

Interim Chief of Police Major Dennis Hoecherl 1997-1998 Member of Bartow Police Department 1982-2012

Major Hoecherl was appointed Interim Chief of Police by city manager Joe DeLegge after the retirement of Chief Tony Sparks in 1997.

Major Hoecherl started with the Bartow Police Department in 1982 and was soon assigned the position of Crime Prevention Officer. Promoted to sergeant in 1989, he continued to work in the Crime Prevention Section. In 1992 after being promoted to Lieutenant,

Hoecherl was assigned to the patrol section as Watch Commander.

He held that position until he was promoted to Captain, and then was assigned to Administrative Services Division Commander.

Major Hoecherl was instrumental in developing and participating in many programs including: Bartow Crime Stoppers, Victim Services, Neighborhood Watch, and the annual Just Say No to Drugs Parade & Rally.

The part of his job that he enjoyed the most was the technological aspect. One of his goals was to establish a direct line of communication between the station and police vehicles.



**Crime Prevention Officer
Dennis Hoecherl in the 1980's**



In 1997, when the search for a new police chief began, Major Hoecherl applied for the position. Although he was one five (5) final applicants, city manager Joe DeLegge selected Captain Erik Sandvik from Pinellas Park Police Department to be the new Bartow Police Chief.

Major Hoecherl resumed his duties, and eventually retired in 2012 after 30 years of service with the Bartow Police Department. Major Hoecherl and Captain Brooks enjoyed a double retirement celebration, both retiring on the same day in December.