



DODGE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Dale J Schmidt Sheriff Scott Smith Chief Deputy

Problem Oriented Policing

Have you ever had a reoccurring problem in your life and wondered why does this problem keep happening over and over again? In response to that reoccurring problem have you ever drilled down to identify what the root cause of that problem was and then worked to identify a long term solution?

Have you ever had a leaky roof that over and over again continues to leak? You may choose to simply patch the roof. If the leaks continue to spread and cause damage to not only the roof but things in your house as well, perhaps addressing the root cause would be replacement of the roof. By addressing the root cause, you eliminate the need for further repair for years to come. It may take a bit more work to re-roof the house, but in the long term it will save you time, money and resources. Many law enforcement issues can be compared to that leaky roof. It is reasonable to assume that if you take the time to get to the root cause of illegal or disruptive behavior and address it, that reoccurring problem will soon no longer be a long term problem.

For too long law enforcement agencies have been very reactive, searching for immediate and quick solutions to problems so they can move on to the next problem and do the same. Unfortunately, many times those short term solutions are so short term that the problem resurfaces again shortly after we leave. By staying with this reactive philosophy of law enforcement, our resources become taxed and our ability to address other problems become more and more difficult.

In the future, however, we at the sheriff's office plan to shift our focus and efforts to being more of a proactive law enforcement agency. It is our hope that we can begin searching for the root cause of issues that are reported to our agency. You may ask, how are we going to accomplish this organizational shift? The first thing we need to do is finish the implementation of our new records management system which goes live on December 11, 2017. That system, Spillman, will finally give us the ability to conduct analysis of crime statistics and our calls for service. While it will take time to collect adequate information for analysis, this analysis is something we hope to use in addressing our reoccurring problem areas.

During this data collection period, we are going to be searching for training opportunities and strategies to implement Problem Oriented Policing (POP). It is important to not reinvent the wheel while shifting our philosophy as there are many successful agencies who have implemented this type of initiative.

Recently while attending the National Sheriff's Institute in Colorado, I was able to network with a sheriff from Michigan and shared my vision for the future. He shared that he also implemented the same type of plan with a great deal of success, particularly in the rural area of his county. This was very encouraging as Dodge County is also primarily a rural county.

This will certainly not be an overnight change and will require work by not only by my staff but also the community. By working together we can develop effective response strategies in addressing the underlying problems of crime and other public safety challenges we face. It is our hope that by

addressing these root causes and underlying issues we can reduce crime, give the community increased peace of mind and increase the quality of life as we work to make Dodge County a safe and enjoyable place to live, work and visit.

Sheriff Dale J. Schmidt