

IACP/Environmental Crimes Committee  
**Chief Dave Cameron Award for Excellence in  
 Environmental Crimes Enforcement & Education**

APPLICATION FORM

Please include the following information with each nomination for the *Chief Dave Cameron Award for Excellence in Environmental Crimes Enforcement & Education*. If this agency is selected, this information is essential to make appropriate notifications.

Law Enforcement Executive Submitting Nomination	
First Name	Thomas
Last Name	Schwedhelm
Rank/Title	Chief
Organization	Santa Rosa Police Department
Division/Unit (if applicable)	
Address 1	965 Sonoma Avenue
Address 2	
City	Santa Rosa
State/Region	California
Zip/Postal Code	95404
Country	United States
Telephone (and extension)	707-543-3600
Fax	707-543-3557
E-Mail	tschwedhelm@srcity.org
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> -- Check here to acknowledge IACP membership in good standing	

Administrative Contact for IACP Follow-up (if different than above)	
First Name	Lance
Last Name	Badger
Rank/Title	Lieutenant
Organization	Santa Rosa Police Department
Division/Unit (if applicable)	
Address 1	965 Sonoma Avenue
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City	Santa Rosa
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E-Mail	lbadger@srcity.org

## CIRCUMSTANCES FOR NOMINATION AGENCY

Nomination packet must include application and documentation of the specific circumstances involving excellence in environmental crimes enforcement and education. Supplemental material such as departmental citations, letters of commendation, and newspaper clippings will be accepted. Although, videotapes, DVDs/CDs, and photos are welcome, please note that they will not be returned.

**Time frame  
for eligibility:**

March 15, 2012 to March 15 2013

**Deadline:**

Submissions must be postmarked or emailed by May 31, 2013.

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**Mail:**

International Association of Chiefs of Police  
Attn: Richard Lisko  
515 North Washington Street  
Alexandria, VA 22314

**Email:**

[lisko@theiacp.org](mailto:lisko@theiacp.org)

If sending your application package by email please use the subject *Dave Cameron Award Submission*. Please name the file with an indication of the agency name of the nominating law enforcement executive as well as characters "ECA2011". For example, a nomination submitted by "Any Town PD" should be named "***AnyTownPD\_ECA2011.doc***".

**Fax:**

703-836-4543

Send to 703-836-4543 with cover sheet. Cover sheet must (1) contain subject as "2013 Dave Cameron Award Submission"; (2) attention to Richard Lisko; and (3) indicate the number of pages being transmitted.

Any questions or requests for clarification should be directed to Richard Lisko by e-mail to [lisko@theiacp.org](mailto:lisko@theiacp.org) or by telephoning 1-800-843-4227, extension 234.

**Narrative Description:** Provide a concise yet comprehensive description of the nominated agency's efforts to enforce environmental crimes, educate the public, and safeguard law enforcement. Programs or initiatives must have been started no later than one year prior to submission for consideration.

The Environmental Crimes Committee strongly encourages you to use the relevant bullet points listed under **EVALUATION CRITERIA** as headings within your narrative description. You also may add other topic headings you feel necessary. This formatting will enhance the quality and clarity of your submission and will assist the members of IACP's Environmental Crimes Committee in assessing nominations. Limit the detailed description to no more than three pages. Supplemental pages with relevant news articles are welcomed and encouraged.

If multiple agencies are included in the nomination, please include a supplemental page listing all official agency names, addresses, telephone numbers and contact person.

<< Type or paste over this text. Do not exceed three pages.>>



POLICE DEPARTMENT  
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Santa Rosa, CA 95402-1678  
707-543-3600  
www.santarosapd.com

May 28, 2013

International Association of Chiefs of Police  
Attn: Richard Lisko  
515 North Washington Street  
Alexandria, VA 22314

Re: Chief Dave Cameron Award for Excellence in Environmental Crimes Enforcement and Education

To Whom It May Concern:

As the Police Chief for the City of Santa Rosa, I consider myself fortunate to be surrounded by professional and dedicated officers. I'm also proud of the fact that our department leads California municipal law enforcement in the protection of our environment. The Santa Rosa Police Department has one of the only municipal environmental enforcement teams in California. The department's Environmental Crimes Unit consists of specially trained officers that play a large part in holding environmental polluters accountable. Through a collaborative, Task Force approach, the Environmental Crimes Unit is responsible for assisting local regulators with investigating and preventing environmental crimes and protecting our citizens, city staff, our natural resources and city infrastructure.

This year, I would like to nominate the Santa Rosa Police Department's Environmental Crimes Unit for consideration of the Dave Cameron Award of Excellence in Environmental Crimes Enforcement and Education. This unit is comprised of a Detective, Supervising Sergeant, and a Patrol Officer.

The performance of the unit is exemplary and exceeds the normal service capabilities of municipal law enforcement agencies in California. I am proud of our Environmental Crimes Unit. The unit serves as a model for other California law enforcement agencies and its members are recognized throughout the State for their efforts in environmental enforcement and protection.

Sincerely,

Thomas Schwedhelm  
Chief of Police

## **Dave Cameron Award Nomination for 2013**

### **Santa Rosa Police Department's Environmental Crimes Unit**

The Santa Rosa Police Department's mission statement is simple. It is our goal to make the City of Santa Rosa a safe place to live, work and play. We service approximately 170,000 residents. The police department is staffed with 250 employees and we patrol an area that covers more than 40 square miles. The Santa Rosa Police Department is unique amongst all municipalities in California, in that it has an Environmental Crimes Unit, which is staffed with a dedicated detective, a detective sergeant and a collaterally assigned patrol officer.

Over the past 20 years, the Santa Rosa Police Department has been one of the only municipal police agencies in California that actively investigates environmental crimes. There are 784 industrial waste permits issued to businesses in the Santa Rosa area and twenty two million gallons of water flow through the waste water treatment system every day. Shutting the wastewater system down due to a catastrophic environmental issue for a single day could cost the city between ten and twenty million dollars for a single event. As a way to help mitigate this and other potential environmental harm, the Santa Rosa Police Department commits an environmental crimes detective to keep industry, commercial businesses and residents compliant.

In the early 1990's, the Director of the Santa Rosa Utilities Department, which manages a large state of the art, multi-city wastewater treatment facility, recognized the importance of protecting our city infrastructure, our natural resources, and the public health of our citizens and our employees. Consequently, the Director proposed funding a peace officer position through the Utilities Department. This sworn peace officer would focus specifically on protecting the sanitary sewer infrastructure by detecting, investigating and hopefully preventing the disposal of hazardous substances into the wastewater treatment facility. Needless to say, this was a novel and innovative way of protecting public health, safety and the environment. In practice, this trailblazing program has an Environmental Crimes Detective to lead investigations, uncover fraud and exercise police powers necessary to ensure regulated industries comply with rules designed to protect our city infrastructure, the public health and environment. The Santa Rosa Police Department's excellent performance record convinced other regional municipalities, including the cities of Rohnert Park, Cotati and Sebastopol, to join (and help fund) the unit's cutting-edge environmental enforcement efforts.

As a peace officer, the Environmental Crimes Detective has the ability to employ all the same investigative resources used to investigate other crimes, like homicide, theft, conspiracy, fraud, robbery and gang violence toward environmental law enforcement. The detective conducts interviews, collects evidence, obtains search warrants, and ultimately makes arrests, if warranted, for criminal violations of environmental laws. Having a peace officer involved in the discovery and investigation of clandestine and often-times fraudulent disposal is the greatest protection for our citizenry and environment. Furthermore, our Detective adds an extra element of support to city regulators who are tasked with permitting and inspecting businesses. Since civil environmental regulators inspect businesses on an annual or triennial basis, which provides but a mere snapshot of compliance, the Detective serves as a constant deterrent in the time between inspections.

Having a peace officer available on-call and able to coordinate and lead investigations creates an incredibly effective deterrent to polluters and non-compliant businesses. The Environmental Crimes Detective is primarily tasked with investigating the illegal disposal, storage, or transportation of hazardous materials, substances and wastes, responding to complaints concerning air, water, toxics and pesticide pollution events, and coordinating investigations with other local, state and federal entities. The Detective's active participation in investigations positively influences businesses to obtain and maintain compliance with the rules aimed at protecting Santa Rosa residents, waterways, roadways, landfills and water systems.

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### **Santa Rosa Police Department's Environmental Crimes Unit**

The Environmental Crimes Detective identifies, locates and holds accountable, anyone responsible for violating environmental laws. Based on the outcome of a criminal investigation, that information is presented to either the Sonoma County District Attorney's Office or the Santa Rosa City Attorney for criminal and/or civil prosecution. Dispositions typically include an arrest and a jail sentence upon plea or conviction. The Detective's traditional law enforcement skills, applied in the Environmental Enforcement arena, facilitate and promote settlements due to the reliability and thoroughness of the investigations conducted. In addition to fines and restitution, the Environmental Crimes Detective's work often leads to the recovery of costs to the department in settled matters. Similarly, civil prosecutions pursued after an environmental crimes investigation almost invariably lead to penalties being imposed, injunctive relief being issued, and recovery of attorney's fees and agency costs.

The City of Santa Rosa utilizes an informal Task Force approach to conducting these types of investigations. The Task Force is comprised of representatives from several different city departments and public entities; including the Utilities, Public Works, Streets, Code Enforcement, City Attorney and Fire Departments. Allied agencies who often participate in the Task Force meeting also include local environmental health agencies, the agricultural commissioner, the air district, and state agencies like the California Department of Fish & Wildlife, the Department of Toxic Substance Control and CalFire. The Task Force typically meets monthly to confidentially discuss incidents, complaints and ongoing investigations. From that exchange of information, new leads are developed for criminal investigations. As a group, the Task Force works cooperatively to share information and resources and to decide what actions should be taken in protection of our communities.

The environmental crimes detective has the capability to work in an undercover capacity, which goes a long way in identifying and securing evidence. The Detective utilizes high-tech equipment and advanced surveillance techniques to further investigative efforts. For instance, the Environmental Crimes Detective frequently uses remote video surveillance and GPS technology to track vehicles and other equipment. Informants often play a large part in an investigation, especially if that informant has worked at a business under investigation. These techniques are utilized to document the activities of businesses in support of criminal prosecution. Even if a case is resolved civilly, the investigation is always conducted to support a criminal trial.

The environmental crimes detective will typically respond to environmental hazards, including chemical spills that occur on or off private property. It's very common for the detective to become involved in accident investigations, illegal dumping sites and incidents that require the Fire Department to respond with HazMat crews.

The City Attorney's Office assists the police department in working with the District Attorney's Office to match investigative and prosecutorial resources. A preponderance of the City Attorney's cases are civil code-enforcement actions, unfair business practices cases and cost recovery efforts. Through cost recovery, the City Attorney's Office helps the City shift the financial burden of cleanup and the investigation to the polluter.

Due to his knowledge and expertise in the field, the Environmental Crimes Detective is frequently invited to participate at the Advanced Environmental Crimes Training Program (AECTP) that is put on twice annually. The detective has taught several components of environmental crimes investigations classes sponsored by the California Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) and he presents to city and county regulators at informal trainings to help educate staff on the observations, statements, documentation and evidence needed to build a criminal environmental investigation. The Detective's participation in these instructor roles helps students learn what to look for in environmental violations while they are out doing their individual jobs. Also, in late 2012 members from the Police, City Attorney and Utilities Departments participated in a California EPA

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### **Santa Rosa Police Department's Environmental Crimes Unit**

sponsored symposium designed to educate other police departments on ways to form and operate an investigative unit focusing on environmental investigations and protection.

Examples of typical cases investigated by the Environmental Crimes Unit include:

- A Carpet Cleaner from Napa had been hired by a homeowner to clean carpet. He had very poorly maintained equipment and a large amount of soapy water was discharged into the storm water system. The disposition of the case was civil and handled by the City Attorney's Office.
- A Marin County concrete company conducting business in Santa Rosa flushed concrete into the storm water system. The case was investigated and referred to the District Attorney's Office for prosecution. The disposition in the case resulted in a guilty plea, a fine and 10 days in jail.
- A local contractor building a grease trap for a new restaurant directed muddy water into a drainage inlet that led to a creek. The company paid a fine and was mandated to conduct employee training.
- A local painting company was hired by a homeowner to paint a portion of his residence. The painter washed his equipment outside which caused a release into the storm water system. This case was forwarded to the District Attorney's Office for criminal filing.
- The Task Force identified stone/marble cutters as a consistent source of pollution and frustration for regulatory agencies. Over a half dozen stone / marble cutters in Santa Rosa were focused on as a means of educating an entire industry to control the amount of stone debris that was being washed into the city storm system. Those business practices changed as a result of criminal investigations. Only one case was prosecuted by the District Attorney, resulting in a guilty plea and fine. Other similar businesses came into compliance to avoid criminal prosecution for storm water pollution violations.

Although these are just a sampling of cases, these incidents represent a majority of the types handled by the Environmental Crimes Detective. With a constant presence in the community, the police department has the capability to respond to, document and investigate environmental or hazardous incidents from the onset. This capability allows for the recovery of physical evidence and statements from involved parties, immediately establishing the basis for a criminal investigation. Ultimately, if these cases resolve civilly, the outcome to our community is the same - Santa Rosa becomes a safer place to live, work and play.

The type of cases investigated by the Environmental Crimes Unit demonstrate a prolonged effort by the Santa Rosa Police Department to help local environmental regulators prevent catastrophic events from harming our natural resources, human health and city infrastructure.

#### **Environmental Crimes Unit Members**

Sergeant Michael Lazzarini  
Detective Mark Azzouni  
Officer Alan Schellerup