

## For the Week of May 16, 2022

### Manager's Message

Aaron Frank, Town Manager

This week we join the nation in honoring three departments: Rescue, Police, and Public Works. Read below to hear from our Rescue and Police Chiefs and DPW Director as we recognize and thank all the individuals and volunteers who together provide these crucial services to the community!



### EMS Week 2022: "EMS: Rising to the Challenge."

A message from Chief Scott Crady and Assistant Chief Becky Alemy, Colchester Rescue

Your Colchester Rescue providers rise to the everyday challenge that is pre-hospital medicine. There is no "typical" day in Emergency Medical Services (EMS). EMS incidents can be categorized into a few broad categories such as traumatic injury, medical, behavioral, and unknown, just to name a few. Each of these categories have a long list of unique situations the patient will present with that the provider is challenged to recognize, assess, provide the proper treatment and transport to the hospital. Other challenges providers are presented with are driving in heavy traffic with lights and sirens, working in hazardous roadways, working in inclement weather, facing aggressive house hold animals, navigating emotional family members, and moving patients throughout the house into the ambulance.

It takes EMS providers hundreds of incidents and patient contacts to gain the experience needed to become proficient with recognizing and overcoming all of the challenges being presented at each incident.

Colchester Rescue providers continually take a proactive team approach in preparing for and meeting these challenges. Members of Colchester Rescue prepare for EMS incidents individually and at the crew level through cognitive training, skills practice, and after-action critiques. With a variety of experience staffing our ambulance, from years to only days, each provider knows that it is with a team approach, pulling from each provider's experiences and knowledge, that our patients can receive the best care. Colchester Rescue providers pride themselves with learning from each other in our success and areas of improvement.

This year, the EMS Week theme is "Rise to the Challenge;" Colchester Rescue providers have proven throughout the last two years of this pandemic they are open to learn new things and accept the many grueling challenges being thrown at them on every incident. With this year's theme, our providers continue to challenge themselves with being prepared for the next incident that will undoubtedly introduce a new challenge.

The administration of the Town of Colchester and Colchester Rescue could not be prouder of how each of these providers, regardless of being a volunteer, part-time or full-time employee, continue to educate themselves to provide quality, compassionate care to the patients they serve.

**Want the chance to meet and greet your community EMS providers and Technical Rescue members? THE STATION OPEN HOUSE IS BACK!**

**On Wednesday, May 18th from 6-8pm** please join Colchester Rescue and Colchester Technical Rescue for station tours, ambulance tours, technical rescue truck tours, informational tables, and activities for kids!

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**National Police Week: Week of May 15<sup>th</sup>**

A message from Chief Allen, Colchester Police Department

In 1962, President John F. Kennedy proclaimed May 15<sup>th</sup> as National Police Memorial Day and the calendar week in which it falls as National Police Week. Established by a joint resolution of Congress in 1962, National Police Week pays special recognition to those law enforcement officers who have lost their lives in the line of duty for the safety and protection of others.



In 2022, 619 new names of fallen heroes are being added to the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial this spring, including 472 officers killed in 2021 and 147 officers killed in previous years. Over 23,000 names of fallen law enforcement officers are engraved at the memorial including 25 from the state of Vermont.

At Colchester Police Department, we honor our fallen brothers and sisters by wearing mourning covers on our badges and fly a National Law Enforcement Memorial flag during National Police Week.

Additionally, we encourage you to read the interview below to learn about how your Town police department serves the community each and every day!



**National Public Works Week 2022: “Ready and Resilient”**

A message from Director Bryan Osborne, Department of Public Works

The year 2022 marks the 62<sup>nd</sup> annual National Public Works Week sponsored by the American Public Works Association/Canadian Public Works Association.

Public works professionals focus on infrastructure, facilities, emergency management, and services that are of vital importance to sustainable and resilient communities and the public health, high quality of life, and well-being of the people of Colchester, Vermont. These infrastructures, facilities, and services could not be provided without the dedicated efforts of public works professionals, who are often first responders, working as engineers, managers, and highly trained maintenance staff, who are responsible for rebuilding, improving, and

protecting our Town's transportation systems, stormwater, wastewater, public buildings, municipal equipment, and other essential infrastructure for our citizens.

It is in the public interest for the citizens, civic leaders, and children in Colchester to gain knowledge and maintain ongoing interest and understanding of the importance of public works first responders and public works programs in their respective communities. We encourage all citizens to pay tribute to our public works professionals, engineers, managers, and employees and to recognize the substantial contributions they make to protecting our health, safety, and quality of life.

To all our public works professionals—thank you!

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## Town News Interviews

### Always Expecting the Unexpected

*An interview with Douglas Allen, Chief of the Colchester Police Department  
by Alicia Tebeau-Sherry, Town Manager's Office, Communications Coordinator*

*I met with Colchester Police Chief, Douglas Allen at the Colchester Police Station to tour the station and to learn about CPD's mission statement, the remarkable relationship they've maintained with the community, and how they are training Colchester Police's future leaders.*

**ATS: To familiarize others about you and the Colchester Police Department, can you tell me a little bit about what you and the Police Department do for the Town of Colchester?**

DA: We are essentially a reflection of the community—we cannot do our job without the support of the citizens of the Town. Like all police agencies in this country, we receive our authority from those whom we protect. We are selected to enforce laws and protect people, especially those at their most vulnerable times, and our mission statement is that we are here to improve the quality



of life for those who live, work, or recreate in Colchester. One may generally think about the Police Department as having two parts. The first is protection, as we're here to protect and enforce laws that essentially protect people. The second is to help the community in any way we can, or the "to serve" part of the equation. We also do what we can to connect people with the resources they may need that the police department can't provide.

**ATS: What might the Colchester community not know about your department and what it offers?**

DA: In the last five years, we have made a strong connection with the Howard Center. We have a program called the Community Outreach Program where community outreach workers work side-by-side with us to help provide services to individuals we encounter who need it. Police are often the first contact for people in need—we are available 24/7, 365 days a year, so if somebody needs something in the middle of the night, on a weekend, or on a holiday, they call

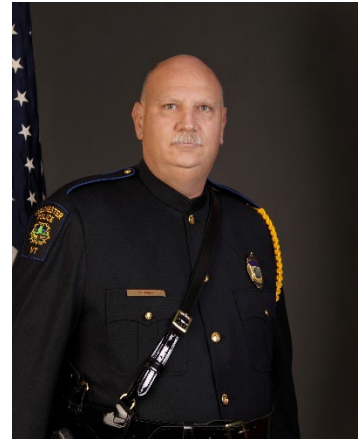
the police. We work to try to connect those folks with our outreach workers when we see that they need that type of assistance. So, it wouldn't be a surprise to someone to learn the police deal with people who have a substance abuse disorder, but it's how we deal with them that may be a surprise. When looking at the number of people we contact that have a substance abuse disorder, the number of those criminally charged is very small compared to the number we try to connect to services to help them fight that disorder. That may be something people don't realize—we do much more searching to solve the problem than we do in a more traditional, strictly-enforcement style sense.

**ATS: When and how did you start working for the Town of Colchester?**

DA: I started in January 1984, after working for three years at my hometown police department in southern Vermont after graduating college in 1981. My then fiancé and now wife was working up in this area, so this was a part of Vermont I wanted to come to. I was fortunate enough to be hired by Chief Kirker and I've been here ever since.

**ATS: And you've enjoyed it?**

DA: I have enjoyed it. I enjoy the community. In fact, there are officers who enjoy living in the community they are policing and I am one of them, but that is not for everybody. We talk to our new people about this because one may not want to be approached by someone they've encountered out in public after a stressful day at the job. But I've worked 20 years with Colchester Rescue, I've been a volunteer in the community for quite some time, and I've raised two daughters here—I live here and enjoy the community I work in.



**ATS: What does a typical day in the Colchester Police Department look like?**

DA: Well we say there is no typical day. We try to emphasize that to our officers, to not get into an expected routine. Police work is always the unexpected. We try to train our officers to be prepared for that expectation. It also really depends on what an officer's assignment is in the department—we have many, many roles. For a patrol officer, it is very much how the calls come in or what they observe on patrol. For our school resource officers, it's completely different—they will see a variety of issues during their day, but they are primarily in the school systems as a resource for students, school faculty and staff, and parents. Our detectives are working on a lot of follow-up investigations and financial crimes, and so they view things a little differently too. We are all certified to serve our community, but to different degrees and levels.



*Cpl Christian Mellen preparing for bike patrol*

**ATS: So, how many positions or roles are there?**

DA: In patrol alone, we have officers that could be assigned to youth services positions, marine officer in the summer, K-9 officer, and more. Our detectives also have different roles—

general investigators in our office have time to follow-up on cases, as opposed to patrol staff who are going call to call, and we have one investigator at the Chittenden Unit for Special Investigations. We also have sergeants who are mid-line supervisors managing individual shifts, and our administrators, myself as the chief, a deputy chief, and two lieutenants, each in charge of a division of the department. Our Operations Commander is in charge of our patrol staff, school personnel and Marine Unit. The Support Lieutenant oversees our investigation unit, communications and training, either in communications or operations of the detective and patrol side. In patrol, we have a variety of methods for officers to perform their duties including bicycles and a motorcycle.



*Officers Crawford (L) and Sturgis on graduation day from the Vermont Police Academy*

**ATS: And what does the training look like, specifically for officers here at the department?**

DA: We actually just had four officers graduate from the VT Police Academy! When they're hired by us, they go through a two-week general introduction of what we're all about, and then they go to the Academy for a 16-week residential program. It's a rigorous program of academics and physical training. But that's just the beginning—they come back to us and they're assigned to their field training officer. We have certified field training officers that will work with them daily for about four months. Ultimately, they'll go through four phases of training where the goal at the



*CPD Honor Guard (back to front) Cpl Jaime Bressler, Cpl Jeremy Wyskiel, Officer Elizabeth Fell*

end of the time period is that they'll become solo officers—officers ready to go out and work on their own. But the training doesn't stop there, we have a minimum number of training hours that we're required to attend on a yearly basis in all kinds of disciplines from domestic violence, fair and impartial policing, how to deal with mental health, use of force, firearms, to CPR and first aid, and more. Those hours have to be accumulated on an annual or bi-annual basis, and we have to report all those hours to the State of Vermont to maintain our certification. Training is a very important piece of what we do here.

**ATS: What types of projects has your department been working on?**

DA: A long time goal that has spanned over the past several years is one we just were able to implement – the purchase and use of body-worn cameras. We have purchased equipment and invested in this program, which includes hardware, software, storage of data, a sizable amount of training, and the management of it all. Once you have the equipment, most aspects of its use are public record, and people want it for various reason, so we have to have someone go through it to make sure what is being released is correct. There are privacy issues as well

because if there are bystanders to an incident that an officer is recording on their camera, their image and identification would have to be redacted out of what's released, so someone has to do that too. Our staff has been using the cameras now for about three weeks and so far, it's going well.

**ATS: What are you most proud of that the Colchester Police Department has done or completed?**

DA: That's a hard one—we are very fortunate to have a remarkable relationship with our community. And we see this relationship—as Chief I see that reflected by the notes I get and by the comments of the support I get from the Selectboard and the Town Manager. COVID was difficult for everyone, yet we had remarkable outreach from our community—people came to us and brought us things like masks and notes of encouragement. We've been really fortunate, and we have worked and



continue to develop that kind of relationship. Our focus has always been, as long as I've been here, on the community and how we try not to just go and answer a call, but go and solve a problem, working to find unique approaches to situations. Our approach might not be a traditional scenario where we write someone a ticket, and instead, we ask how are we going to solve the problem and what resources can we offer. For example, recently in the news we had a situation where we had horses that were not being cared for. A traditional approach would be to seize the horses and send the person to court, but it became clear to us early on that the person was in a situation that was not under their control, so instead we worked with the owner and with other resources to try and make that the best situation we could. So, it's that kind of work we do with the community that I'm most proud of. Is everyone always happy with Colchester Police, no, and do our members sometimes make mistakes, yes, but we work to correct and minimize those mistakes and try to be as open and transparent about them with our Town.

**ATS: How do the employees of your department work together to complete projects and services?**

DA: Just today, the detectives, the patrol staff and the lieutenants have spent a lot of time on an investigation that if they had stayed in their "silos," so to speak, it would not have ended as well. So, we do encourage those parts of the department to work together. For another example, if our youth services officers are doing something at the schools, other officers will go in and help with that. And in that horse investigation, we had an officer who was well-versed in horses, so we added her expertise to the effort. It's that type of cooperation we frequently encourage and see in our department.



*Colchester Police Boat*

**ATS: How was the Colchester Police Department impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic?**

DA: It was difficult for everyone, and like everyone else, we had to reduce and furlough some of our staff. We also found ourselves in a very unique position, put there by no one in particular, but all of the sudden we became the COVID compliance police. We had to visit businesses and make sure they were closed at certain times and that signs about masking were up, but we do what we're asked to do and we got through it. We've also been fortunate how we've weathered the illness as well as could be expected here—we didn't have mass outages at any one time. That was our main concern, not being able to staff shifts, and yes, certainly we had our share of COVID positive cases, but it was gradual and there was a lot of adjusting along the way.



*Cpl K9 Patrol Officer David Dewey*

**ATS: So, you talked about the body cameras, what else can we expect to hear about coming up in the future for your department?**

DA: At the moment we are focused on recruiting, retaining, and training our officers. We've had a long stretch of being understaffed, so we are looking forward to getting our staffing back up. We recognize, however, that we have a very experienced group of officers and retirements are going to make our recruiting efforts very important in the near future. That's something many places are seeing in the workforce right now, so I don't think we're any different. We know and recognize that in the next 18-20 months there will be significant turnover, so we are continually preparing for that. We are working on getting people trained to be our next generation of leaders, so that's what we're looking forward to right now, building toward that future.

**ATS: How can the community keep up Colchester PD? How can they get involved?**



*Communications Specialist Tierra Myers in the CPD Dispatch Center*

DA: We use Facebook and Instagram, and we deliver meals to seniors and check car seats, both to provide a service but also to connect with the community. We also hold open houses for the entire community, reach out to groups of new Americans and contribute to the Town newsletter. People can always come visit too. Additionally, our webpage on the Town website includes a lot of content and information about our services. If people are interested in getting involved, we have several outreach programs, like our "Hello, How Are You?" program where we call seniors who have limited contact with folks and check in on them every morning. If someone wanted to become involved with that, they could call the station at 802-264-5556 and we could get them signed up to help out.

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## Upcoming Town Meetings

**Selectboard:** Tuesday, May 24th, 6:30 pm at the Colchester Town Offices, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Outer Bay Conference Room, 781 Blakely Road. Residents are welcome to attend the meeting or alternatively send a note, up to 1,000 words, to [TownManager@colchestervt.gov](mailto:TownManager@colchestervt.gov) with “Citizens to be Heard” in the Subject and their name and address in the body of the email. The email will be shared with the entire Selectboard prior to the meeting and included in the information packet at the next meeting (as the information packet for the current meeting is sent out along with the agenda).

- Watch the Meeting Online via Live Stream: <http://lcatv.org/live-stream-2>
- Agenda: [www.bit.ly/Colchester-SB-Agendas](http://www.bit.ly/Colchester-SB-Agendas)

**Planning Commission:** Tuesday, May 17<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 pm, at the Colchester Town Offices, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Outer Bay Conference Room, 781 Blakely Road

**Library Board of Trustees:** Thursday, May 19th, 4:30 pm in the Burnham Room of the Burnham Memorial Library.

**Conservation Commission:** Thursday, May 26 at 5:30 pm on Blakely Road across from the schools. There will be a brief meeting, and then the Commission will plant annuals in the two traffic islands at the Malletts Bay Ave/Blakely Road intersection.

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For more information or to comment, call 802-264-5509 or email [townmanager@colchestervt.gov](mailto:townmanager@colchestervt.gov)