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HAILEY POLICE DEPARTMENT ANNOUNCES NEWLY CERTIFIED POLICE CANINE TEAM

(Hailey, Idaho) – The Hailey Police Department announced this week the certification of a new police canine team. Sergeant Derek Stewart and Shadow, a 5-year-old black lab, were certified last month in Nampa by Rick Wiley, a State of Idaho Evaluator for the program. Chief of Police Jeff Gunter plans to augment the department's crime prevention efforts with this new program, which will be focused on drug enforcement tasks. Gunter is excited about Shadow, the City of Hailey's first certified drug dog. Gunter said, "Sergeant Stewart and Shadow will be in high demand as Shadow is currently the only south county drug dog."

Becoming a certified K9 team involves a minimum of 80 hours of training and a field exam. Stewart acquired the necessary training while employed by the Ketchum Police Department, and has 3 ½ years of K9 handling experience. Shadow is capable of identifying the odors of a number of drugs, including marijuana, cocaine, heroin and methamphetamine. For the field exam, two samples of each drug were hidden and then had to be found by Shadow; he found all eight samples within 15 minutes.

The new K9 program is an important tool that will encourage drug free environments throughout the city. In other cities, these types of programs are typically used in a number of ways, including assisting in cases involving drug search warrants, searching businesses upon owner request, vehicle searches, performing drug sweeps at schools and complying with parents' requests relative to their minors.

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