

## 2000 Amherst Police Report

The past year was one marked by change within the Department. In July of this year, Sergeant Steve Kemp retired from the Department after twenty-two years of dedicated service to the Town. The retirement created an opportunity to implement a plan, which had been in development for two years, to improve the organization and structure of the Department. The reorganization divided up the Department's responsibilities into three components, and created a new Lieutenants position. The two existing Sergeant positions were redefined, and after an extensive testing process, were filled from within the Department. The new organization will provide the proper structure for the Department now as well as prepare the Department to meet the challenges of the future.

Last year also saw the implementation of a new records management system for the Department, a *Windows* based system that replaced an operating system which was not Y2K compatible. The transition to the new system was a long process that tasked all members of the Department. As the year comes to a close more enhancements to the system are anticipated which will increase the operating efficiency of the Department. With the completion of a three year plan to improve technology, a program to improve the tactical ability of the Department was commenced. Using federal funds, equipment to better protect the police officers in dangerous situations was obtained. Training with this new equipment has begun and will continue into next year. The equipment and training will better prepare the Department to safely handle situations which can occur in any town.

Amherst continued to enjoy some very positive numbers in regards to crime statistics. After proudly reporting the lowest level of burglaries in over thirty years for 1999, the number of burglaries declined further in 2000. Overall, the number of reported crimes in Amherst dropped by two percent last year, and declined by eleven percent over a two year period. The only criminal category to show a significant increase was criminal mischief, usually youth related vandalism, which increased thirty-five percent. The number of motor vehicle crashes rose for the first time in three years, a trend the Department will look to address via selective enforcement programs planned for next year. The number of calls for service the Department responded to in 2000 shows a decrease of eight percent. In reality, this decrease is probably closer to three percent as the change in records management software created a different way of recording calls which makes a direct comparison to prior years difficult.

The goals of the Department are to continue to reduce the amount of crime in Amherst, and to work with the community to maintain the quality of life that exists. The past success in meeting these goals, and the likelihood of future attainment, continues to be the support and cooperation of the townspeople. We thank you for that support and look forward to working closely together in the future.

Please call, stop by, write, or e-mail us at [amhrstpd@amherstnh.gov](mailto:amhrstpd@amherstnh.gov) with ideas as to how we can better serve the community.