

Press Release

Bethlehem Police Recognized for Sex Offender Management Keeping Communities Safe Using Best Practices

SCHENECTADY, NEW YORK – JULY 27, 2009 The Bethlehem Police Department received a certificate today from the New York State Association of Chiefs of Police (Association) in a new sex offender management program. The certification recognizes that Bethlehem Police are employing proactive and sound practices in managing sex offenders in their community. The presentation was made at a 10 AM ceremony on July 27, 2009 at Bethlehem Police Headquarters in Delmar, New York. The “Certified Best Practices” program was launched in January to recognize police agencies that employ certain strategies to monitor sex offenders, provide community notification and conduct enforcement. Association Executive Director John P. Grebert said, “For more than a decade, managing sex offenders has become an important function of law enforcement. Police are on the front lines in ensuring that offenders comply with the law and that citizens are informed about certain offenders living in their communities.”



Bethlehem Police Chief Louis G. Corsi commented, "First let me thank the New York State Association of Chiefs of Police for their review of our policies and procedures for managing sex offenders in Bethlehem. We do not take this responsibility lightly and will do everything in our power to alert and protect the community as well as monitor these individuals. It is important for law enforcement agencies everywhere to have a comprehensive sex offender management program that works to ensure the safety of its citizens and community".

Association President William J. Kilfoil (Port Washington PD) said, “The New York State Association of Chiefs of Police are pleased to provide this service to our members. It is a nice acknowledgement for the hard work being done to monitor sex offenders throughout New York State.”

The policies and operations of the Bethlehem Police Department were assessed and found to be in compliance with the elements of the Best Practices program. In addition to having a written policy pertaining to sex offender management, they were also required to provide proof of monitoring of offenders, community notification, cooperation with other agencies, and enforcement.

At Monday’s presentation, Chief Corsi received the certification from the Association’s director of research, development and training, Mark Spawn who noted that the Best Practices program takes several factors into consideration. “This program identifies the most important aspects of sex offender registration and gives agencies the ability to have an external validation of their processes.”

Spawn extended special thanks to Bethlehem Police Lt. Thomas M. Heffernan, Jr. and Sgt. Robert J. Helligrass for their work throughout the evaluation process. The Association’s program was presented at a National Symposium on Sex Offender Management in Houston in April. Spawn also said that for agencies that do not yet have a policy in place, the Association has resources to assist departments in developing a plan to meet their individual needs.