

Bernie Cybulski

Here's a little review to help avoid fatal errors

Happy New Year, hopefully this year with Gods blessings will be a safe one for the Detroit Public Safety community. While speaking about safety, here are the 10 most fatal errors that have killed experienced police officers. Please take the time to review them.

1. YOUR ATTITUDE – If you fail to keep your mind on the job while on patrol or carry home problems into the field you will start to make errors. It can you or your fellow officers their lives.
2. TOMBSTONE COURAGE – No one doubts that you are all man or all woman. But in any situation, where time allows, wait for back-up or request back-up. There are few instances where alone, unaided, you should try to make a dangerous apprehension.
3. NOT ENOUGH REST – To do your job, you must be alert. Being sleepy or asleep on the job is not only against regulations, but you endanger yourself, the community and all your fellow officers.
4. TAKING A BAD POSITION – Never let anyone you are questioning or about to stop get in a better position than you and your vehicle. There is no such thing as a routine call or stop.
5. DANGER SIGNS – As a police officer, you will get to recognize “danger.” Movements, strange cars, warnings that should alert you to watch your step and approach with caution. Some times we feel the back of our hair stand up. Know your beat, your community and watch what is “out of place.”
6. FAILURE TO WATCH HANDS OF A SUSPECT – Is he or she reaching for a weapon or getting ready to strike you? Where else can a potential killer strike but from his or her hands.
7. RELAXING TOO SOON – The “rut” of responding to false alarms that are accidentally set off. Walking in and asking if the place is being held up. Observe the activity. Never take a call as routine, or just another false alarm. It's your life on the line.
8. IMPROPER USE OR NO HANDCUFFS – Once you have made an arrest handcuff the prisoner properly and see that the hands are safely cuffed. Seventy percent of all injuries happen during handcuffing.
9. NO SEARCH OR POOR SEARCH – There are so many places to hide weapons that your failure to search is a crime against fellow officers. Many criminals carry several weapons and are prepared to use them against you.
10. DIRTY OR INOPERATIVE WEAPON – Is your weapon clean? Will it fire? How about the ammo? What's the sense of carrying any firearm that may not work?

Based upon investigations of hundreds of law enforcement officers line-of-duty deaths, these TEN DEADLY SINS were found to be the major cause of useless unnecessary deaths. Will you make one of these errors today or have you done so already.

New faces are at the helm of your association. We will strive and continue to move this association forward in the coming year. We all need to come together in these difficult times. Finally, I wish to thank the Board of Directors in electing me to serve as your Vice President. I will continue to serve you to the best of my ability.

Until next time, “Let's all be safe and go home at the end of our shifts.”