Tactics to target troubled neighborhoods
by Tina McLanus

No police department has the luxury of putting a cop on every corner, but Community Policing allows the police to make their presence felt in troubled neighborhoods, particularly through efforts aimed at combating illicit drugs. The following is a brief wrap-up on ideas, strategies, and tactics from around the United States:

- Division Chief J. Michael Stiers, Aurora (CO) Police Department - The entire force was trained in Community Policing by the staff from the MSU National Center for Community Policing in 1987 and 1988. One of the first anti-drug efforts was HICOP (High Intensity Community-Oriented Policing), which took a portion of the city and instituted a zero-tolerance approach. Using problem-oriented strategies, the officers asked the citizens what their biggest problems were and addressed those concerns - crack was, as anticipated, the number one problem. The department interrupted traffic flow in problem areas by having the patrol officers do their routine paperwork in front of crack houses, and they maintained their impact further by issuing code violations on the properties.

- In the Macon-Moline Project, the police initially held a series of meetings with apartment-house owners and managers to see if they could work together on the problem of drug dealers in rental units. The landlords initially feared losing their rent if they participated, but they were eventually convinced that it was more important to hang onto good tenants.

The Macon-Moline Project formed cleanup committees. Managers were instructed on how to screen applicants to keep drugs out of the apartment. These efforts soon expanded to other concerns. "Once energies and forces get together to take care of one problem, they end up taking care of other problems as well," says Stiers.

- Assistant Chief David Sinclair, Lansing (MI) Police Department - Crack first appeared in Lansing in 1987, and the department's initial response was to create REACH (Regional Enforcement Against Crack Houses). This effort aimed to maintain a strong street-level presence in drug-infested areas by stationing officers there 16 hours each day. The department also achieved success against open dealing and prostitution by using barricades on problem streets.
Lansing recently placed Community Officers into specific problem neighborhoods where they had begun to see street-level dealing. Initial reports look promising, and they hope to report on the full impact soon.

- **Deputy Chief David Dusenbury, Long Beach (CA) Police Department** - This department employs a force of trained DRE officers (Drug Recognition Experts) who are able to detect if a suspect is under the influence of drugs, and, if so, what kinds of drugs he or she has probably ingested. DRE's reportedly have a 97% accuracy rate. Dusenbury looks forward to using DRE's in combination with Community Policing to combat the drug problem in Long Beach.

- **Chief Larry Joiner, Kansas City (MO) Police Department** - The county has instituted an anti-drug sales tax. On every $100, twenty-five cents goes to fight drugs in Jefferson County, and it is estimated that the tax will bring in $14 million annually. Half the money, or at least $7 million, whichever is greater, goes to treatment, prevention, and rehabilitation programs, while the remainder will fund extra officers and prosecutors.

- **Assistant Chief Sam Gonzales, Dallas (TX) Police Department** - Operation CLEAN (Commitment of Law Enforcement Against Narcotics) targets six to eight blocks of the city at a time. Undercover operations identify the drug houses first, then sweeps are made with a squad of 100 uniformed officers. After the drug raids, they institute their follow-up component, which provides a police presence that tapers off over a 6-week period. To ensure long-term results, a foot patrol officer remains on permanent assignment. Coordinating city services is also part of the effort to clean up the neighborhoods.