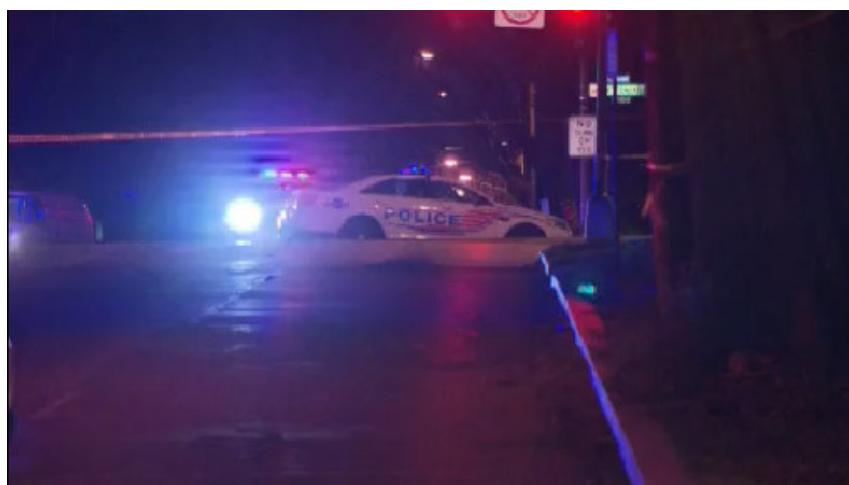




WNY region one of the few not feeling impacts from nationwide police shortage

By Ali Ingersoll, News 4 Reporter (<http://wivb.com/author/wivbaliingersoll/>)

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CHEEKTOWAGA, N.Y. (WIVB)– From small towns to major metropolitan areas, police departments across America are reporting they're having issues filling squad cars. There is a shortage of applicants for open spots at dozens of police departments.

"This area seems to be the exception," said Jim Speyer, the Assistant Chief of Police for the Cheektowaga Police Department. "I don't know if it's because of industry and the economy here but young people still see this as a viable job."

The Cheektowaga Police Department is preparing to swear in six new officers next week. The Buffalo Police tell us they have enough officers in the department but do have spots open for the civil service exam. In Niagara Falls, the chief tells News 4 they could always use more officers but they are recruiting strongly. And the Town of Tonawanda has several openings due to retirements but they also have enough applicants.

Meanwhile, Baltimore, New York City, and Chicago are among the many major areas where they're having issues finding young men and women willing to step up and sign up to serve the community.

"Probably one of the leading causes is that the number of assaults on officers is increasing," said Chief Speyer. "It's tragic."

It's a public safety issue, too.

"In a lot of departments which are short-handed, you're seeing a direct result with increases in homicides and violent crimes," said the assistant chief.

Speyer feels confident this area won't be impacted by a shortage or increase in crime due to one anytime in the near future.

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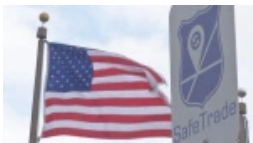
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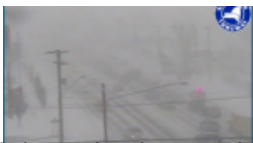
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