



# HUGO

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER | MAY 2025



## DISTRACTED DRIVING ENFORCEMENT

Deputies from the Washington County Sheriff's Office issued a grand total of 124 citations for wireless communication driving violations in April, part of a concerted nationwide effort to step up enforcement of distracted driving laws.

Law enforcement officers around the country are seeing a shift in driver behavior as it pertains to wireless devices: Texting is becoming less common, while video entertainment and streaming is becoming more prevalent. This trend includes drivers operating commercial motor vehicles as well as personal vehicles. Common wireless communications device violations include holding a phone or tablet with one or both hands; sending or receiving texts; engaging in phone calls or video calls; and accessing video/audio content, images, games or apps.

But you don't have to be on a device to be distracted — eating and drinking, personal grooming, changing radio stations, looking for items in a purse or backpack and even talking with a passenger can all contribute to driving issues that can cause accidents and even claim lives.

Learn more about Minnesota's [hands-free cell phone law](#) to make sure you know the rules, and remember that nothing on a phone is worth a life.

NUMBER OF  
INCIDENTS

353

TRAFFIC  
STOPS

178

CITATIONS

42



## WC25019924 ACCIDENT

120TH STREET N & ILLIES AVENUE N

At 9:26pm on April 15, deputies responded to a report of a single-vehicle accident and arrived to find a small SUV in the ditch. It appeared the SUV had rolled and was resting on the passenger side. Deputies saw a person exiting through the sunroof but didn't see any obvious injuries. A deputy spoke with the driver, who was distraught, breathing rapidly and crying. As the deputy tried to gather information about the crash, the driver kept repeating statements but wasn't giving clear information. While the driver was speaking, the deputy detected the odor of consumed alcoholic beverage and noticed slurred speech. The adult driver's father arrived after receiving a crash notification on his phone and told the deputy that the driver had struggled with alcohol abuse. After running the driver's information, the deputy found a prior DWI conviction in 2018. After speaking more with the driver in the back of an ambulance, the deputy administered a preliminary breath test, which registered 0.24 blood alcohol content. The driver was transported to a hospital for evaluation, where a warrant was executed for blood samples. The results were forwarded for charging considerations for DWI.

## MESSAGE FROM THE SHERIFF

After recognizing the dedicated public safety telecommunicators of Washington County's Emergency Communications Response Center — our "first" first responders — the week of April 13-19, we now shift our focus to the Correctional Officers of the Washington County Jail. During National Correctional Officers week May 4-10, we salute the team that works day in and day out to ensure a safe space where people are treated with dignity.

Our team of 90 full-time corrections staff members has a challenging job, with an average 2024 daily population of 130 inmates, adding up to an annual booking count of 4,000 adults and 129 juveniles. Besides basic housing and meals, the jail staff includes medical and social workers to address issues like medication, substance use and mental health as well as to help connect people to social services they may need, both while they're incarcerated and afterward. We thank each of our corrections team members for their dedication and commitment to helping people through some of their toughest times.

And as always, we invite you to gather with us at Stillwater's Historic Courthouse on Thursday, May 15, to remember our fallen heroes at the annual Law Enforcement Memorial Day ceremony. Beginning at noon, we'll honor those officers who gave their lives in the line of duty. Our thanks to all our community members for your continued support — you are why we do what we do, with pride.



In service,

*Dan Starry*

Sheriff Dan Starry