



A new headquarters for St. Charles Parish Sheriff's Office



Greg Champagne
Sheriff, St. Charles Sheriff's Office

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Major Sam Zinna
Construction project manager

Earlier this year, various state and local leaders, along with sheriffs from six outside parishes, joined St. Charles Sheriff Greg Champagne as he unveiled his department's new headquarters in a ceremony in Luling, Louisiana.

The 34,000 square-foot \$6.6 million building is designed to withstand a moderate category 3 hurricane, and consolidates the Sheriff's Office enforcement operations into one place – a first for the department, according to Champagne.

"There are only five parishes in Louisiana with no municipal police department to assist the Sheriff's department, and St. Charles is one of those parishes," Champagne said. "My deputies are the ones who do it all to protect the community from crime, so I felt we needed a building that would allow us to have a full service law enforcement operation under one building. This department has been in

existence for over 100 years, since just after reconstruction. This is the first time in history we'll have a stand-alone facility to run our operations."

Maj. Sam Zinna, who spearheaded the project and monitored construction, said the building houses the Sheriff's Office's patrol, detective, and juvenile divisions, as well as the crime lab. The building also has space for evidence processing and storage, fingerprinting, interview rooms outfitted with audio and video equipment and conference rooms.

The multipurpose room inside the building, used for meetings, press conferences and other gatherings, was also dedicated Thursday in honor of late St. Charles Parish Judge Edward Dufresne

Jr., who passed away earlier this year. Dufresne donated a large tract of land to the parish where the building stands before his death.

The land was originally slated to house a community center, but Champagne came to Dufresne with a vision for the future of the department. Dufresne's daughter, Debra Dufresne-Vial said she recalled how enthusiastic her father was when Champagne came to him with his plans.

"My father was like a little kid at Christmas," Dufresne-Vial said. "He loved to see the collaboration of government entities. He beamed with pride at the notion of using the property for the good of the parish."

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