



Canine Unit Fact Sheet

What the Canine Unit Does on a Regular Basis

Our police dogs are used in the following specialized areas:

- **Tracking** – Dog uses keen sense of smell to detect human scent and ground disturbances.
- **Building/Open Area Searches** – This practice minimizes risk to officers and affords a suspect more incentive to surrender. The dog, with his olfactory and hearing senses, is capable of conducting a more thorough search in less time than even a large number of officers. The sound of the bark is often all it takes.
- **Crime Scene/Evidence Searches** – The dog is put to good use in areas such as heavy bush and tall grass and can point out objects that are foreign to the ground.
- **Criminal Apprehensions** – At times the Canine team may be called upon to apprehend and contain a fleeing suspect. At any point before the apprehension, if the suspect gives up, the canine can be recalled without apprehension.

The Canine Unit is also involved in enhancing foot patrol within our community by patrolling:

- Parks
- Walking Paths
- River Paths
- Industrial and Commercial Areas
- High Crime Areas within the Community

The K-9 unit participates in community presentations/demonstrations, youth education through our schools, and community education through our community partners. They also participate in police week and other community events such as the Torch Run for the Special Olympics.

Dos and Don'ts for Our Community Members:

What should and shouldn't you do if you encounter a Police Dog on duty?

- Please allow the Canine team to do their job; staying out of the way is probably the most helpful thing a citizen can do.
- You may encounter the Canine team tracking a suspect. It is normal to be curious, but walking around to get a better look can make the canine team's work more difficult.
- It is normal to be concerned, but stopping to ask the Canine team a question while they are working is not the best time. If you have concerns, pass that information onto the support officer with the Canine team.

- On the occasion that a suspect may be running by you and a Police Service Dog is hot on his trail, stand still as the dog will not pay as much attention to you.
- Approaching an unattended Canine vehicle and peeking in or teasing the Police Service Dog could cause aggressive behaviour to be displayed towards you.
- Always ask the handler's permission if you are interested in petting the Police Service Dog. Police dogs are not family pets; they are trained law enforcement tools and must be treated with respect for the work they must perform.
- DO talk to the Canine handler and ask as many questions as you wish when you see they are taking a break. Canine handlers love to talk about their dogs and are always interested in the concerns of the community.

Interesting Facts:

Here are a few things you may not have know about our Police Service Dogs (PSDs):

- A career highlight for Cst. Cheryl McMichan & PSD Magnum occurred on December 2nd, 2006 when they caught eight people in one day. PSD Magnum located two youths wanted for break enter and theft, and then went on to capture six armed robbers from a gas bar robbery that occurred at gunpoint in Guelph. They were recognized by their Canine peers and presented with the quarterly award for "directly aiding in a capture and arrest of criminals who were endangering the lives and property of the people of their community."
- Guelph Police Service's PSDs are General Patrol Dogs and all are German Shepherd dogs.
- Each handler's Police Dog comes to work with them everyday and also comes home with the handler and lives with them
- Canine teams are equipped with their own police cruisers.
- Our Canine unit works hand-in-hand with the Waterloo Regional Police Service and we assist when needed with our PSDs for canine-related calls in their region. They do the same for the Guelph Police Service.
- Canine teams work together for a minimum of five years.
- Once the PSD retires he lives out his remaining years with his handler.