CASE STUDY:

LAW ENFORCEMENT FACILITY DESIGN

Carbondale, IL

Storage Solved®

Once-in-a-lifetime Opportunity at Carbondale Police Department

The police department in the college town of Carbondale, Illinois, had been housed in a former dormitory for decades. With small high-school style lockers, cobbled-together cubbies, and overflowing records storage, the facility was cramped and outdated. When the department finally got funding to construct a new building, Police Chief Jeff Grubbs knew he had a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to design the ideal law enforcement facility for his city and his department.

It was a daunting task, and Chief Grubbs started by doing a lot of research. By touring other public safety facilities before starting to plan the building, Chief Grubbs was able to learn from others' experiences and gather ideas that would be a good fit for his department. After seeing Spacesaver products in many well-designed law enforcement facilities, he got the St. Louis-based Spacesaver consultant involved early in the design process to ensure that locker rooms, evidence rooms, and other areas were designed to promote efficiency and organization. The Spacesaver consultant worked closely with the architecture and construction firms to conceptualize and implement a seamless design throughout the building.

"I just wanted to be a police officer. But like in any job, you find your way, and you find yourself fortunate enough to climb the ranks, and you end up in a position doing something that you never dreamed you'd be doing. For me that was designing and overseeing the construction of a 32,548 square foot modern police facility."

- Jeff Grubbs, Carbondale Police Chief

Comfortable Locker Rooms

High-quality lockers were the Chief's first priority in the new building. The police department's old facility had cramped gym-style lockers that were a constant frustration for officers, and he wanted them to have an orderly place to prepare for hectic shifts.

Knowing that durable, well-made lockers would boost officers' morale, Chief Grubbs worked with Spacesaver to specify lockers with benches and drawers, as well as interior features like charging ports, hanging rods, hooks, and shelves. Sloped tops prevent officers from piling items on top of the lockers, and they also conceal the wiring for charging ports located above the lockers' upper shelf. ADA-compliant lockers without benches are conveniently located near the room entrance.

The end result is a locker room that serves as a calm and comfortable place for officers to prepare for shifts or unwind afterwards.

Design Tip:

Integrate storage from the Beginning

"Our goal was to make make the lockers and other storage fixtures look like they were a part of the building. They were designed to be there from the beginning. When you do that, you get the solutions you need. And yes, they're going to cost more but when you see the quality, and the durability, and the clean look, and how it functions, then you know it's worth the price. There's no doubt about it, and we're proud to have it."

- Jeff Grubbs, Carbondale Police Chief

Securing Evidence

Preserving the chain of custody is essential to obtaining convictions. Spacesaver helped Chief Grubbs and the architectural firm design an evidence storage system that would securely store and document evidence from the crime scene to the courtroom.

Pass-Through Temporary Evidence Lockers

Spacesaver's evidence lockers, available in a variety of door configurations to accommodate large and small evidence, help ensure a secure chain of custody. Officers place evidence into these pass-through lockers from one side of a wall, and evidence technicians can access the contents from the evidence room.

Technicians working in the evidence room can access items stored in temporary evidence lockers directly, without leaving the evidence room, resulting in streamlined workflows and a more secure chain of custody.

Refrigerated Temporary Evidence Lockers

Refrigerated compartments provide secure, temporary storage for biological evidence.

Long-term Evidence Storage

Spacesaver's high-density storage systems keep evidence organized and accessible over the long term. Before the move to the new facility, officers thoroughly inventoried the evidence they were storing and implemented a system to purge evidence that they were no longer required to keep.

Weapons Evidence Storage

Evidentiary weapons are stored on Spacesaver 4-Post shelving in a separate locked room. The Spacesaver shelving is configured to make the most efficient use of space.

Design Tip:

Don't let storage be an Afterthought

"I think the most important thing about lockers and evidence and other storage is to not categorize them in the furniture-fixtures and equipment side of the project. Work with your architectural firm, identify your vendor at the beginning of the design process, and design the building alongside the storage solutions. Don't rely upon those bids to come in on a furniture-fixture and equipment side later, to where it looks like an afterthought."

- Jeff Grubbs, Carbondale Police Chief

Always Prepared

Officers always need convenient access to their gear, and quick access is even more vital in times of crisis. The design team considered two main factors as they determined the best way to store rapid response gear: what needed to be stored, and where in the building it could be most quickly retrieved.

Special Response Lockers

The special response room is located on the first floor next to the briefing room, so officers can go from operational briefing straight to transport and deployment. Locker doors were not necessary because only authorized personnel can enter the room. Double-wide lockers provide quick access and plenty of space to store bulky gear.

Design Tip:

Design for Efficiency

"It all goes back into setting the standard and the culture for the organization. When the employees have a facility that includes nice lockers and storage solutions that fit the job duties and responsibilities, it all lends itself to being a more productive organization. Any one piece that's missing diminishes the effectiveness of your organization or causes it to overcome things that it wouldn't otherwise have to."

- Jeff Grubbs, Carbondale Police Chief

Crowd Control Equipment

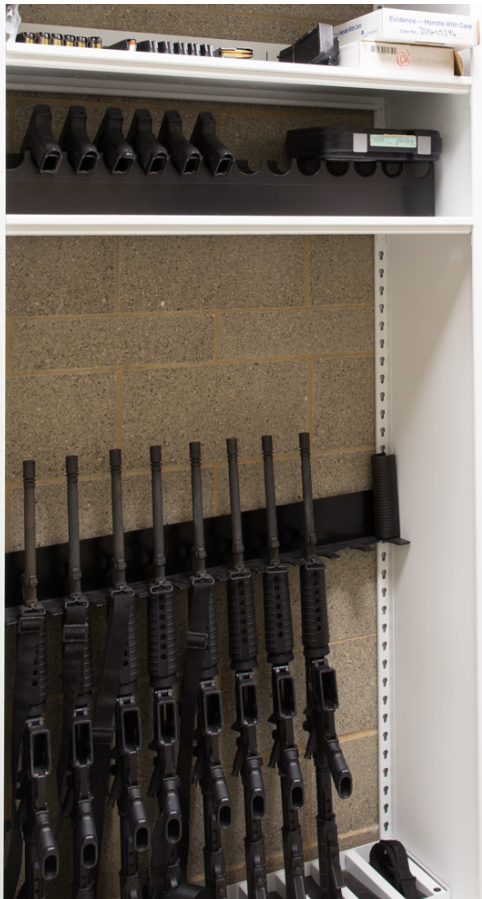
A room adjacent to the garage is fitted with right-sized Spacesaver shelving for gear bags and shields. Every staff member has a labeled personal protective gear bag with equipment and chest protectors, arm and elbow protectors, leg protectors, and a protective helmet.

Staying Safe

Officers are charged with keeping their communities safe, so it's important to plan a facility that protects them. Weapons and hazardous materials should be stored in the safest manner possible.

Armory Storage

Long guns, hand guns, and ammunition are stored on specially configured Spacesaver shelving inside a locked room.



Sally Port lockers

Sally port lockers provide convenient temporary weapon storage.

Hazardous Materials Storage

Hazardous materials are stored in a separate locked room, inside Spacesaver lockers.

Storing the Basics

While storage for everyday essentials isn't particularly exciting, every law enforcement agency needs to provide adequate space for storing records, apparel for new employees, personal property, and other necessities. Thoughtful storage solutions can minimize the space needed to store these items, while still providing convenient access.

Records Storage

To reduce initial construction costs but still provide room to expand records storage in the future, rails were set in the floor during construction and only a few high-density shelving carriages were initially installed. More shelving and carriages will be added as needed in the future.

Quartermaster Storage

Spare jackets and other apparel are stored on Spacesaver 4-Post shelving fitted with garment hanging rods. Spacesaver's 4-Post shelving can be fitted with doors, drawers, and other accessories to increase functionality.

Temporary Personal Property Storage

Detainees' property is secured in Spacesaver lockers located in the intake area.

Equipment Room for Patrol

Located near the staff entrance / exit, the equipment room houses report writing stations, spare radio battery storage, and forms and mailboxes. Spacesaver shelving is configured to provide easily accessible storage for duty bags, paperwork, and personal items.

Design Tip:

Employees take pride in well-ordered space

"I think everybody can agree that whether it's in their business or office space or even in their own home, if the storage is not organized and ready to go, then it's in disarray. It lends itself to being less than a professional look and that diminishes the pride that people have in their work."

- Jeff Grubbs, Carbondale Police Chief

Learn from the best

At Spacesaver, we know that planning a new facility or renovation can be a daunting experience. Your officers and your community are counting on you to make the most effective use of taxpayer funds. But while this type of design project might come once in a career for you, keep in mind that we work on them every day. Our Wisconsin-based teams of in-house engineers, project managers, and manufacturing craftspeople are ready to work with your local Spacesaver consultant to design, build, and install effective storage solutions that will stand the test of time.

As you think about designing a new or renovated law enforcement facility, ask your local Spacesaver consultant for a tour of other buildings in the area. You'll be able to gain insight and inspiration from others who have undertaken similar challenges.

Ready to learn more? Contact us for a free, no obligation space assessment.

800.492.3434 | www.spacesaver.com

Spacesaver Corporation
1450 Janesville Avenue
Fort Atkinson, WI 53538-2798
1-800-492-3434
www.spacesaver.com

KI
1330 Bellevue Street
P.O. Box 8100
Green Bay, WI 54302-8100
1-800-424-2432
www.ki.com

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