

The Madison Police Department (MPD) is committed to providing citizens and media access to information, and utilizes many avenues to facilitate its' flow.

One of the ways the Department helps share information is through the Department's website under "Incident Reports". These entries are made solely upon the judgment of the Officer In Charge (OIC), who often generates these reports. There is an OIC on duty at all times, and each uses his/her own judgment – based on the best information at the time – to determine what should be posted on this website.

Reporters may also call the OIC 24 hours a day to get updates on recent events, or to investigate things being heard over police scanners.

The department also has a Public Information Officer (PIO). The PIO often posts additional Incident Reports after attending a daily detective briefing (M – F) where information is exchanged between the department's five districts. Some, not posted on the website, are shared with media via phone or email.

Incident Reports generally deal with specific, recent crimes. While on the website you can also click on Press Releases. These electronic documents address issues like crime trends, or upcoming events not necessarily case specific.

Beyond the website, the MPD routinely calls news conferences to further discuss important topics.

The Madison Police Department receives around 160,000 calls for service per year. Certainly, only a small portion of this number makes it into an Incident Report, a Press Release, or a news conference.

A daily arrest log is also made available to media. It contains names of arrested people, their case numbers, and tentative charges.

In addition, members of the media may request to review the 911 Center's call log. This document gives reporters access to every call where officers are dispatched.

MPD Records staff also, on a daily basis, places some police reports in a basket for reporters. These reports typically deal with less serious incidents.

The Madison Police Department is committed to being as transparent as possible, and will routinely review policy and procedures, which relate to the release of information, to ensure best practices are being utilized.