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**THE VILLAGE OF SUGAR MOUNTAIN POLICE DEPARTMENT**  
**251 Dick Trundy Lane**  
**Sugar Mountain, NC 28604**

**REPORT TO VILLAGE COUNCIL**

**April 16, 2026**

The Police Department continues to operate effectively. Our newest officer, Marvin Sanchez-Fabian, has begun Phase One of field training and will be working a split shift with Officer Brown and Officer Kiefer. Officer Sanchez-Fabian graduated from Mayland Community College's Basic Law Enforcement Training program in 2025 and previously worked as a telecommunicator at Mitchell County Communications. Upon completion of field training, he will be assigned to the night shift. Officer Sanchez-Fabian is fluent in Spanish, which will be a valuable asset to the department.

Officer Moore has completed field training and is now assigned to the night shift. He has proven to be a great addition to the Police Department.

Officers have been completing their 2026 in-service training as courses become available online through the North Carolina Justice Academy. I plan to schedule our 2026 firearms training in the coming months in coordination with the Avery County Sheriff's Office. This training will be conducted on two separate dates to ensure no gaps in coverage. In previous years, the entire department completed firearms training on a single date, which required reserve officers to cover shifts. The two date schedule has worked well the past two years.

A burn ban was issued on March 28 by the North Carolina Forest Service and remains in effect at the time of this report. I strongly encourage everyone to refrain from burning during this ban. The risk of wildfire is heightened, and debris from Hurricane Helene will intensify wildfire threats for years to come. Officers are actively monitoring for any open burning, this includes fire pits, and camp fires. Violations will be reported to the North Carolina Forest Service and the Avery County Fire Marshal. The warning sign has been placed at the Grouse Moor and NC184 Intersection. An update from the fire Marshal Offices leads me to believe that the burn ban will continue for some time, until the conditions change. I have attached the memo I received from the Avery County Fire Marshal on 4/15/2026.

At this time, I have no major issues to report. As reflected in the incident summaries below, our department has remained busy and has successfully solved several theft cases, which are often difficult due to the challenges in identifying suspects. The FLOCK Safety Camera System has proven to be an invaluable tool in these investigations. We continue to collaborate with partner agencies to review FLOCK camera footage when needed.

I have been covering the night shift recently to accommodate scheduled training and staff vacations. I anticipate returning to a regular schedule within the next week. Officers continue to patrol the Village diligently in an effort to deter criminal activity. High-visibility patrols remain a priority and are one of our most effective crime deterrents.

I would like to remind everyone to remain mindful of posted speed limits throughout the Village. With warmer weather approaching, we expect an increase in pedestrians, hikers, and cyclists enjoying the area. Speed limits are clearly posted: side streets are **15 MPH zones**, while Grouse Moor Drive and Sugar Mountain Drive are **25 MPH zones**. Speeding remains a significant factor in motor vehicle crashes. Officers will be conducting RADAR enforcement to help maintain safe traffic speeds.

### **Incident Summaries**

- **02/17/2026 – Child Neglect:**  
A report of child neglect was received and remains under investigation. The Sugar Mountain Police Department is working in coordination with the North Carolina State Bureau of Investigation, Avery County Child Protective Services, and Watauga County Child Protective Services. Numerous interviews have been conducted. Additional details will be released upon completion of the investigation.
- **03/31/2026 – Check Fraud:**  
A local business reported an unauthorized check presented at a bank in Vermont. The local bank successfully stopped payment of the check. All investigative information has been forwarded to the Vermont bank, which is now considered the victim.
- **03/31/2026 – Theft:**  
Officer J. Buchanan responded to a theft at the Scotchman Store on NC 105. A male suspect entered an employee-only area and stole two cartons of cigarettes. A vehicle description was obtained. Chief Turbyfill utilized the FLOCK Safety Camera System to identify the suspect vehicle, contacted the vehicle owner, and developed a suspect. Surveillance footage confirmed the identification. Warrants were obtained for breaking and entering and felony larceny.
- **04/03/2026 – Theft:**  
Personal items were reported stolen from Sugartop. A suspect was identified, and the property was returned. The victim declined to pursue criminal charges.
- **04/03/2026 – Traffic Incident:**  
Officers responded to the Grouse Moor intersection, where a commercial vehicle hauling a motor grader damaged utility lines. Traffic on NC 184 was disrupted, and officers directed traffic until the lines were raised. The North Carolina State Highway Patrol Motor Carrier Division completed the report for the property damage.
- **04/08/2026 – Theft / Breaking and Entering:**  
Officer J. Buchanan responded to a report at the Courtyard Marriott regarding a March 22 theft involving thousands of dollars in property. On April 9, Chief Turbyfill identified two suspect vehicles using surveillance footage and FLOCK Safety Camera System. A search warrant and multiple felony warrants were obtained. Officers from SMPD and the Avery County Sheriff's Office recovered \$4,863.05 in stolen property, most of which has been returned. The suspect was arrested and given a \$55,000 secured bond.

- **04/10/2026 – DWI Arrest:**  
Officer Kiefer conducted a traffic stop after observing reckless driving. The driver was determined to be impaired, submitted to a breath test, and was arrested for DWI.
- **04/13/2026 – Traffic Incident:**  
A motor vehicle crash resulted in the closure of NC 105 between Tynecastle and Linville. Officer J. Buchanan assisted the North Carolina Highway Patrol and Linville Fire Department with traffic control.

### **Activity Summary**

- Residence Checks: 419
- Business Checks: 485
- Patrol Miles: 4,197
- Citations: 8
- Arrests: 2

As always, I would like to thank every member of our department for their dedication and hard work. We continue to improve our operations and remain committed to providing the highest level of public safety service to our community, guests, and visitors. We appreciate the continued support and the opportunity to serve the Village of Sugar Mountain.

**Respectfully submitted,**



Casey Turbyfill, Chief

# Activity Log Event Summary (Totals)

## Sugar Mountain Police Department

(03/13/2026 - 04/15/2026)

<No Event Type Specified>	4	911 Hangup	2
ABC Closing	25	Accident	2
Administrative Duty	43	Alarm Activation	9
Assist County Officer	2	Assist Fire Dept.	1
Assist Home Owner	1	Assist Medical	1
Assist Motorist	8	Assist Other Department	12
Assist Other Officer	5	Assist Security	1
Breaking & Entering	1	Business Check	485
Calibrate Alco- Sensor	1	Call in Public Works	1
Citation	8	Civil Disturbance	1
Community Police Contact	5	Continue Investigation	10
Damage to Property	1	Deliver Letter	1
Deliver Town Council Packets	4	Direct Traffic	1
Domestic	1	DWI Arrest	1
Escort	8	Felony Arrest	1
Foot Patrol	60	Fraud	2
Interview	2	Investigation	8
Larceny	5	Lost Property	1
Mental Subject	3	Noise Complaint	2
Object in Road	6	Open Door	2
Other	6	Residence Check	419
See Officer	2	Shots Fired Call	1
Ski Collision	1	Stationary Patrol	20
Stationary Radar	16	Suspicious Activity	4
Suspicious Person	3	Suspicious Vehicle	3
Town Ordinance Citation	1	Training	26
Trespassing	5	Unlock car	1
Vehicle Maintenance	2	Vehicle Search	2
Vehicle Stop	40	Verbal Warning	11
Warning Citation	15	Wash/Clean Patrol Vehicle	5
Welfare Check	5		

**Total Number Of Events: 1,325**



## Fire Marshal's Office

P. O. Box 581  
175 Linville Street  
Newland, NC 28657  
828-733-8210 Office  
Paul R. Buchanan  
Fire Marshal

Date: 4/15/2026

*Information regarding the local burn ban in Avery County NC*

Chiefs,

Please see below regarding what the burn ban covers from the Fire Marshals Office:

### ***This is a statement from NC OSFM concerning local Fire Marshal's Burn Ban***

- .Prohibits all open burning statewide, regardless of whether a permit was previously issued .***
- .Includes campfires, debris burning, fire pits, burn barrels, and fireworks.***
- .Within 100 feet of an occupied dwelling, local fire marshals have jurisdiction***
- .Grills and barbecues are allowed if no local ordinance prohibits them.***
- .Portable gas stoves or grills are recommended for outdoor cooking during the ban.***

***As covered by the ban, permits for outdoor firework displays shall not be issued during the ban.***

Even though charcoal grills and smokers are permitted, they must be covered and properly contained at all times. Burn barrels and homemade grills are strictly prohibited.

Please note that under the NC Forestry burn ban, any grills or smokers capable of producing embers are not allowed outside of the 100-foot jurisdiction. If you have a campground in your district, it is strongly recommended that you communicate these guidelines clearly to staff and visitors.

Additionally, while these devices may be allowed under certain conditions, any fire that becomes uncontrolled will result in the individual responsible for the device being held accountable. It may be helpful to advise citizens to use alternative cooking methods whenever possible.

If you have any questions or need further clarification, please feel free to contact me by phone or email.

  
Paul R. Buchanan