



Annual Report

2024

Billing Police Department

Billing Police Department 2024 Annual Report

Meet Our Command Staff — Led by Chief St. John and Assistant Chief Lawrence, our Commanders oversee more than 200 sworn and civilian employees making them the leaders of Montana's largest local law enforcement agency

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Violent Crime Statistics — Assaults increased slightly in 2024, which is partially driven by an increase in criminal endangerment offenses associated with weapons and traffic offenses

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Property Crime Statistics — Motor vehicle thefts decreased for the fourth consecutive year

20

Traffic Statistics — Officers issued fewer citations but more warnings during 2024

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Investigations and Evidence Divisions — Billings Detectives maintained a 70% clearance rate

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Learn about BPD's specialized details and task force membership — Billings Police serve in a variety of additional duties that enhance public safety and remove drugs from the community

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Animal Control Division — Officers responded to more than 5,000 calls for service during 2024

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Welcome, Congratulations and Farewell — BPD ended the year with 8 new officers, 4 new Community Service Officers and 8 retirements

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Office of Professional Standards Report —

TBA

Response to Resistance Report —

TBA



Mayor, City Council, and Billings residents:

As we close the chapter on another remarkable year, we are proud to share the highlights and accomplishments that defined 2024 for the Billings Police Department. This year marked significant milestones, innovative breakthroughs, and a continued commitment to excellence. Our commitment to ensure the safety and well-being of every resident or visitor remains unwavering. The report summarizes the incredible work of the men and women of the Billings Police Department and gives you some insight into future challenges as we move forward.

Despite the many challenges of the last few years, we have accomplished much this past year. Within the pages of this report you will find statistics, charts, graphs, and other information that documents and measures the department's activity and performance in the face of complex issues, both within the community and criminal justice system. More importantly, the report highlights our dedication to provide excellent, efficient, and responsive police services to the citizens of Billings.

As you review this report, keep in mind that it also represents the dedication of our team, the trust of our partners, and the support of our community. Looking ahead, 2025 promises an even greater opportunity to grow, innovate, and make a difference. I would like to thank our Mayor, City Council members, and City Administration. They have been instrumental in creating an environment that fosters innovation and success.

It has been my honor to serve as the Chief of Police for Billings. Thank you for the trust and support you have given the department. Your support goes neither unnoticed nor unappreciated. We will continue to innovate, persevere, and stay resilient as we provide exceptional service and the best of contemporary policing. And we will do so with a professional and dedicated staff.

I welcome you to visit our website www.Billingsmt.gov and become a follower of the Billings Police Department Facebook page.

Sincerely

Rich St. John
Chief of Police

Mission Statement

The Billings Police Department is committed to improving the quality of life through a customer service, problem solving partnership with the community.

Organizational Values

We are committed to delivering professional police service to Billings under the philosophy of community oriented policing through:

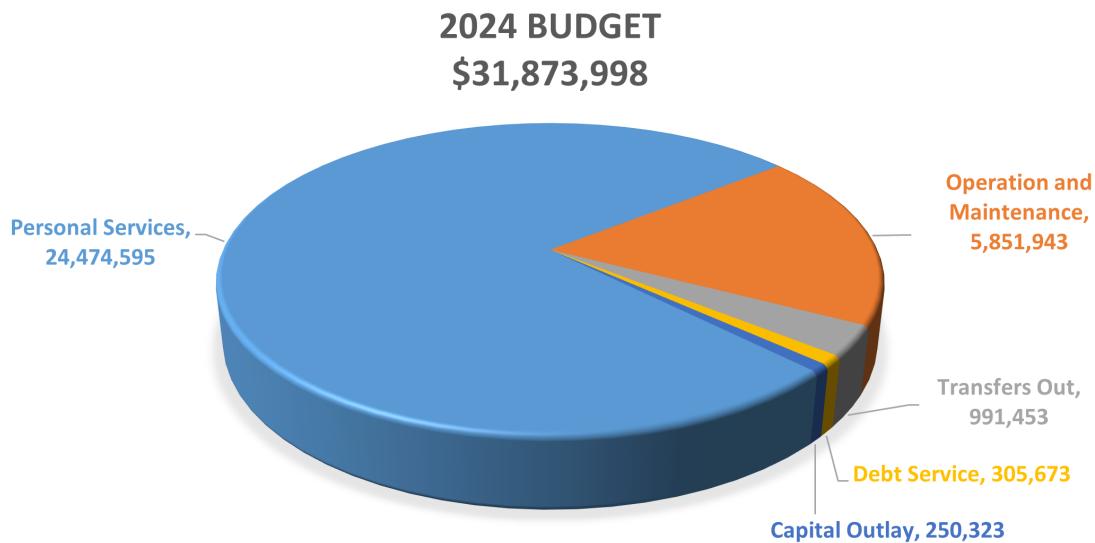
COMMITMENT – Being responsive to the need for increased community livability

SERVICE – Employing a customer service approach ~ Recognizing that our customers are the community, other personnel within the Department and other City employees

PARTNERSHIP – Utilizing a strong police-community partnership for problem solving

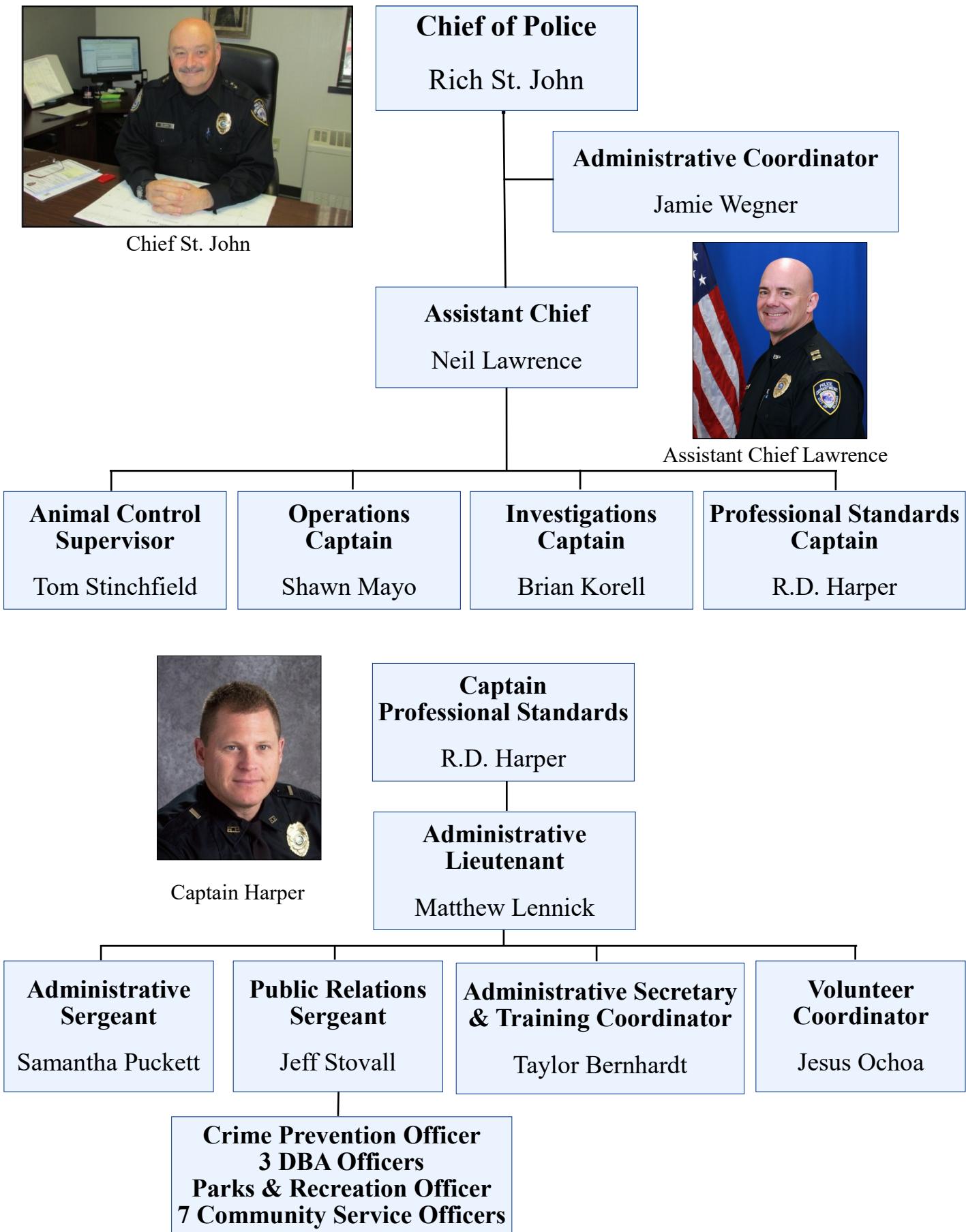
INTEGRITY – Applying moral, ethical and professional standards

Funding at a Glance

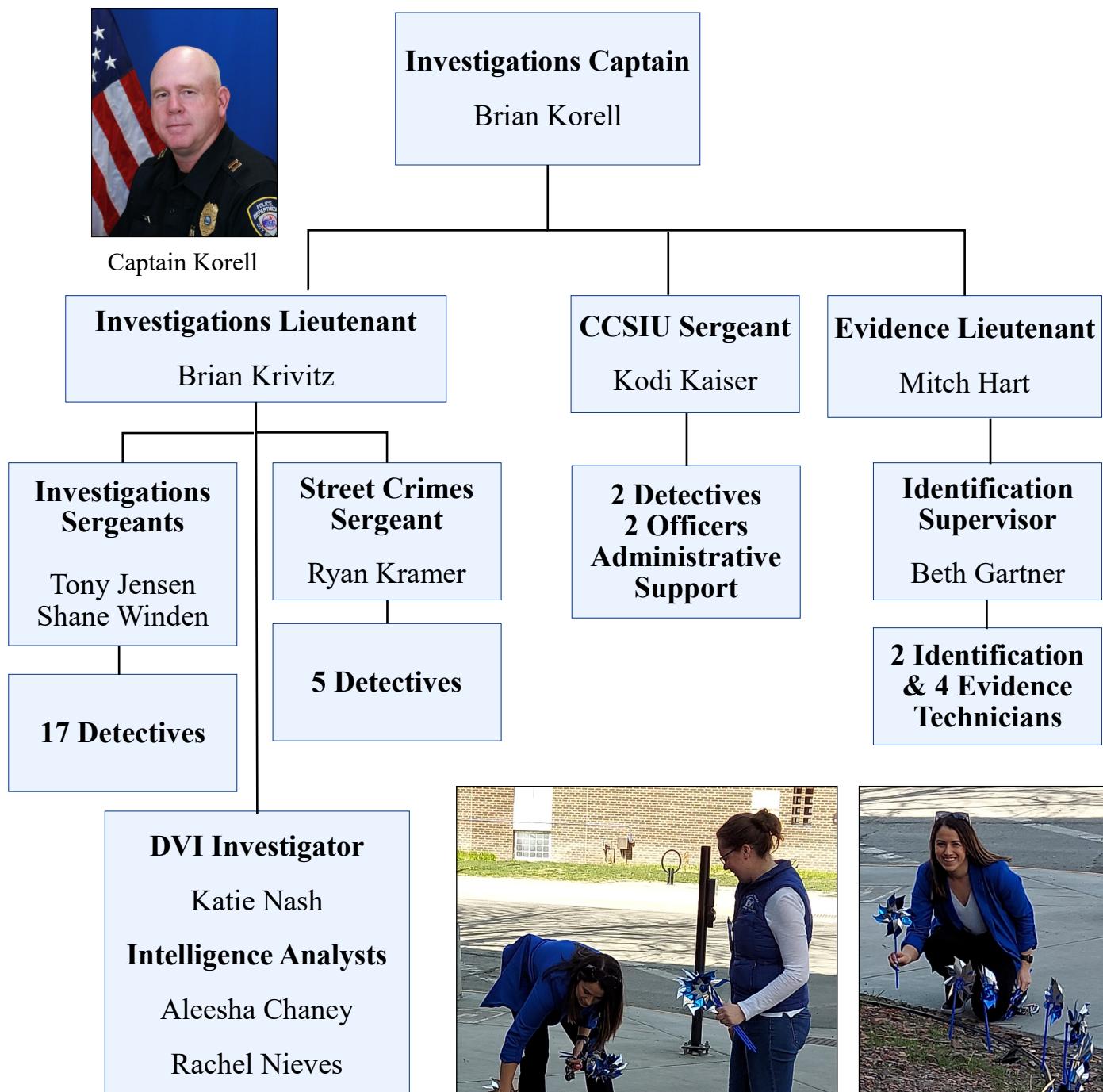


Grant	Uses	Amount
Comprehensive Opioid, Stimulant, and Substance Abuse Program (COSSAP)	Implement Billings Peer Support Program	\$ 900,000
2024 Domestic Violence Grant (DVI)	Domestic Violence Investigator overtime, training, supplies	\$ 79,442
Railroad Trespassing Enforcement Activities Program	Overtime for railroad trespass enforcement	\$ 120,000
2024 HIDTA Grant	Aids drug investigations with clerical staff overtime and equipment	\$ 227,745
2024 Homeland Security Grant	Bomb Squad training and equipment	\$ 130,000
2022 Homeland Security Grant	Bomb Squad training and equipment	\$ 80,000
2022 Homeland Security Grant	Explosive Ordnance Disposal transport vehicle	\$ 365,000
2023 Homeland Security EMPG Grant	Night Vision equipment	\$ 345,000
2023 Homeland Security Grant	Bomb Squad Training	\$ 70,000
2024 JAG Grant	Purchases equipment for BPD and YCSO	\$ 126,080
2022 JAG Grant	Purchases equipment for BPD and YCSO	\$ 123,669
2023 JAG Grant	Purchases equipment for BPD and YCSO	\$ 152,772
State Highway Traffic Safety Grant	Funds salary, benefits and equipment for DUI officer	\$ 160,000
State Highway Traffic Safety Grant	Funds overtime for traffic patrols	\$ 17,000
2023 Project Safe Neighborhoods Grant	Funds internships to analyze violent crime data	\$ 34,000
Total Grants 2023-2024		\$ 2,930,708

Chain of Command



Chain of Command



Detective Jones (above left and far right) and Amy from Support Services put pinwheels around the Police Department as part of Child Abuse Awareness Month in April. Blue and silver pinwheels are a national symbol for child abuse awareness and prevention.

Chain of Command



Did you know?

Billings Police Officers hosted 229 people on ride alongs during 2024.

Citizens ride with officers during their shift. The rides usually last a few hours and can be done any time of day or day of the week. These experiences give citizens the opportunity to see first-hand how officers work and to better understand law enforcement in our community.

Ride-along applicants who are younger than 18 require a parent or guardian's signature. All riders must provide identification when submitting a ride-along request.

More information and the request form is available on the Community Services page at www.billingspolice.com.



Calls For Service

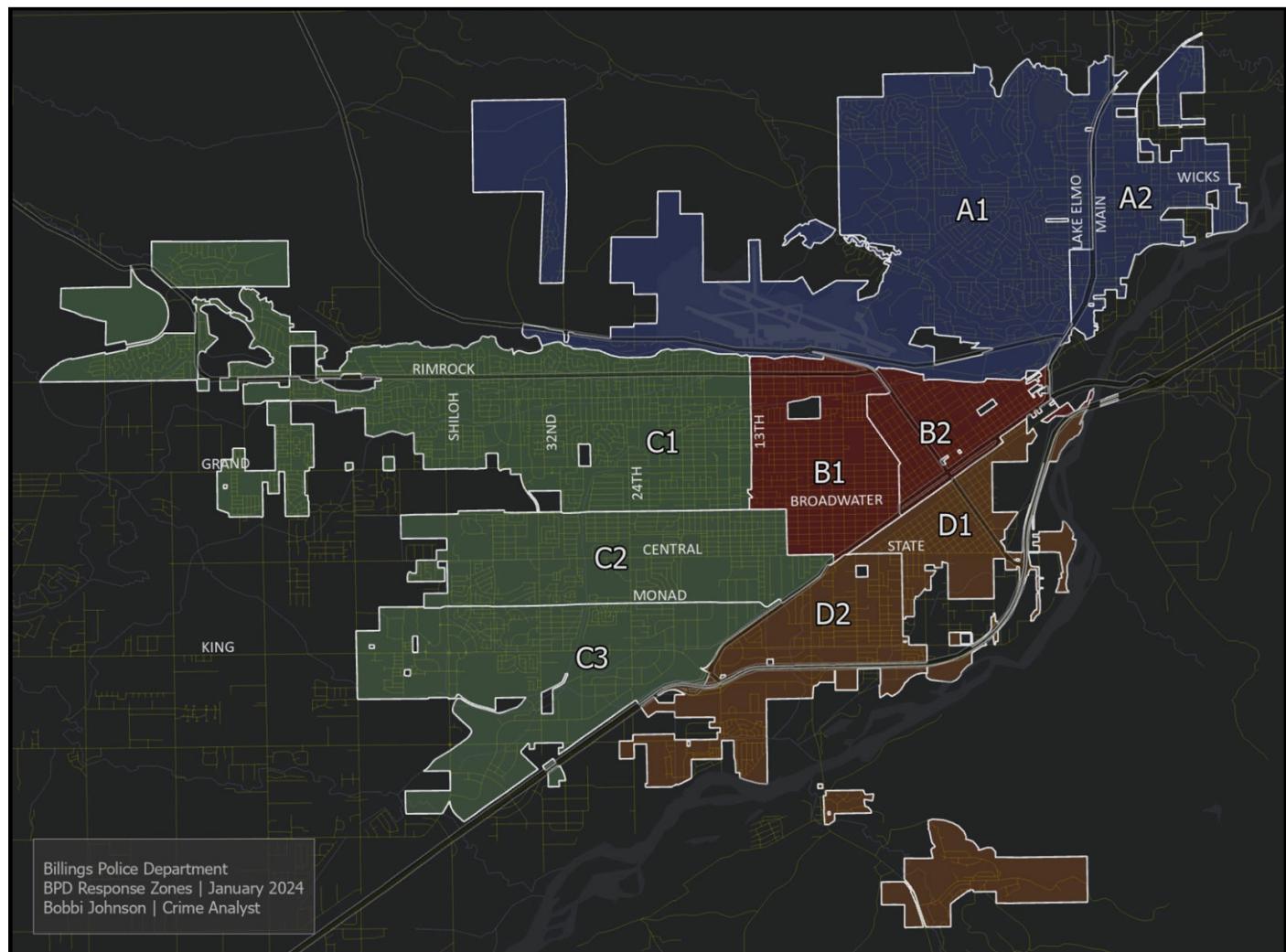
Where We Work

There are an average of 16 patrol officers and commanders on each of the three shifts Billings Police Department operates every day. At the beginning of each shift, commanders determine which part of Billings each officer will patrol that day. There are never less than 9 officers on duty.

Billings Police Department has divided the city into Zones. The boundaries are based on natural borders, such as the Rimrocks, obvious boundaries, such as arterial roads and the railroad tracks, and some boundaries are unique to the Department's call load.

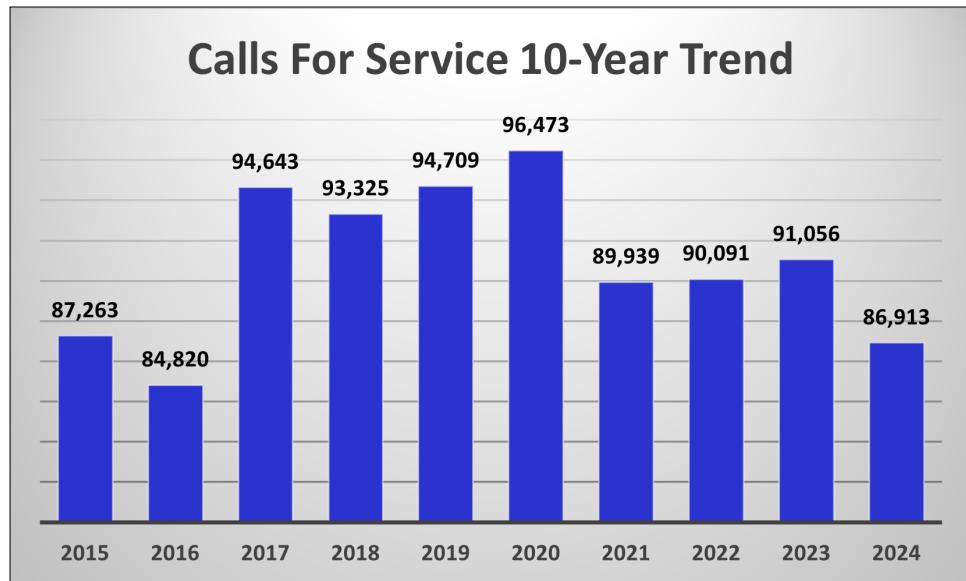
Officers work predominately in their assigned Zones, however they may need to leave their zones for a variety of tasks, including transport a person to jail, deliver seized items to the Evidence Facility or go to a hospital to speak with a victim. When officers must leave their zones, Commanders and the Dispatch Center staff work to ensure citizens receive a Police response by sending officers from other zones.

There are always enough officers to have one in each zone and if there are additional officers on duty, they work the busier zones. They also assist across the City as citizen requests increase during a shift or critical incidents pull officers into service outside of their assigned zones.



Calls For Service

A1	8,254
A2	6,763
B1	7,997
B2	15,371
C1	9,692
C2	9,179
C3	8,844
D1	7,001
D2	7,533
Outside Billings	3,685
Unknown Location	2,594
	86,913



In late 2024, Billings Police Department expanded the options for incident types to improve coordination for sending officers to calls. As an example, Suspicious Activity and Disturbances are broad categories that covered a multitude of situations. By creating sub-sections within those categories, dispatchers can now select from more specific options and officers respond more appropriately. In the chart below, the categories are combined for consistency with past years.

Most Frequent Incident Types	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Suspicious Activity	10,910	11,955	12,916	13,086	15,018	14,402	13,686	14,008	13,224
Traffic Stop	10,135	14,224	11,035	12,442	10,898	8,872	10,232	10,466	12,591
Disturbance	8,114	8,912	9,323	8,830	8,844	8,250	6,983	6,728	6,658
Welfare Check	3,713	3,892	4,562	5,211	6,245	6,084	6,624	6,442	5,801
Trespass	1,678	2,015	2,813	3,512	5,590	5,402	5,357	6,050	5,363
Theft	5,298	5,856	5,032	4,529	4,728	3,628	4,556	4,336	4,018
Traffic Complaint/Investigation	3,073	3,207	3,405	3,811	3,693	3,843	3,638	3,714	3,965
Alarm	4,740	5,239	5,234	5,066	4,372	4,411	4,110	3,606	3,387
Area Check	2,982	5,567	5,210	3,512	3,402	2,440	3,163	3,249	2,636
Abandoned Vehicle	2,220	2,297	2,572	2,593	1,913	850	1,271	2,198	2,209
Accident Property Damage	2,250	2,274	2,321	2,301	1,993	2,297	2,252	2,154	2,323
Threats/Harassment	1,336	1,465	1,346	1,484	1,444	1,683	1,654	1,867	1,854
Service Assist Law Enforcement	1,184	1,202	1,009	1,098	1,432	1,307	1,439	1,524	1,345
Suicide Attempts/Threats	1,162	1,321	1,463	1,490	1,478	1,574	1,538	1,485	1,454
Vandalism	1,859	1,482	1,322	1,079	1,211	1,183	1,414	1,295	1,275
Lost/Found Property	1,078	964	1,026	1,013	1,000	1,046	800	1,264	1,102
Follow Up	1,374	2,206	2,491	2,034	1,620	1,466	1,442	1,099	642
Accident Hit and Run	984	1,026	987	1,069	931	1,192	987	1,078	1,088
DUI	1,515	1,308	1,417	1,459	1,370	1,361	1,133	1,034	1,098
Weapons	484	674	441	558	806	994	706	1,003	830

Crime Reporting

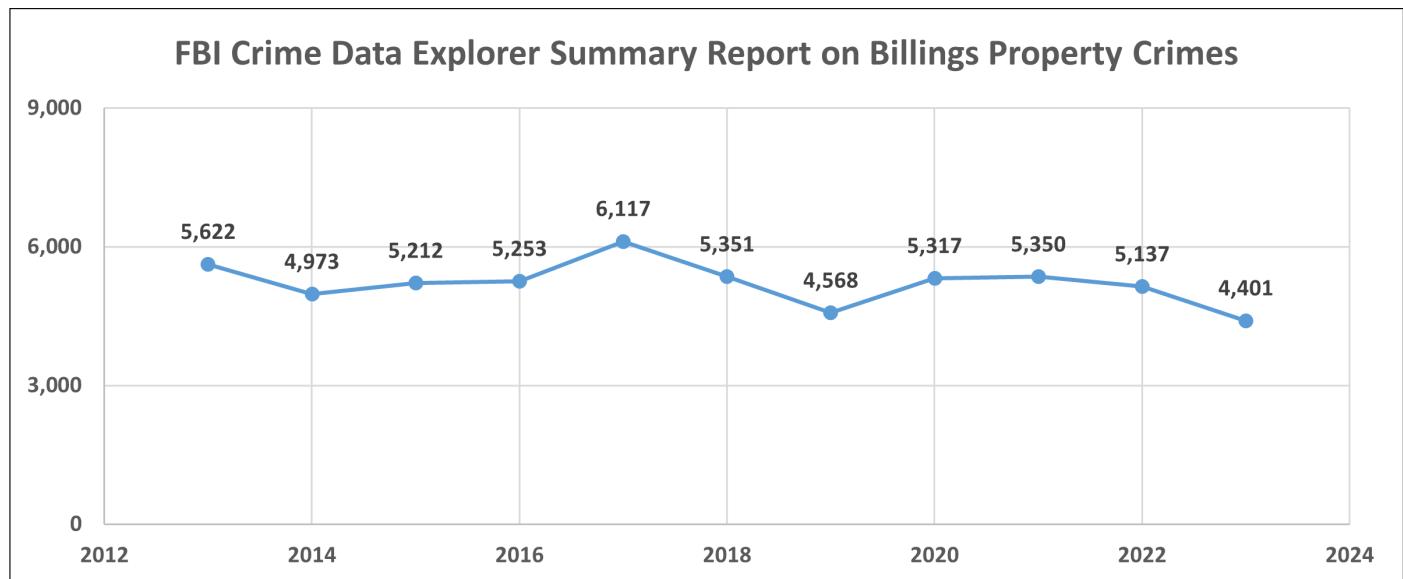
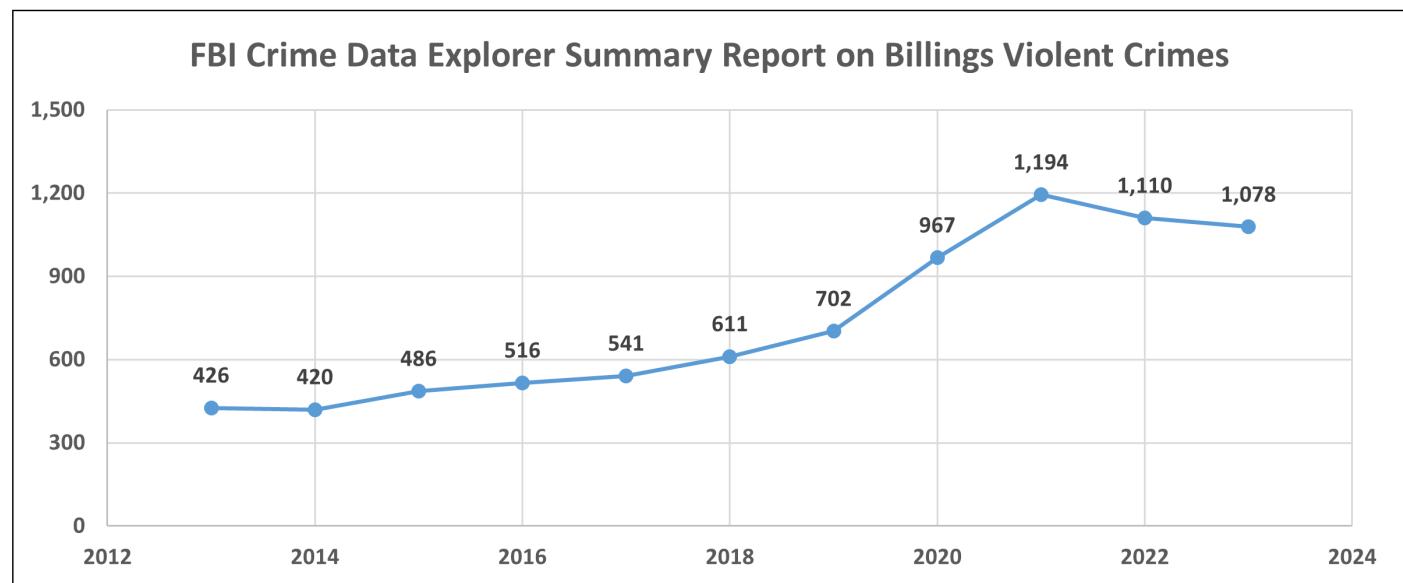
Billings Police Department reports crimes to the Montana Board of Crime Control and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The crime data is submitted under definitions and standards in the FBI's National Incident-Based Report System, NIBRS.

The charts on this page are from the FBI's Crime Data Explorer database. The public database has crime information submitted through May 2024, making the most recent summaries from 2023.

NIBRS assigns offense codes to crimes so that any agency using the system will report in the same manner, although the definitions of crimes may vary state to state. Crimes are further divided into Group A and Group B offenses based on seriousness. All Group A offenses are reported in NIBRS, whereas Group B offenses are only used to report arrest data.

The following pages contain data from BPD's Records Management System. This is the same database that is used to submit to NIBRS, however the charts in this report reflect all offenses officers investigated, regardless of federal reporting standards, prosecution or arrest. This data gives the department and the community a specific look at Billings crime data in all categories.

Crime data is ever changing to reflect updates in investigations and arrests that may happen years after the crime was committed. Visit the FBI's Crime Data Explorer at <https://cde.ucr.cjis.gov/>.



Violent Crimes



The FBI defines crimes that are reported through its National Incident Based Reporting (NIBRs) program. These are the NIBRs definitions for homicide:

Negligent Homicide (Manslaughter) - the killing of another person through negligence

Justifiable Homicide - the killing of a perpetrator of a serious criminal offense by a peace officer in the line of duty, or the killing, during the commission of serious criminal offense, of the perpetrator by a private individual

Criminal Homicide - the willful (non-negligent) killing of one human being by another

There was one justifiable homicide with law enforcement in Billings during 2024.

Detectives were able to make arrests or submit requests for warrants in all but 3 of the 2024 homicides.

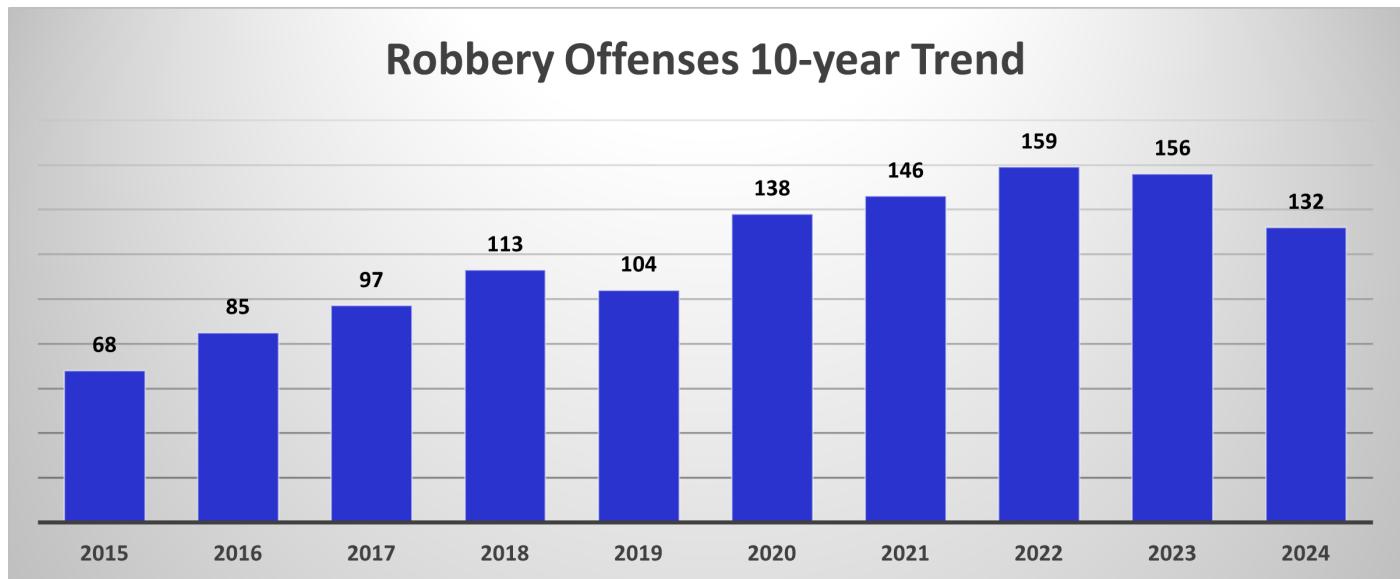
The offenses shown in the chart above do not include deaths of infants and other suspicious deaths that were treated as homicide investigations but did not rise to the definition of intentionally caused deaths.

Also of note during 2024 is that three missing persons cases resulted in homicide offenses after the victims were located in other jurisdictions.



All files utilized in the creation of this report are dynamic. Dynamic files allow additions, deletions and/or modifications at any time, resulting in more complete and accurate records in the database. Due to continuous data entry after reports are compiled, numbers may vary in previous or subsequent reports.

Violent Crimes



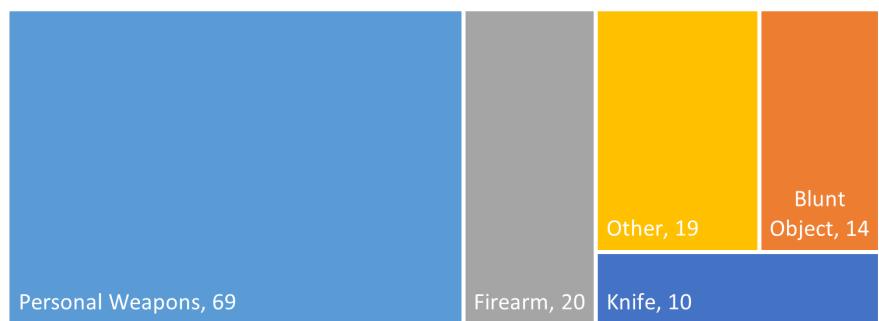
Federal and state crime reporting standards define robbery as taking, or attempting to take, something of value by use of force or threat of force.

Robberies range from someone being threatened by the suspect's words and/or demeanor to a suspect using a gun to a shoplifter fighting with a store employee while trying to get away with stolen items

At right, personal weapons refers to fists, hands and feet.

Weapons Used in Robberies

█ Personal Weapons, 69 █ Blunt Object, 14
█ Firearm, 20 █ Other, 19
█ Knife, 10



Did you know?

Billings Police Department Support Services Specialists are trained to enter and query stolen items, missing and wanted persons in state and national databases. They remove entries as appropriate.

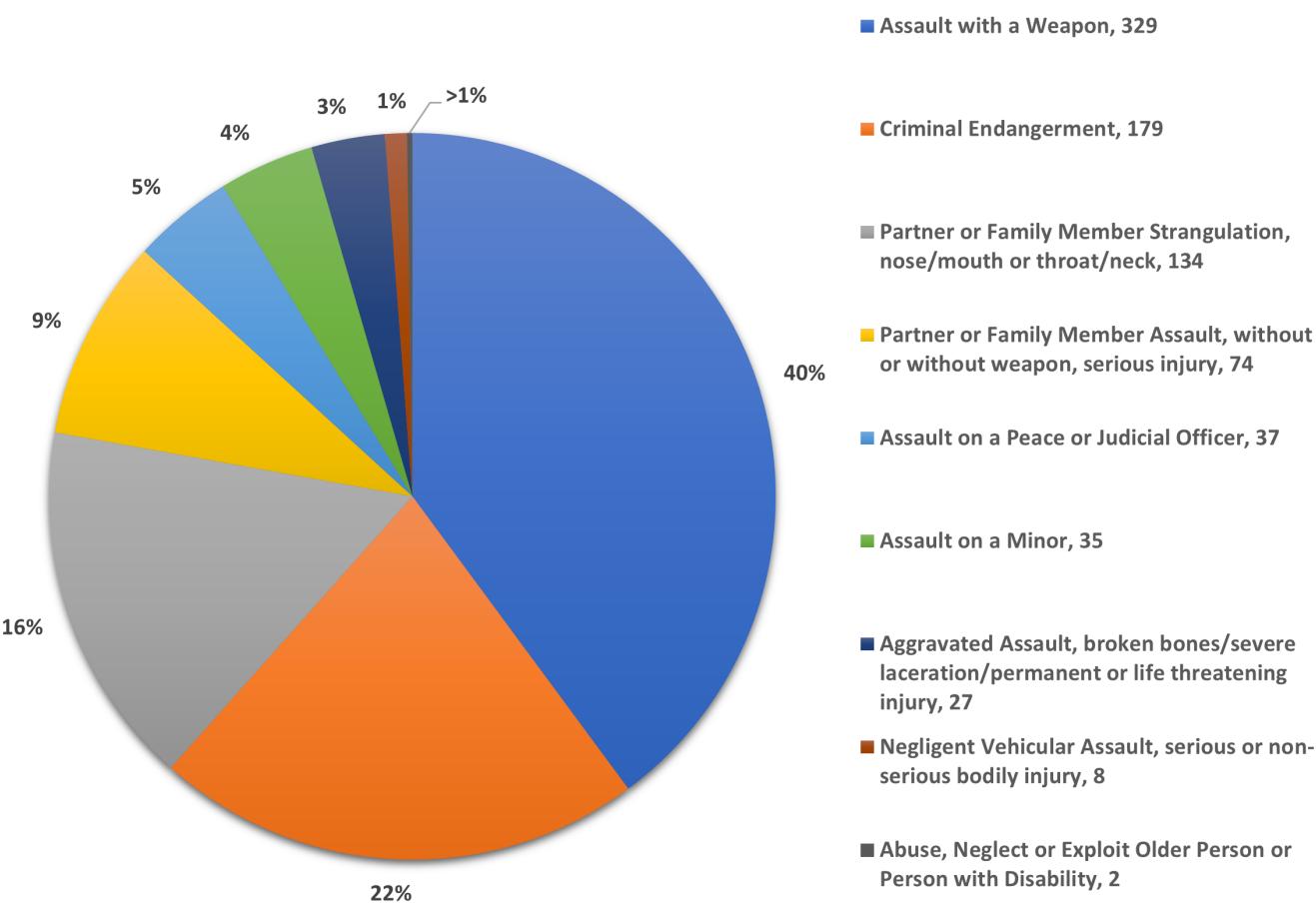
The databases connect agencies across the United States so they can share information, locate items and people. The databases are operated by state and federal agencies and follow rigid protocols for use and physical as well as digital security.

For example, if a vehicle is stolen in Billings it is listed in the databases. If an officer in another state runs its license or Vehicle Identification Number, that officer's agency will receive notification that the vehicle may be stolen from Billings. Staff at the two agencies then confirm the vehicle is the one listed as stolen and take steps to recover it, notify the owner and remove it from the national database. Criminal charges may ensue.

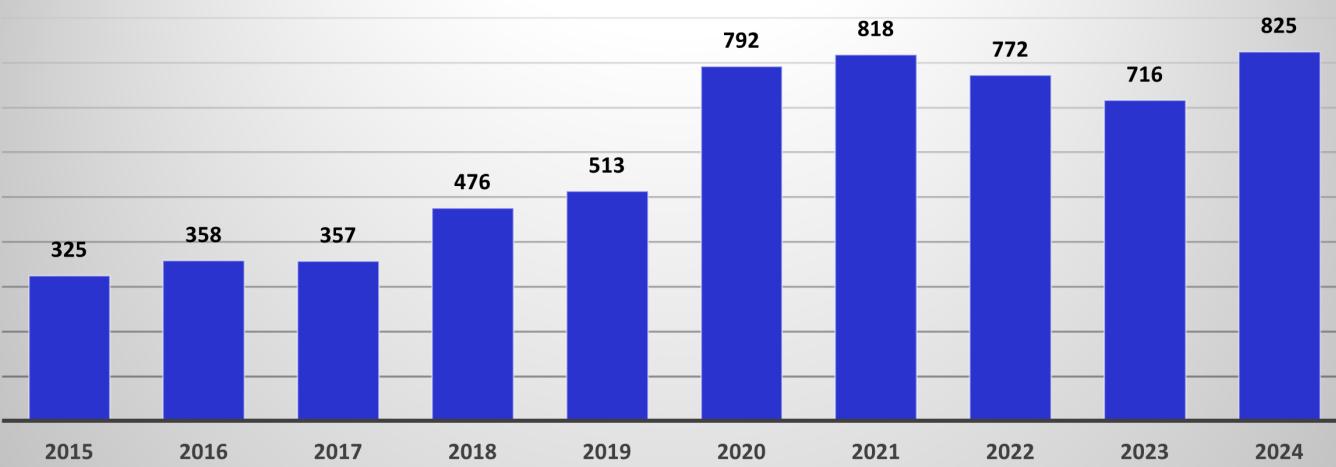
Officers have limited query access to these databases from the computers in their vehicles. BPD has nearly 200 licenses for various levels of access and our employees make about 400,000 transactions a year through the systems. The annual bill for the services is about \$50,000.

Violent Crimes

Aggravated Assault Offenses

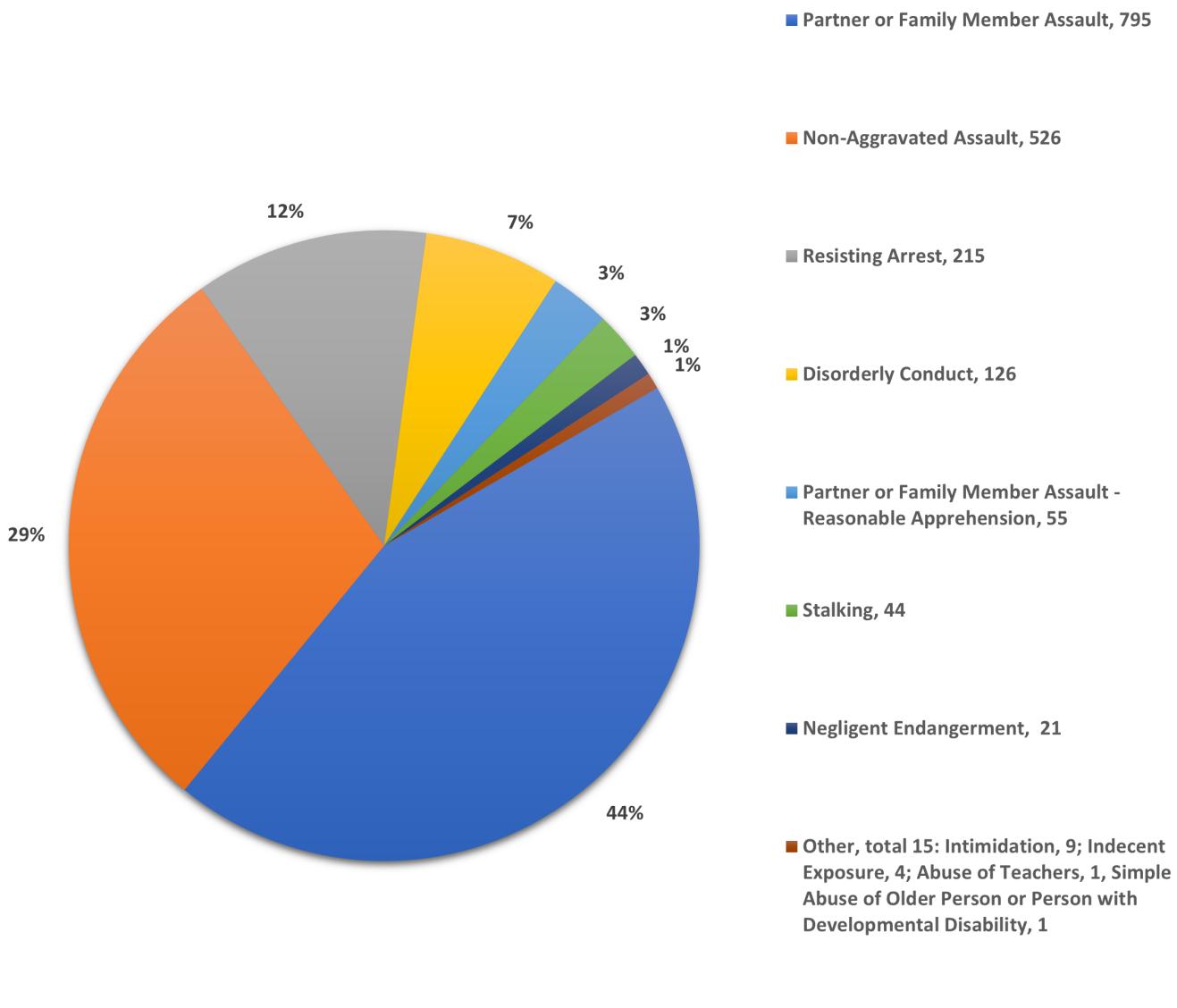


Aggravated Assault Offenses 10-Year Trend



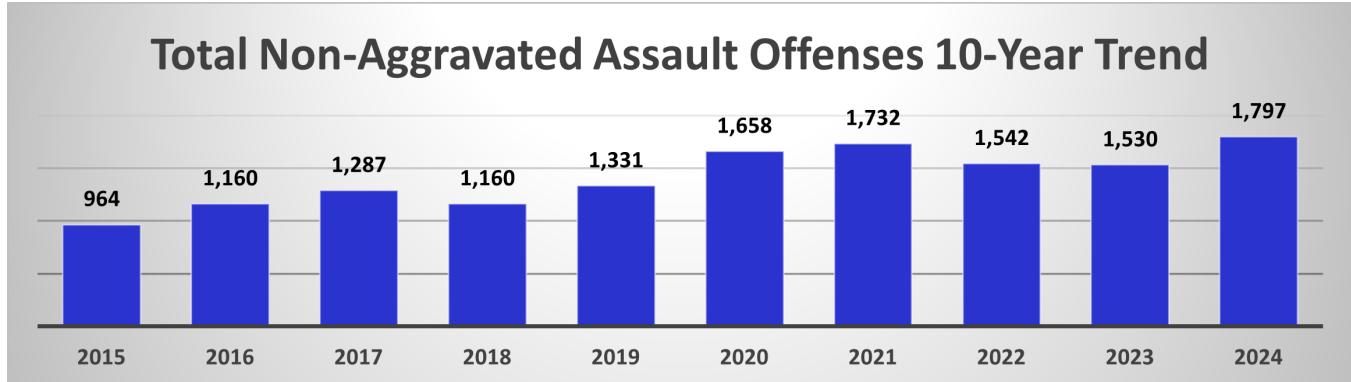
Violent Crimes

Non-Aggravated Assault Offenses



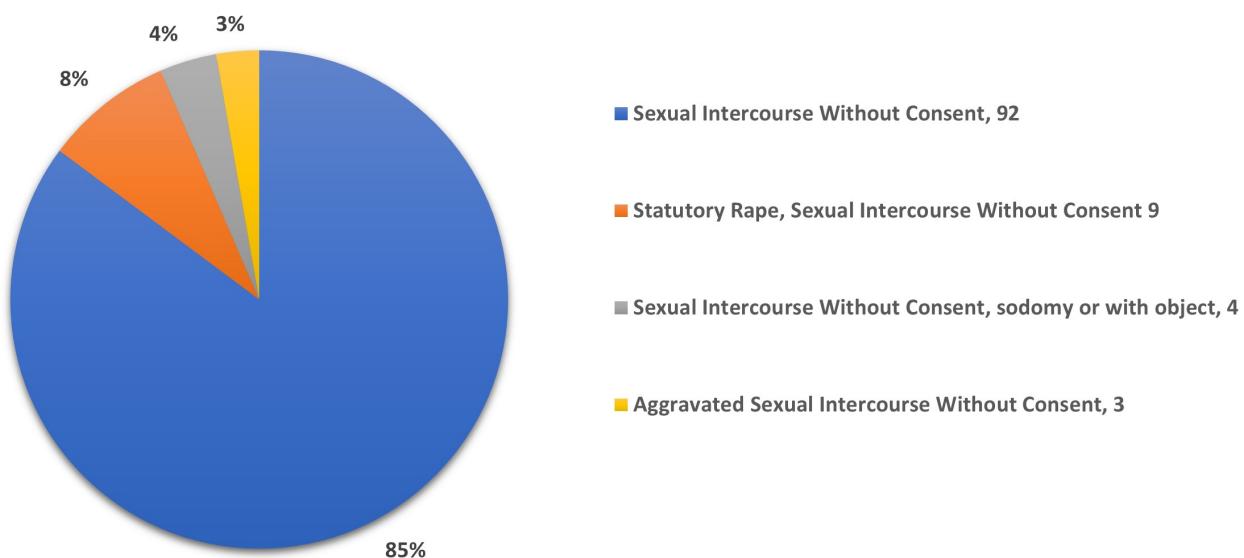
The FBI defines simple assaults as not involving a firearm, knife or cutting instrument or other weapon and in which the victim did not sustain serious or aggravated injuries. Montana statute includes the reasonable apprehension that injury could occur, including the appearance of a weapon or the assailant's size in comparison to the victim.

Total Non-Aggravated Assault Offenses 10-Year Trend

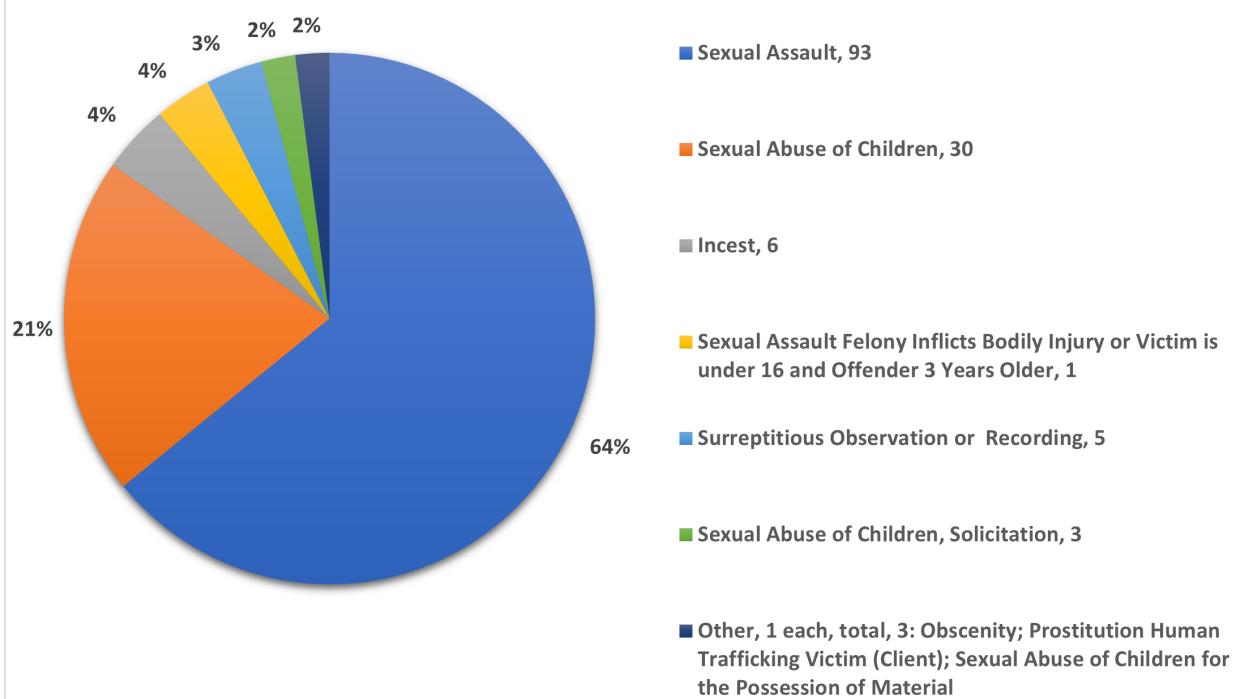


Violent Crimes

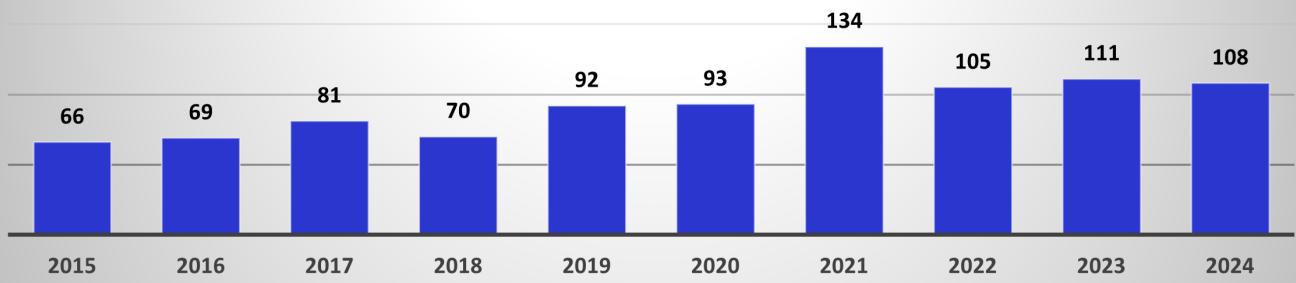
Sexual Assault Offenses



Other Sexual Offenses

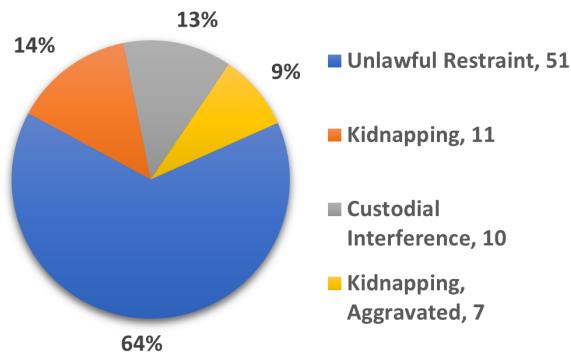


Sexual Assault Offenses 10-Year Trend



Violent Crimes

Kidnapping Offenses

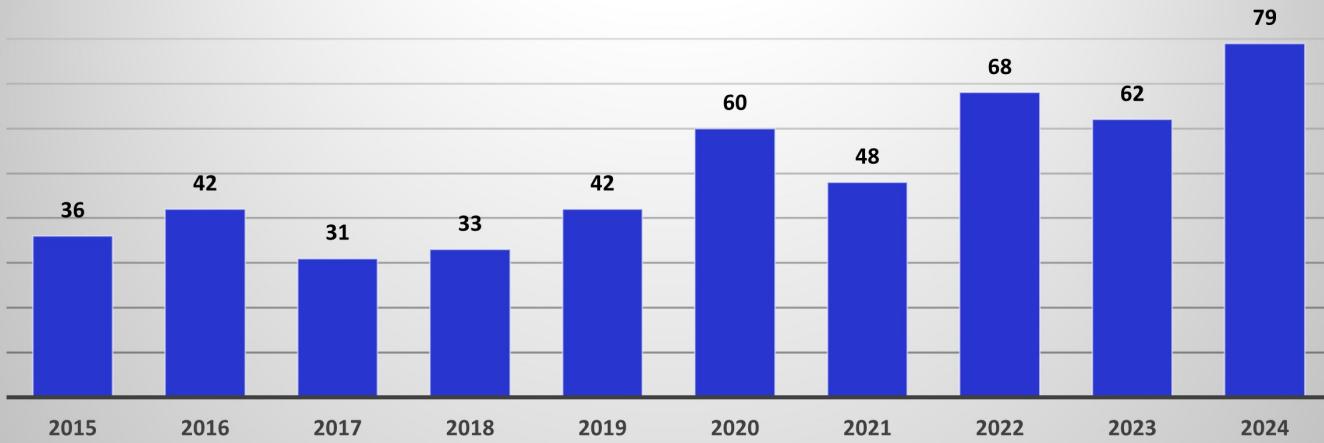


The FBI definition of kidnapping is the unlawful seizure, transportation and/or detention of persons against their will or of minors without the consent of their custodial parents or legal guardians.

Most of the kidnapping offenses investigated by Billings Police are unlawful restraint that occur during Partner or Family Member Assaults.

Officers responded to 200 Custodial Interference Calls For Service, but only 10 of them rose to the level of crime. The remainder were parents documenting children not exchanged in timelines outlined in parenting plans or who were not working with a court ordered plan.

Kidnapping Offenses 10-Year Trend



Did you know?

Billings Police Officers participate in events at schools and throughout the community.

BPD's Public Relations Sergeant Stovall, at right, read at the Poly Drive Elementary Read-a-Thon.

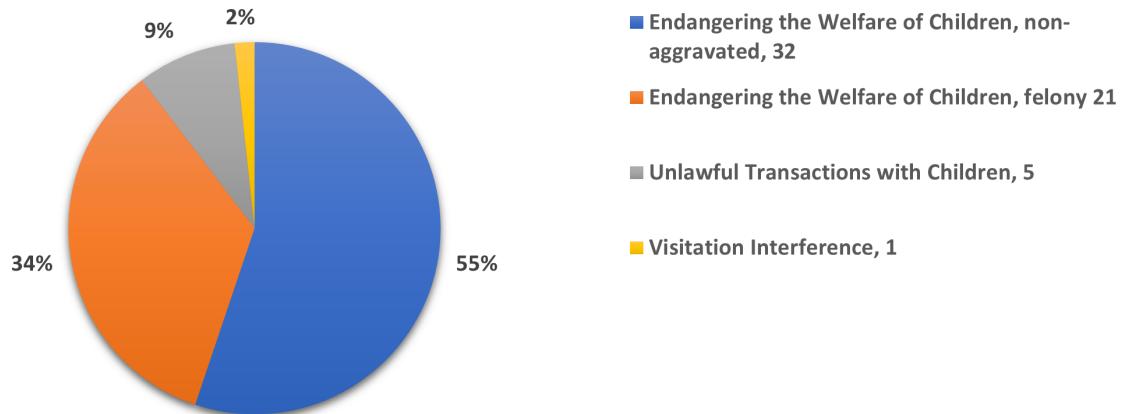
Sgt. Stovall and Crime Prevention Officer Nichols are available to provide public presentations. Depending on the topic, there are some requirements for hosting a presentation.

For more information visit the Community Services page at www.billingspolice.com.

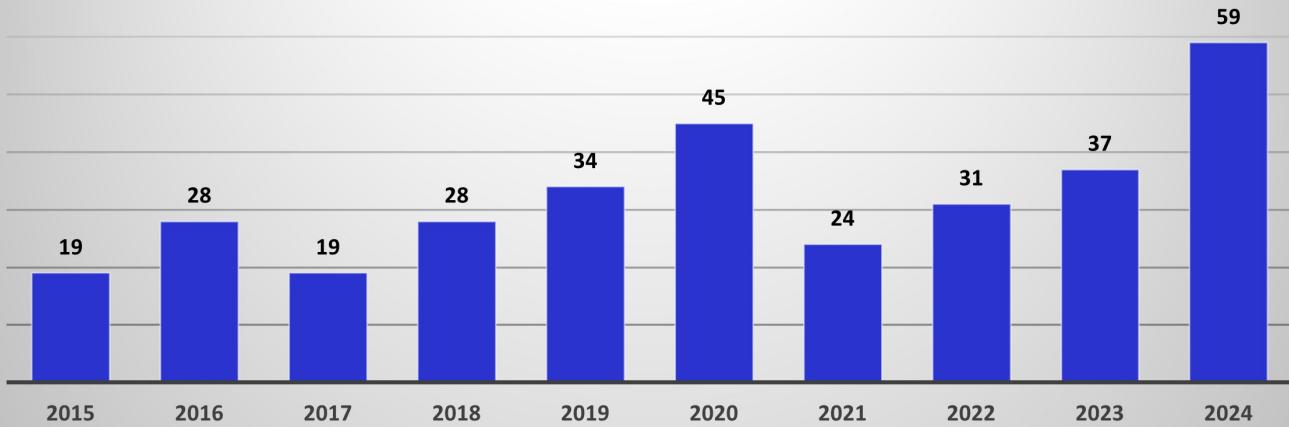


Family Offenses

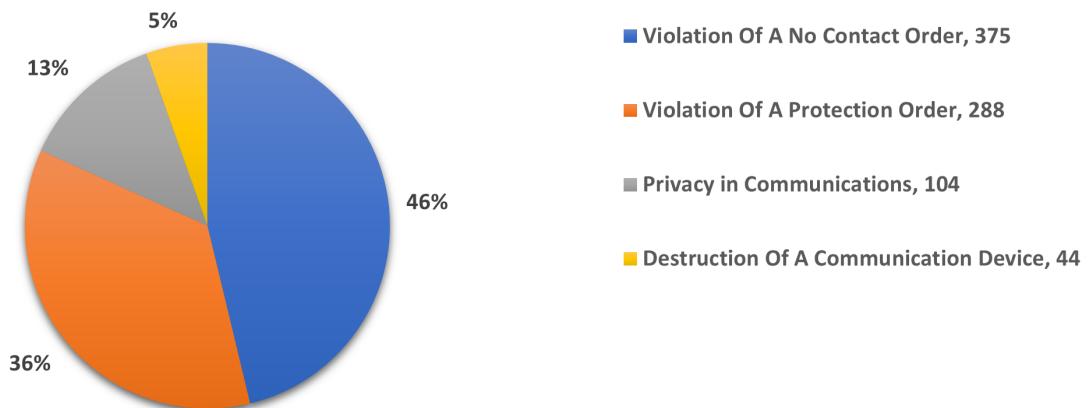
Offenses Against the Family



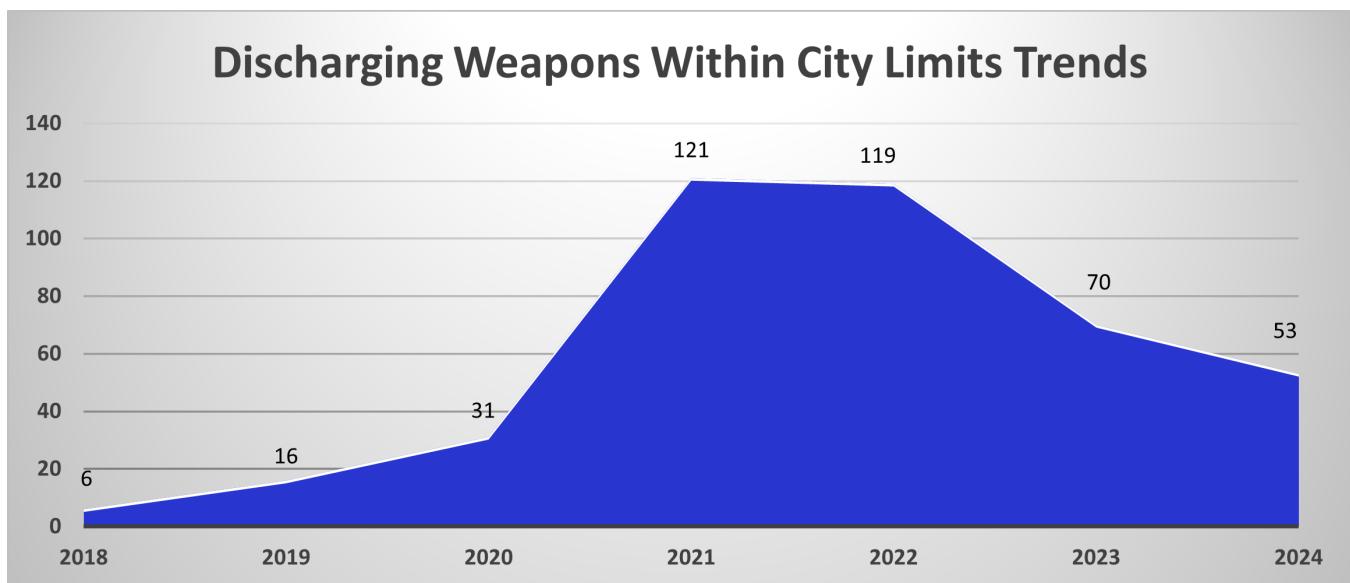
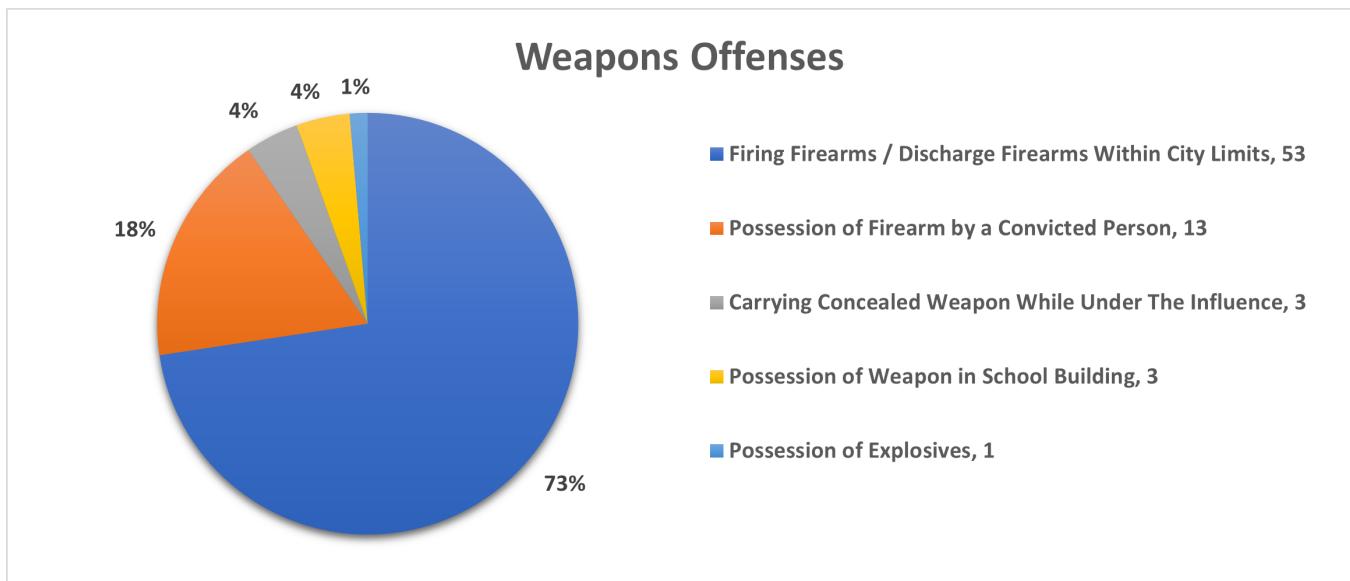
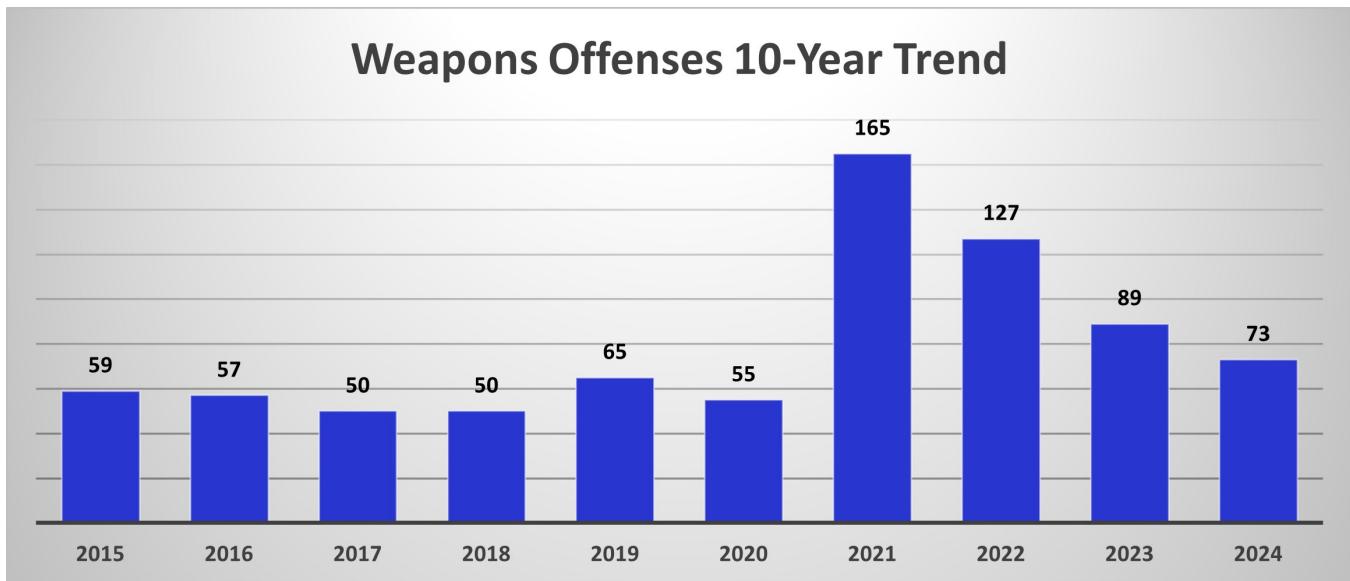
Family Offenses 10-Year Trend



Other Domestic Violations

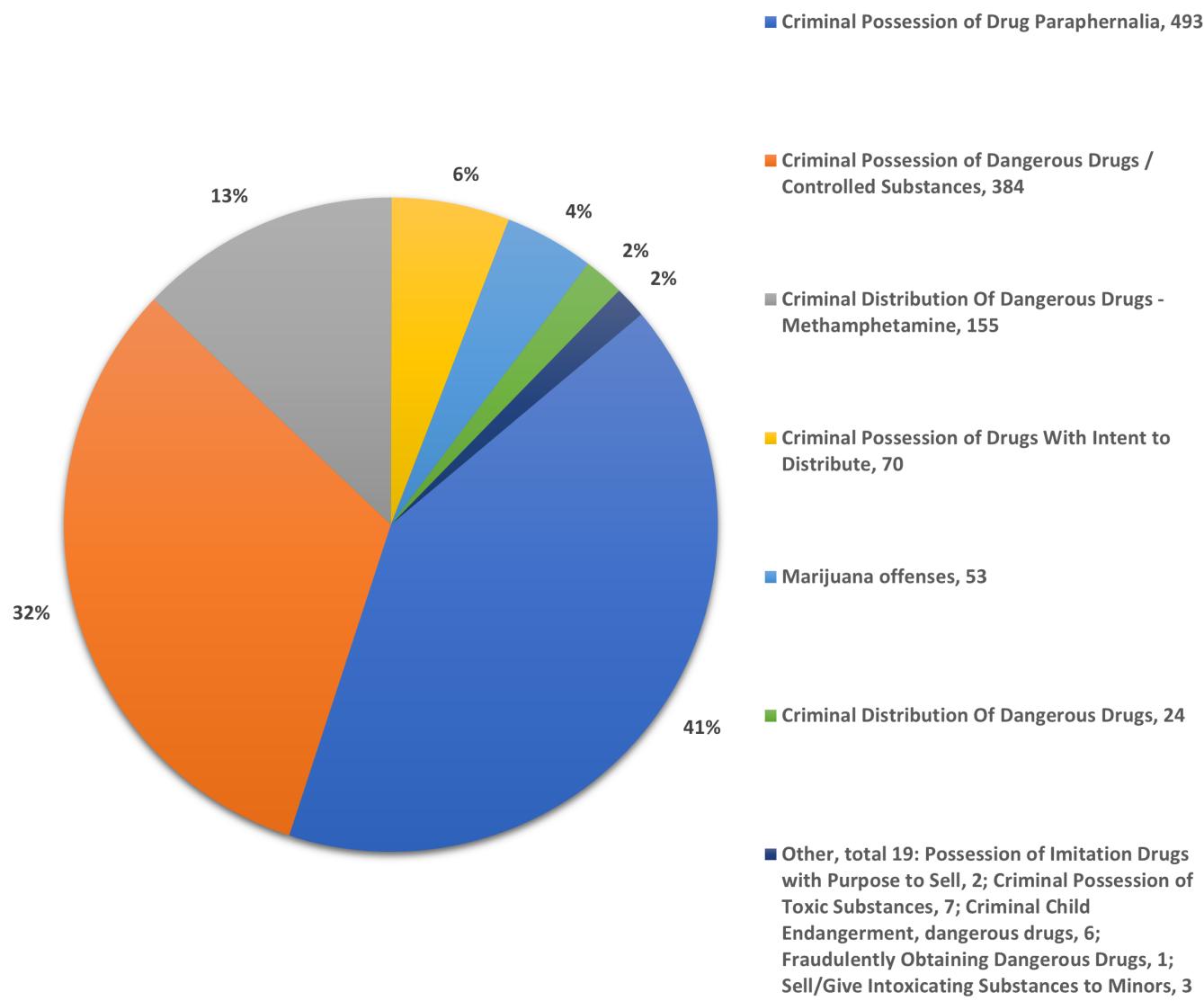


Weapons Offenses

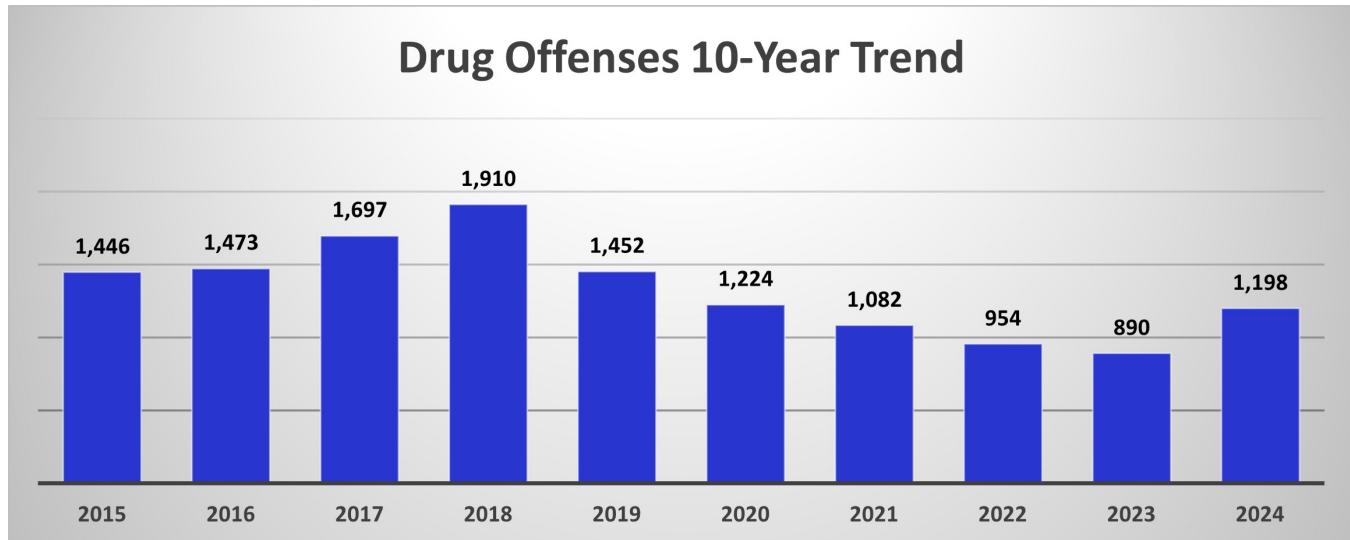


Drug Offenses

Drug Offenses

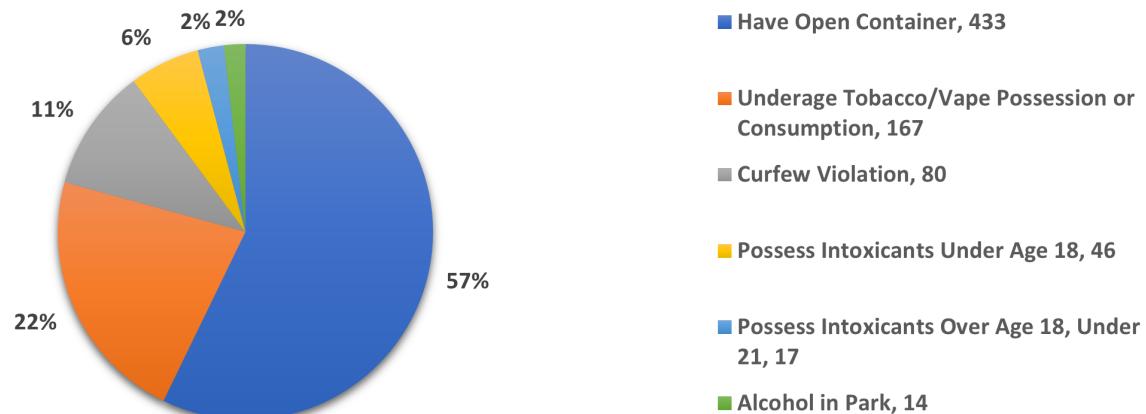


Drug Offenses 10-Year Trend

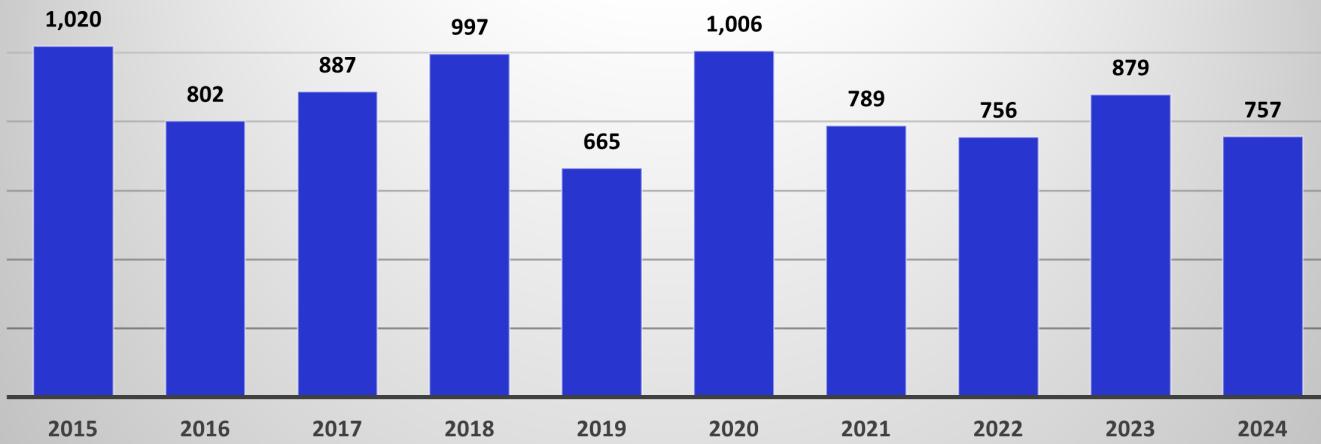


Liquor Law and Youth Violations

Liquor Law and Underage Tobacco Violations



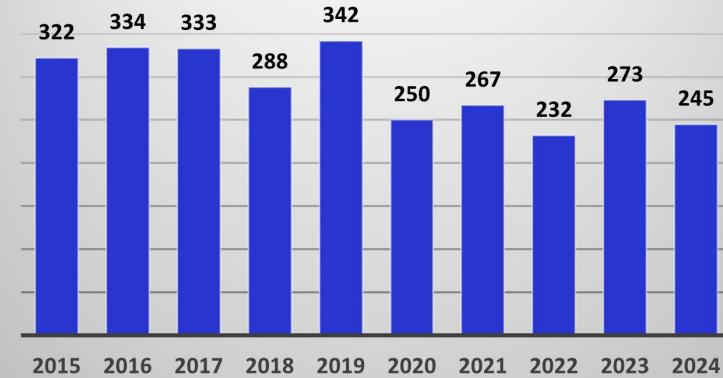
Liquor and Tobacco Violations 10-Year Trend



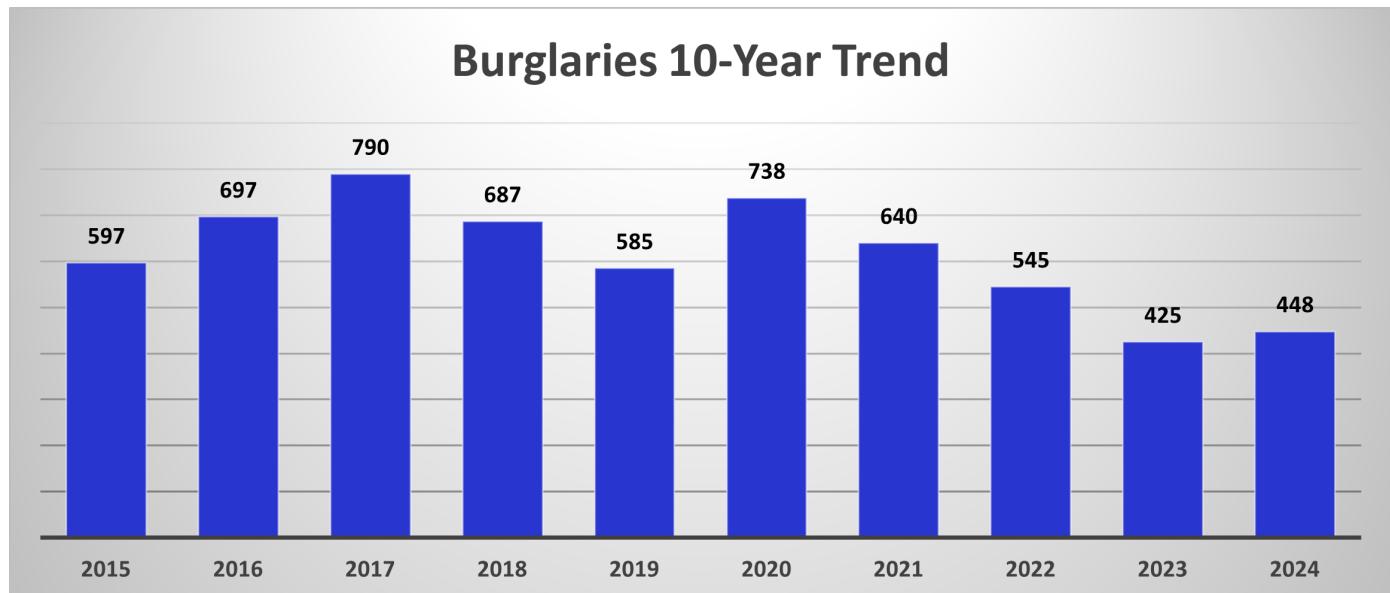
Running away is not a crime, but it is included in crime reporting. Children who are reported as runaways are considered missing persons and listed in a national law enforcement database until they are found.

Billings Police Department works with the Montana Department of Justice Missing Persons Clearinghouse and the National Missing and Unidentified Persons System (NamUs) to list local missing and runaway children on their web sites.

Runaway Reports 10-Year Trend



Property Crimes

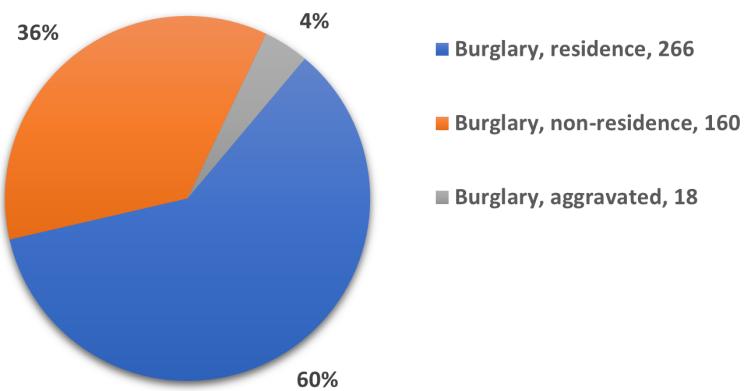


Did you know?

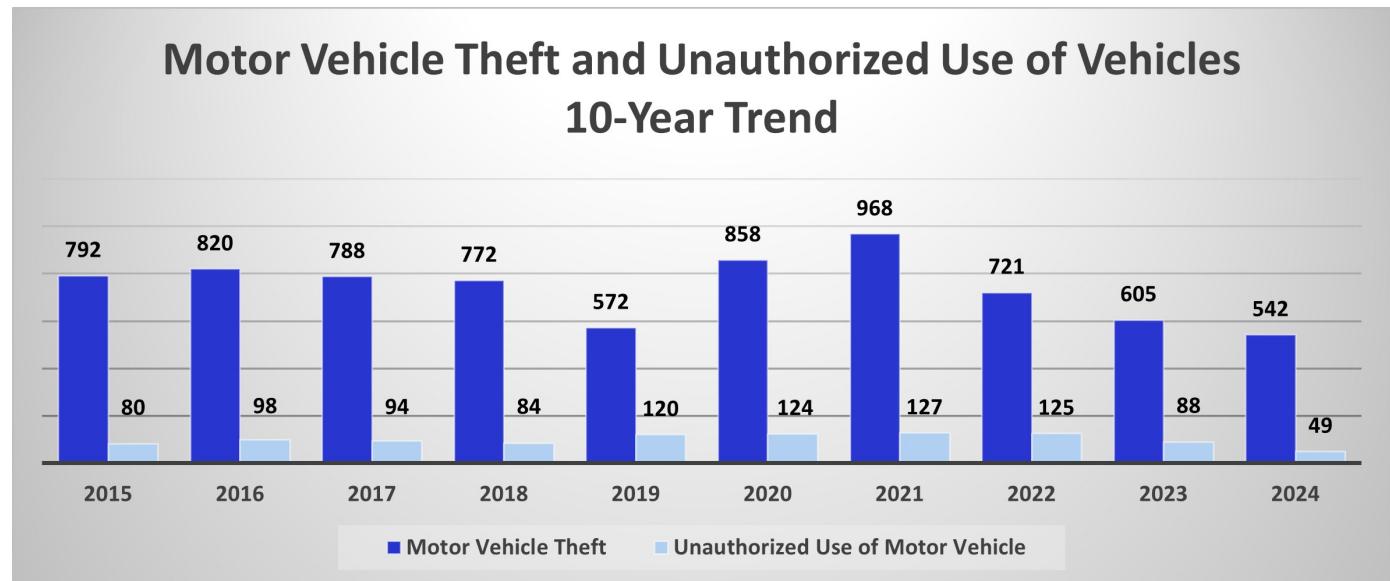
Billings Police Department has staff and volunteers who can help citizens find ways to deter crimes at their homes and businesses. Using Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design concepts, they identify areas that have the potential to attract crime. Those things can be changes to dissuade criminals.

To learn more visit the Crime Prevention Center pages at www.billingspolice.com

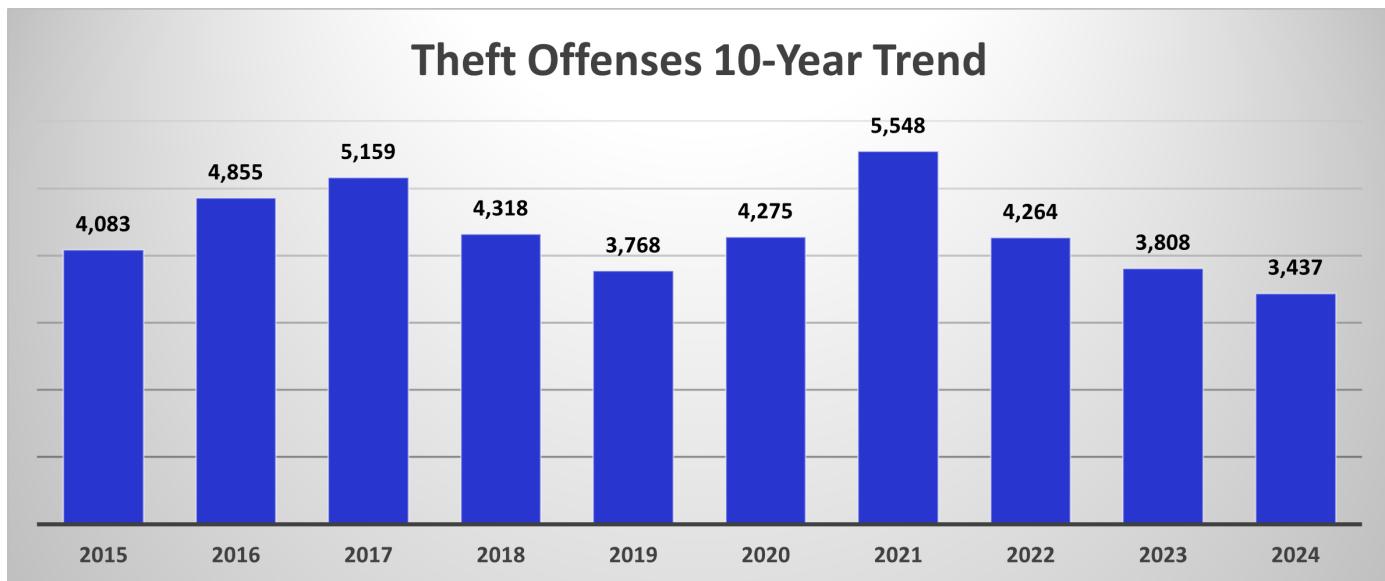
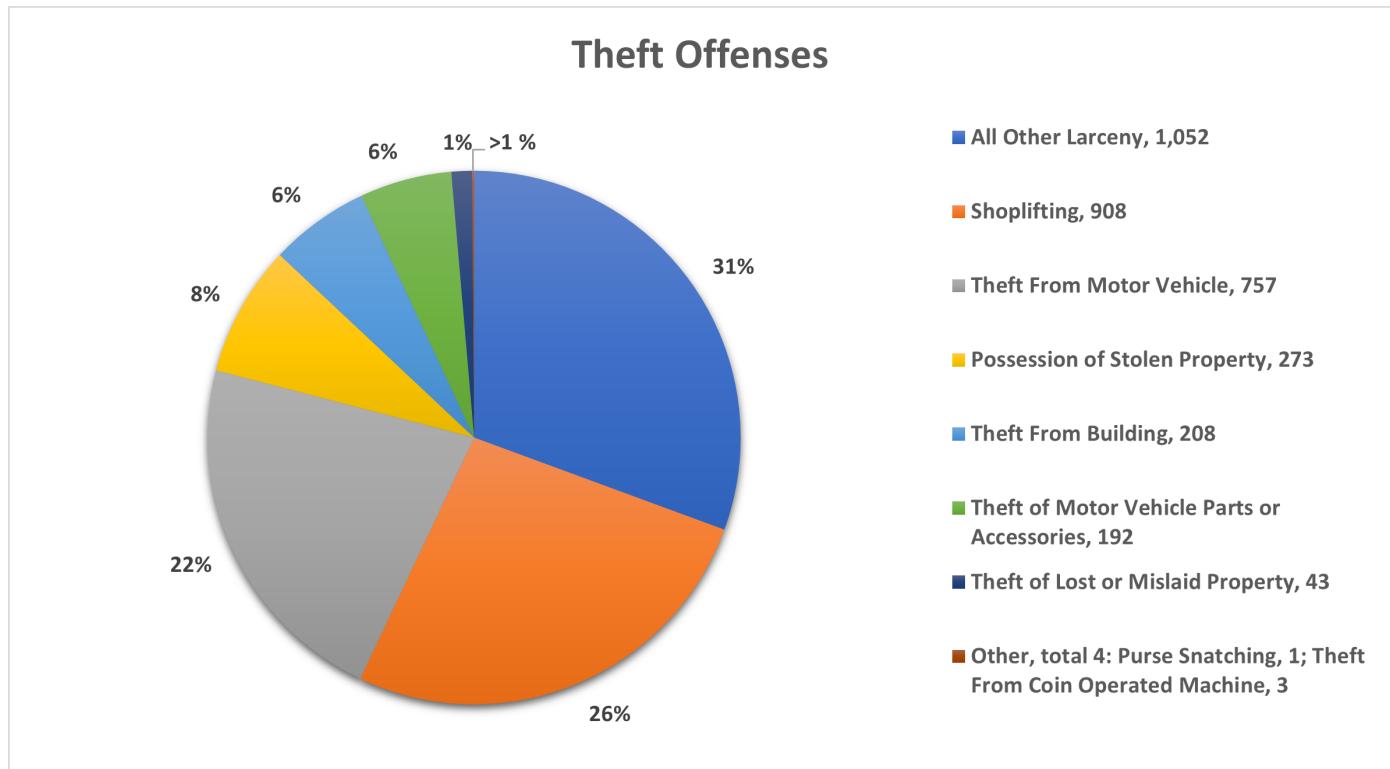
Burglary Offenses



Motor Vehicle Theft and Unauthorized Use of Vehicles 10-Year Trend



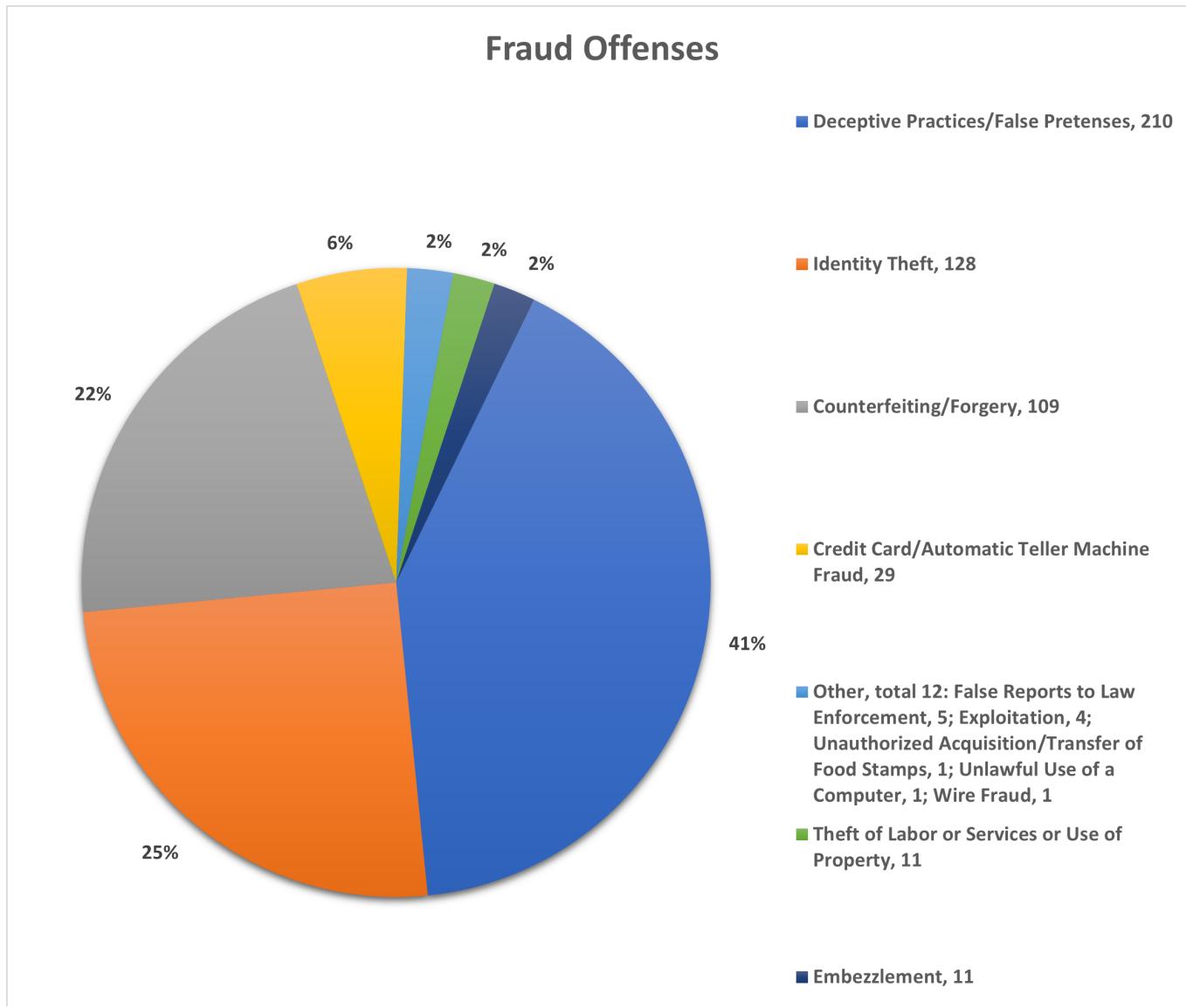
Property Crimes



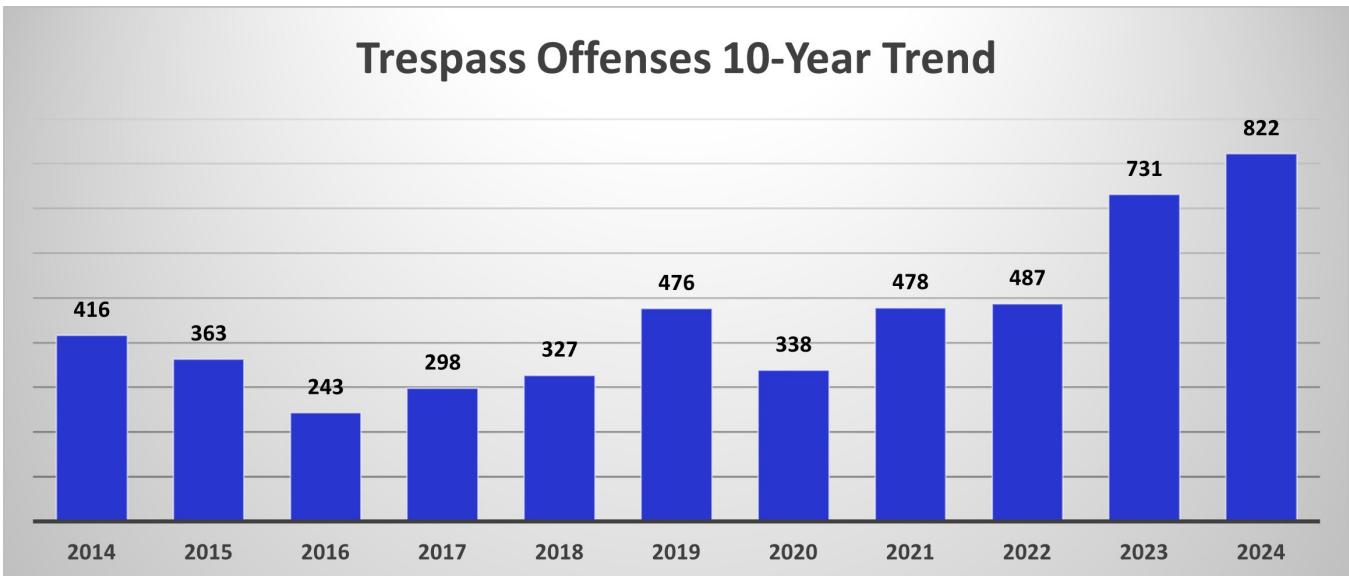
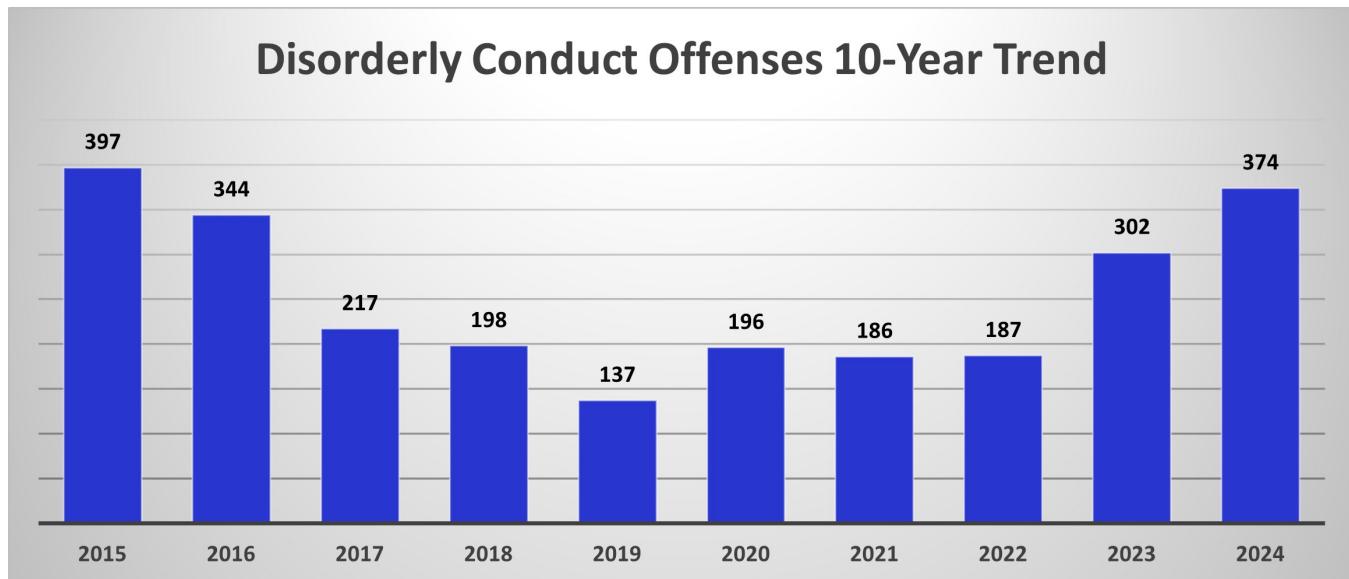
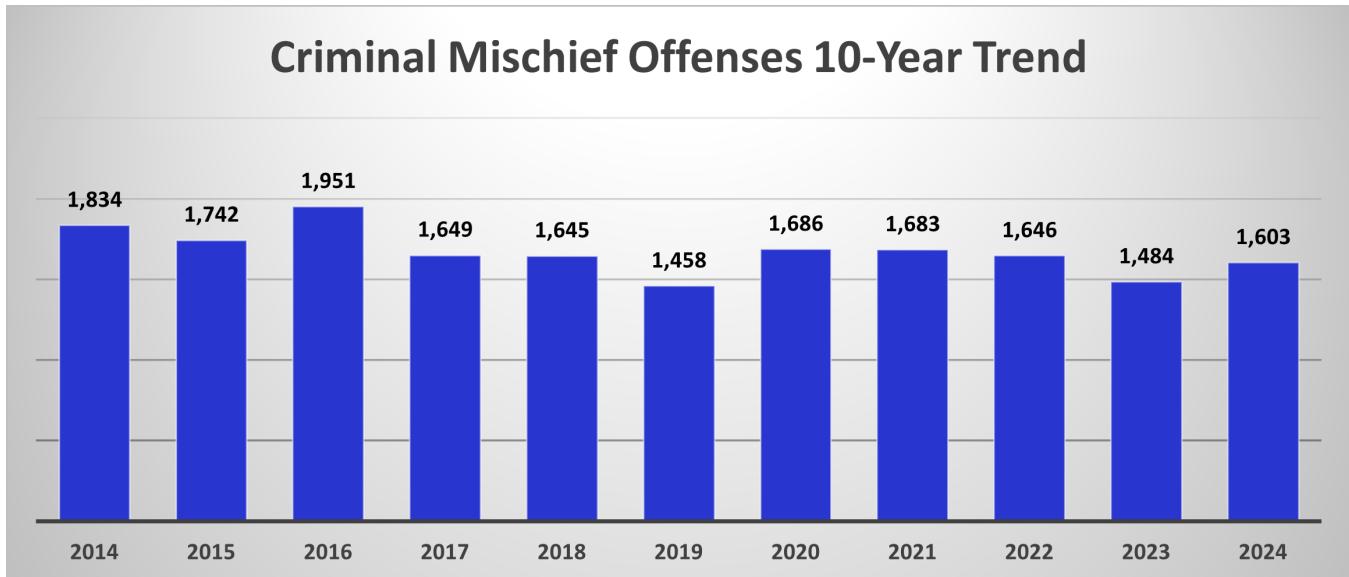
BPD partnered with the Billings Career Center welding and metal shop to complete much-needed repairs on the steel targets used at the department shooting range.



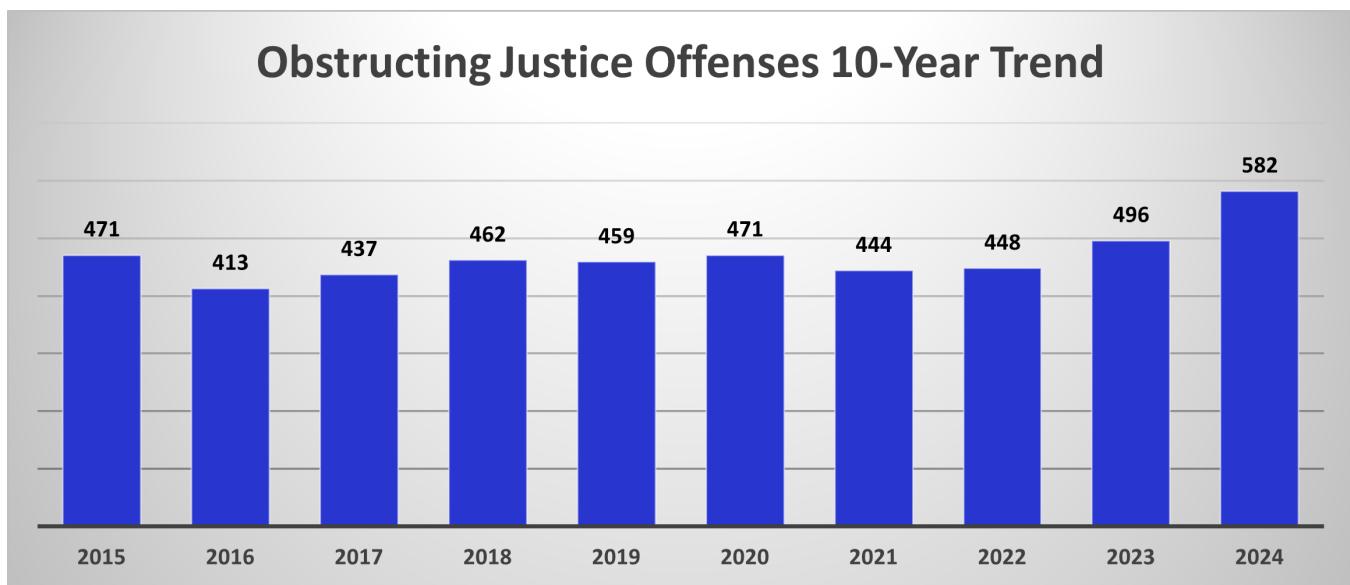
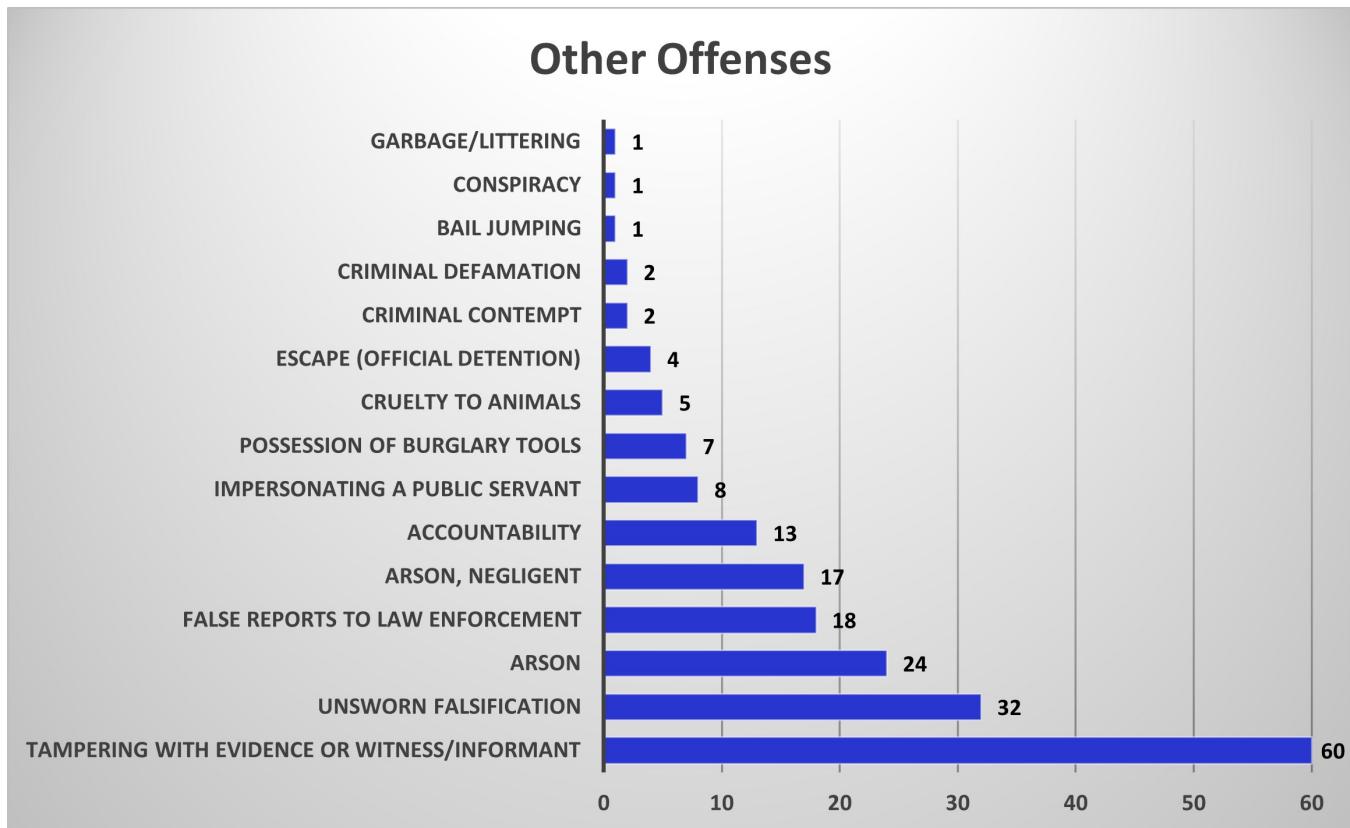
Fraud Crimes



Crimes Against Public Order



Other Offenses



Did you know?

Law enforcement will never call a person to collect money for a warrant.

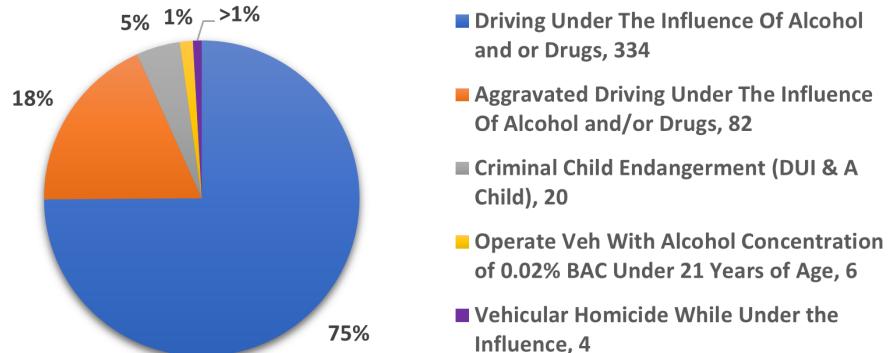
Citizens can confirm if there is a local warrant by calling Billings Police Department at 657-8460, option 4, and providing a name and date of birth.

If you are called about having a warrant, use caution and do not pay or provide personal or banking information. People who have lost money in scams can file a police report.

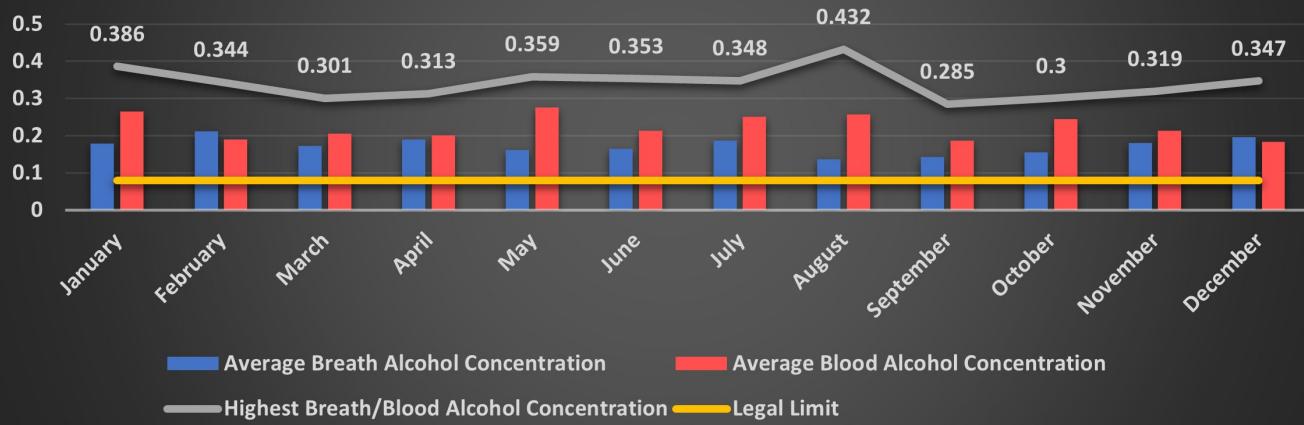
Anyone can report a scam online through the Montana Department of Justice web site at www.dojmt.gov and visit the Office of Consumer Protection pages.

Driving Under the Influence

Driving Under the Influence of Alcohol and Drugs

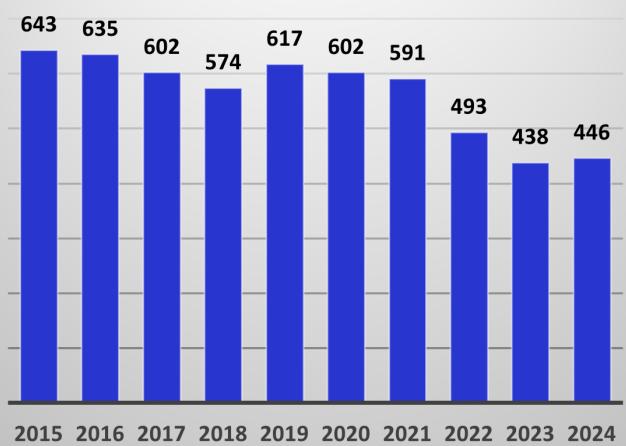


Average and Highest Breath and Blood Alcohol Concentration Readings by Month



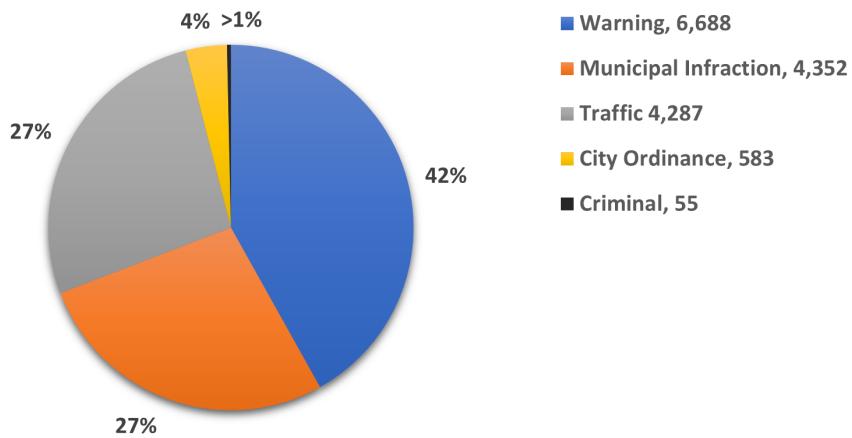
Sgt. Gunther and Officer Ihde, far right, were the Billings Police Department Award of Merit honorees at the 2024 Angle Tree Ceremony. They are both committed to the Task Force's mission to reduce impaired driving through enforcement and participate with the Yellowstone County DUI Task Force on their own time. Ihde was the Task Force Chairman last year. Gunther received a special acknowledgement for his long-standing service including volunteering with the Task Force at public events.

DUI Offenses 10-Year Trend

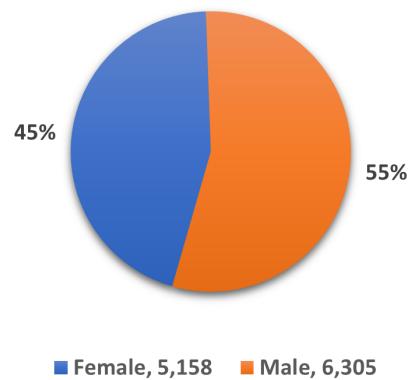


Traffic Statistics

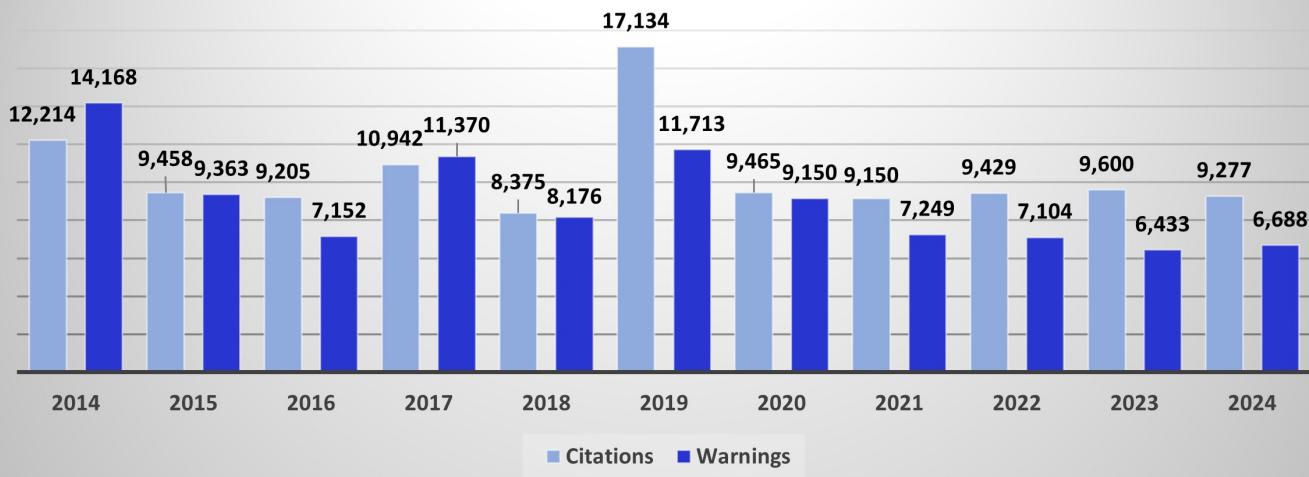
Citations by Type



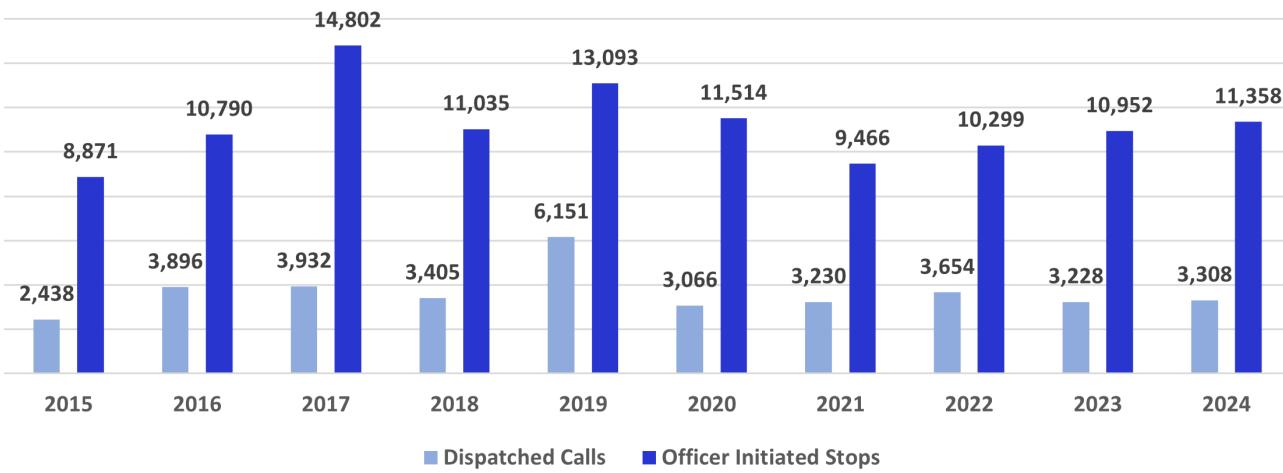
Citations by Gender



Traffic Citations vs. Warnings 10-Year Trend

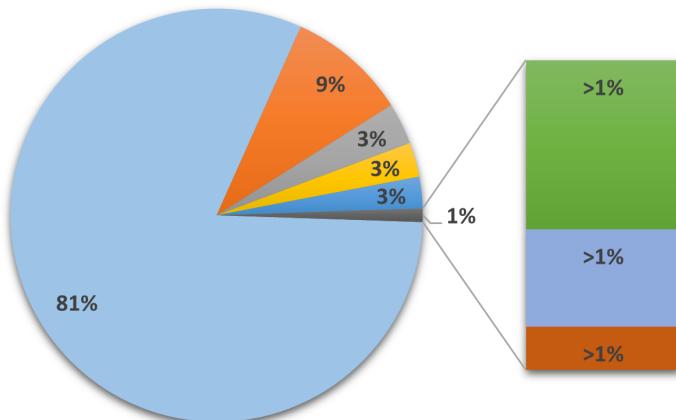


Dispatched Calls vs. Officer Initiated Stops 10-Year Trend



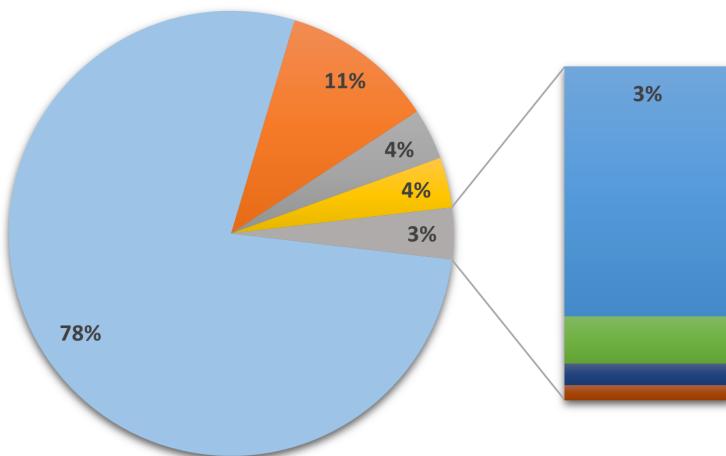
Traffic Statistics

2024 Breakdown of Citations by Race



- White, 9,325
- American Indian/Alaskan Native, 1,075
- Hispanic, 375
- Black, 309
- Unknown, 284
- Asian/Pacific Islander, 66
- Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, 38
- Middle Eastern, 17

10-Year Breakdown of Citations by Race



- White, 149,304
- American Indian/Alaskan Native, 21,407
- Hispanic, 7,133
- Unknown, 7,011
- Black, 5,375
- Asian/Pacific Islander, 1,015
- Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, 467
- Middle Eastern, 323

Combined total
is less than 1%

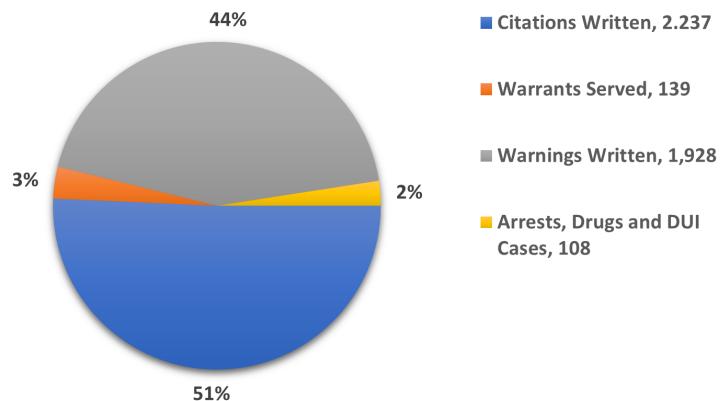
Selective Traffic Enforcement Program

Officers assigned to the Selective Traffic Enforcement Program wrote more than 4,000 citations and warnings during 2024.

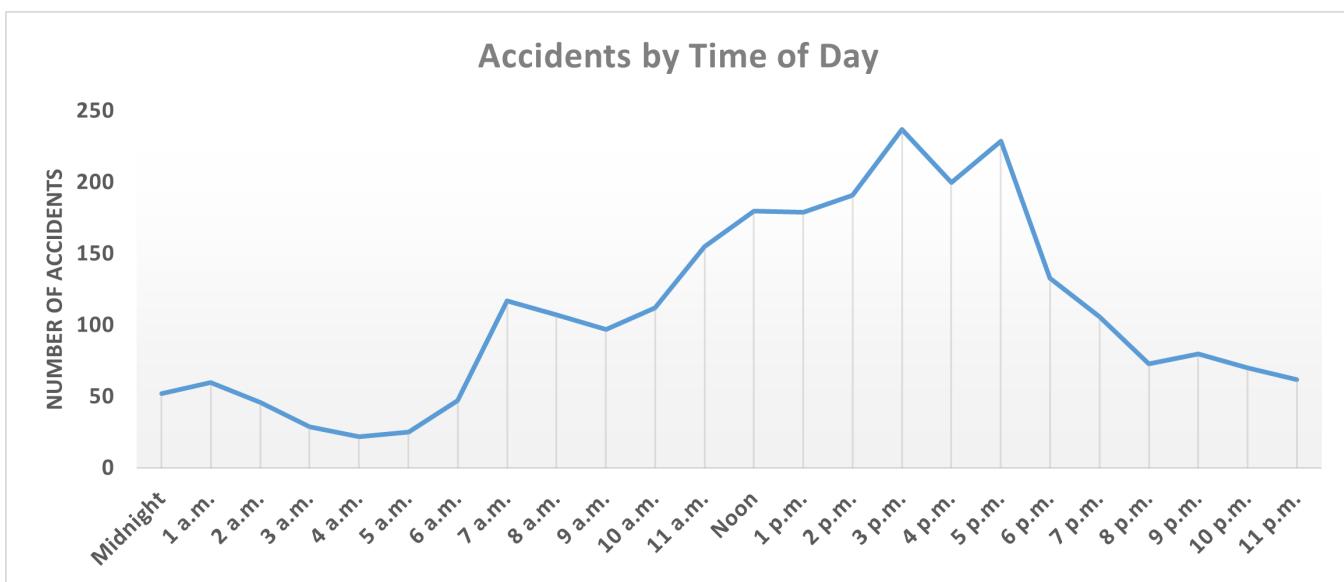
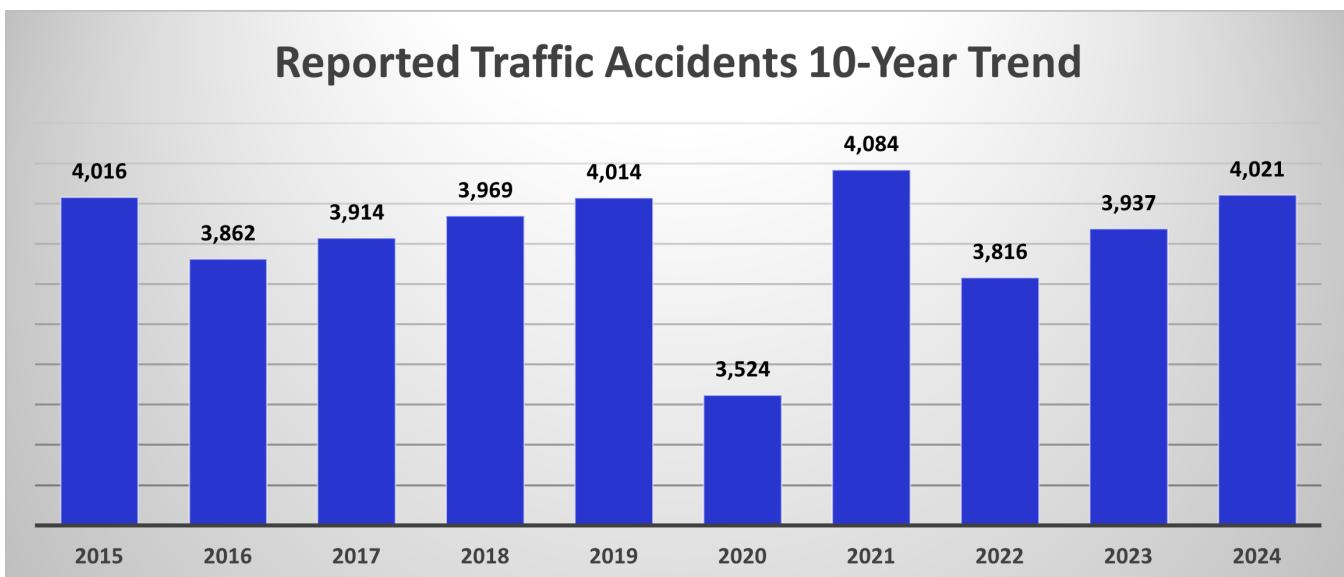
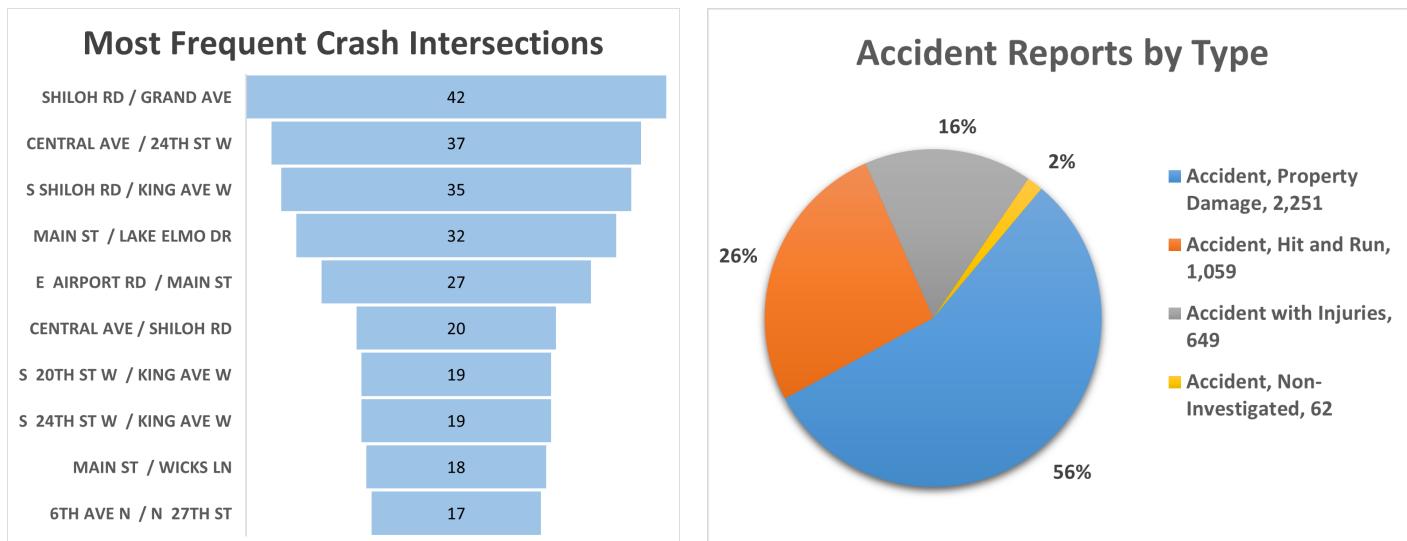
The team works adjusted shifts so they are available during busier traffic times. They conduct special details in high-volume accident areas and locations where there are known traffic problems. STEP officers work regular patrol and provide backup to officers for increased safety.

Citizens can contact the STEP team with traffic questions or requests for extra traffic enforcement by sending an email to step@billingsmt.gov. Learn more on the patrol pages in the divisions section of www.billingspolice.com.

STEP Activity



Accident Statistics



Arrest Statistics

Arrests **Most Frequent Adult Arrests**

- 4,784 Warrants, Contempt/Failure to Appear
- 818 Revocation of Suspended/Deferred Sentence
- 811 Theft Offenses
- 610 Partner or Family Member Assault (All Offense Types)
- 603 Criminal Trespass to Property / Vehicles
- 520 Obstructing Peace Officer/ Justice
- 503 Drug Offenses
- 356 Drug Paraphernalia
- 410 Driving Under the Influence
- 273 Probation Violation
- 242 Disorderly Conduct

Arrests **Most Frequent Juvenile Arrests**

- 182 Tobacco Possession
- 94 Disorderly Conduct
- 81 Theft
- 72 Criminal Mischief
- 71 Simple Assault
- 68 Warrants, Contempt/Failure to Appear
- 59 Aggravated Assault
- 55 Drug Offenses
- 48 Partner or Family Member Assault (All Offense Types)
- 49 Possess Intoxicants
- 37 Obstructing Peace Officer/Justice
- 33 Drug Paraphernalia
- 26 Criminal Trespass to Property / Vehicles

Did you know?

Billings Police Officers volunteer with the Montana Special Olympics throughout the year. Their efforts including fund raising events such as the Polar Plunge and Tip-A-Cop. They participate in the Law Enforcement Torch Run, carrying and escorting the Flame of Hope when it comes through the Billings area. They are also regularly participate in opening ceremonies and presenting athletes their medals at events.



Arrest Statistics

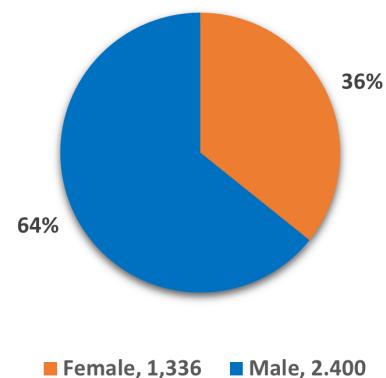
Officers made 3,736 physical arrests that resulted in 15,784 separate charges. One physical arrests can result in multiple charges. This illustrates why there are more charges than physical arrests. The physical arrests involved 3,235 adults and 511 juveniles.

Arrests do not always result in a person going to jail. On some crimes, the person may be given a notice to appear in Court. They also maybe taken to jail, have pictures and fingerprints taken, and then be released with a Court date. Officers did this on about 37% of arrests in 2024.

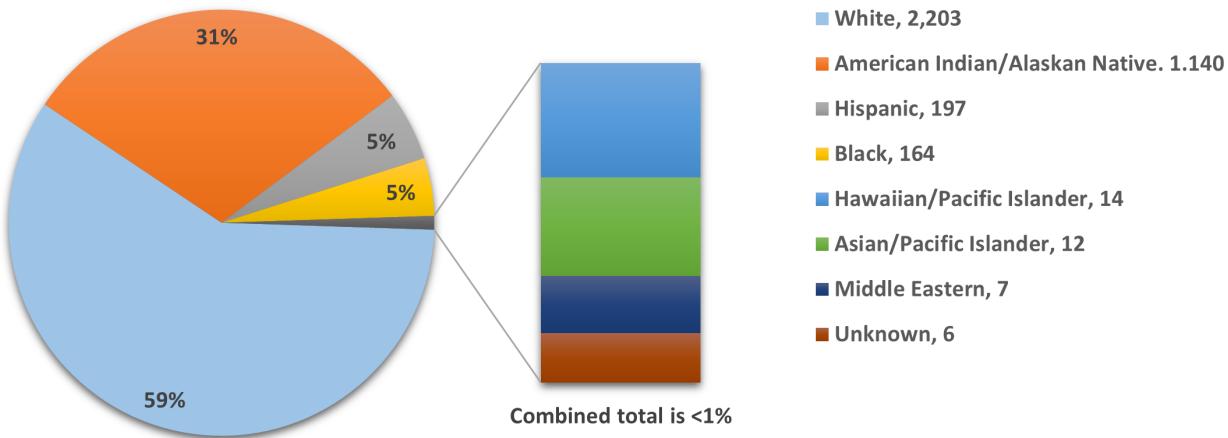
Also, officers may not always arrest on warrants. When this occurs, the person is notified of the warrant and told to take care of it with the court. Billings Police Department tracks this activity. During 2024, officers used the notification 1,055 times.

Officers also track when someone is taken to jail but upon arrival could not be remanded into custody. This occurred 465 times.

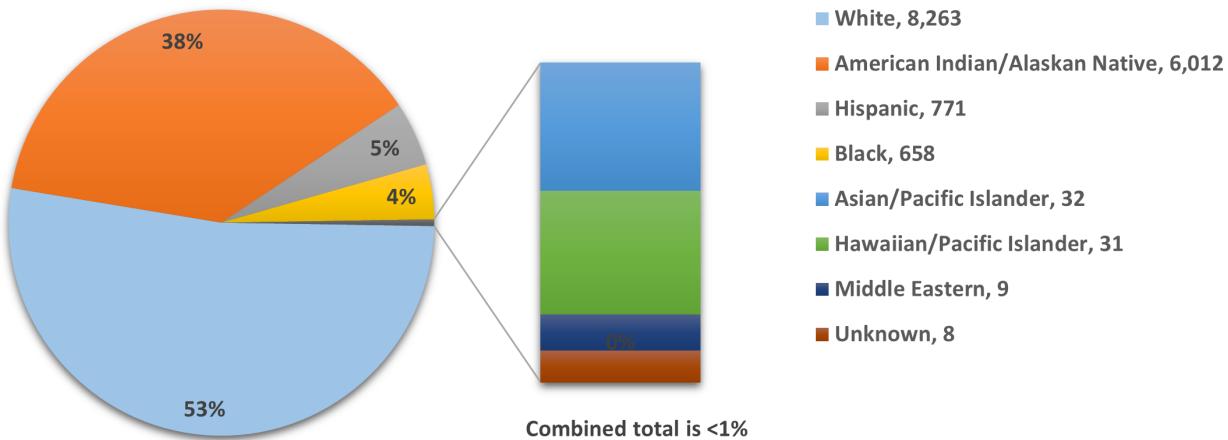
Breakdown of Physical Arrests by Gender



Breakdown of Physical Arrests (3,736) by Race



Breakdown of Charges (15,784) by Race



Investigations Division

The Investigations Division staff is a mix of detectives and patrol officers, who are assigned to special details.

The Division command staff is made up of a Captain, Lieutenant and two sergeants. There are two additional sergeants who supervise the City-County Special Investigations Unit and the Street Crimes Unit.

The civilian detectives' staff includes two clerical employees and two intelligence analysts. There is also a civilian employee in the City-County Special Investigations Unit. The Evidence and Identifications section is part of Investigations. Evidence is staffed by a Lieutenant, Identification Supervisor, two identification technicians and four evidence technicians.

The detectives assigned specifically to Investigations shared a case load of 478 investigations during 2024. They were called out to major crimes scenes 26 times. These responses include homicides, shootings and stabbings, sexual assaults, crimes against children and suspicious deaths.

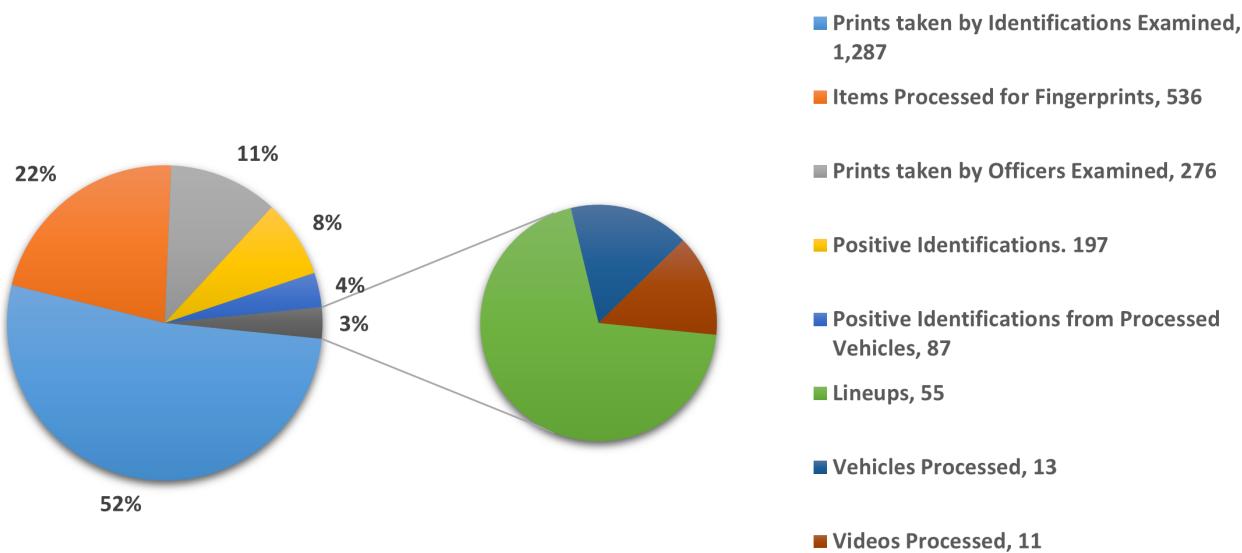
- The Investigations Division received 478 cases during 2024.
- Detectives cleared 377 cases, with 96 of those closed by arrest or referred for prosecution.
- 137 Cases remain under investigation.
- Detectives achieved a 70% case clearance rate and a 28% arrest or warrant request rate. Those closures are nearly equal to 2023 rates.
- They cleared 14 of 17 homicides.
- There were 2 infant death investigations, both completed.
- One Officer Involved Shooting was investigated.
- They received, reviewed and processed 420 Department of Health and Human Services reports. Of the reports, 77 resulted in cases assigned and investigated.
- The Intelligence Analysts processed 165 phones.
- Detectives conducted 51 child forensic interviews, and an additional 62 child forensic interviews



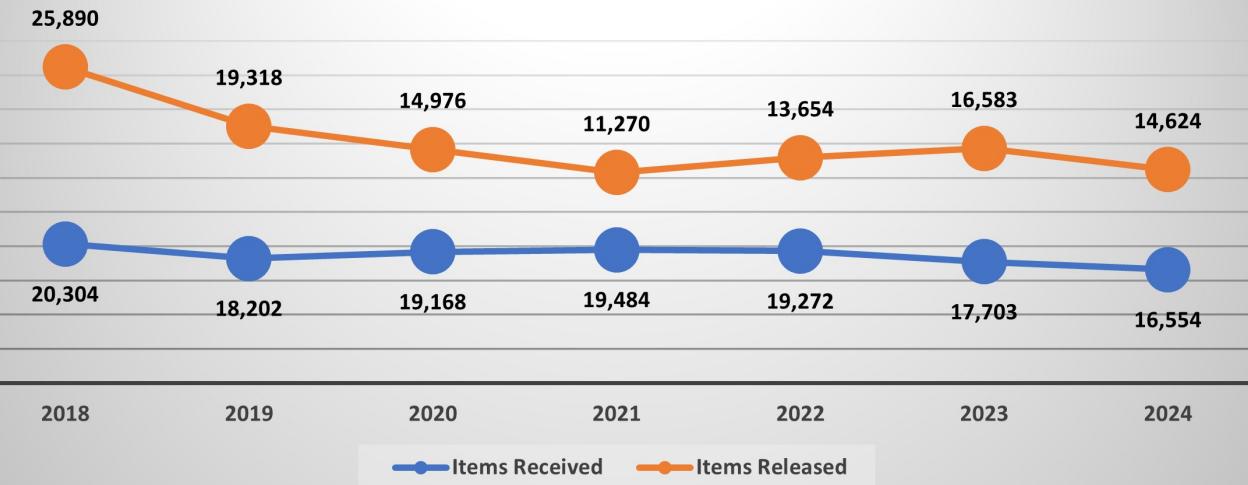
Detective Denise Baum (center) retired in October 2024 after 21 years of service.

Investigations Division

Identifications Staff Activities



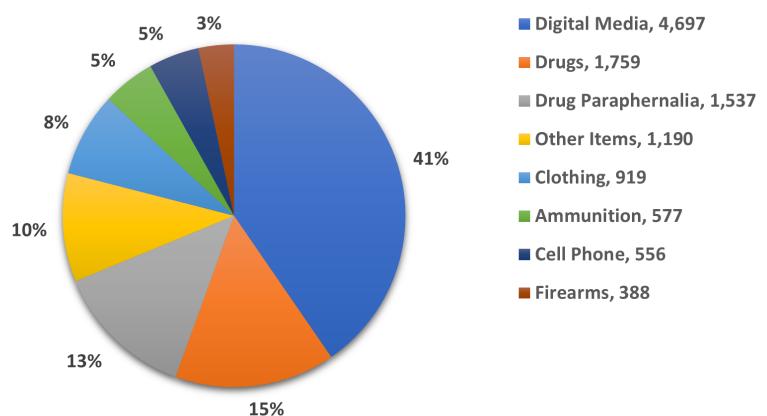
Evidence Received and Released



Did you know?

The Evidence Division staff processed 4,997 discovery requests during 2024. That's about 20 requests each work day that are provided to prosecutors and the public defenders' office. The requests increased from about 3,500 the year before, or around 42 percent. In recent years, BPD has added technology to make it more economical and efficient to transfer the information.

Most Common Evidence by Type



Specialized Units

Montana Violent Offender Task Force

One Billings Police Department officer serves with the Billings District Violent Offenders Task Force of the U. S. Marshals Service. This group makes high-risk arrests, predominately on warrants. There are also task forces in Missoula and Great Falls. Since 2005, these task forces have closed 22,420 warrants. During 2024 the Billings Division led the state with 699 closed warrants. Statewide the Task Force seized 52 firearms and four vehicles. They seized 6,921 grams of methamphetamine and 5,892 fentanyl pills in addition to 936 grams of powder. Currency seizures totaled \$76,248 and counterfeit totaled \$61,040.

City-County Specialized Investigations Unit

The High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area Program (HIDTA) is a component of the President's National Drug Control Strategy which provides additional federal resources to help eliminate or reduce drug trafficking. Law enforcement organizations within HIDTAs assess drug trafficking problems and design specific initiatives to reduce or eliminate the production, manufacture, transportation, distribution and chronic use of illegal drugs and money laundering and to reduce drug trafficking and related crime and violence. Among its goals is to reduce drug availability by eliminating or disrupting drug trafficking organizations. The Eastern Montana HIDTA Drug Task Force was created in 1996 and is part of Rocky Mountain Region which covers Colorado, Montana, Utah, & Wyoming.



Seizures

Methamphetamine	98.78 pounds	Marijuana (bulk)	35.36 pounds
Cocaine	21.12 pounds	Marijuana edibles	19.88 pounds
Fentanyl pills	45,343	THC Resin	44.52 pounds
Fentanyl powder	30.9 grams	THC liquid	4,977.6 grams
Heroin	64.7 grams	THC Vapes	1,015 vapes
Psilocybin mushrooms	11.42 pounds		
MDMA (Ecstasy)	1.69 pounds	Cash	\$171,164.76
Club Drugs	6.15 grams	Vehicle (value)	\$ 10,788.00
Pharmaceutical pills	2,755	Firearms	58

Investigation Activities

Wire/Phone Warrants	12
Controlled Deliveries	13
Felony Arrests	212
Federal Indictments	45

Drug Trafficking Organizations

Opened	11
Dismantled/Closed	4
Suspended	3
Disruptions	34

Specialized Units

Bomb Squad

Billings Police Department has 1 of the 2 FBI accredited bomb squads in Montana. The squad's six bomb technicians, all of whom work as officers, and the Department's specialized equipment may be called on to respond to critical incidents in Eastern Montana but can deploy anywhere in the state if needed. They examine and safely dispose of suspicious packages and devices, collect and dispose of fireworks and ammunition as well as commercial and military explosives. The Bomb Squad has two response vehicles, robots, bomb suits, X-ray equipment and a total containment vessel to safely dispose of items.



SWAT

BPD has a group of 15 highly trained officers who specialize in high-risk warrant service, fugitive apprehension, hostage rescue, response to people barricaded with guns as well as active shooters, dignitary protection and sniper/observer support of these activities. The SWAT team is activated when a situation requires advanced training or tools that are not commonly available to the patrol division. They work with other specialized units to complete their duties and share resources as well as skills.

Hostage Negotiators

The negotiators are called out to situations with hostages, barricaded people and other situations where de-escalation is needed, including with suicidal subjects. The SWAT team, negotiators and bomb squad work in conjunction on critical incidents, however negotiators may be called to work with people in any tumultuous situation. While negotiators are speaking to the subjects involved, they are evaluating the stability of the situation, and relaying crucial information to other on-scene officers. The information they gather and provide influences the decisions and actions of command personnel on the scene. Ultimately, the dialogue they enter into can potentially save the lives of not only any hostages, but also those of responding officers and the subjects they are speaking with.

Drone Program

The BPD Drone Team flew on 121 missions during 2024. That is nearly double the number of responses from 2023. The drones are flown by officers who are licensed by the Federal Aviation Administration to pilot the Department's eight drones.

The drones have been effective in increasing officer and citizen safety. They've been used to search for missing persons, during in-progress crimes, to enter buildings with barricaded suspects and to give tactical teams a bird's eye view of the scene they are encountering. Any information gained by using the drone must pass search warrant standards to be entered in court.

The team provided 11 demonstrations for children and adult organizations. Overall for 2024, the team logged 782 flights for 119 hours of flight time and flew 473 miles. At right, Lieutenant Shelden shows one of the department's drones.



Specialized Units

Street Crimes Units

The Billings Street Crimes Unit was established in 2018. Due to successes in disrupting crime, the unit was expanded in 2020 and again in 2022 and now includes a sergeant, one detective and three patrol officers. A second detective, who is assigned to pawn shops works closely with the unit. The members must apply and interview for these positions. The patrol officer slots are a two-year rotation.



SCU Activities

Cases	215
Arrests On Scene	81
Warrants Served	331
Gang Related Arrests	18
Citations/Warnings	193
Search Warrants	55

Seizures

Vehicles	12
Firearms	63
Fentanyl Pills	9,135
Currency	\$110,909

Billings Police Bicycle Patrol

About 30 police officers participate in bicycle patrol. Bicycle patrol requires more than just hopping on a bike and going to work. The officers must pass intensive specialized training with classroom and riding sections. The officers ride heavy-duty bicycles that are marked as Police. The 2022 BPD started its own training program after BPD officers became certified as instructors. Officers who participate in the program must ride a minimum number of hours each year.

Honor Guard



The Police Department Honor Guard provides ceremonial duties. They will conduct flag presentations at local events and accompany the caskets of retired Billings officers and line-of-duty deaths of officers through the state. The Honor Guard members are trained in protocols and exacting precision.

Parks Officer

Officer Schara works with the Parks and Recreation Department to patrol trails, assist parks employees and work toward keeping the public safe while they enjoy time in Billings' parks. During 2024 he responded to more than 700 Calls for Service, the vast majority of which were in parks. Each week he assists in towing abandoned vehicles that the BPD volunteer patrol has documented for removal.

Downtown Resource Officers

The Downtown Billings Alliance and Billings Police Department partnership provides officers who focus on downtown safety. To be more visible the officers bike and walk as much as possible. Their shared patrol vehicle was changed for higher visibility as well.

The officers who work downtown strive to engage with business owners and staffs. They offer a training class on de-escalation that helps citizens learn how to handle the time period between when police are called and when they arrive. Topics include how to talk to someone in crisis and the benefit of following one's instincts.

Domestic Violence Investigations

Billings Police Department has two officers in its Domestic Violence Investigator program.

The program moved into the Northern Lights Family Justice Center during 2024. The non-profit center brings a cadre of services together to provide a coordinated approach to serving adults and children who have experienced unhealthy or unsafe relationships, violence and/or abuse.

All BPD officers investigate domestic violence, but these officers are tasked with completing additional follow up and documentation to strengthen the cases. They also have more availability to victims and can help them access needed resources to stay safe. That contact helps them identify and document additional offenses including stalking, court order violations and additional partner-family member assault.

Frequently, crimes occur after suspects are put in jail. To help identify and prosecute those crimes, BPD uses grant money to pay overtime for BPD officers to assist with tasks such as listening to jail calls and writing supplemental reports about their content.

K9 Program

The Billings Police K9 team in 2024 included Officer Schultz and Chevy; Sgt. Weston and Czar; Officer Best and Evan, and Officer Anderson and Sam.

At right, Officers Anderson and Best, with K9 Evan, give a bite demonstration during the BPD 2024 Kids Camp.



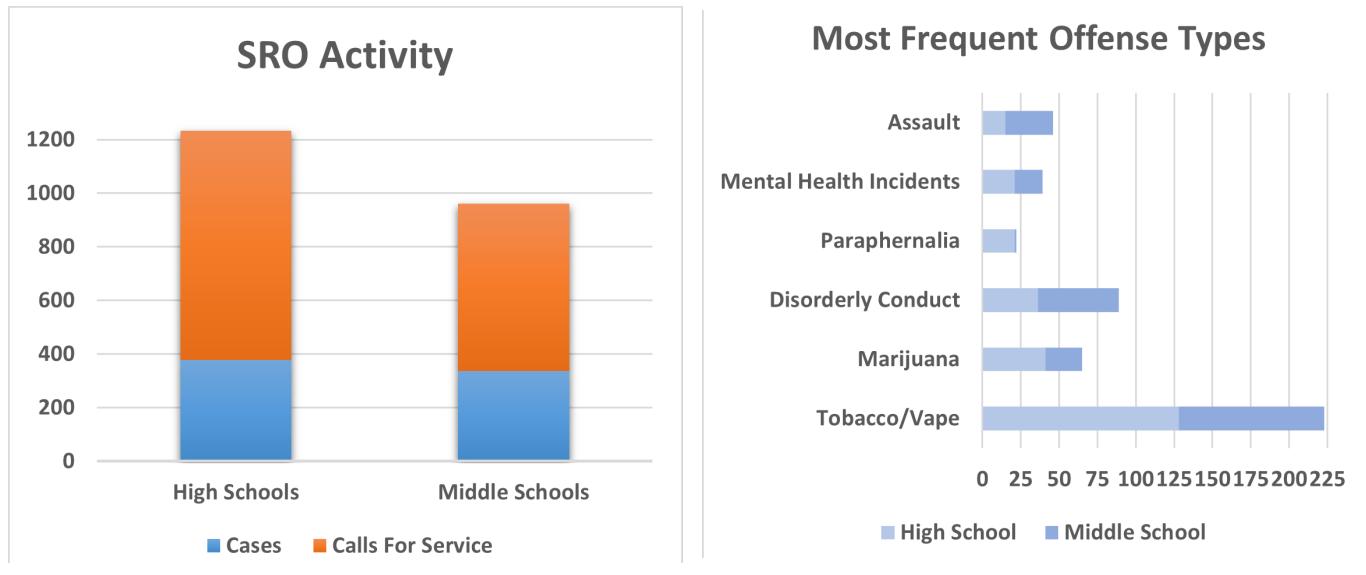
Unit Activity		Seizures	
Deployments	631	Firearms Seized	51
Vehicles Sniffed	126	Methamphetamine	23,291.35 grams
Parcels Sniffed	80	Liquid Methamphetamine	240 ounces
Arrests	142	Cocaine	1,360.4 grams
Public Demonstrations	24	Fentanyl Powder	2,101.7 grams
		Psilocybin mushrooms	1,559.29 grams
		Currency	\$67,935

Specialized Units

School Resource Officers

School Resources Officers are funded in cooperation with School District 2. There are 8 SROs and a Sergeant who work in schools. The officers are assigned to individual high schools or middle schools and visit several elementary schools as part of their duties.

During the 2023-2024 school year, the officers wrote 714 cases. They provided 18 armed intruder classes and 105 presentations. The SROs build rapport and trust with students. They serve in mentorship capacities and help students, school staff and families find solutions to problems outside of the criminal justice system.



School Resources Officers, from left: Vickery, Boeckel, Nienhuis, Doll, Richter, Thiel, Weaver and Sgt. West.

Defensive Tactics

Billings Police Defensive Tactics was introduced in 2017 as a response to a growing need for officer safety as assaults on Officers increased both nationally and locally. The program has expanded to include six Billings Police Officers who are skilled in multiple styles of self-defense systems. All six are certified instructors and often travel to the Montana Law Enforcement Academy in Helena to assist teaching new recruits self-defense and fight scenarios.

BPD requires all officers to attend an annual 10-hour training day with the option of several quarterly training days. The BPD defensive Tactics program is a Judo based system, however, other martial arts are taught including Brazilian Jiu Jitsu, Krav Maga and boxing.

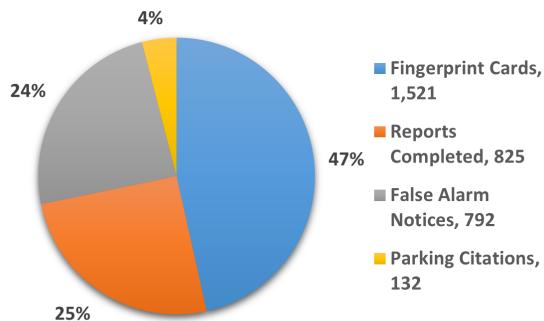
Officers learn basics such as how to "break fall" to help prevent injuries due to falls or takedowns. As Officers progress, they learn several controlled takedowns, ground defense, vehicle extractions, weapon defense and advanced handcuffing techniques.

Billings Police Volunteer Program

The Billings Police Department's volunteers donated 3,658 hours to the Department and community during 2024.

The 23 volunteers range in age from 28 to 92 and serve in several capacities based on their interests. Their time is given enforcing abandoned vehicle and parking ordinances, fingerprinting the public and new City employees, assisting with special events and completing data entry of some police reports and digitizing files.

Volunteer Activities



Volunteer applications are available at www.billingspolice.com.

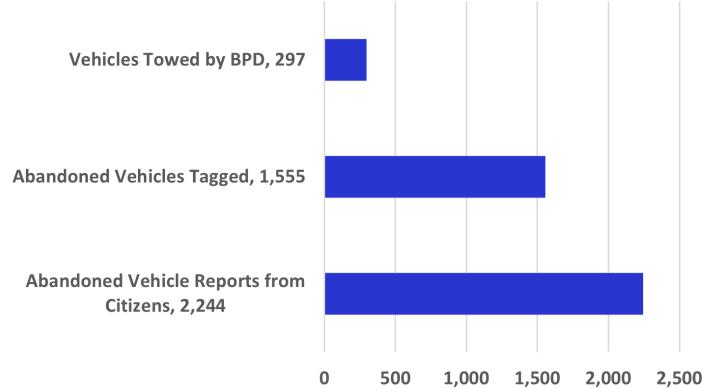
Call 406-247-8590 for information.



"Our volunteers play an essential role in ensuring the safety and well-being of our community. These individuals embody the spirit of service, sacrificing their personal time to make a difference in the lives of others. It is important to acknowledge and celebrate their contributions as they truly make an impact in our community."

Rich St. John
Chief of Police

Volunteer Patrol Unit Activities



By the numbers ...

Billings Police Department Specialized Units make incredible strides each year in removing illegal items and illicit money from the community.

These everyday items help give context to some of their combined seizures in 2024.



A small sofa can weight around 150 pounds, which is how much Methamphetamine powder was seized.



A 5-pound bag of potatoes represents how much Fentanyl powder was seized.



A gallon of paint weighs about as much as the 15 pounds of Psilocybin mushrooms that was seized.



This isn't the full \$350,000 that the units seized but it was an impressive day at work for the K9 Evan and his handler Officer Best.

Animal Control Division

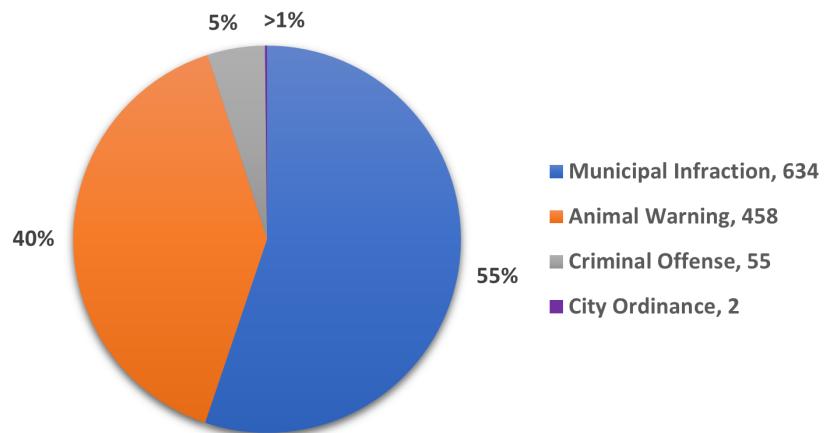
Animal Control Supervisor Tom Stinchfield has a staff of 5 Animal Control Officers and an Office Assistant.

The officers respond to citizen complaints and are dispatched through the Billings Communications Center.

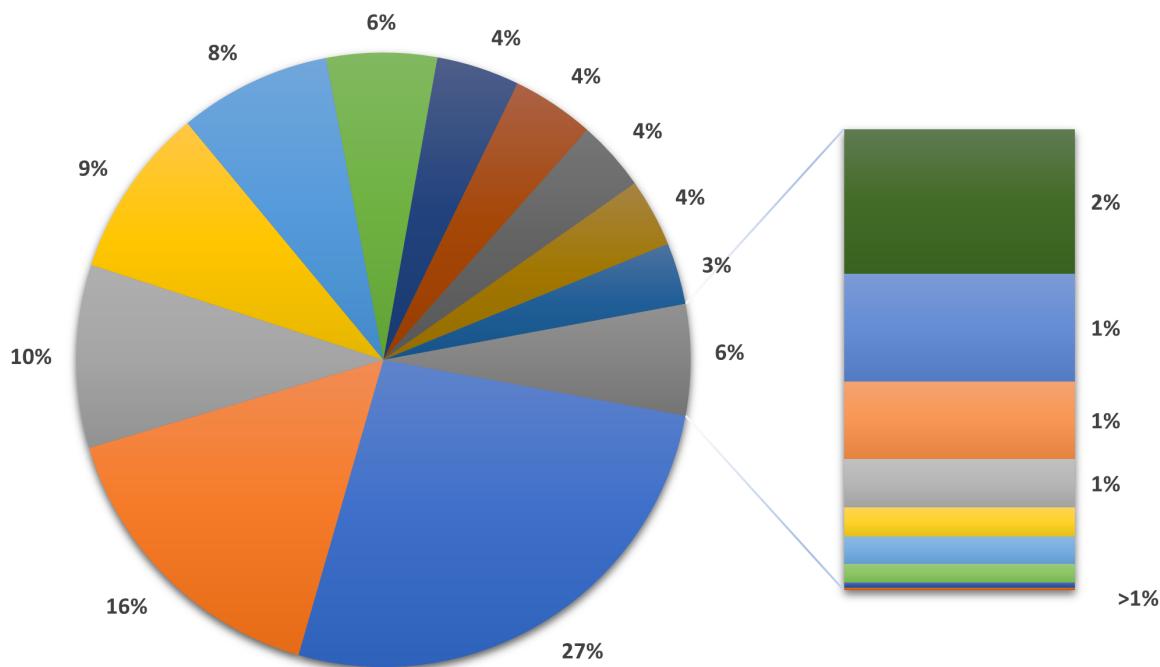
Animal Control Officers are on call around the clock to respond to emergency animal-related calls.

They are authorized to cite animal owners and write criminal cases to submit to Billings Municipal Court.

Animal Control Citations by Type



Animal Control Calls For Service by Type



- Small Animal at Large, 1,597
- Wildlife, 541
- Animal in Hot Vehicle, 263
- Dog/Cat in Trap, 216
- Injured Animal, 82
- Offensive Animal Waste, 22
- Dangerous Animal Behavior, 4

- Confined Stray, 957
- Animal Bite, 482
- Neglected Animal, 262
- Deceased Animal, 195
- Small Animal in Park, 59
- Abandon Animal, 21
- Animal Control, 2

- Animal Noise, 579
- Other, 350
- On-View Investigation, 223
- Potentially Dangerous Animal, 110
- Livestock, 37
- Animal Waste, 14

Welcomes and Farewells

New Officers

Jacob DeHaas	John Rodriguez
Sidney Strizki	Jaxson Brandt
Tanner Tabbert	Eric Preble
Nicholas Lai	Gabriel Perez



Officers Rodriguez, Brandt, Preble, Tabbert and Lai at their graduation from the Montana Law Enforcement Academy.

New Community Service Officers

Troy Smith	Riley Yung
Hilary Mitchell	KP Davidson



City Administrators Kukulski with Community Service Officers Smith, Mitchell, Yung and Davidson.

Promotions

Brian Krivitz ~ Captain	Brandon Wooley ~ Captain
Ryan Kramer ~ Lieutenant	Eric Schnelbach ~ Lieutenant
Daren Haider ~ Sergeant	Chad Wildin ~ Sergeant
Dylan Sutton ~ Sergeant	Nathan Contreraz ~ Sergeant

Retirements

Scott Conrad	Justin Jagers	Brad Ross	Denise Baum
Clyde Reid	Wanda Spaulding	RD Harper	Jim Woog