GOALS:

Goal #1 – During 1999 the Animal Control Officer will become more involved in public education. He will be working with the DARE Officer in the classroom trying to inform early elementary students about how they can prevent dog and cat bites.

Goal #2 – There will be a concerted effort this year to get more residents to register their dogs and cats.

Goal #3 – On-street patrol times will be increased again this year in an effort to reduce stray animals. Weekend patrols will also be continued in 1999.

Year	1996	1997	1998	<b>ANIMAL FACTS</b> In 1998 there were 547 dogs and 105 cats registered with the City Clerk's Office. In 1997 there were 572 dogs and 86 cats registered.
<b>Service Requests</b>	<b>1336</b>	<b>1319</b>	<b>1382</b>	
<b>Enforcement Actions</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>197</b>	<b>201</b>	
<b>Animal Impounds</b>	<b>228</b>	<b>189</b>	<b>204</b>	
<b>Investigations</b>	<b>744</b>	<b>801</b>	<b>837</b>	
<b>Reports Written</b>	<b>735</b>	<b>669</b>	<b>702</b>	
<b>Patrol Miles Driven</b>	<b>9013</b>	<b>9057</b>	<b>8979</b>	

# Support Functions



## INTRODUCTION:

In addition to responding to calls for service, working traffic accidents and traffic enforcement, the Merriam Police Department is involved in a number of other functions that directly impact and help to serve the public. A synopsis of these services are listed below.

### COLLEGE INTERN PROGRAM:

For the past few years, the Merriam Police Department has utilized the services of college students, during the summer months, in the College Intern Program. Our department is affiliated with three state universities who provide interested students. During a specified period of weeks the student performs work in the station. This could include clerical or statistical assistance. They are also exposed to various aspects of the policing job through ride-alongs and other associations.

In 1998, one college intern worked for MPD. Dave Lanaman, a student of Washburn University, worked during the fall months and donated **240** hours of his time at no cost to the citizens of Merriam.

### BRADY GUN LAW CHECKS:

This is the fifth year that the Merriam Police Department has taken part in conducting background records checks on Merriam residents that want to purchase guns from various gun shops. On **73** occasions Brady Law applications were forwarded to the department for checks. In that time, all but **2** were approved for purchase.



NOTE: On December 1, 1998, a new law was passed that will end our obligation to conduct these checks.

### FINGERPRINTING SERVICES:

Each year there are a number of requests to be fingerprinted. The Administrative Sergeant provides this function, by appointment, for a small fee. During 1998, fingerprints were taken on **34** persons. Due to the inconvenience and time consumption of this service, it is only provided to Merriam residents or those connected to Merriam businesses.

### ALARM ORDINANCE MANAGEMENT:

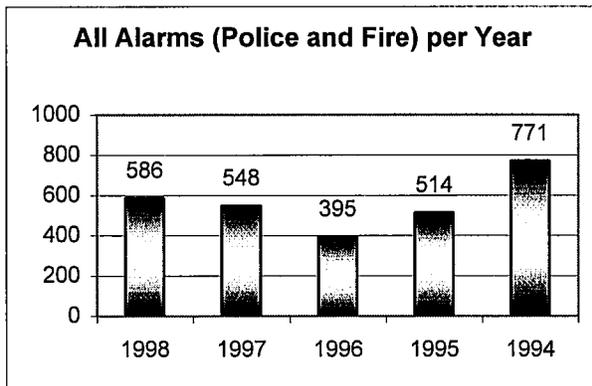
1998 was the third full year of the Alarm Ordinance management. During the year, police officers responded to **442** false burglary and robbery alarms. This represents a **4%** decrease over 1997.

A total of **360** individual businesses and home owners have registered their alarms with the department. This is a **10%** increase over 1997. It is important to point out that there were fewer false alarms, even though there were more alarm systems in the city. The alarm ordinance and the way it is managed is at least partially responsible.

Alarm ordinance fines for 1998 totalled **\$7,300**. This number is less than 1997, which corresponds with the reduction in alarms for the year.

The top ten false alarm locations (this includes all alarms, both police related and fire alarms) were:

Shawnee Mission Medical Center	34
Rio Bravo	19
Charter Funerals	17
Shoney's Restaurant	14
I.B.T.	13
Lee Company	13
Georgetown Apartments	11
Enterprise Car Sales	10
Long John Silvers	9
K-Mart	9



# Community Partners



## COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP INTRODUCTION:

1998 marks the sixth year that the Merriam Police Department has been involved in the transition towards Community Policing. This important philosophy has grown in acceptance in nearly every corner of the country because it involves the community in the policing process. Each year the police department is involved in a number of activities that bring officers closer to the community they serve. The rewards for this style of policing are felt in many ways — some measurable, some not. For a more detailed description of Community Policing see the shaded box below.

### COMMUNITY POLICING EFFORTS:

The Community Policing philosophy is supported in every level of the Merriam Police Department. Each employee has been trained and is familiar with this philosophy. Each employee is encouraged to look for ways for the department to improve its interaction with the public. This empowerment makes the department effective.

In addition to the overall practice by employees, the Merriam Police Department engages in a number of specific efforts that promote and support the philosophy of Community Policing.

### WHAT IS COMMUNITY POLICING?

- *Policing based on a set of established values which reflect beliefs clearly articulated to the community and throughout the department;*
- *A commitment to problem solving rather than simply responding to each incident as it is reported to the police;*
- *An increased focus on the city's neighborhoods as a basic level of police service delivery, moving away from specialization toward generalized police service delivery at the neighborhood level;*
- *Getting the neighborhood and business communities involved in solving the problem of crime in their areas and sharing some of the responsibility for a solution of problems, not just leaving it up to the city to solve problems;*
- *Increasing the accountability of the police to neighborhood residents; and*
- *Involving and empowering police employees at the lowest level of the department to problem solve.*

### COMMUNITY INTERACTION:

During 1998, members of the police department met with a number of resident and business groups to facilitate communication and partnership.

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH Meetings were held throughout the year. Another successful NATIONAL NIGHT OUT effort was held in August to help educate citizens on how to make their homes and neighborhoods safer. Having an officer or group of officers in these neighborhoods have helped to improve relations and facilitate communication and cooperation.

The department met with **14** different neighborhoods during the year, representing a **36%** increase over 1997.

These neighborhoods included:

- ◇ **Sherwood Forrest**
- ◇ **Antioch Hills**
- ◇ **West Vernon Place**
- ◇ **New Milburn West**
- ◇ **Wellington Woods**
- ◇ **Vernon Place**
- ◇ **Switzer Meadows**
- ◇ **Sunflower Towers**
- ◇ **50th Terrace and Farley area**
- ◇ **68th Street and Wedd/Mastin area**
- ◇ **56th Street and Perry Lane area**
- ◇ **61st Street and Mastin area**
- ◇ **61st Street and Hemlock area**
- ◇ **60th Street and Hardy area**



Through these efforts the Merriam Police Department reached out to over **500** residents.

### RIDE ALONG PROGRAM:

The police department offers a program where interested citizens can ride along with officers in an effort to bring citizens and officers closer together to bridge some of the communication gaps. This program is also used by a number of high school students as part of a school assignment and by those interested in entering the law enforcement field.

In 1998, **40** citizens were involved in this program. This is a **12.5%** increase over 1997.

### **FAX ALERT PROGRAM:**

Since 1996 the Merriam Police Department has been involved in a program that was developed to increase communication with the city's business community. In this program, when a serious crime or general crime trend affecting the business community is discovered, the department sends a group information FAX to the affected businesses. Several faxes were sent during the year.

### **CRIME PREVENTION EFFORTS:**

The department has one officer assigned to take care of normal crime prevention needs. General crime prevention requests are handled by this officer. Some of these crime prevention efforts are listed below:

- **SECURITY SURVEY PROGRAM** -Officer Larry Birt is a Certified Crime Prevention Officer. During the year he has completed security surveys on **4** homes and **28** businesses in Merriam. This service is offered free of charge, by appointment and is designed to provide tips on how to make these facilities more crime resistant.
- **HOUSE WATCH PROGRAM** - For several years the MPD has provided a house watch program for residents who are on vacation. If a resident completes the required house watch form, an officer will check their home each day while they are gone. This increases security for these vacant homes and it gives the residents peace of mind while they are gone, knowing that their property is being watched.  
  
In 1998 there were **65** house watch requests in Merriam. This represents a **10%** increase over 1997.
- **CRIME PREVENTION ARTICLES** – In 1997 the Chief of Police began submitting crime

prevention related articles to the Chamber of Commerce for their monthly newsletter -- **VANTAGE POINT**. Articles were submitted during 1998 featuring articles about the police department, problem solicitors, business burglaries, code enforcement, violence in the workplace and seasonal crime trends. These articles are written specifically for the business community in Merriam.

### **OTHER COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT PROGRAMS:**

#### *EXPLORER PROGRAM -*

The MPD formed the Explorer Post four years ago. It is made up of young men and women that range from 15 to 19 years of age. They are affiliated with the Boys Scouts of America.

The group was supervised by Patrol Corporal Bob Schluben. They met twice per month to learn about police work. In these meetings they were trained to complete certain tasks that have assisted the police department. Each year they have been very helpful with traffic direction and crowd control during the Turkey Creek Festival .

In 1998, members of the Explorer Post also assisted by being involved in two programs that encouraged compliance of the city's tobacco and alcohol ordinances. Explorer volunteers went to the various Merriam businesses to make controlled purchases as underage customers. This was a very successful campaign that has helped to educate these businesses.

#### *COMMUNITIES THAT CARE PROCESS -*

The Merriam Police Department co-sponsored the "Communities That Care" process in the fall of 1997. Merriam is the first community in Johnson County to be involved in this organized process.

In conjunction with the Regional Prevention Center of Johnson County, a number of meetings were held in 1998 to continue the efforts to address community concerns regarding juvenile related crimes, alcohol and drug abuse.

The group was named "Merriam for Merriam."

During the summer the Merriam for Merriam group was involved in community service by painting two homes. One home was owned by a disabled elderly man who could not afford to paint his home. The other was a disabled group home. This group also sponsored an all-teen swim night at the Merriam Swimming Pool.

# DARE Program



## INTRODUCTION:

The DARE (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) program is an internationally recognized, model program created in 1983 by the Los Angeles Police Department and the Los Angeles Unified School District.

DARE provides students from kindergarten through high school with the skills necessary to recognize and resist pressures to experiment with drugs and to avoid gangs and violence. Lessons emphasize self-esteem, decision making, interpersonal communication skills, the consequences of drug abuse, conflict resolution and positive alternatives to substance abuse.

Merriam's DARE Program is concentrated on the 6th grade students of the four Merriam elementary schools. This grade level is targeted because studies have shown that children are more likely faced with their toughest decisions about drug and alcohol use during the sixth and seventh grades. The DARE mission is to arm these children with as much information as possible during this time, to increase their chances of making the right choices.

Officer Larry Birt has been assigned as DARE Officer for the past six years. In full uniform, he conducts a series of structured classes at all four of Merriam's elementary schools. For reasons stated above the primary target group of Merriam's DARE Program is the sixth grade. Each sixth grader receives 17 weeks of specialized instruction. During the school year Officer Birt spends four days a week in the classroom. In addition to teaching classes, he participates in many recreation activities and often interacts with children during lunch periods. He is involved with the Parent Teacher Associations and attends those and other meetings with teachers and school officials.

## DARE ACTIVITY SUMMARY:

1998 was the second year that the department asked the community and the schools to assist in financially supporting this program. The city received approximately **\$1,500** from the school PTA's to help off-set the costs of materials and to help support some of the after school functions at the end of the year. In 1998 we received more than **\$1,900** from private donations, Parent Teacher Associations and other Merriam businesses.

During the school year, Officer Birt made weekly visits to more than **60** classrooms — kindergarten through sixth grade. He gave classes to more than **1,125** students from South Park, Merriam, Crestview and West Antioch Elementary Schools.

From the four schools more than **165** sixth grade students graduated from the DARE program. In March the police department hosted a skating party for DARE graduates at

Skateworld in Merriam. Over **120** graduates were in attendance. The evening was offered to the students to reward them for their hard work in completing the DARE course.

## SUMMER CLINIC:

During the summer months the Merriam Police Department sponsored two summer clinics and a special week-long field trip. The first two clinics were held at the Merriam Community Center. They involved both a basketball and volleyball clinic which were held for **30** fifth and sixth grade Merriam students. The special week-long clinic

was targeted for **15** at-risk Merriam children from the fifth and sixth grades. The children were taken on several short field trips in the Kansas City Area including golf at Blue River Golf Course, visits to the Merriam Community Center, Deanna Rose Farmstead, NCAA Visitors Center, KC Zoo, KC Museum and Science Center, Bump City and Worlds of Fun. Officer Birt was assisted in this clinic by community volunteers.



*Children involved in a 1998 Summer Clinic.*

# Merriam Business Survey



## INTRODUCTION:

The Merriam Business Survey is a project that is designed to improve public relations between the police department and the business community of Merriam. During the project, uniformed police officers were assigned to meet with all businesses within the city limits in an effort to foster a positive relationship.

The 1998 Merriam Business Survey is the third public survey completed since 1993. Each survey process is set up in three distinct phases:

### Phase One: Self Introduction and Familiarization

Each officer is assigned to check a certain number of businesses in their district during each shift. It is their assignment to go into each business and introduce themselves to the managers or owners. This encourages district patrol officers to get out of their cars to directly interact with the public. It also helps to acquaint the business owner with the officer patrolling their business and it helps the district officers to know the types of businesses in their districts.

### Phase Two: Public Education and Information Gathering

During their meetings with the business owners or managers, officers ask about recent police related problems or concerns that they may have. They discuss crime prevention tips or considerations. They encourage earlier police intervention. On several occasions officers were informed about other area problems that may not directly involve the business such as traffic problems, suspicious activity nearby, etc. This information has proven to be very valuable in the past.

### Phase Three: Survey Completion / Constructive Feedback

The officer completed his or her visit by leaving a self-addressed survey form with the business manager or owner. The officers asked that the simple one-page survey be completed and returned to the police department. This survey was designed to solicit constructive feedback on how the police department is doing. Business managers or owners are asked to rate the department and list any problems or concerns they have relating to the

police department or the issue of crime in general. These surveys have been compiled, studied, and the results are listed on the following page.

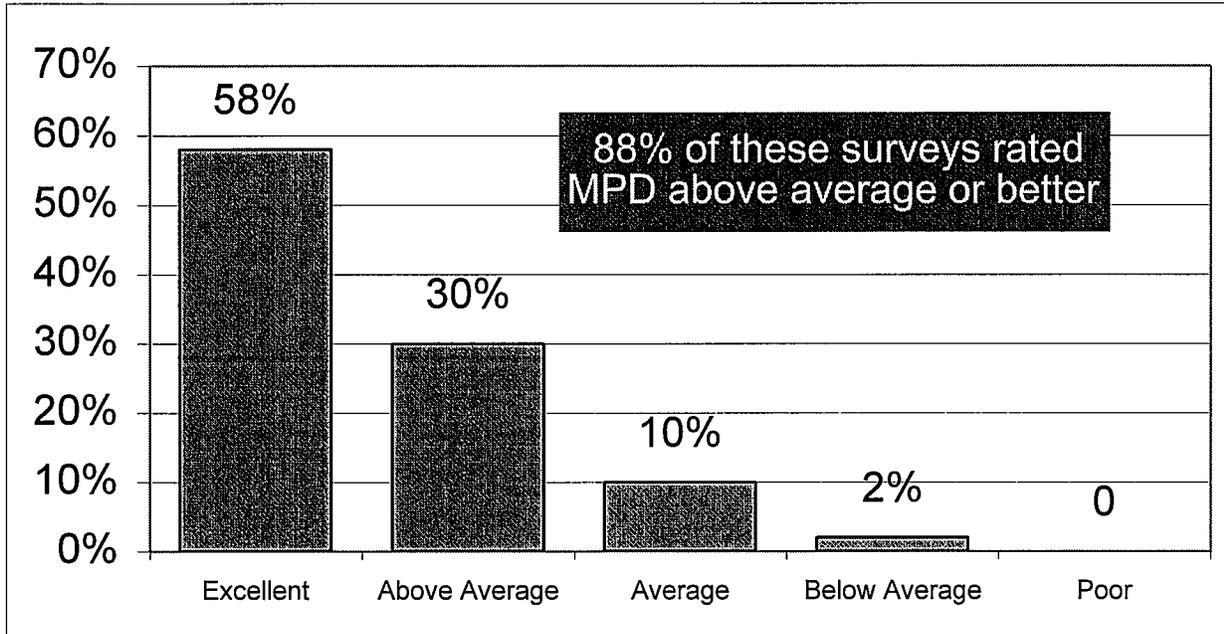
### Survey Results:

- ◆ During June, July and August, Merriam officers made personal contacts at **422** Merriam businesses. Of the surveys that were left, **35%** were completed and returned to the police department for analysis.
- ◆ The first question on the survey asked the businesses to "rate their police department." The chart on the following page lists the results of those ratings.
- ◆ The second question asked businesses to list their "biggest concerns." Over **33%** of the businesses indicated they were most concerned about burglary and vandalism to their business facilities or cars parked at their businesses.
- ◆ Question three asked businesses to list any suggestions that would help the Merriam Police Department to improve services to the community. Over **35%** requested more frequent police patrols by their business, especially patrols at businesses during the hours they were not open.
- ◆ The last section of the survey form was dedicated to inform businesses about our business crime prevention services. An offer was made to have our Crime Prevention Specialist come to their business to conduct a personal security analysis. Forty-one or nearly 10% of the businesses contacted were interested and requested these services. Most of the security checks were made prior to the end of 1998.



**QUESTION 1:** *What is the overall rating of the service provided by the Merriam Police Department?*

The chart below lists the ratings received from Merriam businesses.



**QUESTION 2:** *What is the biggest concern your business has in regard to the issue of crime?*

- Burglary or break-ins to building (26 responses)
- Vandalism / criminal damage to property (24 responses)
- Burglary or break-ins to cars in my lot (14 responses)
- Theft inside of business or shoplifting (10 responses)
- Robbery (8 responses)
- Young people hanging around the business (5 responses)
- Theft outside the business (5 responses)
- Check forgery / credit card fraud (4 responses)
- Suspicious persons hanging around (2 responses)
- Drug related concerns (2 responses)
- Not enough police officers on department (1 response)
- Employee theft (1 response)

**QUESTION 3:** *What could the Merriam Police Department do to improve the level of service to your business?*

Of the surveys returned, thirty of them listed they wanted more drive-by patrols. Another 23 surveys were a little more specific by stating they wanted more night time patrols. On business felt that the department should hire more officers. One business felt that the department should do more to cite drivers who violate handicapped and fire lane violators. Another business felt more should be done to discourage kids from loitering at night.

**QUESTION 4:** *The first part of this question asked if the business had recent contact with a Merriam Officer and the reason for this contact. The second part of the question asked the business owner or manager to state whether or not the officer was courteous and helpful.*

Of the surveys returned, 63 businesses indicated that they had not had any police contact. Another 86 businesses indicated that their contact was positive and that the officer was courteous and helpful. Only two businesses indicated that the officers were not courteous and helpful.