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Staten Island
Advance

Institute Opens Pilot Safety Course

Classes of the first safety officers' training academy in the country are under way at the Staten Island Institute for Basic Research in Mental Retardation, Willowbrook.

Thirty - one safety officers from state institutions throughout New York State are attending the two-week course, which is a pilot program in anticipation of a permanent training academy.

Residing at nearby Willowbrook State School, the trainees attend all-day classes in police, fire and safety work, as well as first aid and public relations.

Instructors are being supplied by the city Police Academy, the fire training service and the state Mental Hygiene Department.

Police and fire departments have always had training schools, but in the past, safety officers (the patrolmen assigned to state hospitals) have learned on-the-job, according to Raymond Kehoe, of Dongan Hills, commanding officer of the new academy and chief safety officer of Manhattan State Hospital.

He expressed hope that a permanent site for a safety officer training academy might be found on the Island, possibly at Willowbrook State School.

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Safety First

Safety officers from state institutions and hospitals throughout New York State listen to Lt. Thor Holvik, center, of the New York City Police Academy during classes of the first safety officers' training academy in the country. Standing, right, is Lt. Murray Sohmer, chief instructor of the academy, which is meeting daily for two weeks in the Institute for Basic Research in Mental Retardation, Willowbrook.

S.I. Advance Photo by Jean Perdue