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## Video evidence causing more work for DAs

KATHLEEN MOORE [kmoore@poststar.com](mailto:kmoore@poststar.com) Sep 30, 2018



Jordan

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FORT EDWARD — Video cameras are everywhere now — and the sheer volume of video to review is clogging up the workday for Washington County assistant district attorneys.

District Attorney Tony Jordan has asked the county to hire a sixth assistant district attorney — a cost of \$100,000 — because of the increased workload.

A written document that could be read three times and memorized in less than an hour has been replaced by a video that could be six hours long, he explained.

For example, law enforcement routinely records all interviews with suspects now.

“Previously, all we’d get was that two-page statement,” he said. “Now a six-hour interview for a misdemeanor is recorded.”

He thinks that’s the right thing to do.

“Law enforcement is responding appropriately, I think,” he said.

But it takes his attorneys a lot longer to handle a simple misdemeanor if they must watch a six-hour video.

Similarly, law enforcement is wearing cameras.

“The volume of information you have to review — a DWI now could have an hour of body camera footage instead of maybe six pages to read,” he said.

He doesn’t want his attorneys to fast-forward or skip videos.

“Ultimately, we have to look at everything that comes our way,” he said.



They're also finding huge amounts of evidence by watching videos and reading comments on social media, but getting a search warrant for Facebook can be an ordeal. Regular warrants also used to be fill-in-the-blank and are now much more comprehensive.

"The level of detail and work that goes into these search warrants can be days of work," he said, before adding, "I don't think it's a bad thing. It protects the person whose property is getting searched."

Unfortunately, Washington County is also continuing to see a rise in crime.

Last year, there were 22 percent more felonies. Jordan had hoped it was a fluke.

"But this year to date we're on track to exceed that slightly," he said. "And it's more severe cases. We had three murders in 14 months. I'm not sure we've ever had that before, three separate, distinct murders."

Appeals are up, too.

Last year at this time, the county had seven appeals. This year, the county already has 13 appeals, he said.

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