



Violent and Property Offenses in Anchorage, 2003–2008

This research overview presents information on serious violent and property crimes reported to Anchorage police for the period 2003 to 2008. The data were collected as part of the Federal Bureau of Investigation’s Uniform Crime Reporting Program (UCR). The data presented here are limited to Part I offenses of the UCR, which include four violent crimes (murder and non-negligent homicide, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault) and four property crimes (burglary, larceny theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson). (See *Research Overview* No. 2, March 2009.)

Volume of Violent Crimes in Anchorage

Overall the volume of violent crimes reported to Anchorage police increased significantly between 2003 and 2008. Aggravated assault and robbery rates increased by 55% during the period. The rate of increase for forcible rape was much more constrained (4.3%). Over the same timeframe, the murder rate dropped 43%, from 6.27 per 100,000 in 2003 to 3.57 per 100,000 population in 2008.

Anchorage property crime rates also declined between 2003 and 2008, with the largest declines seen in motor vehicle theft (-38.1%) and larceny theft (-22.8%). Declines for both burglary and arson rates over the period were similar in magnitude (-18.7% and -19.8%, respectively), but significantly less than declines for motor vehicle theft and larceny theft.

Table 1. Number of Violent and Property Crimes Known to Police, Anchorage, 2003–2008

| Year | Population | Violent crime | | | | | Property crime | | | | |
|------|------------|---------------------------------------|---------------|---------|--------------------|--------------|----------------|---------------|---------------------|-------|---------------|
| | | Murder and non-negligent manslaughter | Forcible rape | Robbery | Aggravated assault | Total | Burglary | Larceny-theft | Motor vehicle theft | Arson | Total |
| 2003 | 271,085 | 17 | 244 | 340 | 1,143 | 1,744 | 1,418 | 9,091 | 1,197 | 128 | 11,834 |
| 2004 | 273,714 | 15 | 263 | 331 | 1,555 | 2,164 | 1,523 | 7,354 | 1,024 | 82 | 9,983 |
| 2005 | 276,109 | 16 | 224 | 384 | 1,407 | 2,031 | 1,783 | 8,248 | 1,334 | 76 | 11,441 |
| 2006 | 277,692 | 17 | 248 | 465 | 1,862 | 2,592 | 1,733 | 8,543 | 1,445 | 106 | 11,827 |
| 2007 | 284,142 | 22 | 257 | 453 | 1,673 | 2,405 | 1,454 | 8,397 | 1,256 | 145 | 11,252 |
| 2008 | 280,068 | 10 | 263 | 544 | 1,830 | 2,647 | 1,191 | 7,254 | 766 | 106 | 9,317 |

Source of data: Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Crime in the United States 2003–2008*, <http://www.fbi.gov/ucr/ucr.htm>

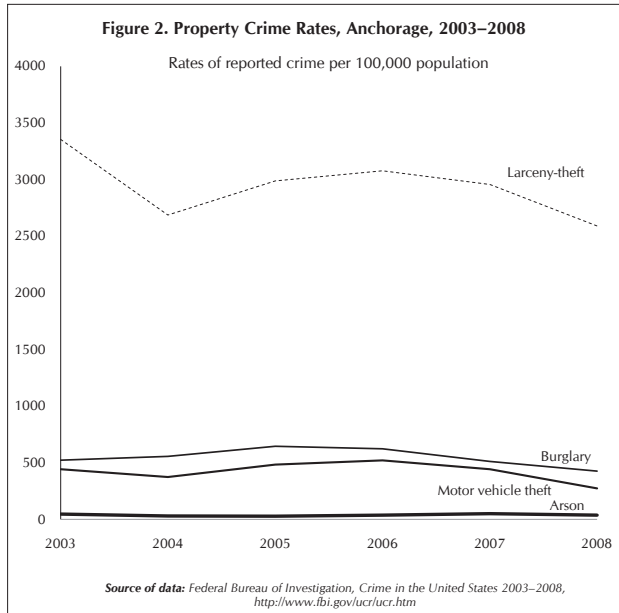
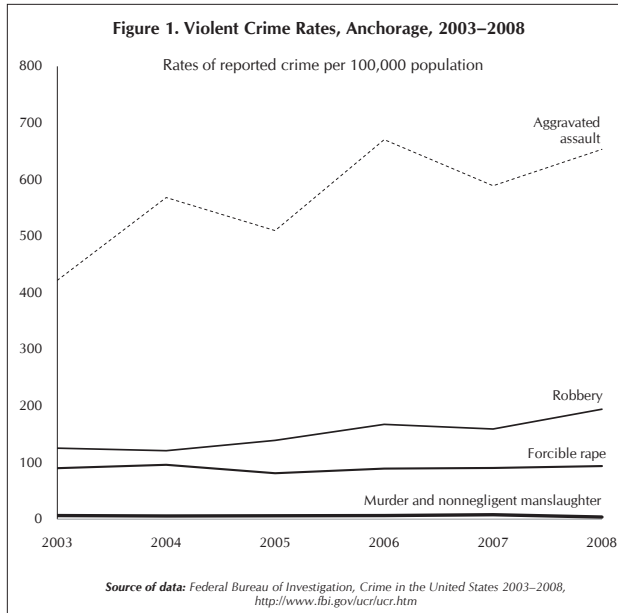
Table 2. Rates of Violent and Property Crimes Known to Police, Anchorage, 2003–2008

Rates of reported crime per 100,000 population.

| Year | Population | Violent crime | | | | | Property crime | | | | |
|-----------------------|------------|---------------------------------------|---------------|---------|--------------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|---------------------|--------|-----------------|
| | | Murder and non-negligent manslaughter | Forcible rape | Robbery | Aggravated assault | Total | Burglary | Larceny-theft | Motor vehicle theft | Arson | Total |
| 2003 | 271,085 | 6.27 | 90.01 | 125.42 | 421.64 | 643.34 | 523.08 | 3,353.56 | 441.56 | 47.22 | 4,365.42 |
| 2004 | 273,714 | 5.48 | 96.09 | 120.93 | 568.11 | 790.61 | 556.42 | 2,686.75 | 374.11 | 29.96 | 3,647.24 |
| 2005 | 276,109 | 5.79 | 81.13 | 139.08 | 509.58 | 735.58 | 645.76 | 2,987.23 | 483.14 | 27.53 | 4,143.65 |
| 2006 | 277,692 | 6.12 | 89.31 | 167.45 | 670.53 | 933.41 | 624.07 | 3,076.43 | 520.36 | 38.17 | 4,259.04 |
| 2007 | 284,142 | 7.74 | 90.45 | 159.43 | 588.79 | 846.41 | 511.72 | 2,955.21 | 442.03 | 51.03 | 3,959.99 |
| 2008 | 280,068 | 3.57 | 93.91 | 194.24 | 653.41 | 945.13 | 425.25 | 2,590.09 | 273.51 | 37.85 | 3,326.69 |
| % change in past year | -1.4% | -53.9% | 3.8% | 21.8% | 11.0% | 11.7% | -16.9% | -12.4% | -38.1% | -25.8% | -16.0% |
| % change 2003–2008 | 3.3% | -43.1% | 4.3% | 54.9% | 55.0% | 46.9% | -18.7% | -22.8% | -38.1% | -19.8% | -23.8% |

Source of data: Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Crime in the United States 2003–2008*, <http://www.fbi.gov/ucr/ucr.htm>

Violent and Property Offenses in Anchorage, 2003–2008



UCR Data for Five Cities: A Comparison

Table 3 presents 2008 UCR data for five cities of similar size also located in the western United States. In 2008 Anchorage had a substantially higher rate of violent crime than each of the other cities listed in Table 3. This was due in large measure to Anchorage’s exceptionally high rates of aggravated assault and forcible rape. The prevalence of forcible rape in Anchorage was at least twice as high as the rates observed in Spokane, Salt Lake City, Portland, and Boise, and 6% higher than in Colorado Springs. The disparity was not as striking for aggravated assault. For that crime, a 2 to 1 (or greater) ratio was observed for only two cities: Colorado Springs and Boise. For the remaining three cities, Anchorage’s aggravated assault rate was 39% to 77% higher.

The news was much better for property crimes. Anchorage had among the lowest rates for burglary, larceny theft, and motor vehicle theft. Anchorage’s arson rate, however, was second only to Portland.

Research compiled by Brad A. Myrston, Assistant Professor

| City | Population | Violent crime | | | | Total | Property crime | | | | Total |
|------------------|------------|---------------------------------------|---------------|---------|--------------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|---------------------|-------|-----------------|
| | | Murder and non-negligent manslaughter | Forcible rape | Robbery | Aggravated assault | | Burglary | Larceny-theft | Motor vehicle theft | Arson | |
| Anchorage | 280,068 | 3.57 | 93.91 | 194.24 | 653.41 | 945.13 | 425.25 | 2,590.09 | 273.51 | 37.85 | 3,326.69 |
| Spokane | 201,491 | 6.45 | 46.65 | 228.30 | 389.60 | 671.00 | 1,126.10 | 3,582.29 | 763.31 | 28.79 | 5,500.49 |
| Colorado Springs | 378,403 | 6.34 | 88.53 | 136.89 | 296.51 | 528.27 | 899.04 | 3,049.92 | 297.04 | 28.54 | 4,274.54 |
| Salt Lake City | 180,514 | 6.65 | 40.99 | 269.79 | 469.22 | 786.64 | 1,131.77 | 6,798.92 | 1,020.97 | 32.13 | 8,983.79 |
| Portland | 553,023 | 4.70 | 45.21 | 204.69 | 368.34 | 622.94 | 778.81 | 3,905.26 | 603.77 | 54.79 | 5,342.63 |
| Boise | 203,770 | 0.49 | 39.75 | 31.41 | 198.75 | 270.40 | 540.32 | 2,237.33 | 105.02 | 23.56 | 6,466.11 |

Source of data: Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Crime in the United States 2008*, <http://www.fbi.gov/ucr/ucr.htm>