

Several probation-operated programs such as GPS electronic monitoring, drug treatment court and day reporting have helped to reduce Cumberland County's prison overcrowding issues.

County Uses GPS Tracking to Monitor DUI Offenders



HIGHLIGHTS:

- County was faced with rising prison population, budget deficits and projected tax increases
- Several alternatives to incarceration have been implemented to reduce prison overcrowding
- County is using highest form of offender monitoring – active GPS tracking
- The electronic monitoring program has saved 14,000 bed-days at the county prison in its first 15 months

THE PROGRAM

Cumberland County is a 550-square-mile county in southern Pennsylvania that is home to about 226,000 residents. The county contains only one prison, a prison that faces some overcrowding issues. These crowding problems were exacerbated by a tough Pennsylvania law passed in 2004 mandating prison time for second- and third-offense DUI convictions. This law has accelerated the prison inmate census, with the county nearing its capacity of 398 several times in recent years.

While a \$25 million prison expansion that will accommodate an additional 160 prisoners is scheduled for completion in 2008, Cumberland County officials sought other, less expensive options to reduce jail overcrowding and help deter future DUI offenses. As a result, the county developed several alternatives for low-risk offenders that involved community-based supervision. These programs are managed by the Cumberland Adult Probation Department within a broader program called Intermediate Punishment (IP). Through IP, Cumberland County has implemented several new programs for DUI offenders, including:

- Accelerated Rehabilitative Disposition (ARD), which is available to first-time offenders and usually includes community service and other requirements
- A day reporting center, where offenders check in on a daily basis for classes or training
- A tough electronic monitoring program

First-time DUI offenders are typically ordered to the ARD program. If they comply with conditions of release and do not have additional offenses, their record is cleared. The Cumber-

land County Electronic Monitoring Program was implemented in May of 2006. It was developed specifically for DUI offenders, who under the 2004 DUI law are mandated to serve 90-day and one-year minimum sentences for second- and third-time DUI offenses, respectively, behind bars.

Now, through the county's electronic monitoring program, second-time DUI recipients spend 30 days in a work release center and are then placed on house arrest for 60 days under electronic monitoring. Third-time offenders now spend 120 days in a work release center and 245 days on electronic monitoring. Previously, third-time DUI offenders averaged 136 days in the county prison. By allowing these inmates to serve their sentences in the community, significant savings are achieved and these individuals can work, support their families and contribute to the local economy.

Cumberland County selected BI Incorporated for the program's electronic monitoring technology in 2006. Cumberland County selected technology that would provide the greatest level of detail about an offender being supervised in the community – BI ExacuTrack™ AT. This intensive offender monitoring system includes active Global Positioning System (GPS) technology that provides probation officials with near real-time monitoring of community-supervised offenders. ExacuTrack AT includes an ankle-mounted transmitter, a GPS tracking unit worn by the offender when he or she leaves home, a base station installed in the offender's home and a central monitoring computer maintained by BI at its 24/7 national monitoring center, the BI GuardCenter®. The supervising agency details a schedule of "exclu-

sion" or "inclusion" zones for the person and precise curfews and schedules.

If an alert is generated, BI forwards the alert to the supervising agency via pager, email, email-enabled cell phone, fax, or a combination of these methods. County probation officers specified this advanced equipment because they want immediate notification of a zone violation so they can contact the offender or intervene as needed. The system enables agencies to know where criminal offenders released to community supervision are throughout the day.

The County's IP coordinator plays a large role in determining who is eligible for the electronic monitoring program. Among other factors, the individual must be a second- or third-time offender, must not have any other criminal charges and must be a Cumberland County resident. Today, two Cumberland County probation officers monitor up to 40 DUI offenders at a time using ExacuTrack AT, meaning up to 40 prison beds are readily available for high-risk offenders. Participants of the program are also required to pay \$11 a day, saving taxpayer dollars.

The IP program places a large emphasis on addressing offender risks and therapeutic needs, such as drug and alcohol counseling. Under Pennsylvania state law, any individual who receives a DUI must undergo a new drug and alcohol evaluation, and consequently, must complete recommended treatment. Finally, the public is very aware and supportive of these creative approaches to reducing prison overcrowding and managing correctional resources wisely.

THE RESULTS

- Cumberland County's several options for supervising DUI offenders in the community have helped to keep prison overcrowding at bay.
- After 15 months, approximately 14,000 bed-days have been saved at the prison – 39 beds per day.
- Through 15 months, 146 offenders have been sentenced to the electronic monitoring program.
- The data provided through GPS offender monitoring provides Cumberland County Adult Probation with timely information to aid courts in sentencing, release decisions and enforcement of court-ordered sanctions.

- By keeping control of the prison capacity, additional costs to house inmates in nearby jails or prisons are being avoided.
- By having offenders pay \$11 a day to participate in the electronic monitoring program, costs to administer the program are being lowered.

TECHNOLOGY:

- BI ExacuTrack™ AT
- BI GuardCenter®



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