



# MEDIA RELEASE

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## **City of Novi celebrates opening of state-of-the-art Firearms Training Center**

**NOVI, Michigan, February 5, 2008** – On January 28, 2008, the City of Novi dedicated its first-ever Firearms Training Center to the men and women of the Novi Police Department and Special Agents of the Drug Enforcement Administration who helped make the facility possible. The state-of-the-art Firearms Training Center was entirely funded using federal drug forfeiture funds as a result of Operation Falling Star. Construction of the \$1.725 million Firearms Training Center began in September 2007.

Traditionally, firearms training consisted of officers standing on the firing line and shooting their weapon at a static target from various distances. Their skill was measured by a scoring system that measured the officer's ability to "hit" a bulls-eye. This type of training was conducted in a well lit, low stress environment and provided officers with the basic mechanics of shooting. But to train an officer when and how to shoot accurately, he or she must be trained utilizing real world scenarios.

The new Novi Police Department Firearms Training Center boasts the latest in technologies simulating real world scenarios. The Firearms Training Center includes eight shooting lanes, remote targets programmed to create a variety of training scenarios at numerous distances, and two "running" targets that move perpendicular to the officer.

Additionally, the new Firearms Training Facility provides officers the ability to train without leaving Novi. In the past, officers traveled to the City of Farmington range twice a month to perform their firearm training sessions. This new facility ensures officers are trained in their community, all the while being able to respond on emergency calls, if needed.

"We were very fortunate to have this opportunity to construct a state-of-the-art training facility," notes Novi's Chief of Police David Molloy. "With the approval of City Council, we were able to fulfill our most critical training need and have the facility entirely funded by Federal drug forfeiture funds as a result of Operation Falling Star."

Operation Falling Star commenced on March 18, 2004 when the Novi Police Department received a 911 call stating there was an incident at Studio Plus wherein a female was fearful occupants of a hotel room had been harmed. Officers checked the room and found no one inside, but did find large

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bags containing an enormous amount of US currency. Information gained from this search led investigators to another location in Northville. Three additional bags containing multiple bundles of US currency were found. Three suspects were taken into custody from Texas and Mexico and were charged with Conspiracy to Launder Money and Conspiracy to Distribute Marijuana.

For nearly two years, officers from the Novi Police Department worked with agents from the Drug Enforcement Administration to dismantle one of the largest international narcotic trafficking organizations. Their efforts resulted in the seizure of more than \$15 million in narcotics proceeds and confiscation of nearly 25,000 pounds of marijuana.

Department of Justice Federal Forfeiture guidelines mandate a certain percentage of the forfeiture funds are donated to the community for drug and crime prevention. As a result of Operation Falling Star, the City of Novi received nearly \$6.5 million in Federal Forfeiture funds.

In addition to appropriating the funds to completely construct the Firearms Training Center, the Novi City Council also designated the funds to enhance several Novi Police Department initiatives, including the addition of new Police Officers, patrol vehicles, in-car digital cameras, financial management software, new computers and laptops for police cruisers and enhanced emergency and 911 telecommunications equipment. The City of Novi was also able to use the funds to pay off the Police Department Building bond debt.

The Firearms Training Center was designed by Southfield-based Redstone Architects and constructed by the Garrison Company out of Farmington Hills.

For more information on the City of Novi and the Novi Police Department, visit [cityofnovi.org](http://cityofnovi.org).

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