

The Matthews Police Department is releasing its annual Crime Report which contains statistics from reported Group A offenses that occurred during 2018. Group A offenses are those reported to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) as part of the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS).

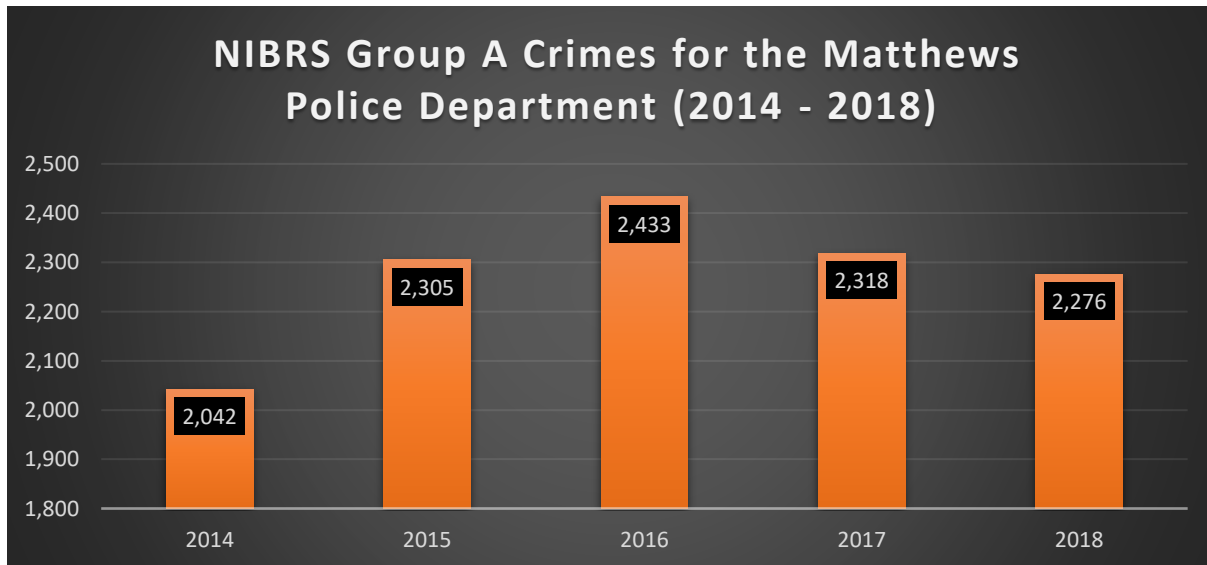
There was an overall 2% decrease in reported Group A offenses within the Town of Matthews for 2018 as compared to 2017.

Group A Comparison

Group A Offenses	2017	2018	% of Change
Arson	9	2	-78%
Assault Offenses			
Aggravated Assault	36	37	3%
Simple Assault	246	221	-10%
Intimidation	105	93	-11%
Bribery	0	0	-
Burglary	136	99	-27%
Counterfeiting/Forgery	36	34	-6%
Damage to Property	201	207	3%
Drug /Narcotics Offenses			
Drug Narcotics Violations	175	200	14%
Drug Equipment Violations	116	159	37%
Embezzlement	18	8	-56%
Extortion/Blackmail	2	2	0%
Fraud Offenses			
False Pretenses/Swindle/Confidence Game	153	120	-22%
Credit Card/ATM Fraud	57	54	-5%
Impersonation	2	1	-50%
Welfare Fraud	0	0	-
Wire Fraud	3	3	0%
Identity Theft	0	13	0%
Hacking/Computer Invasion	0	2	200%
Gambling Offenses			
Betting/Wagering	0	1	100%
Operating/Promoting/Assisting Gambling	0	1	100%
Gambling Equipment Violations	0	3	300%
Sports Tampering	0	0	-
Homicide Offenses			
Murder & Non-negligent Manslaughter	0	2	200%
Negligent Manslaughter	0	0	-
Justifiable Homicide	0	0	-
Kidnapping/Abduction	7	2	-71%
Larceny/Theft Offenses			
Pocket-Picking	0	1	100%
Purse-Snatching	0	4	400%

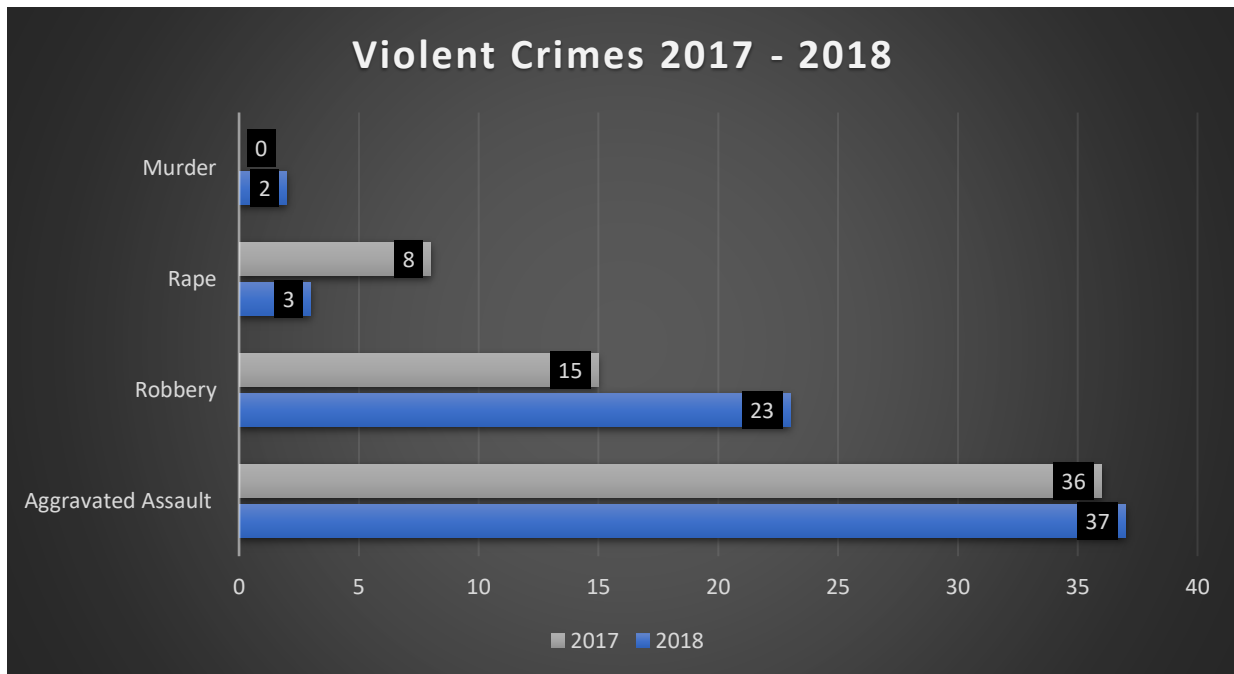
Shoplifting	265	294	11%
Theft From Building	7	5	-29%
Theft From Coin Operated Machine	1	2	100%
Theft From Motor Vehicle	346	287	-17%
Theft of Motor Vehicle Parts	13	24	85%
All Other Larceny	246	246	0%
Motor Vehicle Theft	61	69	13%
Pornography/Obscene Material	1	2	100%
Prostitution Offenses			
Prostitution	0	1	100%
Assisting or Promoting Prostitution	0	0	-
Robbery	15	23	53%
Sex Offenses, Forcible			
Forcible Rape	8	3	-63%
Forcible Sodomy	1	1	0%
Sexual Assault with An Object	0	1	100%
Forcible Fondling	6	10	67%
Incest	0	0	-
Statutory Rape	1	0	-100%
Stolen Property Offenses	19	17	-11%
Weapon Law Violations	26	22	-15%
Total	2,318	2,276	-2%

In looking at Group A offenses over a five-year trend, there was a significant rise from 2014 to 2016, however; we have seen a continued reduction from 2016 through 2018. With this reduction, the total number of reported Group A offenses in 2018 is at a four year low of 2,276.



Violent crimes are defined in the FBI Uniformed Crime Reporting Program (UCR) as those which involve force or threat of force. Violent crime statistics are composed of four offenses: murder and non-negligent homicide manslaughter, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault.

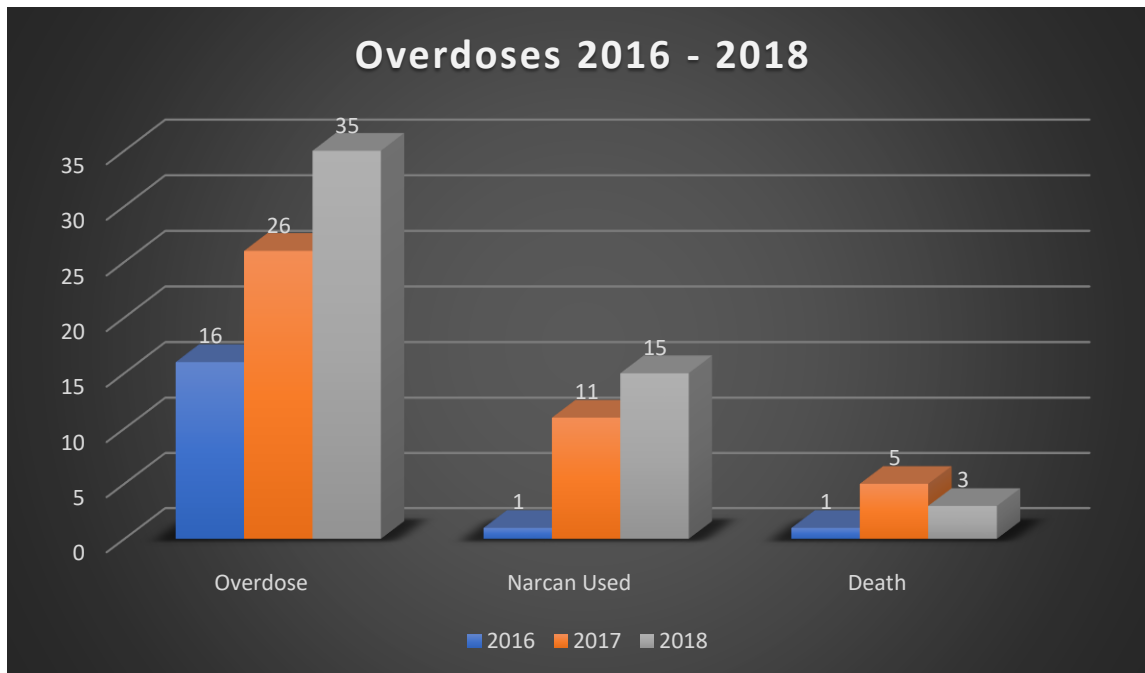
There was an increase in violent crimes from 2017 to 2018 of 6 crimes (10%). Pursuant to our newly implemented data-driven problem-solving initiative, violent crimes are one of our main focuses as we are looking at statistics from the past year. As part of the problem-solving model, March 1, 2019 will bring some adjustments to our patrol response areas to help place officers in better positions to respond to any situation. This will be more efficient for not only answering calls for service for crimes committed, but to have more of an impact on deterring and preventing these types of crimes.



In 2018 the Matthews Police Department adopted a more aggressive response to overdose cases and required an on-call detective to respond to all overdoses resulting in death. The detective and patrol officers work in concert with each other to ensure each overdose is treated with a sense of urgency. Each overdose is treated with the same consistency and dedication we do in other similar cases, such as homicides. At the scene of overdose deaths officers are required to gather much more information and evidence in order to better facilitate the investigator to conduct a more in-depth investigation.

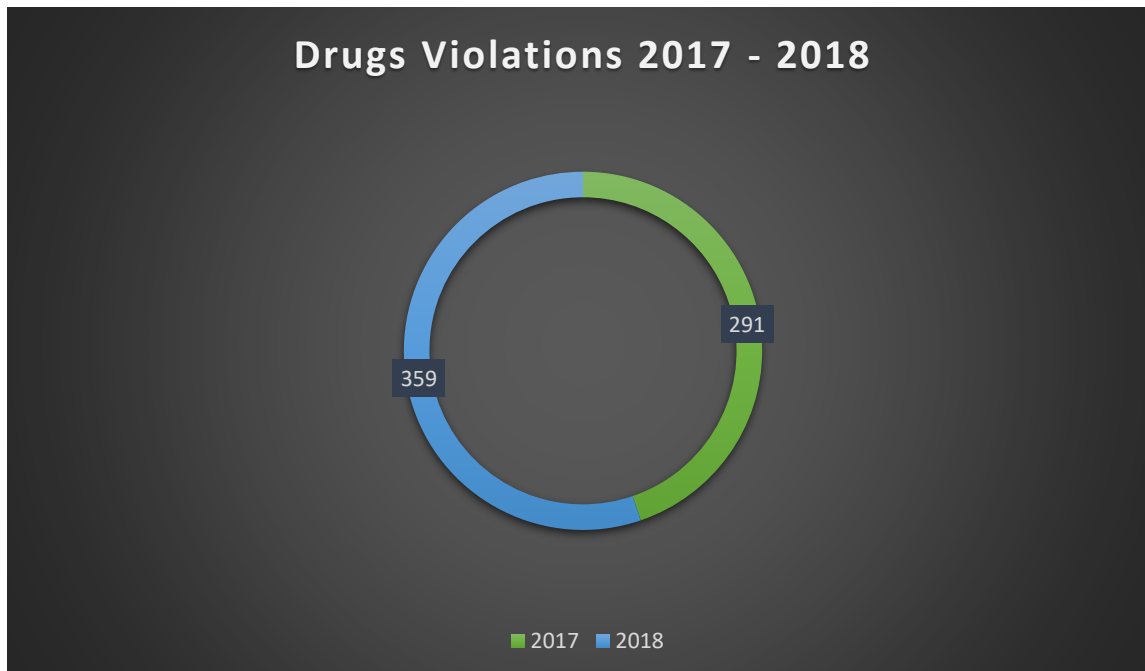
The Matthews Police Department was the first Law Enforcement Agency in Mecklenburg County to begin tracking and sharing information on all overdoses across the state of North Carolina, and the United States, via a new software tracking system called ODMaps.

In early 2019, the Matthews Police Department will receive training in the identification of symptoms and effects of opiates to better enable them to treat persons suffering from an overdose. In addition to the newly acquired identification training, officers will be trained and equipped to deploy Narcan in emergency situations. Narcan will enable officers to save lives and provide our residents and visitors with the opportunity to receive treatment during a moment of crisis brought on by their addiction.

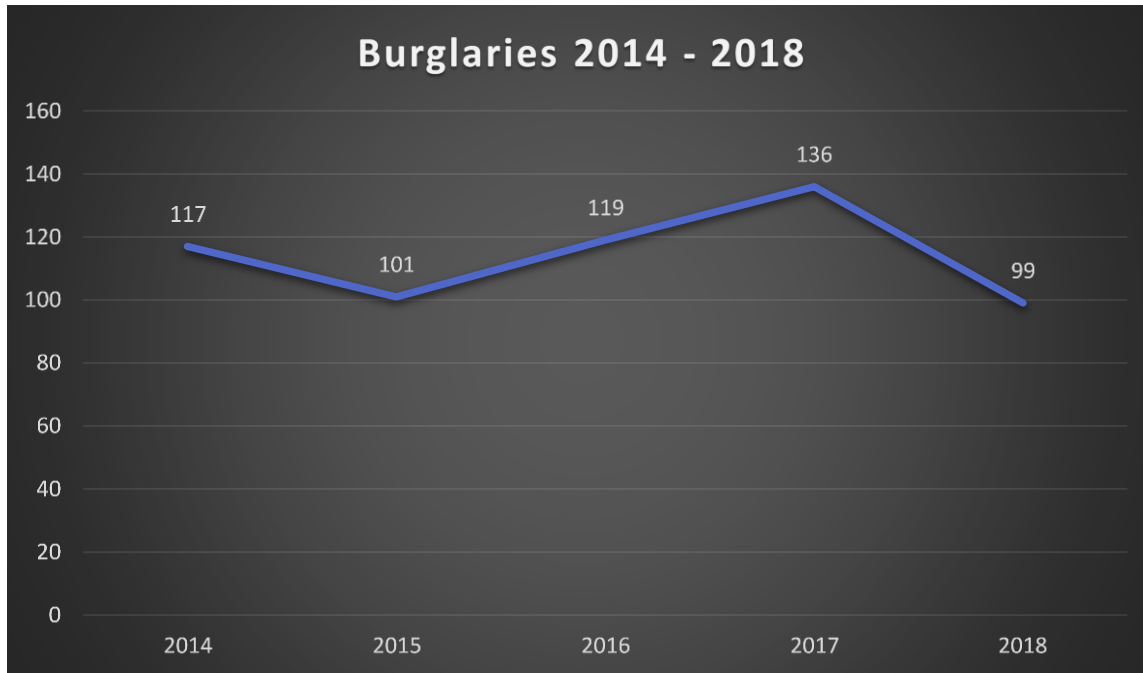


There was an increase in Drug Violations from 2017 to 2018 of 68 (23%). While every community wants theirs to be drug free, we are realistic in the fact that this is an ongoing problem in most communities. The Matthews Police Department Vice/Narcotics Unit has spent this past year advancing its technology and training, while also utilizing the invaluable partnership between other law enforcement agencies in the region. This is in an effort to build the best possible criminal cases against people that choose to bring and/or sell illegal narcotics into our area. We are also very appreciative of the willingness of our concerned citizens to provide valuable information in our common goal of a safe and thriving community.

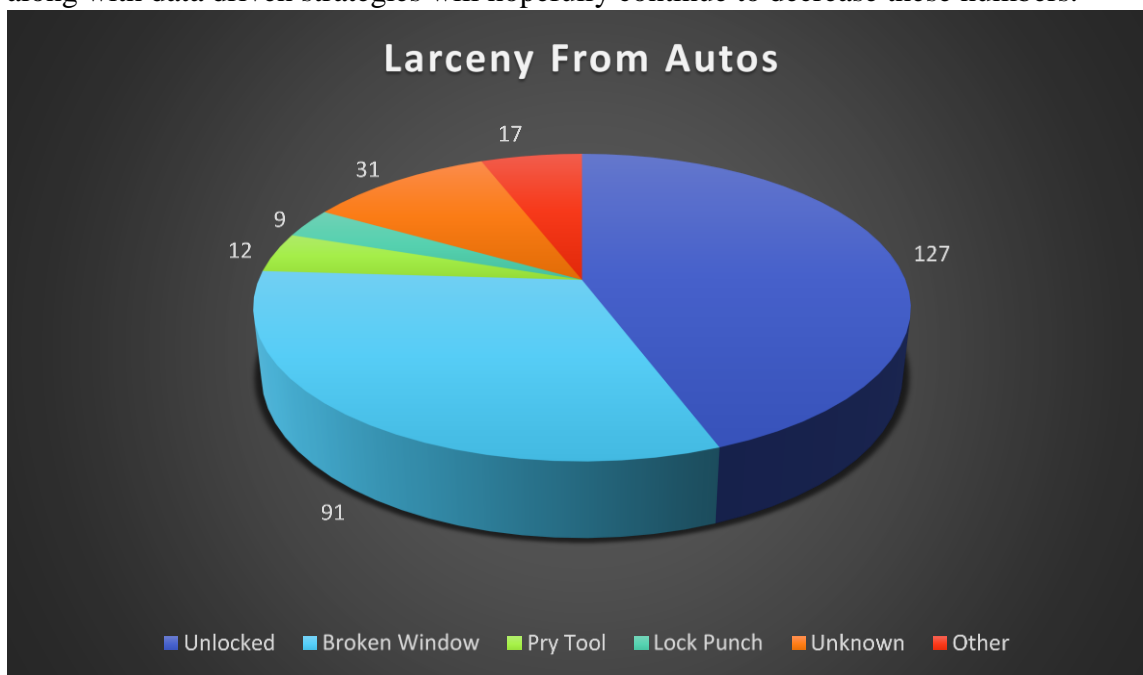
In 2018, the Matthews Police Vice/Narcotics detectives participated in a joint DEA investigation which resulted in a federal seizure of 7 kilos of cocaine and 16+ pounds of marijuana. This seizure also netted \$2.6 million US dollars as well as additional assets and personal property. The results of this seizure allotted the Matthews Police Department approximately \$300,000 in forfeiture funds. Those funds should be available in 2019/2020.



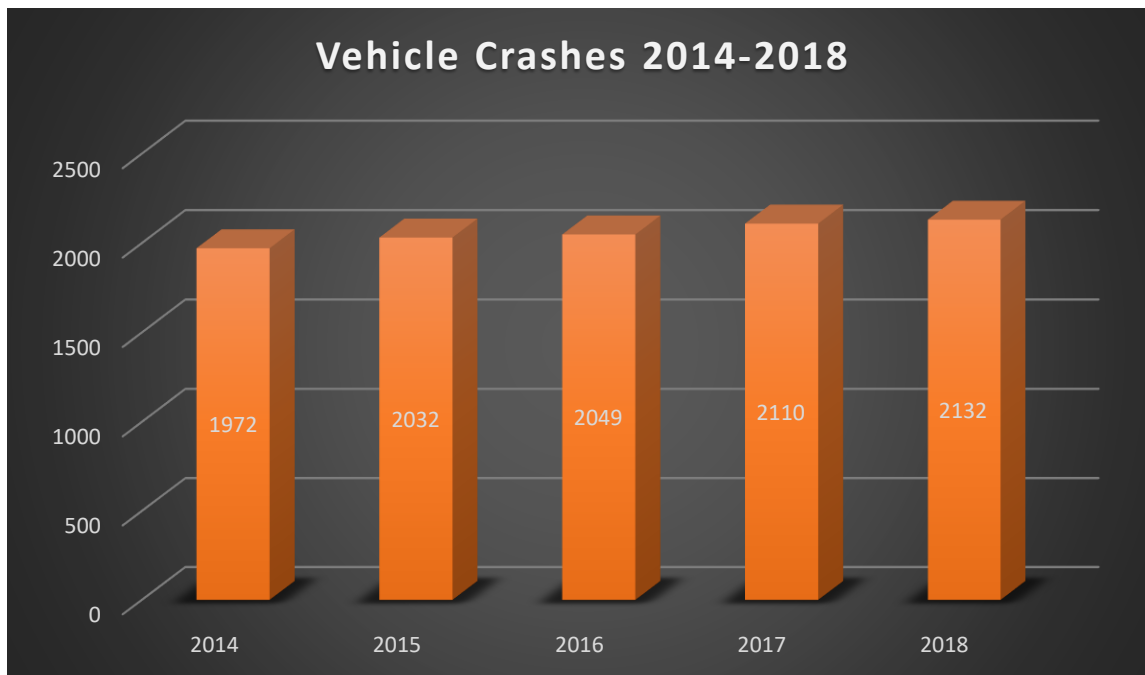
After seeing a five year high for Burglaries in 2017 (136), we are pleased to see that number decrease in 2018 by 27% (37) to a new five year low of 99. We plan on continuing our current strategy of additional and targeted patrols as well as homeowner and business owner education of the best ways to secure and protect their property.



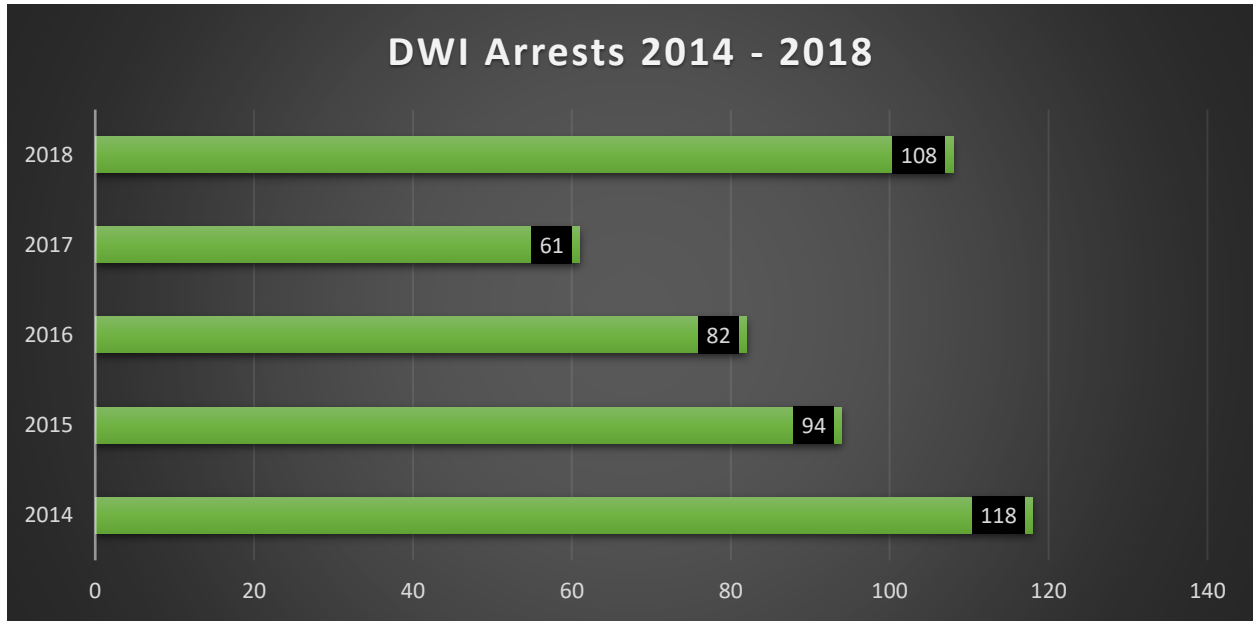
There were 287 vehicles reported burglarized in 2018. Although that was a 17% reduction from 2017 (346), 44% (127) of those vehicles were left unlocked or unsecured by the victim. We feel that the continued promotion and education of our Hide, Lock, Take campaign, along with data driven strategies will hopefully continue to decrease these numbers.



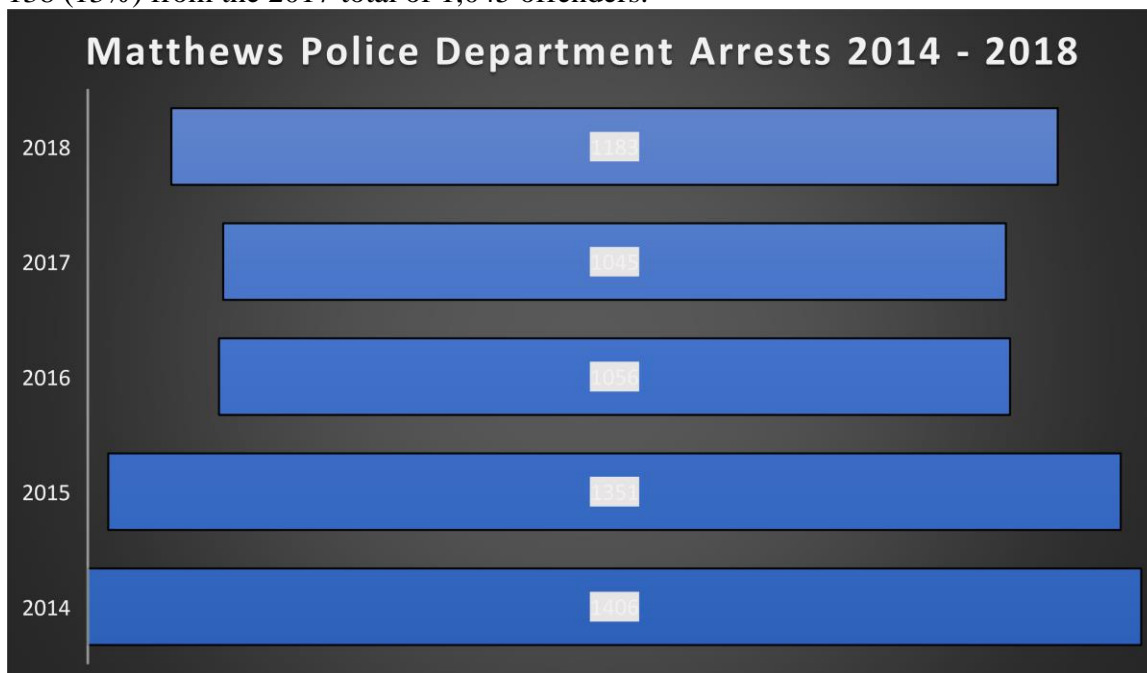
There was a total of 2,132 traffic crashes in 2018 which was an increase of 22 (1%) from the 2017 total of 2,110. As our area continues to grow, which brings more traffic congestion, Matthews Police officers are highly focused on a data analysis driven strategy to continue to combat these numbers. Patrol Division Officers are continuing to increase their traffic enforcement in targeted areas in an attempt to have a positive impact on this issue. The areas targeted using this technique determine through data analysis when these crashes are most occurring, the most common locations and under what conditions. During 2014 – 2017, there was an average increase of 46 crashes each year, so by cutting that increase by 52% this past year (22), we are encouraged that these efforts are slowing that trend with a goal by next year of showing an overall decrease.



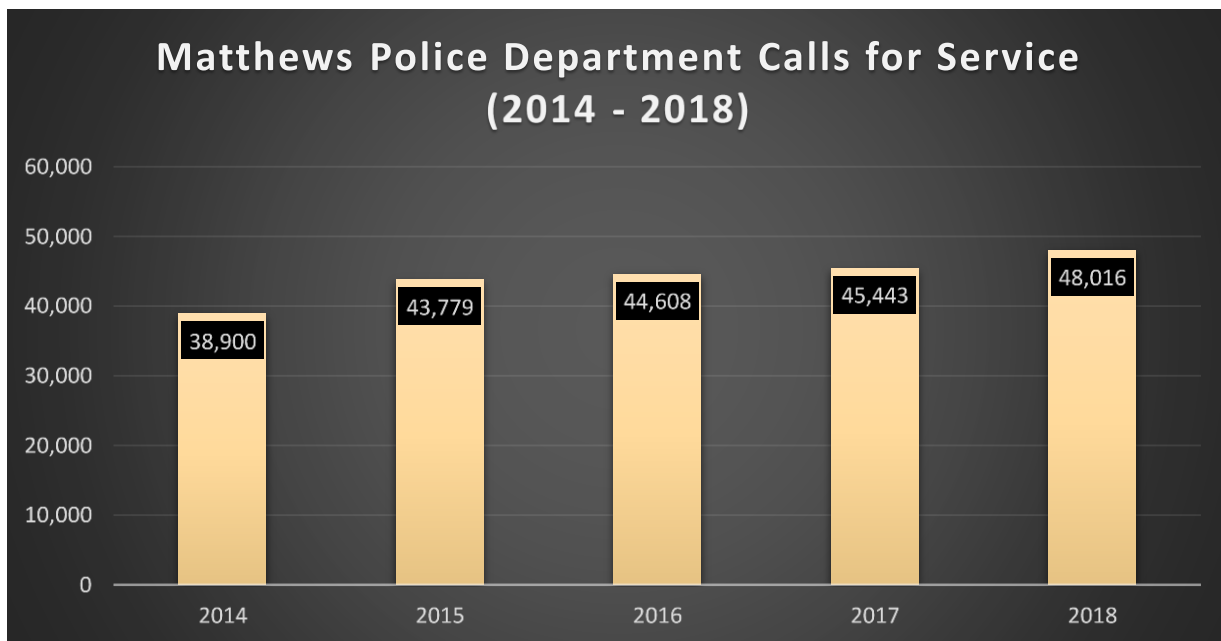
Our increased traffic enforcement has also shown to be impactful in DWI arrests which reached a four-year high during 2018. There were 108 DWI arrests which was an increase of 47 (77%) from the 2017 total of 61.



During 2018, the Matthews Police Department arrested 1,183 offenders which was an increase of 138 (13%) from the 2017 total of 1,045 offenders.



The Matthews Police Department initiated or responded to 48,016 calls for service during 2018. This was an increase of 2,573 (5%) calls from 2017. These totals cover calls for service requested by the public, as well as self-Initiated activities by officers. Self-Initiated is when officers observe an issue themselves and react to resolve it which demonstrates our problem solving and community-based policing model.



Chief Clark A. Pennington commends the outstanding men and women of the Matthews Police Department, both civilian and sworn, for their continued commitment and dedication to Matthews. Chief Pennington stated, “I’m very thankful to serve as your Police Chief in a community of such supportive citizens. In just my first year as Chief, I have personally experienced what a special place this really is and what a unique relationship our police department is so fortunate to possess with its citizens. Although there are still some areas that we are focusing on for improvement, we are pleased with the overall 2% reduction in Group A offenses. The Matthews Police Department is committed to maintaining a safe community by using every tool at its disposal which includes, advancing department technology, additional officer training and utilizing data analysis which will then lead to the implementation of data driven strategies. This is not only to combat crime, but to prevent crime from occurring in the first place. We must do this all while continuing to build positive relationships through community engagement. The vital component for this to be achieved is a communicative partnership between police, citizens, business owners and visitors of Matthews.”