EMS Consideration For Local Leaders
A message from the sponsor of this special issue of Innovative Ideas
by Robert M. Ziegler, President of ERM

It does not matter the time of day, the day of the week, or even who’s calling; what matters is that when one of your town’s residents dials 911 for a medical or trauma related emergency, you expect a timely response from your EMS service. Where many communities are very reliable, that is not always the case.

As a Town CEO are you fully aware of the potential straits your local EMS services are in? Do you meet with them regularly? Do you get reports or statistics from them or from the dispatch centers as to how many calls they are or aren’t responding to? Are you aware how long it is actually taking them to respond?

If you are supporting their budgets you should absolutely know the answers to these questions. And if they are deficient, are they being held accountable and tasked with finding solutions?

It also does not matter whether your town’s EMS services are volunteer or not, the standards are the same, though it’s a fact that most volunteer communities are struggling today. There’s no acceptable “We don’t have to respond if we can’t because we’re only volunteers” call percentages. OEMS Regulations are quite clear, without exception. Every EMS service is required to respond 100% of the time to 100% of their First 911 calls in their towns.

The use of mutual aid ambulances from contiguous towns is not the solution, nor is it allowed by OEMS as the solution to answer First 911 calls in your town. This is not an impossible feat, it just takes strong management and leadership skills. Make no mistake about it, EMS is a business. And as with many business leaders today, they need to re-evaluate their delivery models and think outside the box.

Regionalization or consolidation of services, as well as hired supplemental staffing are options to be considered. So too is hiring your own internal staff, as long as you are willing to commit to the daily management and oversight of these employees. Keep in mind too, these employees can no longer also volunteer in their same dept. as doing so would violate Federal Labor Laws.

Many of these noted issues/concerns can be addressed by assuring your Towns Local EMS Plan (LEMSP) has been collaboratively developed and on file with OEMS as is required by Regulation. Emergency Resource Management is available to assist with all of these needs and services. Learn more about what ERM has to offer at www.ermamanagement.com.
May 2019

CT&C Readers,

We are pleased to present Innovative Ideas for Managing Local Governments: A Connecticut Town & City Compendium – our 31st annual compilation to help municipal leaders run local governments more effectively and efficiently. These ideas save taxpayers money while providing municipal services that enhance community life.

The ideas are reprinted from Connecticut Town & City, the bi-monthly magazine of the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM).

Connecticut Town & City developed these stories from many sources, including visits to Connecticut local governments; suggestions from municipal officials; newspapers and magazines in Connecticut and other states; publications of the National League of Cities; and publications of other state municipal leagues. We would be happy to hear from readers about any ideas we should publish in the future.

This special edition of Connecticut Town & City was sponsored by Emergency Resource Management.

For further information on any article, please contact Managing Editor Kevin Maloney at 203-498-3025 or kmaloney@ccm-ct.org.

Good reading!

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You get into work at eight in the morning, you take your lunch at noon, and by 3:00 you start casually glancing at the clock, looking forward to quittin’ time. But for many police officers on the job, they wouldn’t be leaving at 4:00, or 5:00, or even 6:00; they’d be starting their second shift of eight hours, looking forward to midnight. At police stations across the nation, officers are being showered with overtime to cover a police shortage that seems to get worse every year. Overtime is just one of the side-effects of this shortage, but the main questions are: why is there a shortage and what can be done to solve it?

The police shortage is best expressed in terms of budgeted resources. In Connecticut, some towns are down just a handful of police officers due to injuries or military duty. The shortage is felt more acutely in cities like New Haven where the number is down to under 400 currently staffed positions compared to the 495 budgeted positions (some outlets count officers in the academy as part of the staffed positions, even if they are not currently on the job).

This is by no means to single out New Haven; the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) who looks at employment statistics found that in general-purpose law enforcement agencies across the country, the number of full-time sworn officers dropped from just under 725,000 to about 700,000 in the three years between 2013 and 2016. What’s more, these figures are in direct contrast to population growth. The BJS estimated that there were 2.42 officers per 1,000 residents in 1997, falling down to 2.17 by 2016.

One obvious repercussion is the immediate lack of police officers to fill roles. It was from the Danbury News Times that we learned that some officers were being asked to cover 16-hour shifts. Though this overtime is welcomed by some, it can have deleterious effects. On-the-job burnout is real, and according to studies done at Ohio State University, “job schedules with long working hours are not more risky merely because they are concentrated in inherently hazardous industries or occupations.”

Another pitfall from this shortage is taking place in West Haven, where the city is opting to pull a school resource officer from Bailey Middle School to be placed back on the beat. While their shortage is not as severe as other municipalities, hard decisions like this are being made every day.

So where did all the cops go? Answers have been as disparate as their sources — some say it’s the salary or pensions, some say it’s the job market, some blame the media — but none fit the one-size-fits-all answer that would make this an easy problem to solve.

In one case, NPR describes the problem as “money — evident in the department’s worn-out squad cars, one of which has a rust hole in the floorboard that has been patched with an old license plate.”

Connecticut does pay its police officers well. Based on information from Data USA, the state pays higher-than-average wages in every tract (which this site splits into 12 distinct areas called Public Use Microdata Areas, also known as PUMAs). The average wage goes from $65,415 to $102,982, both in PUMAs surrounding the New London area. Bridgeport, which roughly estimates the average pay in Connecticut, pays more than 80 percent of PUMAs in the entire country. But it’s also true that a dollar in Connecticut doesn’t go nearly as far as a dollar in other states.

In the same NPR report, they bring up lateral hiring, more familiarly known as poaching. In one case, the Seattle Police Department put up a billboard in Indianapolis to promote “its interest in hiring away local
cops.” Unfortunately, poaching does not always look so obvious or intentional.

In fact, many police departments are not actively poaching, but due to the healthy job market recruits can actively pursue the best employment packages — from higher salaries to traditional pensions rather than 401ks. Back in West Haven, many cops have asked the city to return to a traditional pension to keep the force numbers up. And it’s hard to fault one police force for offering what it believes is fair compensation for a difficult career.

One unwritten cost of poaching officers, wittingly or unwittingly, is that the initial hiring municipality often incurs the cost of training new officers. In 2015, the Connecticut General Assembly passed a measure to reimburse towns and cities for officers that have left within two years of their certification. New Haven Assistant Chief Racheal Cain submitted testimony to state legislators asking that time frame be increased from two years to five citing one officer who resigned on day 732.

More than this, millennials have a strong preference for jobs that “make a difference.” A Gallup poll showed results suggesting that the generation shops around for “the jobs that best align with their needs and life goals,” looking for opportunities to learn and grow, but also a general acceptance of the individual and the diversity of communities they come from. Police across the country are now allowed to wear tattoos and jewelry, while many forces are looking less critically at past substance use as marijuana, medical or recreational, becomes the norm in everyday life.

Quoted in the NPR piece, Deputy Chief Valerie Cunningham of the Indianapolis Metropolitan Police believes that “the recruiting crunch is pushing departments to cater more to young Americans’ preference for community policing, which she sees as the direction departments should be going in.”

New Haven had been nationally recognized as a leader in community policing, primarily under the leadership of former Chief of Police Dean Esserman. It was his goal for the community to recognize the cops that patrolled their neighborhoods. Quoted at length in an article for The Atlantic, Esserman relays a story about a rookie officer who was told about a crime committed when he first started walking the beat. The incredulous rookie asks the citizen, “Why didn’t you tell me then?” To which she replies, “Because I didn’t know you then.”

This anecdote reveals not just Esserman’s philosophy of policing, but the view that not everyone sees the police the same. Over the last decade, stretching back to the early-’90s, a small minority of cops have created outsized media frenzies due to their bad behavior. Many people feel the undue attention has caused the cultural cache of Police Officer to go down in the collective imagination.

Because of the multitude of causes, it’s hard to see what a solution might look like to solve a nationwide shortage of officers. In a Hartford Courant article on the subject, one trooper suggests that because of media, people — and critically, young people — misunderstand what police work is. A large part of the solution will be reminding people of the cause and purpose of the local police force — to protect and serve.

One way to do this is to have the police force begin to look like the communities they serve. From a small sample of departments, the Hartford Courant showed that only about 13% of the force were minorities, and fewer than 10% were women. According to the Census Bureau, minorities make up 33% of Connecticut’s population, and women are more than 50%. Towns like Manchester aim to end this disparity by offering rolling sign-ups. Hamden actively seeks out minority applicants that look more like their community to help end troubling practices like the racial disparity in vehicle stops.

One idea is to simply lower the budgeted number of cops. Though it may seem counter-intuitive, this idea has a method in its madness. With a lower budgeted number of cops, you can give out modest increases in pay, hoping to retain the police force you have instead of seeing them move to other towns. The major tenet of community policing is getting the community to know the police in their neighborhood suggesting that retaining current officers is just as important as hiring new ones.

And more cops does not necessarily mean less crime. According to the FBI, there were 3.9 violent crimes per 1,000 population in 1997; with fewer police officers on the force there were only 2.3 violent crimes in 2016. This is also true of property crimes, which went from 3.5 per 1,000 to 1.8. As a matter of fact, the rates in the country have been in a decline since 1991.

This would not solve the matter of 16-hour shifts, mushrooming overtime pay, and on-the-job burnout, which are all symptoms of the police shortage. Nor does it deal with poaching, again either wittingly or unwittingly, which disrupts the ability of the police or the citizens to form a community bond — an essential partnership that keeps our municipalities safe.

Truly at the heart of the matter is the safety of the residents in this state. The police are an important part of that safety, and it’s disconcerting to see an honored position see such a drop in its ability to recruit in the numbers it used to. There will be no one solution to this problem, and it might take time, but the police shortage is a problem worth solving.
A police officer in 2018 has more technology at their fingertips than at any other time in history. Whether it’s the body cams, the computers in their cars, or even, on a long enough timeline, the cars themselves, a police officer walking the beat or patrolling an area has access to unimaginable resources. One of the latest pieces to fall in place is Nexgen, a new program that was launched in Bridgeport in May, 2018.

The software allows the free exchange of information between officers and departments; with Mayor Joe Ganim noting that it “allows police officers, firefighters, and emergency personnel to share critical information between each other.”

He continued that “over the past two years the City of Bridgeport Emergency Communications and Operations Center has made significant strides toward strengthening our city’s preparedness and improving our communications capabilities so that our public safety departments are more effective and efficient, and ultimately improve service and response to our residents. This modern technology does just that.”

Nexgen ties the Emergency Communications Center (911) with the first responders and emergency operations so any information could be accessed at any portal, whether that is in their vehicle or back at headquarters. Previously, a police officer would only have access to their own notes by updating them manually.

In the mayor’s press release, both the police and fire chiefs extolled the virtues of having a centralized system. “This greatly improves our investigations by having all records centrally located and easily accessible. It replaces a variety of different software systems,” Police Chief Armando ‘AJ’ Perez said. “It also allows the police department to be more efficient with the ability to write and share reports between various officers, various units and command staff.”

Fire Chief Richard Thode said, “The safety of city residents, but also of my staff, is always a concern during an emergency call. This program now gives firefighters access to reports that will ensure they are better prepared entering a situation. Monitors in the fire stations will also display instant status changes as well as the ability to view every active call in the city. This will allow firefighters to maintain situational awareness and monitor what the other units are doing.”

The company itself has roots in Connecticut; it was founded in East Haven in response to the state’s IT needs. At the time, the market was filled with half-written programs and promises that could not be kept. Nexgen set the standard by delivering on their promise, and being a one-stop shop rather than a town buying a la carte software.

Bridgeport also announced a partnership with Madison-based PowerPhone, and are hoping to integrate ShotSpotter technology.
Distracted driving accidents are easily preventable. All it takes for motor vehicle operators to miss a red light is a quick glance down at their phone when they get a message. According to TeenSafe.Com, just around nine fatal accidents a day occur because of a distracted driver. That is why Hamden, along with many other towns and cities across the state, have joined in on a program to help curb distracted driving, and get the word out just how dangerous it is.

Hamden participated in the crackdown called “U Text U Drive U Pay,” intentionally meant to mimic the shorthand that is found in everyday texting, during a two-week period in the beginning of August 2018. In Connecticut, people over 18 are allowed to use hands-free cell phone devices, like those bluetooth-enabled dashboard applications, where you can simply say “Call Matt” and the car will call Matt for you. Some even have the capabilities to take down a text. The benefits of hands-free is that you never have to take your eyes off the road.

Teens under 18 aren’t even allowed to use the hands-free devices as they are a higher-risk group of drivers. According to TeenSafe.Com, those aged 16 to 19 are among the most likely to be in a distracted driving accident. It’s a combination of being new to driving and being easily distracted. But it’s actually most adults who think that texting and driving is no big deal, with three-quarters of those over 18 saying that they don’t think it’s a problem.

During the program, officers stopped motorists who were violating the law, and in Hamden, with just two locations over two weeks, issued more than 600 tickets to distracted drivers. They urged drivers to safely pull over to a parking spot, or the side of the road if in an emergency, before continuing a conversation on your cellphone.

As a reminder, not only is driving while using a cellphone illegal, but other forms of distracted driving are just as dangerous. Among the activities that are found to cause accidents are putting on makeup, eating, and even reading. Additionally, it is a misconception that just because a car manufacturer has placed an infotainment system in the dashboard does not mean it is safe to use when operating the vehicle. The most important thing is to keep your eyes focused on the road at all times when operating a vehicle, and to remember that “U Text. U Drive. U Pay.”
New Tech Helps Serve And Protect
50 municipalities have already joined National Justice Database

More than 50 municipalities in the state of Connecticut have signed up to be part of a groundbreaking partnership with the Center for Policing Equity (CPE), sharing their data with them to be part of the National Justice Database (NJD). The group, which was a groundbreaking leader of law enforcement research, has previously helped major cities like Denver in recruiting, training, and retention of police officers. This partnership is part of a greater expansion in technology and information being used by police departments across the county.

Connecticut has been on the forefront of using technology to help in policing the state, including technologies like ShotSpotter, which allows the police to actively respond to the sound of gunshots through advanced sound recognition technology. Elsewhere in CT&C, we have written about new dispatching technologies and programs designed to keep Connecticut citizens safe and happy.

The NJD takes it one step further, by allowing the entire state to examine information, allowing for efficiencies and nuance in policing across the board. Former Governor Malloy said in a press release from Washington, D.C. where the partnership was announced: “It goes well beyond data collection to include analytics and customized solutions, giving police chiefs a significant tool toward being able to evaluate use of force and bias within their ranks. A robust and transparent analysis of data will continue to help our law enforcement agencies to become the more just and professional departments we always strive to be. Connecticut’s law enforcement agencies have continued to use data-informed strategies to reduce crime. That is one of the reasons our state has reduced the rate of violent crime more than any state in the nation over the last four years.”

According to information from the CT Mirror on the NJD, there is no legislative mandate to cooperate with CPE, but that 50 municipalities have already agreed, and there is no charge to be associated and participate in data collection. They don’t even have to standardize their data, just “agree to open their doors” as the Mirror says. But participating will have benefits, as data will be collected from across the nation — more than 240 police departments representing a quarter of the population — and Connecticut towns and cities will be able to glean best practices from the information learned. CPE can have reports available to departments in weeks rather than months, with the goal of having real time information given to officers in active situations.
Connecticut as a state has taken the lead on gun safety, with Senators Murphy and Blumenthal fighting for higher standards in background checks, and advocating for the banning of bump stocks, with the president’s administration following suit. While neither the president nor the senators are looking to take away the rights to a gun, there has been a movement to get illegal guns off the streets in two Connecticut cities, with New Haven and Hartford initiating gun buybacks at the end of last year.

A gun buyback program is unique in that it is a voluntary forfeiture of firearms with the promise of some sort of offer, most commonly gift certificates. According to an NPR story from early 2013, these programs date back as far as the 1960s, offering the community a chance to do something about gun violence. The most important feature of the program is that the police will take back the firearm with no questions asked about how the returner came to be in possession of that particular firearm.

In New Haven, police offered $25 for smaller pistols, $50 for rifles and shotguns, $100 for magazine and revolver-style handguns, and $200 for assault weapons, with similar amounts in Hartford. Both the Hartford and New Haven buybacks were held in partnership with The Injury Free Coalition for Kids of New Haven, Yale-New Haven Hospital, and the Newtown Foundation.

Reports from the two police departments put the number of guns voluntarily handed in at 262, which includes seven assault rifles between the two departments.

In recent years, Hartford and New Haven have seen dramatic reductions in their gun-related homicides with a combined 32 in 2018, when New Haven had 32 in 2011 alone. Everyone agrees that even one death is too many.

Gun buybacks are just one facet of gun reforms that will help stem violent gun-related homicides. In Australia, these programs became part of a move to stem a gun violence epidemic in the mid-'90s, and the country saw a dramatic reduction in gun deaths, from 2.9 per 100,000 in 1996 to 0.9 per 100,000 in 2016, according to TheConversation.com, which took a look at the effects of the country’s suite of laws.

The 262 guns that were handed in, were handed in of the free will of those that possessed the guns.

Most importantly, in America, the Second Amendment as commonly understood provides the right to bear arms, and as such the benefit of a gun buyback is that no one is asked to relinquish their right to legally own a gun. The 262 guns that were handed in, were handed in of the free will of those that possessed the guns.

The goal of a buyback isn’t to imperil those rights, but to increase safety. If we look to places like Australia as a model, then gun buybacks will surely lead to safer cities.
These are certainly trying times, and despite many lawmakers’ best efforts, it seems that school shootings have become all too common in this country. Connecticut must live with the painful reminder of Sandy Hook, which was among the worst tragedies in American history. From that tragic moment rose Sandy Hook Promise (SHP), which aims to make these events far less common by educating students about gun violence and mental illness. Guilford Public Schools has recently partnered with that program to roll out the “Say Something Anonymous Reporting System” (SS-ARS).

The Say Something Anonymous Reporting System will help students relay their fears or concerns about themselves or others. They aim to help prevent a situation before it happens. From the press release, “concerned students simply submit a tip using the SS-ARS app, website, or by calling a dedicated 24/7 crisis center. SHP’s crisis center then triages the tip and communicates it back to the identified school district contacts and, as needed, to law enforcement.” SHP provides all the management, training and funding for the entire program through donations, grants, and other gifts.

Efforts for Guilford Public Schools to adopt a system like SS-ARS was led by Kristin Song, who reached out to Superintendent Paul Freeman. Kristin, along with husband Mike, have established the Ethan Miller Song Foundation, after the tragic loss of their son, which is dedicated to keeping children safe. They, like SHP, promote gun safety and advocacy, educating on the dangers of opioid abuse, texting and driving, and the promotion of SS-ARS.

Quoted in the release, Superintendent Paul Freeman stated, “The Say Something program is just one more way that we can work to keep our students safe. Whether it is from bullying or from any other threat, we strive to make our community safer and more supportive of all students.”

The program relies on the children themselves to speak up if they or someone they know is showing signs of dangerous behavior, which can be a frightening experience if the child is already feeling threatened. By allowing the children access to professionals in an anonymous way, they might feel safer saying something before they hurt themselves or others. Education is key, and Guilford Public Schools with the SHP is helping its students understand the signs of dangerous behavior and when they should seek out help.
Look Listen Learn
Newtown educates about fire prevention

In honor of National Fire Prevention Week, Newtown educated its citizens about fire safety and handed out free smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors for those who could not afford them.

The week has been observed for nearly 100 years, since 1922, when President Calvin Coolidge made the week a national observance. This is, according to National Fire Prevention Association, the “longest-running public health observance” in the United States. It is observed in October as a commemoration of the Great Chicago Fire that was started when, as lore has it, Mrs. O’Leary’s cow tipped over a lantern. The fire spread and a great part of the city was damaged proving the destructive forces of an unchecked fire.

As part of the week, firefighters across the country seek to educate both the young and old in safety precautions that could very well be life-saving. Per the Newtown Bee, representatives of the five local volunteer fire companies — Botsford, Dodgingtown, Hawleyville, Newtown Hook & Ladder, and Sandy Hook — visited schools across town in this mission.

This year’s campaign is “Look. Listen. Learn. Be aware. Fire can happen anywhere.” The tenets of this campaign urge people to “look around your home, identify potential fire hazards and take care of them. Listen for the sound of the smoke alarm,” and “learn two ways out of every room, and make sure all doors and windows leading outside open easily and are free of clutter.” While this couplet might be easy to remember for children, it is the adults in the house who must take care of potential hazards and making sure exits are free of clutter. Fire safety is everyone’s business.

Making sure that smoke detectors are running is of the utmost importance as the NFPA says that three out of every five deaths happen in homes with no working smoke detectors.

Smoke detectors must be installed in every bedroom and on every level of the home, including the basement, but kept high on the wall away from the kitchen. You should be testing them once a month, and most modern smoke detectors only need to be replaced once every 10 years. So as long as you are testing them and replacing the battery, you will be prepared should a fire ever occur.

Per the Newtown Bee, local residents in need who want a smoke detector or a CO detector for their homes should go to the fire marshal’s office at Newtown Municipal Center, 3 Primrose Street within Fairfield Hills. The office is open Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., and can be reached at 203-270-4370.

Safe Project Launched in Coventry

The Coventry Police Department and the Coventry School District are working together to initiate PROJECT SAFE RETURN.

The mission of this project is to ensure the quick and safe return of persons who have wandered from home and family.

As a police department, Coventry police know that there are members of their community who have special needs. With those needs comes the possibility that police intervention may be needed to quickly locate a lost or missing person.

As police officers in Coventry, it is the desire to have a positive outcome with those persons we interact with.

The goal is to have as much information in advance about your family member as they can, along with a picture, to enable them to ensure a quick and safe return of your family member.

The information families provide police, by filling out an easy-to-use form, helps police locate family members quickly.

It can also enable a more positive interaction with the person.

Knowing things like nicknames and sights or sounds that may excite or frighten the person can be very valuable. Having this information will save time in the event that your family member wanders. It would take several valuable minutes to obtain all the pertinent information from a distraught parent or family member at the time of the emergency.

PROJECT SAFE RETURN will reduce the time to gather this information, because police will already have it at their fingertips.
PUBLIC SAFETY

Putting The System To The Fullest Use

Seymour implements data saving measures

We are barely three decades from the mass adoption of the internet, and there are many for whom a dial-up modem will strike up fuzzy feelings of nostalgia. In this relatively short time, the internet has gone mobile with WiFi and Smartphones and is put in everything from watches to refrigerators. But with this growing technology, there is a greater chance of using the platform to commit crimes, known generally as cyberattacks. These attacks have hit major department stores, credit rating bureaus, and social media networks; exposing people’s sensitive data. For municipalities, this is certainly a frightening prospect, but there are measures to be taken. Seymour’s public schools decided to take a precautionary step to protect their students’ data by teaming up with Palo Alto Networks.

After consulting with an IT adviser and Palo Alto Networks partner Digital BackOffice, Seymour gained a full picture of the vulnerability of their old system which had become obsolete, a symptom of the rapidly changing world of technology rather than a school system that had lagged behind. The picture that was painted suggested that upwards of 43,000 vulnerabilities were being passed through the existing firewall and being caught by Palo Alto Networks’ Next Generation Firewall. This includes 57 high-risk applications that could introduce malicious activity, and threats from virtually every corner of the world.

According to a press release, Rob Dyer, the director of technology for the school system, and Kurt Miller, the first selectman, decided that the report was enough. Miller noted in the release that “the report was written in such a way that a lay person could read it and see there was a problem. [...] We simply had to find a way to fund the next-generation firewall and stop those attacks.”

Dyer said in that same statement, “what we saw was very eye-opening. [...] With the Security Lifecycle Review, we suddenly could see how big a target we really were. It was clear we needed to take action.” His course of action was “an integrated approach to security that was cloud-connected to stay current with definitions and updates and enable real-time threat prevention.” For him, that meant signing up with Palo Alto Networks.

Even with increased security, the town and school system found ways to save money by merging the school system and town networks to use the same infrastructure. Palo Alto Networks then went in to the back end of the system, and configured it to have “two instances” or two full systems sharing the firewall, but keeping the traffic separate.

The effects of the new firewall were immediate, with Dyer saying that...
The Enfield Police Department is looking to try a novel approach to the opioid epidemic by taking a page out of the efforts to decriminalize marijuana. As of May 28, 2018, a person may not be arrested for the simple possession of personal use opiates, and in fact may call on the Enfield Police Department in their time of need.

The full statement posted on the Enfield Police Department Facebook page on June 4 reads:

“Under the direction of Chief Fox, our agency has recently adopted a new protocol, where people in need of addiction assistance are welcome, without fear of arrest, to either come to the Police Department, or otherwise contact us, and we will assist them in obtaining medical care for whatever addiction they are wrestling with. We will provide a ride to a local hospital that specializes in addiction services. We are in this fight together.”

Those who are caught using or buying opiates are under the discretion of the officer and may still be referred to a treatment facility in lieu of arrest. “Officers will consult with their supervisor to determine whether an arrest, medical referral, or both, are appropriate under the facts of a given interaction.”

Modeled after other programs across the country, the individual would be offered treatment rather than jail. Once again that a bug will bounce internally from computer to computer, or that the bug could get on the system to begin with.

The safety that the enhanced firewall has brought to the town and school system is certainly priceless, but as Palo Alto Networks said in the release, “through consolidation and cooperation, Dyer and Miller found a way to use resource sharing to gain efficiencies that enabled these important investments even with a very tight budget.”

Concluding remarks are offered by Dyer and Miller. “If you truly value your data, you do a security review like we did and find out just how vulnerable your infrastructure is. That clear evidence makes it much easier to convince stakeholders to make the necessary investment,” Dyer said. “But, you still have to find the money. By merging infrastructure for our two organizations, we reduced the cost burden substantially within our individual budgets.”

Miller added: “The Palo Alto Networks platform has brought us a secure, efficient infrastructure that enables our employees to be more effective and productive, and through our resource-sharing approach, with very small net impact on our budget. If you compare how far we’ve come to our actual cost, it’s been worth every penny.”

A Change In Tactics May Save Lives
Enfield police look to help, not arrest

The Enfield Police Department is looking to try a novel approach to the opioid epidemic by taking a page out of the efforts to decriminalize marijuana. As of May 28, 2018, a person may not be arrested for the simple possession of personal use opiates, and in fact may call on the Enfield Police Department in their time of need.

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Modeled after other programs across the country, the individual would be offered treatment rather than jail. This is based on the principal that an arrest or punishment of any kind might perpetuate the cycle of addiction, whereas treatment has at least the chance to break the chain. Keeping people out of the system, and in treatment, is starting to look more and more like the logical and moral thing to do.

Per the Justice Policy Institute, not only do programs like these work, but the benefits of treatment versus incarceration are almost incomparable. Nearly two-thirds of drug offenders are repeat offenders, and many return to prison by a technical violation of their sentence. It goes on to say that “while imprisoning offenders may provide comfort to some in terms of public safety, it does little to reduce the cluster of issues which will see these people cycle in and out of the nation’s corrections system.” This does not take into account those paying the ultimate price for their addictions.

A program like the one implemented in Enfield has the ability to save lives, and it will create a new cycle, a virtuous one. As found in the conclusions of the Justice Policy Institute’s paper, when a town emphasizes treatment, it will greatly reduce probation and parole violations, which in turn will save a town money. These savings can be used to expand treatment programs that helped save the lives in the first place.
Neighborhood Watches may take on a new meaning if the Bristol Police get what they want. Announcing the Community Watch Team (CWT), the City of Bristol Police Department is asking residents and businesses to register their personal external video surveillance systems with them.

The department wants to utilize information that may have been caught by the growing number of homes with video surveillance. Per the announcement, they believe that “video surveillance is a valuable tool in the detection, identification, apprehension and conviction of criminals who plague our City with crime.”

Not quite Orwellian in scope, the CWT is a completely voluntary registry, and the Bristol Police Department will not be able to access your cameras at will. The procedure involves registering a camera, and if there is a crime committed within the purview of that camera, the police then contact the participant, requesting to view the camera footage. They are careful to note that “in accordance with CT Law, all personal information collected will remain confidential.”

To register, you fill out a form notifying the department where the camera is located, and whether that faces the roadway, whether it covers a residence or business, and if the system is already monitored by a security company. In addition they will need to know when the camera records and how long that information is retained. You can request a sticker advertising your partnership.

Like body cameras, having a video record is tantamount to having an official record of a crime whereas testimony can be considered flawed. The hope on the part of the police department is that this will expedite the solving of crimes, or even prevent certain crimes.

Berlin had implemented a similar program earlier in the year, but it’s still too soon to say if the benefits of a registry of videos had the intended effects. Programs like this one are being started all across the country, in places like Fort Worth and Berkeley, in response to the growing popularity of this technology.

Speaking to the *Bristol Press*, Police Chief Brian Gould said that he’s “always exploring new initiatives and new ways to partner with the community.” And with a program like this, participants might have the ability to say they helped solve a crime, and keep the city safe.

Those interested in the program can sign up on the police department’s website; there is a link to the Community Watch Team underneath the Police Help Center. Simply fill out the registration form linked at the bottom of that page.

The Bristol Police Department is committed to the mission, “To Protect and Serve the Community with Integrity and Professionalism”
Wearing Pink To Show Strength
Westport Police support Breast Cancer Awareness Month

Our police forces are there to serve and protect, they uphold the peace, and keep everyone safe. Connecticut is one of the safest states in the Union (number six according to WalletHub.com), and now former Governor Malloy just announced a major reduction in crime for 2017. The police force is one of the bedrocks of American society, and will sometimes go above and beyond for their municipalities. Westport’s police force is one example, and they did so by spending the entire month of October wearing pink.

The Westport Police Department released a statement saying that they would be participating in the Pink Patch Project for the month of October, which is also Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Many people will be familiar with the pink ribbons associated with Susan G. Komen For The Cure; the Pink Patch Project works on the same principle. It is, according to their Facebook page, “an innovative public awareness campaign designed to bring attention to the fight against breast cancer and to support breast cancer research organizations in combating this devastating disease.”

“At the Pink Patch Project, we have the simple goal of increasing awareness about the life-saving benefits of early detection and intervention in the fight against breast cancer. In addition to our public education efforts, we have the added goal of raising funds from the sale of Pink Patch Project items to go directly to fund the research, treatment and education needed to help find a cure.”

The Westport Police Department release said “wearing pink patches on our uniform is intended to stimulate conversations with the community during our daily contacts with them and to encourage discussion with the public.” This collaboration consists of 2,675 police departments around the country who feel the same way.

“From October 1st-31st, we will be selling the patches to the public as a fundraiser for $10 each at the Westport Police Department, 50 Jesup Road, Westport, CT. The proceeds will be donated to Pink Aid of Westport. Those who purchase our Pink Patch can tag the Westport Police Department Facebook page, Instagram and Twitter.”

Hopefully you won’t see too many cops in the month of October, but if you do and they’re wearing a pink patch, thank them for supporting a great cause!
Municipal borders have been a hot topic as the need for regionalization becomes increasingly important. These lines drawn on maps are superficial on the ground — save for a sign welcoming you to town, neither roads nor people drastically change from town to town. Sharing services makes sense because it saves money and makes services more efficient no matter the cartography. It could also mean safer residents, as East Lyme, Waterford, and New London look to break down barriers in fighting crime.

The three municipalities began work on an agreement that would support regional police cooperation late last year in response to the changing times, both in terms of regionalization and the way crimes such as narcotics dealing occur.

As the law stands, there is limited power of police departments to detain a criminal that has crossed over municipal boundaries. These include the “hot pursuit” laws that make it necessary to follow a dangerous suspect, but otherwise protocol mandates that they call for backup from whatever town they are currently in as they would not have the authority to arrest the criminal.

The agreement would make necessary changes so that East Lyme, Waterford, and New London could share full arresting powers.

In a quote to WTNH, New London Police Chief Peter Reichard said, “I think it enhances what all three agencies can do.”

He goes on to note narcotics dealing in particular, as that has changed over the past 20 years, stating, “Everybody’s using cellular phones. They’re using digital media. They’re using Facebook selling their drugs. They go from town to town in two or three minutes.”

This kind of cooperation will help foster the end of the narcotics epidemic that has rattled the entire nation in the past 20 years by getting the drugs and drug dealers off the street quicker. Because of that, this agreement has already been signed by Waterford First Selectman Daniel Steward, passed the City Council in New London, with East Lyme looking to move this along early this year.

The municipalities also have the support of the editorial board of the New London Day which has “long advocated for regional municipal collaboration and cooperation in a variety of areas. [...] This regional policing agreement would take one more step in the right direction and could serve as a model program for other municipalities seeking improved inter-town public safety.”

Summing up the case for cooperation, Chief Reichard said to WTNH, “ultimately all these arrestees will be in the same courthouse underneath the same prosecutor before the same judges.”

Fighting the terrible drug epidemic in Connecticut should be a priority for police forces across the state, and any agreement that fosters cooperation and success should not just be embraced, but championed.
Body Camera Ready
Stamford latest police force to sign up

A fter months of testing and evaluating various models, Stamford Mayor David Martin, along with the officials from the Stamford Police Department, have announced that the police department will be moving forward with purchasing a “full complement” of body-worn cameras.

“The City of Stamford is a growing, diverse community with a great police department,” Martin said during a recent press conference.

“Many recent events have highlighted the importance of strong, collaborative relationships between the police and the community they serve, with accountability and transparency as priorities. Body-worn cameras are a tool that I support and I believe will improve the safety not only of our police, but the community as a whole.”

According to the mayor’s office, the city of Stamford applied for the Body-Worn Camera Pilot Partnership Program in May, 2015, and was successful in obtaining grant funding from the Department of Justice.

The Stamford Police Department field tested three cameras for more than 100 days, ultimately settling on the Axon Body 2 Camera after a majority of the department’s officers indicated a preference for that model.

“Moving forward into the final phase of the Body-Worn Camera program shows our commitment to further enhancing our relationship with the community as body-worn cameras have been shown to reduce crime, improve public safety, and improve public trust between the police and residents,” added Ted Jankowski, Director of Public Safety.

The Stamford Police Department has partnered with the Stamford Police Association and 10 integral community partners, including the NAACP and ACLU, the State’s Attorney’s Office, and the Domestic Violence Crisis Center, to ensure that policies and procedures are in place to address individuals’ rights, privacy, and safety issues.

Stamford NAACP President Jack Bryant said, “I applaud Mayor Martin, our Stamford Director of Public Safety, and our Stamford police chiefs for continuing the effort to equip our police officers with body cameras. The concept of police body cameras has not been easily accepted by all municipalities in Connecticut, but here in Stamford it was accepted from the beginning and Stamford officials have worked with the community to get us to this point.”

“The trust between law enforcement agencies and the people we protect and serve is essential to the stability of our community,” said Stamford Police Chief Jonathan Fontneau. “The eventual purchase and use of body-worn cameras will enhance the safe and effective delivery of policing services and will provide the necessary transparency to clear up conflicts and questions.”

Police Departments Paid For Body Cameras

Twelve police departments across the state will be reimbursed for the cost of purchasing body cameras for the cops in their departments and the video storage devices needed to house the tapes.

The state Bond Commission recently approved spending $1,768,525 for the reimbursement. Besides the dozen departments, college police forces at Western and Eastern Connecticut State Universities will be reimbursed.

The following departments will be reimbursed:
- Bloomfield, $98,061
- Darien, $87,142
- Groton Town Police Department, $98,998
- Middlebury Police Department, $37,463
- Milford Police Department, $222,726
- Naugatuck Police Department, $27,339
- New Haven Police Department, $790,421
- North Haven Police Department, $84,025
- Orange Police Department, $27,725
- Putnam Police Department, $47,778
- Wilton Police Department, $153,732
- Wolcott Police Department, $32,559
PUBLIC SAFETY

Buckle Up!
Norwalk police remind drivers to Click It or Ticket

Along with parades and picnics, Memorial Day weekend typically brings families out on the road to kick off the summer festivities. To keep these drivers and passengers safe, the Norwalk Police Department held its annual Click It or Ticket campaign from May 21 to June 3.

The campaign, established by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), aims to increase public awareness and law enforcement presence in an effort to reduce the number of seat belt violations. Norwalk police stepped up seat belt enforcement and reminded its citizens just how important it is to buckle up.

Norwalk’s department conducted its two-week long initiative with a strict zero-tolerance policy. According to officials, Norwalk police issued 28 seat belt infractions during the campaign period. In Connecticut there is a $92 fine for an adult who is not wearing a seat belt while traveling in a vehicle, and a $120 fine for persons under the age of 18.

“This year’s Click It or Ticket campaign was a real success,” said Norwich Police Lieutenant Terrence Blake. “Through our enforcement efforts, we believe we helped keep community members safe and reminded drivers of the importance of buckling up. Issuing tickets was not our goal, but it was a way to remind people of the importance of such a simple action.”

The law requires all passengers traveling in the front seat to wear a seat belt. According to the NHTSA, seat belt use reached an all-time high of 90 percent in 2016 — but millions of people still endanger themselves and others by not buckling up. Of the 37,461 passenger vehicle occupants killed in 2016, 48 percent were unrestrained, with 56 percent unrestrained at night.

In response, the Norwalk police force added nighttime patrols. The department also trained its officers on techniques to catch seat belt violators at night. This was a “major success,” according to Blake.

“If you know a friend or a family member who does not buckle up when they drive, please ask them to consider changing their habits,” he said. “Help us spread this life-saving message before one more friend or family member is killed as a result of this senseless inaction. Seat belts save lives, and everyone — front seat and back, child and adult — needs to remember to buckle up — every trip, every time.”

Other Connecticut towns that have joined the Click It or Ticket campaign include: Bridgeport, Greenwich, Hamden, Middletown, New Milford, Wallingford, and Westport.

Buckle up & Help reverse the trend.

In 2016, 10,428 people killed in crashes weren’t wearing a seat belt, an increase from 2015.
The towns of Sherman and New Milford teamed up in February of this year to celebrate THP Project Purple Week.

Project Purple is an initiative of The Chris Herren Project, a non-profit foundation established by former NBA basketball player Chris Herren that assists individuals and families struggling with addiction.

The THP Project Purple initiative was launched to break the stigma of addiction, bring awareness to the dangers of substance abuse, and encourage positive decision-making to navigate life’s challenges.

The THP Project Purple initiative empowers our youth to stand up and make a difference. Going Purple gives students motivation and support as they embrace a message of education and awareness. Students learn that they do not need drugs and alcohol to meet life’s challenges; that they are perfect the way they are.

To celebrate the event, the New Milford Substance Abuse Prevention Council teamed up with local businesses to “paint our towns purple.”
Taking on Opioids
Bridgeport make call to action on abuse and addiction

In response to the national opioid crisis, Bridgeport Mayor Joseph Ganim and Health Director Maritza Bond were joined by Fairfield First Selectman Mike Tetreau, Trumbull First Selectman Vicki Tesoro, health directors from Fairfield, Trumbull, Stratford, Monroe, and New Haven, Bridgeport Fire Chief Thode, and representatives of the police departments from Bridgeport, Fairfield, Trumbull, and Stratford, as well as surrounding municipal health and prevention leaders for a call to action against opioid addiction.

Mayor Ganim and Health Director Bond took the opportunity to collaborate with regional leaders to launch the ‘BPTIamU’ opioid awareness campaign.

“This is a national problem that knows no boundaries. Opioid overdoses are taking lives and devastating families and residents in our cities and towns across the state,” said Mayor Ganim. “The BPTIamU opioid campaign is a valuable tool that can educate the community on support services and resources while sharing powerful testimonials of recovery and hope. It is our belief that by partnering with our surrounding towns we can increase awareness on this epidemic to end it.”

The BPTIamU initiative was designed to support those in active addiction or early recovery, highlight prevention efforts through education, and strengthen collaboration among communities, public and private non-profit agencies, as well as federal, state, local, and tribal governments.

Bridgeport Health Director Maritza Bond said, “It is exciting to see this project come into fruition. The Bridgeport Health Department is committed to reducing opioid-related deaths among our citizens. And we are not alone in this fight! This is not an independent battle. That is why we are working collectively with other municipal leaders. There are many phases of awareness the Health Department is undertaking through our BPTIamU Campaign to reduce stigma among those actively using and in recovery, identify hotspots throughout the City, and coalesce resources with our community stakeholders to combat this epidemic.”

Additionally, BPTIamU will include a video component to highlight the challenges of being debilitated by and overcoming opioid addiction, based on the testimonials of those in recovery and leaders fighting to eradicate the opioid epidemic. This documentary will be used to educate the general public, invested stakeholders, and other families and friends in the community.

Fairfield First Selectman Mike Tetreau said, “The crisis with opioid abuse affects us all whether you reside in Connecticut’s cities, suburbs or rural communities. We are committed to doing all we can to address the issue of opioid abuse. We have dedicated staff time to promote the resources currently available and we continue to work with community coalitions such as Fairfield Cares to secure grants for educational work to reach residents, doctors, pharmacists and clergy on the dangers of opioids and the role each of them can have to prevent opioid abuse.”

Trumbull First Selectman Vicki Tesoro said “Everyone knows someone who has been impacted by this epidemic of substance abuse and addiction. In Trumbull, our community partners have been fighting this devastating disease on a number of fronts — through education, reducing access to prescription and illicit drugs, providing Narcan to first responders and the community, and helping families access assistance and support. There is still much work to be done, and I look forward to expanding Trumbull’s efforts through regional collaboration.”

For more information on opioid abuse and recovery efforts, go to BridgeportCT.gov/BPTIamU.
Safe Zone
Bridgeport police offer area for Internet purchases

The City of Bridgeport is joining the growing list of Connecticut communities to offer its police station as a “Safe Zone” for residents making purchases on the Internet.

Bridgeport Police Chief AJ Perez and Sgt. Joseph Szor from the Robbery and Burglary Division of the Detective Bureau are cautioning residents when making Internet purchase exchanges.

“These criminals will offer something that is too good to be true and they will mislead victims to meet in an unfamiliar, dark place. Unknown to the victim, there will be someone else lying in wait,” said Chief Perez. “We are offering the front of our headquarters as a safe, convenient alternative. It is well lit, has cameras, and there is always an officer present.”

The Robbery and Burglary Squad of the Detective Bureau have seen a rise in crimes against individuals using “OFFER UP,” “CRAIGSLIST,” “LET Go,” and other similar websites. Criminals are using these sites to lure would-be buyers or sellers of merchandise into locations where they then rob victims who are legally attempting to transact business.

The usual pattern is a potential buyer or seller will answer an ad pertaining to merchandise. The potential buyer or seller is then told to meet at a designated address for the transaction. The buyer (if the criminal) will show up and ask to see the item (this can be anything from an iPhone to a dirt bike). Once the item is in their possession the other party is brutally assaulted, while the criminal leaves with the stolen goods. If the criminal is the seller, he/she will confirm the buyer is holding the money and brutally assault the buyer to obtain the cash.

In an effort to stop this pattern against innocent parties, the Bridgeport Police Department is designating a space in front of Police Department Headquarters at 300 Congress Street Bridgeport as a SAFE ZONE for persons wanting to legally and safely purchase or sell items.

Bridgeport Police Headquarters will soon have a sign in front of the building, distinguishing it as a “Meet Up Spot” for Internet exchanges.

Please be advised, although the businesses mentioned above are legal and legitimate, there are those who will use them illegally for their own gain.

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For more information contact Beth Scanlon, (203)946-3782 | bscanlon@ccm-ct.org.
The City of Hartford was one of 35 Champion Cities selected as a finalist in the 2018 U.S. Mayors Challenge, a nationwide competition by Bloomberg Philanthropies that encourages city leaders to pursue bold, inventive ideas that confront the toughest problems cities face.

Hartford’s proposal, Alleviating Child Trauma in Our Neighborhoods (ACTION), uses the City’s ShotSpotter technology to ensure that educators, early childhood professionals, and youth support organizations are able to recognize and respond in real time when a child has been exposed to the trauma of gun violence.

“In too many communities around the country, young people who are exposed to the trauma of gun violence in their neighborhoods never get the support, treatment, or even the acknowledgement that they need,” said Mayor Luke Bronin. “Our proposal was designed to help provide timely support and assistance to kids exposed to gun violence in our own community. I’m proud of our team’s innovative proposal, and I’m thankful to Bloomberg Philanthropies for selecting Hartford as a Champion City. Our team is looking forward to developing the proposal further, in partnership with all of our stakeholders, including Hartford Public Schools, the Hartford Police Department, and The Village for Families and Children.”

Research shows that more than 76% of youth who are exposed to gun violence nationally are never referred to care, and traumatic stress from that exposure can result in persistent emotional and cognitive damage.

The City’s proposal was selected from a pool of more than 320 applications. Hartford now advances to the six-month “Test, Learn, and Adapt” phase of the competition.

Cities will refine their ideas during this process with up to $100,000, as well as personalized support from innovation experts, to test and begin building support for their urban innovations. In October, four cities were awarded $1 million and one received a grand prize of $5 million to bring their ideas to life.

“We received hundreds of bold and creative ideas from cities around the country in response to the 2018 Mayors Challenge, and these 35 really stood out for their potential to improve people’s lives. The next six months are a great opportunity for the cities to test their ideas and make them even more innovative and effective,” said Michael R. Bloomberg, founder of Bloomberg Philanthropies and three-term mayor of New York City.

The 35 Champion Cities performed the best against four key criteria: vision, potential for impact, implementation plan, and potential to spread to other cities. A selection committee co-chaired by former ambassador Caroline Kennedy and former Xerox Chairman & CEO Ursula Burns and comprising distinguished policy experts, artists, academics, business executives and social innovation leaders assessed the applications.

“Gun violence and mental health go hand in hand,” said City Council President Glendowlyn L.H. Thames. “The Bloomberg Philanthropies’ 2018 Mayors Challenge grant provides the City of Hartford with an opportunity to take ACTION and lead the way in addressing this critical issue.”
to develop creative approaches to better identify and deploy resources in order to support residents who are experiencing trauma from gun violence. I am thankful for grant-making organizations like Bloomberg Philanthropies who help build capacity within communities and support problem solving to their unique challenges.”

“Meeting the needs of the whole child is a focus area at Hartford Public Schools,” said Dr. Leslie Torres-Rodriguez, Superintendent of Hartford Public Schools. “This generous grant from Bloomberg Philanthropies will support our efforts to address social, emotional, and trauma-based needs as we continue to remove learning barriers. Many thanks to Bloomberg Philanthropies and the City of Hartford for partnering with us in the public school district to further develop this important work.”

“Hartford police officers see the damage gun violence does in our City almost every day,” said Former Hartford Police Chief David Rosado. “We are glad to be part of this City-wide effort to develop a plan to address the often-unseen trauma innocent children experience long after shootings. Our Capital City Command Center is primarily used to prevent or respond to crime, and I’m proud of our team for finding a way to leverage ShotSpotter technology to help identify young people who need the support that our partners at Hartford Public Schools and so many community groups provide.”

The 2018 Mayors Challenge returns to the U.S. as the first investment in the American Cities Initiative, a $200 million suite of new and expanded programs that will empower cities to generate innovation and advance policy that moves the nation forward. The Challenge builds on the success of previous Bloomberg-sponsored Challenges in the U.S. (2013), Europe (2014), and Latin America and the Caribbean (2016). For more information, visit mayorschallenge.bloomberg.org and @BloombergCities on Twitter and Instagram.

### Safety First

**Top child-safe Connecticut towns listed**

If you live in Greenwich, Fairfield, West Hartford, Milford, or Wallingford then you reside in one of the safest areas in the state to raise a child, according to an independent agency that does such rankings.

Safewise, a website that ranks home security systems, has ranked the 30 safest places to raise a child in the United States and five Connecticut towns made the list: Greenwich, Fairfield, West Hartford, Milford, and Wallingford.

Safewise analyzed violent crime data from the most recent FBI Crime Report, along with sex offender populations, state graduation rates, and school rankings.

The agency also looked for unique programs that were kid-friendly.

Cities with fewer than 10,000 residents were eliminated as well as any cities that failed to submit a complete crime report to the FBI.
The shortage of volunteers nationwide is reaching crisis levels, while statistics show that more EMTs are leaving the field every year than are becoming certified. Meanwhile, an aging population and increasing use of Emergency Departments for primary care is creating additional call volume for even the most rural areas. The majority of employees at ERM volunteers in their hometowns and truly understand the challenges facing all of us. Emergency Resource Management is committed to ensuring Volunteer services keep their ambulances staffed and running. A partnership with ERM allows your squad to continue to provide quality care – often with greatly improved response times during critical hours. With experienced, caring and dedicated ERM staff integrated into your schedule, overburdened volunteers gain peace of mind and the ability to focus on those often neglected tasks. Instead of scrambling to cover the schedule, your officers can be free to ensure regulatory and fiscal compliance, review QA, and work on strategic planning.

For more information on our staffing or management services, please visit www.ermamanagement.com

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