



## Public Safety

### *Police, Fire and Emergency Medical Services*

Public safety is a key element in any comprehensive planning process. Development patterns can have a significant impact on the provision of police, fire and emergency medical services. Consider the number of minutes that may transpire between a telephone call to report a fire and the arrival of fire equipment at the site. Minutes can mean the difference between minor property damage and tragedy. The number of minutes of response time can be attributed to several factors, but such elements as traffic congestion, street pattern, density of development, and distance from the fire station to the site have a major, and sometimes detrimental, effect on response time.

This is one of the reasons why these services are considered as part of a comprehensive planning program. The decisions made approving subdivisions, rezoning land or expanding an urban service area, have long-lasting impacts to the provision and quality of these services. In fact, urban service areas in other parts of the country are determined, in part or in whole, by the ability of new development proposals to preserve predetermined levels of service for police, fire and other types of public safety services.

For the 2003 Comprehensive Plan Update, three types of public safety services have been inventoried and analyzed, including police, fire and emergency medical services. The following sections provide the results of this investigation.

### *Police Services*

Police protection for the residents of Versailles, Midway and Woodford County is provided by four agencies. Within the city limits of Versailles, the Versailles City Police Department provides 24-hour protection. In the unincorporated areas the County police, County Sheriff's Department and the

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State Highway Patrol, Post 12, provide services. The County is also served by an enhanced 911 system that helps to dispatch calls for service to the appropriate provider and to the correct address.

The Versailles Police Department employs thirty-one (31) full-time officers, clerical staff and telecommunication technicians, including the chief and the detectives. The County E911 Coordinator is also included as one of the 31 full-time staff members. The Versailles Police Department serves as the central answering point for E-911 dispatch services for the following agencies:

- The Versailles Police Department
- The Versailles Fire Department
- The Woodford County Police Department
- The Woodford County Sheriff's Department
- The Woodford County Emergency Medical Service
- The Woodford County Fire Department
- The Woodford County Animal Control
- The Midway Fire Department

During fiscal year 2001, Versailles Central Dispatch handled 35,544 calls for service.<sup>1</sup> The distribution of these calls to the various agencies referenced above is provided below.

<u>Agency</u>	<u>Number of Calls</u>		<u>% of Total Calls</u>	
	<u>1999</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>2001</u>
Versailles PD	13,781	13,185	40.82	37.00
Woodford Co. PD	16,178	16,829	47.92	47.00
Woodford Co. EMS	2,037	2,202	6.03	6.00
Versailles FD	225	584	0.67	1.00
Woodford Co. FD	269	273	0.80	0.83
Woodford Co. Sheriff	1,239	2,436	3.67	6.03
Midway FD	30	35	0.09	0.04
<b>Total Calls</b>	<b>33,758</b>	<b>35,544</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>

The data indicates a 5.3 percent increase in the number of calls for service over the two-year period, with the largest increase attributed to calls going to the Woodford County Sheriff's Office. A slight shift in calls between the city and county police departments is evident, but whether this is a trend based on population movement is not certain. Should Versailles annex additional lands within the Urban Service Boundary, the 1999-2001 shift may reverse.

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<sup>1</sup> Versailles Police Department Annual Report, 2001, page 5.

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Another method for establishing a level of service is by the number of calls per service per sworn officer. For the Versailles PD, the number of sworn officers was the same for both years - nineteen including the chief. At this level of staffing, the number of calls per officer was 1,776 and 1,870 for the respective years. This represents a 5 plus percentage increase between the two reporting years, or approximately 2.5 percent increase per year.

The Versailles Police Department operations and communications center is located in Downtown Versailles on the south side of the Woodford County Courthouse. The Department does not operate any substations, although it does participate in a school-based program (G.R.E.A.T. – Gang Resistance Education and Training) to provide school resource officers for the high school, middle school and elementary schools. The high school and middle school have one assigned staff member each, while one staff member is assigned for all elementary schools.

The Woodford County Sheriff's Department includes the sheriff, four full-time deputies and two part-time deputies. The Sheriff's Department provides services to the County as well as the cities of Versailles and Midway. Between 1999 and 2001, this law enforcement agency experienced the largest increase in the number of calls for service of any public safety agency in Woodford County. The number of calls doubled from 1,239 to 2,436. The calls per sworn officer in 2001 would be 406 (assuming that the two part time sworn positions equal one full time position).

Woodford County is one of the few counties in central Kentucky to have a county police department. This department employs seventeen sworn officers, including the chief, and two administrative staff positions<sup>2</sup>. The Department provides police protection to the unincorporated portions of the County on a 24-hour basis. The calls per sworn officer in 2001 were 990, approximately one-half the number of calls handled by the Versailles PD. However, these numbers should not be directly compared due to the significant difference in the geographic size of the service area covered by the respective departments.

The size of the service area is one reason that the Woodford Police Department and the City of Midway have recently conducted discussions aimed at determining the feasibility of locating a county police substation in Midway. At the time this Background Report was prepared, a final decision had not been reached.

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<sup>2</sup> Based on telephone interview with administrative staff of the Woodford County Police Department.

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The Kentucky State Police (KSP), Post 12, also provides Woodford County residents with police protection 24 hours per day. The KSP officers' primary responsibilities are in the unincorporated areas of the County, however, they will respond to and provide back-up response for incidents occurring within the city limits of Versailles.

### *Fire Services*

Woodford County is served by three fire departments: the Versailles Municipal Fire Department, the Midway Municipal Fire Department, and the Woodford County Fire Department. The County Fire Department operates five fire stations that provide coverage to the entire county. Stations are located in Versailles, Midway, Millville, Mortonsville, and Nonesuch. The main station, located in Versailles on Big Sink Pike, is staffed by a full-time paid chief and volunteer firemen. Each of the other four stations houses a fire engine and the equipment necessary to serve a five-mile (by road) section of the County. Each station is staffed by volunteers and is supported by back-up assistance from other stations. In 2001, the Department answered 273 calls for service.

Insurance Services Office ratings can provide one measure of the level of service provided by a fire department. The ISO rating can have a significant impact on individual homeowner's insurance rates and is tied to the efficiency and effectiveness with which a fire station can respond to fires within its service area. These ratings are standardized across Kentucky and provide the basis for establishing hazard insurance rates. The current ISO rating for the service areas of county fire stations located in Millville and Versailles is a split Class 7/9. This split rating means properties within 1,000 feet of a fire hydrant are Class 7 and properties farther than 1,000 feet but within five miles are Class 9. Areas served by county fire stations located at Midway, Mortonsville and Nonesuch are rated as Class 9.

The staff of the City of Versailles Fire Department includes 30 volunteer firefighters, seven full-time paid firefighters and a Chief. It provides service from two stations located strategically to provide efficient fire protection to the downtown, the industrial park, and the city's northern subdivisions. The Department handled more than 570 calls for service in 2001, a more than two-fold increase from calls reported in 1999.

The City of Midway houses its volunteer fire department just off South Winter Street, while the County fire station that services the Midway area is located north of town on US 421. Areas served by the Versailles and Midway fire departments have achieved a Class 6 ISO rating.

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### *Emergency Medical Services*

The Woodford County EMS and Versailles Fire Department provide these services within their respective jurisdictions. Together, these agencies responded to more than 2,200 calls for service in 2001. Both agencies operate with vehicles and equipment housed within city or county fire stations.