



Williamsburg Police Officer Rick Dana worked out at Cuts Fitness on Friday. He's one of about 10 officers who have joined the gym.

Sarah Crowe

Police need to get fit for new criteria

Workout focused to get them running better

By Amanda Kerr

WILLIAMSBURG — Long hours, foot chases and rowdy suspects can make for a hard day in law enforcement. To endure the stress, police need to be physically fit.

That's why the Williamsburg Police Department is encouraging its officers to exercise at Cuts Fitness for Men, and Ladies Workout Express. The police department has scored a corporate rate with each of the gyms and has offered to pay for a membership for any interested police officers as well as dispatchers.

Each gym offers a 30-minute circuit workout that incorporates cardiovascular and strength-building exercises.

Williamsburg Police Chief Mike Yost said that the condensed workouts are ideal for police officers who work long hours and often don't have much time to dedicate to physical fitness.

Yost said that this initiative is a precursor to a new city policy on fitness standards for police and firefighters. The policy is expected to be finalized within the next six months.

"We always want our officers to be in good shape and thought this was a good way to ante up and give them assistance in doing that," he said. "What we are hoping to achieve is having more effective public safety people.

"It's good for the public to have fit public safety people not only from an operational sense, but also in terms of expenses with less sick leave or injuries," Yost said.

There are benefits for the officers as well. "Being a police officer is a very tough job

physically because of the hours you work and the stress you're under, and physical fitness is one way to deal with those issues," Yost said.

Sarah Crowe, who co-owns Cuts Fitness for Men-Williamsburg with her husband, Nick, is focusing on cardiovascular endurance with the police officers.

"One thing that we heard about was that the officers are chasing people down and some can't keep up," she said. "We are really trying to get their body fat down, and the circuit is designed to push cardio."

The circuit consists of 17 exercise stations that range from bikes and step machines to weights and hydraulic resistance machines. Each officer is given 40 seconds at each station. One circuit takes about 10 minutes to complete.

The workouts at Ladies Workout Express include nine hydraulic weight machines and nine cardio stations.

Ladies Workout Express owner Charlene McCloskey can alternate the circuit five ways. "You'll never come and do the same work out two days in a row," she said.

People can spend 30 seconds, 40 seconds, 60 seconds or 80 seconds at each station.

"The circuit workout helps your body not to plateau as easily," McCloskey said.

About 10 officers have signed up at Cuts Fitness while four officers and five dispatchers have signed up at Workout Express. Yost has about 32 police on the payroll.

"I've been going for about 10 weeks, and it really does increase your endurance and stamina," Yost said of the exercise regimen.