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# WASHINGTON COUNTY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

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2012 ANNUAL REPORT



Washington County Attorney's Office  
Law Enforcement Center  
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*Inside this report:*

<b>Contents</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Veterans Program</b>	
<b>Message from the County Attorney</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Administrative Division</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Civil Division</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Criminal Division</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Juvenile Division</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Training</b>	<b>8-9</b>
<b>Community Outreach</b>	<b>10-11</b>
<b>Staff Events Recognition</b>	<b>12-13</b>
<b>Cases by Crime Type Charts</b>	<b>14-15</b>

## Veterans Program



### Veterans Program Announcement—January 30, 2012

In February of 2012, the office began to collaborate with the Veterans Administration, Community Corrections, Community Services and the Courts to deliver needed outreach services to returning combat veterans that have become involved in the criminal justice system. The Veteran's Diversion Program gives pay to the fact that good people go to war for their country and are changed for the worse by the experience. When they return home, they sometimes act out putting them at odds with the law. The Program is crafted in a way to get these veterans help and to keep their "records clean" a critical outcome where unemployment for veterans already approached 25 percent. The inaugural year saw about a half dozen persons enter the program. Community acceptance of the program is tremendous and interest is shown by other counties in instituting their own programs modeled after ours.

## *Message from the County Attorney....*



Welcome to the Washington County Attorney's Office's annual report for 2012. I thank you for your interest in my office's work and I am confident that the achievements of my office's attorneys and staff in 2012 will impress you as much as they have me. Along with our partners in law enforcement and the communities throughout Washington County, the County Attorney's Office has accomplished a great deal to enhance public safety.

In the past two years the Washington County Attorney's office has redefined its mission to better protect our citizens and serve our county by instituting a number of initiatives that have proven to be highly successful. We have turned our focus on three areas. The first is our determination and intense focus on violent crime. The second is a commitment to helping crime victims to recover from crimes and to attain a feeling of justice as well as to avoid becoming victims again. The third focus is in our efforts to decrease crime by allocating our resources into areas that we know from significant research, can achieve success.

This 2012 Annual Report represents a snapshot of the work that our office does every day on behalf of the citizens of Washington County. It highlights just some of the many accomplishments coming from the work of our dedicated team of prosecutors and staff who seek justice in our courtrooms and communities.

I remain deeply grateful for the opportunity to serve as the Washington County Attorney and look forward to working with you and our communities to make a difference in the quality of life for all citizens of Washington County.





Brent Wartner  
First Assistant

**County Attorney**

Pete Orput

**First Assistant**

Brent Wartner

**Administrative  
Services Manager**

Barbara Nelson

**Executive Assistant**

Cathy Rochel

**Attorney**

Rick Hodsdon

**Office Support II**

Lisa Brysky

## Administrative Division

### Overview

The administrative division, under the leadership of the County Attorney, supports the public safety mission of the office by providing a full range of support services including community outreach, law enforcement support, media relations, grant and program oversight, and special projects. The administrative staff must be resilient and respond to emergent needs in a quick and flexible manner to enable all employees to perform at the highest levels possible.

### Programs and Partnerships

- **East Metro Crime Coalition**

In 2012, our office collaborated with Dakota and Ramsey counties to announce the formation of the East Metro Crime Prevention Coalition, which is a unique multi-jurisdictional initiative to unify and share crime prevention strategies and resources to achieve better outcomes for our community.

- **Education Forum on Prescription Drug Abuse**

On February 28, 2012 at the Dakota Lodge in West St. Paul. Attendees included: school staff, law enforcement, treatment professionals, pharmacists, medical providers, criminal justice agencies, and public health officials.







### **Civil Division Chief**

George Kuprian

### **Attorneys**

Mike Hutchinson

Linda Krafthefer

Maura Shuttleworth

Sue Steffen Tice

Jim Zuleger

### **Paralegals**

Deb Peterson

Nancy Tavernier

Char Trende

### **Legal Assistants**

Vicky Krawczeski

Tammy Harrison-Hiben

Ashly Bechhold

## **Civil Division**

### **Overview**

The civil division is headed by George Kuprian, who has worked in the division for over 25 years. The civil division provides legal representation, advice and direction to the County Board and other county departments. The civil division's duties include review of contracts, civil commitments, guardianships, conservatorships, child support enforcement, paternity, regulatory enforcement, condemnations, land use, administrative appeals, forfeitures, real estate tax appeals and the rendering of opinions. In addition the civil division represents the county in lawsuits.

### **Programs and Partnerships in 2012**

- **Resource Recovery Project**

The civil division worked with the RRP to negotiate a 3 year, \$24 million contract to process garbage into fuel.

- **Environmental Enforcement Unit**

The civil division partnered with Public Health to collaborate on the development of best practices for the enforcement of environmental protection laws.

- **Community Services and Child Support Payments**

In order to be good stewards of Washington County tax dollars, the civil division continued partnering with Community Services in pursuit of Title IV-D child support payments - realizing \$6.83 collected for every dollar spent, far outpacing the state average.





**Criminal Division  
Chief**

Fred Fink

**Attorneys**

Imran Ali  
Pete Johnson  
Kari Lindstrom  
Karin McCarthy  
Jessica Stott  
Tom Wedes  
Siv Yurichuk

**Supervisor**

Teri Kelly

**Legal Assistants**

Pam Hughes  
Alissa Leibfried  
Jean Mersch  
Theresa Redman  
Erica Sullivan  
Aly Wojcik

## Criminal Division

### Overview

The criminal division is led by Division Chief Fred Fink who has over 38 years of prosecution experience. The division is responsible for the prosecution of all felonies committed in the county as well as misdemeanors in designated municipalities. The division also consists of the victim witness unit whose goal is to provide victims and witnesses of crime supportive services and an understanding of the criminal justice system.

### Programs and Partnerships

Since 2011, vast changes have taken place in the philosophy and manner in which cases have been handled. This can be broken down into three (3) major areas:

- Charging - the average time between a case file entering the office system and a charging decision being made decreased from over 30 days to just 7 days.
- Case emphasis - focus of efforts on preparing violent offenses, career offenders, and complex prosecutions for trial has resulted in the quadrupling of jury trials.
- Investigative phase - in certain cases our prosecutors do not wait for the finished investigative product to arrive and instead assist investigators in the investigative phase to put a solid case together.

**Victim/Witness  
Coordinators**

Steve Despiegelaere  
Deb Smith  
Christine VonDeLinde  
Mary Waldkirch





**Juvenile Division  
Chief**

Tony Zdroik

**Attorneys**

Rick Allen

Sue Harris

Erin Johnson

Mary Pieper

**Legal Assistants**

Sherry Hillman

Teri Selden

## Juvenile Division

### Overview

The juvenile division, led by Division Chief Tony Zdroik, prosecutes all juvenile criminal cases in Washington County. In the most serious cases, the division will move to certify juveniles who commit violent crimes to adult court if warranted. The division also provides legal representation to Community Services on child protection matters. Those cases involve children in Washington County who have been abused or neglected by their parents or legal guardian.

### Programs and Partnerships in 2012

- **Truancy Initiative**

In February, the Attendance Intervention Meeting [AIM] was started. Staff collaborate with the school district to hold monthly meetings with students who are having truancy issues and their parents. Those in attendance are provided a presentation about the legal requirements of school attendance and the impact school failure and dropping out has on the student and society.

- **Charging Turnaround Time**

On the juvenile prosecution side of the caseload, the overall turnaround time for charging decisions decreased from 7.6 days to 6.2 days.

- **Juvenile Prosecution Declination Letters**

The number of cases declined for prosecution showed a sharp decrease. In 2009, the division declined prosecution on 247 cases referred by law enforcement. That number was reduced to 178 in 2010 and continued its decline to 118 cases for 2011 and 2012.



## Police Training

After surveying law enforcement for their needs, this office made significant efforts to provide specialized training to local police agencies and our sheriff's office. We instituted quarterly police training, which typically involved a three hour day class and three hour evening class in order to make the training available to all shifts. The value of providing police training to law enforcement agencies can be measured in the quality of the cases presented to our office for prosecution. Additionally, it serves to strengthen our relationships with all of the law enforcement departments and their individual officers.

Classes have included

*Rules of Evidence,  
Courtroom Testimony for law enforcement;  
Warrantless Search and Seizure of Evidence;  
Investigating and Prosecuting Domestic Abuse Cases;  
Dealing with Digital Evidence;  
Administrative Forfeitures;  
Prescription Drug Abuse; Gun Laws; and  
Motor Vehicle Stops and Occupant Detentions.*

In 2012, this office provided 38 hours of police training to a total of over 600 police officer attendees and was certified as an accredited sponsor for the Minnesota Board of Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST).



Pete Orput, Mark Lanterman and Sheriff Bill Hutton



## Community Training

This office has also made significant efforts in providing crime prevention information to senior citizens and other community groups in order to respond to increases in crimes against seniors and others. Prosecutors provide classes to community groups educating them on ways to keep from becoming victims of crime and to provide them with tools to protect their families. Groups visited included: Lions Club, Yellow Ribbon groups, MADD, Community Thread, rotary groups, seniors, chambers of commerce, students and citizens.

Presentation at  
Community Thread  
on September 27, 2012



## Programs

United States Senator Amy Klobuchar was at Washington County for a domestic violence roundtable discussion hosted by the Washington County Attorney's Office. The domestic abuse roundtable focused on the Lethality Assessment Protocol (LAP), an innovative program in use by all of Washington County law enforcement agencies. Participants in the roundtable along with Sen. Klobuchar and County Attorney Pete Orput were Washington County District Judge Elizabeth Martin, Washington County Sheriff Bill Hutton, Oakdale Police Chief Bill Sullivan, Assistant County Attorney Karin McCarthy, Nicky Gillett, Director of Legal Services for Tubman Family Alliance, Washington County Community Corrections Director Tom Adkins and Deputy Director Sandra Hahn.



## Community Outreach

*Involvement in community events and activities is important to us.*

### Spring Into Service

On May 5, 2012 many Washington County Attorney's office volunteers participated in Community Thread's "Spring Into Service" event. Volunteers helped garden, clean and do other work at the Peace House in Stillwater.



### Night to Unite

Staff members participated in events at a dozen communities in Washington County for "Night to Unite" events on August 7, 2012.



## Community Outreach

### Washington County Fair

Many staff members volunteered to work at our county fair booth and helped with the senior day activities at the fair. Staff enjoyed meeting people who stopped at our booth and telling them about our office. Students (K-12) signed a pledge to commit to graduate from high school and were entered into a drawing to win a class ring donated by Jostens and an iPad donated by Sam's Club.



Winner of class ring donated by Jostens at Mahtomedi High School.

Winner of iPad donated by Sam's Club at Woodbury High School.





## Staff Events

### Fundraising

For the second year, staff participated in the “April Showers” fundraiser for the Tubman Center. Thanks to the generosity of Washington County staff and friends, the second annual Washington County Attorney’s Office fundraising drive collected many baby and infant items (value over \$400) and cash donations. Staff members have participated in many other community projects including: summer food drive, holiday food drive, gifts for the troops and others. As part of Washington County’s charitable giving fund drive staff participated in many activities to raise money for charities.



Staff with April Showers donations



Committee tallying proceeds from Charitable Giving Fund Drive



Staff with Summer Food Drive donations



## Staff Recognition

Recognition and appreciation of staff is important to us. Acknowledgment is given for service awards, retirements, new staff, trial victories, hard work on cases and other accomplishments. Other events held include dog days of summer employee appreciation picnic lunch hosted by management, family picnic after work, Administrative Professionals luncheon, Bosses' Day luncheon, Halloween party, Christmas party and activities.



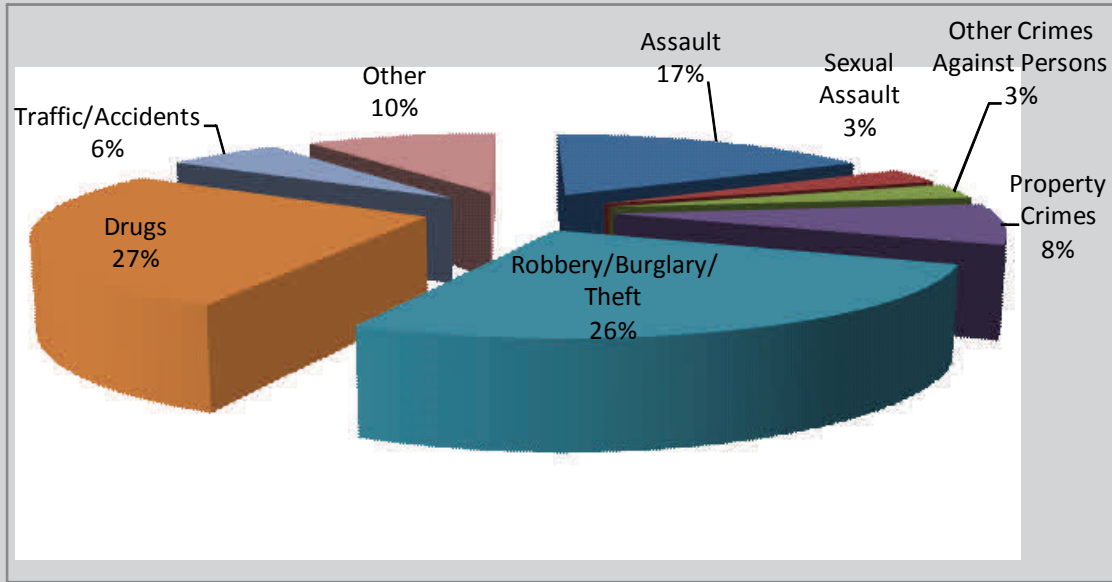
Professional staff bought lunch for support staff at the annual Administrative Professionals Luncheon

### Criminal Heavy Hitters

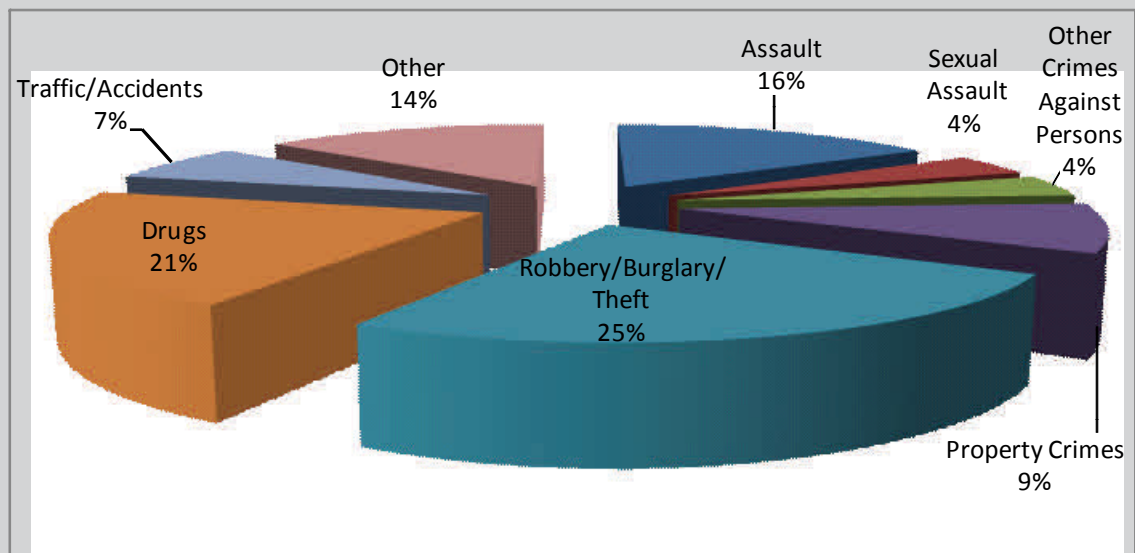


## Adult Cases by Crime Type

2012

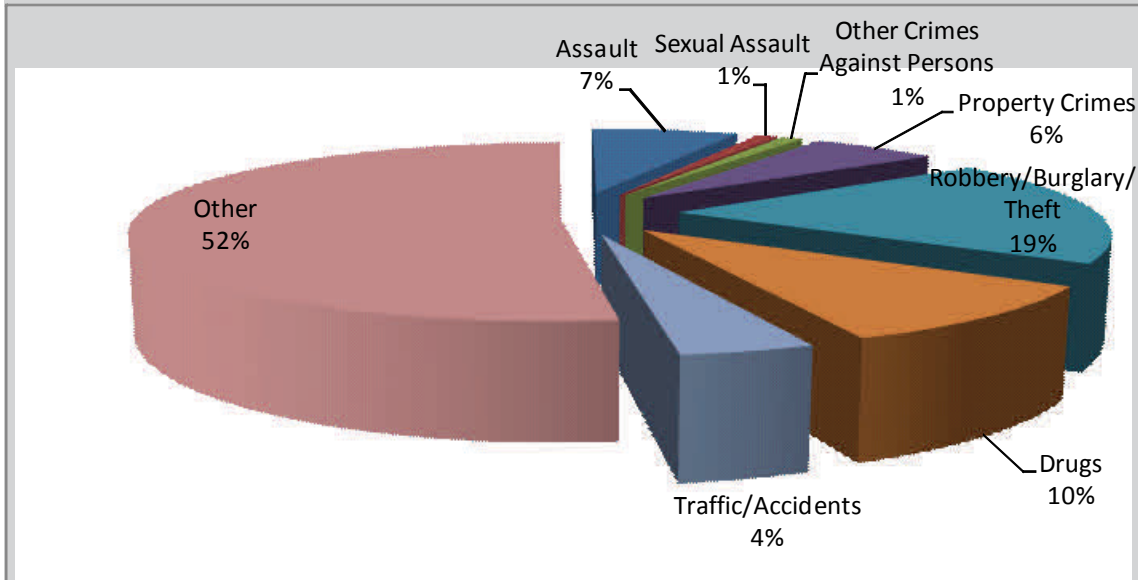


2011

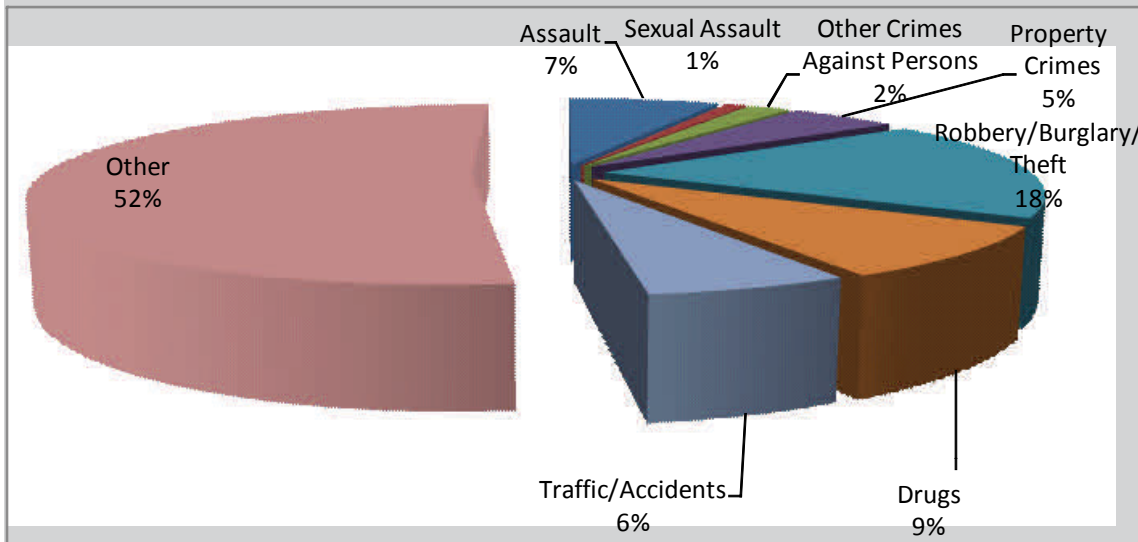


## Juvenile Cases by Crime Type

2012



2011



## New Staff 2012



### **MISSION**

*We promote justice and public safety through vigorously prosecuting crime, protecting those in need and providing quality legal representation for Washington County.*

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