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Crime: Shoplifting has risen in Warrenton

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A request seeking comment from Walmart was not successful.

The police chief's annual report, which was presented to the City Commission on Tuesday, showed a 58 percent increase in arrests and criminal citations last year over the previous year. Warrenton made 1,731 arrests in 2018 and 1,098 in 2017.

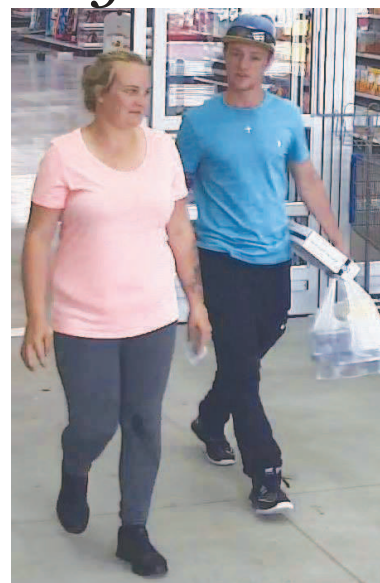
"This increase was aided by being full-staffed for half of the year and the increased activity from Walmart," the report states.

Overall, calls for service rose 26 percent to 9,986 in 2018 versus 7,982 in 2017.

Traffic stops were up 48 percent.

"The increase in traffic events had a direct relation to being full-staffed for the first half of the year," according to the report. "More officers mean more proactive enforcement stats like traffic stops, DUIs, and more time to do proactive activity."

In 2017, the department began a concerted effort to stop impaired driving and that effort continued into 2018. There were 55 arrests last year for driving under the influence of intoxicants, a 6 percent increase from 2017,



Walmart's high-tech surveillance equipment helped police catch these two identity theft suspects last year.

but a huge jump from 2015, when Warrenton's officers made just 14 DUII arrests.

Narcotics-related crimes were up 37 percent, from 79 in 2017 to 108 last year.

"K9 Gabe and his partner's work helps with this stat," Workman wrote.

Property crimes, which include burglary, larceny, arson, shoplifting and vandalism, rose 32 percent last year, from 902 to 1,187.

The increase was due to calls in the second half of the year after Walmart opened

and an increase in crime calls involving homeless people, according to the report.

"Any time you grow as a city population-wise and business-wise, your crime statistics will go up," Workman told the City Commission. "It's not that there's more crime. There are more targets. We have homelessness, a transient population, gypsies panhandling. There's even a group out of Washington state that stages women and children at intersections."

There was a spot of good news in the police report. Mid-year, Oregon Department of Transportation improved the Ensign Lane intersection on Highway 101, eliminating left turns without a dedicated green light.

"We've had no major accidents -- none in the last few months -- after removing the flashing yellow sign at Ensign," the chief said.

Levees:

Continued from Page 1

"They just had done Pendleton's system of levees and found 30 points of discrepancy," Kujala said. "We had 300. It's certainly a more complicated system than most."

Regardless, Warrenton's dikes and levees are expected to remain "minimally acceptable," he said.

City Engineer Collin Stelzig is working with utility and property owners to manage or remove encroachments.

The Oregon National Guard helped the city rehabilitate a section of levee that had settled, bringing it back to its original elevation. The city also has been working with Clatsop County Diking District No. 11, which is outside city limits but part of the flood protection system, in hopes of annexing it.

A formal report is expected in April with a final report from the Corps in September.

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