



Wikwemikong Tribal Police Service Community Update

Fall Newsletter 2025

A Message from the Chief of Police

Dear Wiikwemkoong Community,

Over the past year, our police service has seen crime rates rise across the territory and following the Robinson Huron Treaty (RHT) Per Capita Distributions. While these payments have provided financial support to many families, they have also led to serious and measurable impacts on community safety and on the Wikwemikong Tribal Police Service.

Since the first payments were issued in late summer 2024, **we have recorded substantial increases in calls for service, arrests, and charged persons.** We have also seen more collisions and fatalities involving ATVs and a dramatic rise in complex, time-consuming investigations that demand extensive officer time for interviews, court briefs, testimony, and follow-up work.

These realities have placed a heavy strain on our officers, our resources, and our community as a whole. **The increases are not just statistics; they represent the challenges families are facing, the risks that our youth are encountering, and the pressures that ripple across Wiikwemkoong.**

Yet, I do not bring this message to discourage you. I bring it as a call for us to work together. We cannot address these challenges as a police service alone. **We must approach them as a community, supporting one another, practicing safety on our roads, trails, and waters, reporting crime when it occurs, and standing with those who may be struggling.** Only through collective action can we reduce the risks and ensure a safer future for everyone.

As a force, we have taken decisive steps to adapt. We have restructured staffing and deployment, launched new units, expanded training, and strengthened capacity so that we can continue to meet growing demands. But these measures, while essential, are not enough on their own. Lasting solutions depend on

police, families, Elders, youth, and community partners working side by side to protect and strengthen Wiikwemkoong.

The data we share in this newsletter is a reflection of what we are all experiencing. It confirms that the cost of crime, both financially and socially, is rising, and that the workload and stress placed upon our police service have increased. At the same time, it underscores the need for partnership and unity. Together, we must face these challenges with honesty, accountability, and resilience.

WTPS will continue to communicate openly and transparently with you. I ask you to continue supporting one another, to remain vigilant, and to join us in ensuring that Wiikwemkoong remains a place of strength, culture, and security for everyone.

Chi Miigwech for your ongoing trust and support.

Sincerely

Chief Ron Gignac
Wikwemikong Tribal Police Service



Wikwemikong Tribal Police Service Community Update

Fall Newsletter 2025

RHT PCD Impact: What the Numbers Show Us

Since the RHT PCD began, crime has gone up across the Territory. Our police service is responding to more calls than before, and the cases we handle are becoming more serious and take much longer to resolve.



↑ 77%

Adult males charged



↑ 73%

Adult females charged



↑ 22%

Total RMS occurrences



↑ 200%

Attempted murder



↑ 100%

Abduction



↑ 81%

Traffic complaints



↑ 69%

Motor vehicle collisions



↑ 81%

Drug possession (CDSA)

The increase in calls has meant that officers spend more time on:

- Extensive investigations
- Preparing detailed Crown briefs
- Testifying in court
- Conducting follow-ups and multiple witness statements
- This removes officers from proactive community policing and places pressure on all levels of staff

In response, WTPS has:

- Restructured staffing and deployment for efficiency
- Built a dedicated recruiting team
- Implemented new training and specialty units
- Enhanced operating procedures to maintain high service standards

Wikwemikong Tribal Police Service Community Update

Fall Newsletter 2025

The Cost of Crime: Offender Management Program Update

WTPS is working to reduce repeat crime in Wiikwemkoong. Through our Offender Management Program, Bail Compliance Program, and collaboration with the Ministry of the Attorney General, we aim to stop offenders from revictimizing community members.

Of more than 6,000 calls last year, 180 repeat offenders accounted for 1,044 — costing an estimated \$2.2 million annually, not including healthcare or social impacts. To address this, officers now proactively check in on offenders to ensure compliance with court conditions. The program is already showing results, and WTPS has joined Ontario's bail compliance dashboard to track violent repeat felons.

By working with health, social service, and justice partners, we are taking a proactive, collaborative approach to reduce reoffending, support at-risk individuals, and protect community resources.

New Situation Table Initiative

WTPS is proud to introduce a Situation Table in Wiikwemkoong. This is a weekly meeting where police, health professionals, social services, and community partners come together to identify people who may be at serious risk and offer support before a crisis happens.

The Situation Table has already begun helping community members by addressing urgent needs such as housing, addictions, and mental health. By working side by side, our partners are reducing harm, lowering crime, and making sure people get the right help at the right time.

Seasonal Safety Reminders:

As the seasons change, WTPS urges residents to keep safety top of mind.

ATV Safety

- ✓ Always wear a helmet and protective gear
- ✓ Never ride under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- ✓ Youth riders must be properly supervised
- ✓ Ride only in permitted areas.



Hunting Safety

- ✓ Wear visible clothing (orange or reflective gear)
- ✓ Inform someone of your location and return time
- ✓ Handle firearms safely and legally
- ✓ Prepare for weather changes with proper clothing

Boating Safety

- ✓ Always bring a life jacket and warm clothing
- ✓ Never drive under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- ✓ Be aware of fall weather — sudden storms and cold water increase risk
- ✓ Carry proper equipment (radio, flares, lights, etc.).

Wikwemikong Tribal Police Service Community Update

Fall Newsletter 2025

WTPS Highlights and Accomplishments: Summer 2025

2025 has been a landmark year for WTPS. Together, we have achieved meaningful progress that strengthens our service, supports our members and their families, and deepens our bond with the community. From securing long-term funding and modernizing equipment, to expanding wellness programs and facilities, each accomplishment reflects our shared commitment to safety, service, and growth.

These achievements are the result of our people. Our officers, civilian employees, and special constables show remarkable devotion to the citizens of Wikwemkoong, to visitors across the Territory, and to Greater Manitoulin. Their dedication is matched by the passion of our police services board, Ogimaa Tim Ominika, and the band council, whose leadership and guidance help ensure our continued success.

Recognition and Initiatives:

- **MMIWG Recognition Vehicle:** Honoured nationally and welcomed at Moose Factory Cree Nation for ceremonies with residential school survivors.
- **Unsolved Investigations:** Partnered with Ontario's Family Information & Liaison Unit to bring truth and closure to grieving families.
- **Offender Management & Bail Compliance:** Launched in 2025 to reduce repeat offences, with officers proactively checking compliance and joining the provincial bail dashboard.
- **Wikwemkoong Pow Wow:** Carefully planned months in advance, the four-day cultural celebration drew over 30,000 visitors. Nearly every officer and civilian staff member took part, helping deliver a safe and joyful event with no major incidents.
- **Community Engagement & Communications:** Our presence in the community has grown stronger than ever. Since May 2025, WTPS has issued dozens of media releases, connected with 27 Ontario news outlets, and launched new communications platforms, including LinkedIn and an upgraded website. With the support of a social media expert, we've shared 154 informative posts — nearly six a week — keeping our community better informed and connected.



Wikwemikong Tribal Police Service Community Update

Fall Newsletter 2025

Looking Ahead

More WTPS is focusing on key initiatives to strengthen safety, support youth, and equip our officers for the future.

- **Training:** Officers will take part in advanced courses on investigations, criminal interdiction, and drug intelligence. These programs ensure our members have the most up-to-date skills to handle complex cases and keep our community safe.
- **School Liaison Program:** Officers will work closely with our three schools, building strong connections with students. Through short sessions, we will teach practical safety skills — from ATV riding and outdoor survival, to online safety and positive community living. This program helps youth feel supported and prepared.
- **Mental Health Crisis Response:** Our crisis responder has been trained as a provincial MHCR (Mental Health Crisis Response) instructor. This means every WTPS officer will soon receive specialized training to respond to mental health situations with compassion, empathy, and effective strategies.
- **Victim Support Seminar:** On October 16 at 5:00 p.m. at the Rabbit Island Centre, WTPS will host a community seminar in partnership with Northshore Victim Services. The event will provide information on available resources, feature guest specialists and clinicians, and offer transportation, a meal, door prizes, and draws — ensuring it is accessible and welcoming for all.
- **Technology Upgrades:** Our new frontline vehicles will soon be equipped with in-car cameras, Automated License Plate Recognition Systems (ALPRS), onboard computers, and live intelligence feeds. These tools will help officers gather stronger evidence, prevent crime, and provide added safety for families, Elders, and youth across Wiikwemkoong.



<https://wtps.ca/>



Crime Stoppers 1-800-222-8477

