



Gahanna PD Community Bulletin: June 2022

With Independence Day fast approaching, many will gather to celebrate the summer holiday with family barbeques, baseball games, pool parties, concerts, visits to amusement parks, trips to the lake and fireworks. This year, House Bill 172 was signed into law. The new law, which eliminated the state ban on commercial fireworks, allowed for local units of government in Ohio to "opt-out" of these new provisions and keep existing bans in place. On June 21, the Gahanna City Council followed many communities in Franklin County, and throughout Ohio, by passing legislation to keep the existing ban on commercial fireworks in place. Gahanna's new ordinance did decrease the penalty for an initial violation from a first-degree misdemeanor to a fourth-degree misdemeanor. Second and subsequent violations of the ordinance remain first-degree misdemeanors.

The response by the Division of Police to fireworks violations has always been complaint-based. Officers are not actively seeking out violations of the ordinance, but rather responding to complaints from residents. Due to the density of housing in Gahanna, the use of fireworks does present a risk of physical injury and property damage. While the sale of commercial fireworks is a regulated industry, many off-market fireworks containing significant amounts of explosive material are readily available. Many commercial fireworks (known as 1.4G explosives or formerly as Class C fireworks) can rival those of exhibitor-grade fireworks (1.3G explosives, formerly known as Class B special fireworks or display fireworks). Even the most well-planned and well-intentioned use of these explosives can result in serious injury or death. Last 4th of July, Columbus Blue Jackets goalie Matiss Kivlenieks was struck in the chest and killed by a shell from a commercially-available firework while attending a wedding in Michigan. Matiss was only 24 years old. These tragedies can be avoided by leaving the display of fireworks up to the professionals. There have been no changes to fireworks exhibitor permits available to professional exhibitors through the Ohio Department of Commerce (State Fire Marshal's Office).

While we understand everyone's desire to celebrate holidays with fireworks, it is not safe to do so especially in a dense urban environment. The loud noise, bright flashes of light and falling debris can negatively impact the lives of others. In addition, the number of reported incidents of celebratory gunfire have increased over the last few years. The discharge of firearms in the air presents a severe risk of injury and death. The Division takes every incident of shots being fired as a priority and critical call for service.

As I wrote, the holiday weekend is meant for family, fun and celebrating. It is our hope that you and your family do so safely.

JEFFREY B. SPENCE, CLEE

Chief of Police, Gahanna Division of Police

Summary of Division Activity for May



Support Services – Communications Center:

-Communications Technicians handled 926 911 calls throughout the month. The Communications Center answered those calls in an average of 2.0 seconds. Two Text-to-911 messages were received.

-Of all 911 calls received by the Communications Center, 76% originated from cellular phones, while 14% were received from VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol) telephone lines/systems.

-An additional 2,021 calls were received through the Division's non-emergency lines in May.

-Year-to-date call volume has increased 16.9% over 2021.

-In total, 2,959 calls for service were dispatched during the month.

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Summary of Division Activity for May

4425
 2022 Year-to-Date
 Total 9-1-1 Calls

3783
 2021 Year-to-Date
 Total 9-1-1 Calls

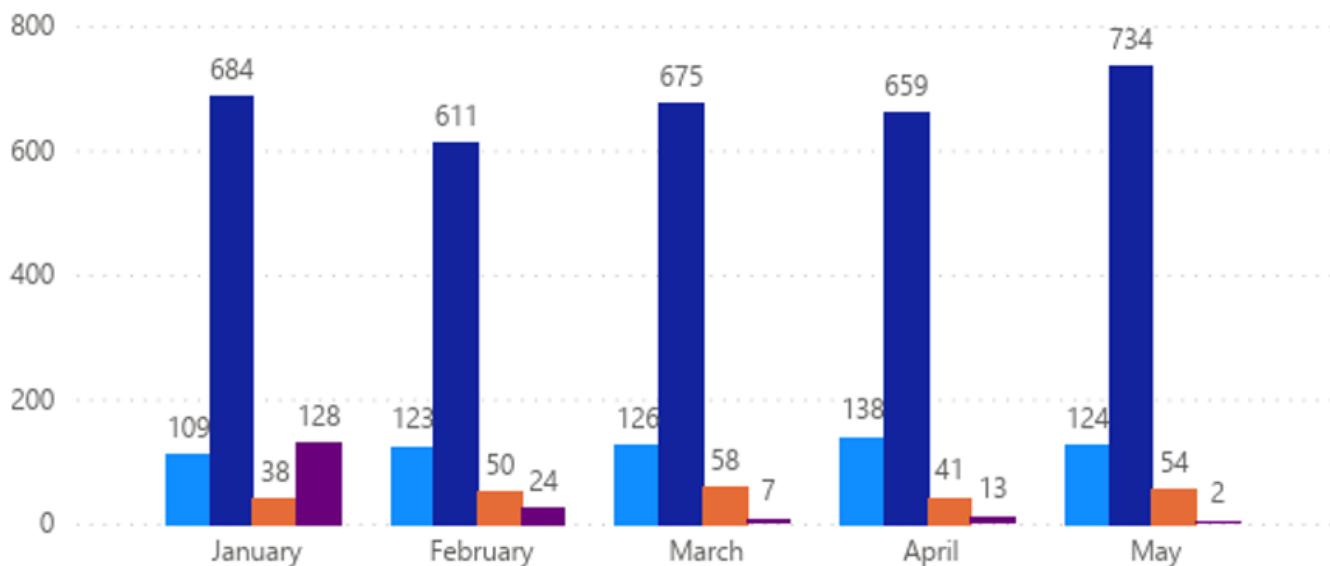
16.97%
 % Change
 Year-to-Date Total
 9-1-1 Calls

Gahanna 9-1-1 System Data

Month	9-1-1 Total	9-1-1 Wireless	9-1-1 Wireline	9-1-1 VoIP	No ANI/ALI	Average Answer Delay (Seconds)	Abandoned Calls	Rollover Calls	Non-Emergency Lines	Text to 9-1-1
January	959	684	38	109	128	4.00	28	0	1948	0
February	811	611	50	123	24	3.00	32	0	2085	0
March	866	675	58	126	7	3.00	27	0	1709	0
April	863	659	41	138	13	2.00	35	0	1644	1
May	926	734	54	124	2	2.00	24	0	2021	2
Total	4425	3363	241	620	174	2.80	146	0	9407	3

Total 9-1-1 Calls by Month & Type

● 9-1-1 VoIP ● 9-1-1 Wireless ● 9-1-1 Wireline ● No ANI/ALI



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Field Services: May 2022

-The Division generated 378 offense and arrest reports. The following is a breakdown of incidents by type:

- No robberies were reported.
- There were 13 thefts from vehicles reported, including some involving forced entry.
- There were 16 incidents of criminal damaging reported. Two arrests were made in separate incidents.
- One burglary occurred.
- Four breaking and entering offenses were reported. Two separate incidents were reported from a business located within the City's Industrial Park (Science Boulevard).
- A total of 12 vehicles were stolen. One arrest was made in connection with the recovery of a stolen vehicle.
- Incidents of assaults (no domestic nexus) are as follows:
 - Two aggravated assaults.
 - Seven simple assaults resulting in three arrests.
- Domestic-related responses include:
 - 15 documented disputes that did not involve a criminal offense.
 - Three arrests for domestic violence.
 - Two incidents in which warrants were issued for offenders.
 - Five offense reports forwarded for investigation or further prosecutorial review.
- Drug offenses for the month include:
 - Drug/Narcotics violations – Three arrests; one warrant issued.
 - Drug equipment violations – Two arrests.
 - Six overdose responses occurred, with four out of the same incident at one College Park area home. None of the incidents resulted in fatalities.
 - Fentanyl and fentanyl-laced cocaine were involved in the reported overdoses.

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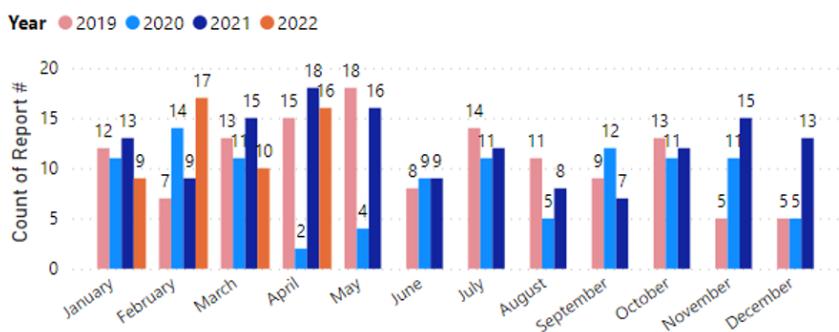
Field Services: May 2022 (page 2)

- During the month, 59 arrest warrant entries were made.
- Five field interviews were conducted resulting in reports.
- Officers conducted 598 self-initiated traffic stops with 244 traffic violators issued citations. From those stops, 18 arrests were made.
- The Division responded to 50 motor vehicle crashes, a breakdown of which is as follows:
 - No traffic fatalities occurred during the month.
 - One crash was classified as serious injury suspected - 2.0% of responses.
 - Four crashes were classified as minor injury suspected – 8.0% of responses.
 - Two crashes were classified as injury possible – 4.0% of responses.
 - The remaining 43 crashes were classified as Property Damage Only (PDO) – 86.0% of responses.
 - On I-270, 13 crashes occurred – 26.0% of responses.
 - Three incidents involved alcohol and/or drug impairment – 6.0% of responses.
 - Four commercial vehicle-involved crashes occurred during the month – 8.0% of responses.
 - Distractions were reported in 18 of the 50 crashes – 36.0% involved some form of driver distraction.
- Patrol officers made 17 arrests for impaired driving (OVI).
 - Six arrestees refused to submit to chemical testing.
 - The results of blood/urine tests in four incidents are pending laboratory analysis.
 - The average blood alcohol content for the seven arrestees that submitted to breath testing was .18, or two times the legal limit of intoxication in Ohio (.08).
 - The highest number of arrests (8) occurred between Friday evenings and Sunday mornings.
 - Officers of the Division have made 69 impaired driving arrests year-to-date.

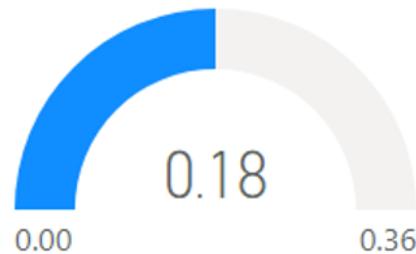
Summary of Division Activity for May 2022

OVI Report

Arrests by Month



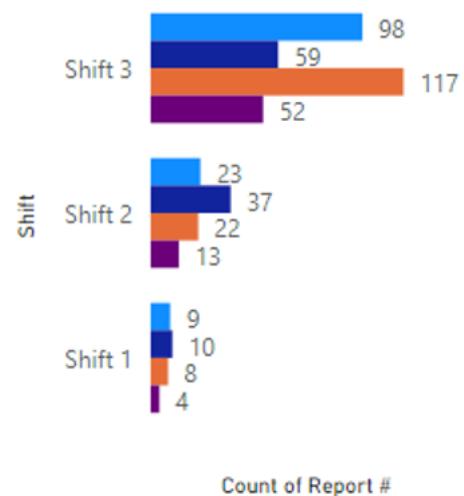
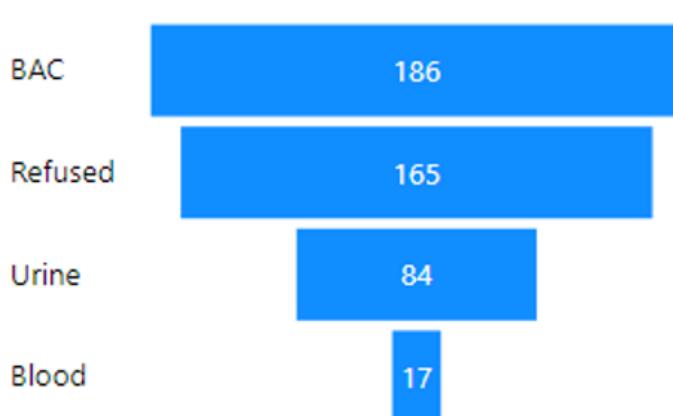
Average BAC



OVI by Year and Shift

Year ● 2019 ● 2020 ● 2021 ● 2022

Testing Type Total



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Investigative Services



- The Division's detectives were assigned 104 offense and arrest reports requiring investigative follow up or other administrative action.
- Detectives obtained seven investigative subpoenas and executed seven search warrants during the month.

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Drowning Victim Recovered

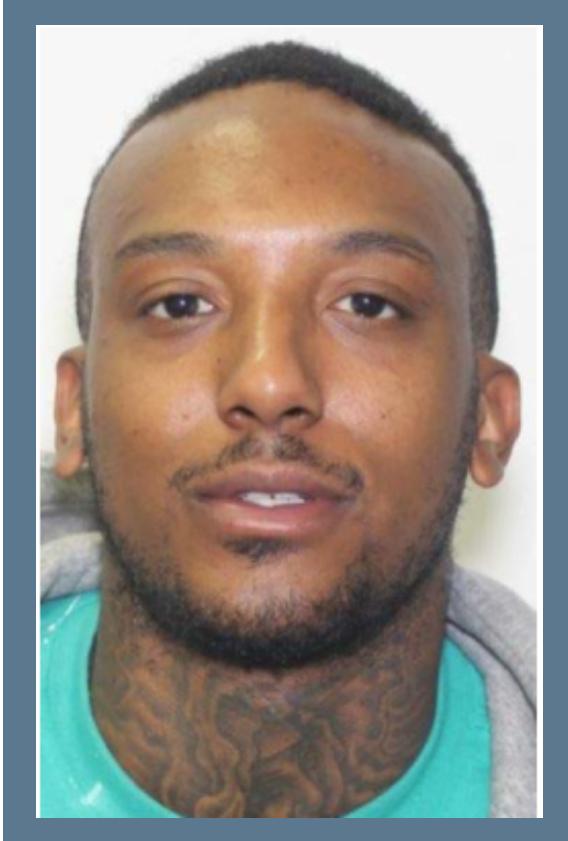
On Saturday, May 14, officers of the Division located human remains within the bed of the Big Walnut Creek, a few hundred yards north of the Creekside complex. The body was discovered in an area that, until a few days prior, remained underwater for a significant period of time. Heavy debris, including fallen trees, obscured the recovery site. Crews from the Mifflin Township Fire Department assisted investigators from the Division, the Columbus Division of Police and the Franklin County Coroner's Office in the recovery effort. The recovery was consistent with that of a drowning, and there is no cause for concern for the broader community's safety.

On Wednesday, May 18, the Franklin County Coroner's Office notified the family of Ali F. Shegow, age 17, of Columbus that his body had been positively identified. Shegow was last seen entering the Big Walnut Creek, near Academy Park, late on the evening of February 21. The distance between his last known location and the recovery site was slightly over one mile. His body was recovered in an area that was examined several times, but the water's depth and fast current along with heavy underwater debris hampered search efforts.

The Division of Police would like to thank the many agencies that assisted in the search and recovery efforts over the last four months. We also wish to extend our condolences to Ali Shegow's family.



Drug Trafficking Suspect Sentenced



Tawuan M. Green
(Left)

On Tuesday, June 14, 30-year-old Tawuan Maurice Green of Columbus pleaded guilty in Franklin County Commons Pleas Court to trafficking in fentanyl, trafficking in cocaine and weapons under disability. All charges had firearms specifications as part of the indictment, which requires mandatory incarceration. Mr. Green was sentenced to seven years in prison followed by two years of supervised release. This case stems from a 2019 narcotics investigation by the Division's detectives.

Help Needed to Identify

On May 17, the male suspect wearing a red sweatshirt in the surveillance images below stole numerous grocery items from a store in the 300 block of South Hamilton Road.



In-store surveillance image

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Help Needed to Identify (page 2)

On May 8, the two male suspects captured on the in-store surveillance images below stole over \$500 in merchandise from a convenience store in the 400 block of Agler Road.



In-store surveillance image

Waterway Safety



Over the past several years, the Fire Division has experienced a sharp increase in the number of emergencies at our local creeks, ponds, and tributaries. These emergencies include individuals slipping while streamside or intentionally entering the water and being swept away. Canoes and rafts capsize, get stuck in tree branches or on islands that form in the center of the creek. Recently, crews have responded to agile kayak users getting caught in tree debris, capsizing or getting pinned against rocks or logs.

Most of these events occur when water is at flood stage, meaning the water level has extended beyond the normal banks or margins. Flooding increases the volume, depth, and speed of water on rivers and tributaries. When a pond or large body of standing water forms in a field or on a roadway, flooding rapidly increases depth and normal margins. Ponds and standing water are often also moving.

Standing and moving water should always be approached with extreme caution. A watercraft pinned against trees or rocks can be impossible to move without assistance. The force of water holding an object or person in place can quickly lead to exhaustion. Even the most experienced and strongest swimmers and boaters can succumb quickly to these conditions and drown.

For our firefighters, operating under these conditions is equally as dangerous. When the natural riverbanks, including cut trails and paths, are underwater, our staff is forced to operate on less than ideal surfaces. It also takes several minutes to assemble the necessary rescue equipment and prepare to enter the water to perform a rescue -- time that is not available for those needing assistance. Sometimes we work during the storms that caused the flooding and in the darkness of night. The bottom line is that water rescues are very challenging and require more time than many other types of emergency work.



Waterway Safety (page 2)

The Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) has great information about enjoying our local waterways safely [HERE](#).

We agree with the ODNR that canoers and kayakers should avoid boating on creeks and waterways that are flooded. Never paddle or enter water above a low head dam, whether manmade or natural, and monitor water conditions like flow and temperature before entering the water. This can be done by accessing one of the state or county gauges online.

Canoers, kayakers, and rafters should always wear an appropriately sized and fitted personal flotation device. Strainers, or obstructions in moving water that allow water to pass but hold objects in place, should be avoided. These include tree branches that hang into the water, logs and underwater branches that stick up and could pin an object above or below the waterline.

Hypothermia can occur in any outside air temperature and in any season. Hypothermia occurs when the body's temperature decreases to a level that physical activity becomes more difficult. It can render an individual unconscious. You are urged to wear appropriate clothing in all seasons and be attentive to others.

There are many online options that address watercraft and water safety topics in small creeks, streams, and tributaries even when they are not at flood stage. Please review these with your family and especially your children. Also, model appropriate and safe behavior.

We look forward to seeing you and your family safely enjoying our beautiful creeks and trails this summer!

-Frederick L. Kauser, PhD.
Fire Chief



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Cellular Device Safety



Today we use our cellular devices for everything including paying bills, shopping, mapping services and communication. Our cell phones house a lot of personal information about us. If you walk through restaurants and businesses, you will find cellular phones left in the open creating an avenue for thieves to commit a multitude of crimes. There are, however, a few actions you can take to prevent thieves from accessing your information if your device is stolen.

Our phones are connected to cloud storage, banking accounts, credit cards and a multitude of applications, which contain a lot of personal identifying information. To prevent this information from being accessed, you should always have a passcode on your device. Many phones ask for a four-digit passcode, but some will allow you to set up a more complex six-digit passcode or biometrics. Always opt for the more complex passcode, if possible. Your passcode should never be all zeros or 1234.

Consider activating applications that locate your phone. These applications will allow you to wipe your phone, helping to protect your online accounts. Lastly, if you do not want to activate applications that allow you to remotely wipe your device, try to not leave your phone logged into banking applications that would provide immediate access for a thief. In the unfortunate event that your cellular device is stolen, change the passcodes to your online accounts as soon as possible.

~ Detective Blair Thomas

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Get Involved!

3rd Annual SUPPORTING GAHANNA TOGETHER DAY



**SATURDAY
AUGUST 27**

Gather your neighbors and friends for a day that celebrates community!

Organize a clean-up event or a fun activity for your neighborhood. Volunteer for a service project to help a local non-profit. Shop at a local business. No matter the activity, Supporting Gahanna Together Day is a time for every resident and every neighborhood to connect with one another and with our community.

To learn more about how you and/or your neighborhood can participate, contact Becky.Whittington@gahanna.gov or visit Gahanna.gov.

Gahanna

Join us as we grow Gahanna together!



Thank you!

GAHANNA DIVISION OF POLICE
"To Serve and Protect"



"The Mission of the Gahanna Division of Police is to serve and protect our diverse community by building partnerships in order to provide professional law enforcement services that safeguard the lives, rights, and property of all."

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