



Sharen Wilson Criminal District Attorney



For Immediate Release

Contact: Anna Tinsley Williams, Communications Officer
atwilliams@tarrantcountytx.gov (817) 884-3120

Tarrant Law Enforcement Agencies recognized for "Commitment to Excellence"

(Fort Worth, TX) – There's a gold standard for law enforcement in Texas.

And nine law enforcement agencies in Tarrant County have reached that level.

This year, eight local police departments plus the Tarrant County Criminal District Attorney's Office gained accreditation – or re-accreditation – through the Texas Police Chiefs Association. That means those departments meet or exceed best practices for law enforcement.

"Tarrant County should be proud of its local law enforcement agencies," Keller Police Chief Brad Fortune said. "While we believe all our partnering law enforcement agencies operate with excellence, we enjoy the third-party confirmation that The Texas Police Chiefs Association provides us through accreditation."

These Best Practices were developed by Texas law enforcers to help agencies deliver services and protect individual rights. They cover all aspects of law enforcement operations including use of force, protection of citizen rights, property and evidence management and patrol and investigative operations.

This accreditation program began in 2006 and, since then, more than 100 Texas law enforcement agencies have received the accreditation. The recognition lasts four years.

It's not an easy process.

Among work done in the extensive process: an internal review, external audit, and a review by Texas police chiefs to ensure each office complies with all standards. "This process is voluntary and very time consuming," said Sid Fuller, interim police chief in Azle. "It is not entered into lightly."

These local agencies were among those recognized at the Texas Police Chiefs Association's annual Conference in Galveston this month:

Accredited for the first time: Lake Worth and Westworth Village police departments and the Tarrant County Criminal District Attorney's Office.

Accredited for the second time: Azle, Fort Worth and Trophy Club police departments.

Accredited for the third time: DFW Airport, Keller and White Settlement police departments.

"Tarrant County is home to one of the finest consortiums of law enforcement agencies in the United States," Lake Worth Police Chief J.T. Manoushagian said. "Even among such an elite group, there are those who have distinguished themselves by becoming accredited law enforcement agencies. Although difficult to attain, the accreditation process affirms an agency's commitment to excellence and adherence to accepted best practices."

Each department is honored to have this designation.

"By receiving this status, twice, we are sending a clear message to our community that we strive to be the best we can be," Fuller, of Azle, said. "The residents of Azle, Tarrant County and the State of Texas should be proud of all agencies that have achieved this status."

The Fort Worth police department, which received its second recognition, said in a statement: "Having so many accredited agencies within our county shows that the law enforcement community within Tarrant County is dedicated to the best practices within our profession, which will allow us to work together to provide the best possible service to the people of Tarrant County."

Christopher Cook, the new police chief in White Settlement, said he's honored his department has been re-accredited for the third time. "Being one of only 186 agencies across the state out of 2,700 reaffirms our commitment to achieving excellence through best practices and meeting the TPCA gold standard for policy adherence," Cook said.

DFW Airport Chief of Police Jon Taylor shared a similar sentiment. "Dallas Fort Worth International Airport is committed to best practices in policing for the safety and security of our customers. We are proud to receive this recognition from the TPCA for the third consecutive time as it further demonstrates our commitment to excellence in policing, especially with regards to policy, training and oversight."

The Tarrant County Criminal District Attorney's Office is the first DA's office in Texas to receive this designation. The recognition goes to CDA investigators, who participated in this voluntary program.

"Our investigators worked very hard to gain this coveted recognition," Tarrant County Criminal District Attorney Sharen Wilson said. "I'm very proud of their work – and the work done by all the local police agencies that were accredited this year."

"For one county to have this many agencies doing a great job, that's a big deal."