



PORT HUENEME POLICE DEPARTMENT
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 Andrew Salinas – Chief of Police



NEWS RELEASE

Incident Date/Time: March 1, 2022

Incident Location: 2021 UCR Crime Statistics

Subject: Crime in Port Hueneme Hits Historic Low

Narrative:

In the spirit of transparency and building community trust, the Port Hueneme Police Department is releasing its annual crime statistics. The Port Hueneme Police Department collects data and crime information as part of the Uniform Crime Reporting Program coordinated by the FBI. Each year this reliable set of statistics are reported to the FBI and subsequently used for evaluating the overall crime rate in a city.

The UCR crime categories and the reported crime data for 2021 and 3 previous years are listed below:

Part I Crime (YTD)	2018	2019	2020	2021	Percent Change 20-21	Num. Diff.
Violent Crimes						
Homicide	0	0	0	2	200.0%	2
Rape	4	5	7	5	-28.6%	-2
Robbery	18	14	12	11	-8.3%	-1
Aggravated Assault	39	24	38	44	15.8%	6
Total	61	43	57	62	8.8%	5
Property Crimes						
Burglary	86	64	43	38	-11.6%	-5
Motor Vehicle Theft	55	47	48	40	-16.7%	-8
Larceny (Theft)	280	305	305	264	-13.4%	-41
Arson	11	3	6	4	-33.3%	-2
Total	432	419	402	346	-13.9%	-56
Grand Total	493	462	459	408	-11.1%	-51

A new low crime record has been set in the City of Port Hueneme. Crime is down for the fourth year in a row leading to numbers never before seen in the city’s history. This downward trend can be attributed to a number of factors such as the passage of Measure U which created additional funding for public safety; re-investment in public safety technology such as license plate readers and software; the addition of

NEWS RELEASE: 2021 UCR Statistics

March 1, 2022

Page 2

Community Service Officers; and our continued commitment to being engaged in our community.

The City of Port Hueneme saw an overall crime reduction of 11% or 51 fewer crimes as compared to last year. The city saw an increase of nearly 9% in violent crime and a decrease in property crime of approximately 14%. The violent crime increase was attributed to a notable increase in the Aggravated Assaults category which includes; Assault with Deadly Weapon and the Brandishing of Weapons; and serious domestic assaults. Of the 44 reported aggravated assaults, 25 resulted in an arrest for a 56% total arrest rate.

Tragically, we experienced our first homicide in almost four years when suspect Samuel Rocha drove his vehicle through a group of seven young bicyclists resulting in the death of 16-year-old Pedro Valdez on April 19, 2021.

Robberies continue to decline with a decrease of nearly 39% between 2018 and 2021.

Property crime in the city decreased by nearly 14% with a total of 56 fewer crimes than the year before. Reductions were seen in all four categories with an 11% drop in Burglary; a 16% drop in Motor Vehicle Theft; 13% drop in Larceny; and 33% drop in Arson.

Of the 264 thefts reported, shoplifts accounted for 65 of those crimes while Thefts from Vehicles accounted for approximately 23%, or 62 of the reported larcenies.

The Motor Vehicle Theft (Auto Theft) category saw a decrease of 19%. While the Port Hueneme Police Department reported 40 stolen vehicles in the city, officers recovered 49 stolen vehicles during that same time. Of the 49 stolen vehicles recovered, 32 of the vehicles were occupied and resulted in arrests. This is the second straight year in the city's history that more vehicles have been recovered than were actually reported stolen. A majority of the vehicles that were recovered came from other cities such as Oxnard.

The months of July, August, and December accounted for our highest crime months during the year, while February, May, and November remained our lowest months of the year.

According to the California Department of Finance, the 2021 population for the City of Port Hueneme was 23,374. This tabulates to the overall crime rate per 1,000 to be 17.46 – also a historic low.

Police Chief Andrew Salinas said the following about the reduction in overall crime,

“While crime is at an all-time low, quality of life issues continue to be on the rise as over half our calls for service involve criminal vagrancy. Our residents are also concerned about the increased traffic in the city. We will focus our efforts not only on keeping crime low but also meeting the needs of our community.”

NEWS RELEASE: 2021 UCR Statistics

March 1, 2022

Page 2

Larcenies remain the driving force behind our crime rate with thefts from vehicles and shoplifting leading this category. The decriminalization of theft for repeat offenses, as well as bail reform, have made it difficult to keep criminals from subsequent offenses in this category.

In regards to DUI related traffic offenses, the City of Port Hueneme saw a large increase. Chief Salinas commented, "DUI related traffic collisions also saw a considerable decline in 2020 but witnessed an increase rebounded 2021. Notably, we made 51 DUI arrests in 2021, while 2020 only saw 22 such arrests. We made one arrest for driving under the influence of cannabis. In addition, there were no traffic collisions in 2021 related to anyone being under the influence of cannabis."

"With cannabis taking effect in Port Hueneme in 2017, many believed it would be a contributing factor and a source for criminal activity. This remains one of the biggest myths about cannabis today," said Chief Salinas. These licensed and legal dispensaries continue to deter and reduce crime in the shopping centers in which they are present. With over 75,000 customers visiting Port Hueneme dispensaries every month, the areas around these businesses have remained safe and clean.

In spite of the demand and attention driven by the current pandemic, the men and women of the Port Hueneme Police Department continue to face the demands and challenges with pride and professionalism as reflected in our Mission Statement. Our crime statistics were not swayed due to illness or the pandemic as we were able to maintain a strong level of service during this difficult time and when our public needed us the most.

Chief Salinas continued, "I am both proud and thrilled for members of the Port Hueneme Police Department and everyone at the City of Port Hueneme as our future is incredibly bright and a sense of rejuvenation and transformation is on the horizon. When you have a mission and a vision, officers continue to know what's important to the organization and to the community."

The Port Hueneme Police Department has been committed to recognizing deficiencies, adapting to changes in policing, engaging the community, and building relationships. We can't do this without our community supporting and believing in the men and women of this police department. It is critical to evolve and to adapt to crime trends and the needs of the community. You can't just rely on data but rather positive outcomes. This strategy is paying dividends.

This four-year downward trend started with a strengthened partnership with our community as well as our local partners such as the Oxnard Police Department, the District Attorney's Office, Naval Base Ventura County, and the Port of Hueneme.

These investments reflect a commitment that extends across this administration and our boundaries as we continue to invest in our neighborhoods and build bonds of civic trust.