

## Billings City Administrator Weekly Report

April 15, 2022

1. **Police Department Annual Report & Press conference** – This morning, Chief St. John presented the police department's 2021 annual report to the public and media. I've included the link to the ~70-minute press conference and the annual report. Excellent job! Thank you to all our men and women who serve our city making it a safer community. Click the link to view: <https://www.facebook.com/BillingsPD/videos/710365957081600>
2. **Fire Department Annual Report** – Great work and a big thank you to all our men and women who serve to improve our safety. See attached 2021 annual report.
3. **Parole, Probation and Sober Living** – It remains staff's opinion that Council and staff's efforts are best spent working collaboratively with the DOC and the state legislature to make changes to the way felony offenders are supervised in Billings rather than trying to force a limitation on DOC by local ordinance/resolution that cannot be enforced.

In addition to the attached information, we will present an update regarding the research and data needed to effectuate non-discriminatory regulations on sober living homes at the May 23 meeting. See attached document from City Attorney, Gina Dahl.

4. **Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME)** - In preparation for the City Council's April 25 Meeting Action Item on the Community Development Board's recommendations for FY2022-2023 budget allocations for CDBG and HOME programs, staff has prepared the attached white paper. The document provides a comprehensive overview of the CDBG and HOME program process and the 5-year plan that informs the City's implementation of CDBG and HOME allocations for the community. We hope this overview will provide information to the Council well in advance of the meeting and maybe elicit some questions we can then anticipate for the April 25 meeting.
5. **Billings PCE Superfund Site Update - April 19, 21, and 25:** EPA will be collecting outdoor air samples for 24 hours on these days using a metal canister that will likely be chained to something in six city parks—Mountview Cemetery, Optimist Park, South Park, Community Park, Pioneer Park, and North Park. An example picture of a canister is below. Citizens may have questions about these canisters and call city and emergency services. Signage will be posted next to the canisters in an effort to help explain why they are there.

April 19-29: EPA is continuing vapor intrusion sampling started in March. EPA, its contractor, and MT DEQ will be collecting indoor air samples from about 50 residences and businesses.

Early May: EPA will provide, and update of activities planned for the month of May.



Figure: example of an air sampling canister deployed at a park

**Have a wonderful Easter weekend!**

# BILLINGS POLICE DEPARTMENT 2021 ANNUAL REPORT



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

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### *On the Cover*

Lt. Krivitz with his patrol vehicle.

The department moved to SUVs because manufacturers quit building passenger cars equipped for law enforcement. BPD updates a portion of our about 80-vehicle fleet every year. Worldwide supply issues and manufacturer delays have slowed the arrival of new vehicles for the last two years. Most vehicles are shared by officers and are in operation at least 10 hours a day, 7 days a week. The average patrol vehicle is driven 110,000 to 120,000 miles







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Mayor, City Council, and Billings residents:

On behalf of the men and women of the Billings Police Department, it is my honor and privilege to present to you the 2021 Annual Report of the Billings Police Department. The report summarizes the incredible work the men and women of the Billings Police Department have accomplished this past year. I cannot express how proud I am of our officers and civilian staff who worked tirelessly in persistent pursuit of overall improvement and public safety for the citizens of Billings.

We have accomplished much this past year and within the pages of this report you will find statistics, charts, graphs, and other information that documents and measures the challenges we faced in 2021. But, there is much work to do. While homicides decreased, the City of Billings continued to see increases in aggravated assaults and drug offenses. Methamphetamine remains ever present and is the common denominator of most of our crime. Exacerbating the problem is the increased presence of Fentanyl.

Addressing these issues is not the sole responsibility of the police department and we continue collaboration with our local, state, and federal partners. Together, we have been addressing violent crime, drug dealing, and illegal possession of firearms. We will continue those efforts in order to keep our city safe.

Meeting these challenges and fostering an atmosphere of transparency and work that collaboratively meets the needs of the community would not have been possible without the hard work and commitment of our exceptional staff. None of our accomplishments would have been accomplished without their dedicated service. We also realize that there are many variables to our success to include support from our Mayor and Council, City Administration, and the public. We continue to emphasize community engagement to help strengthen trust and respect in order to provide effective police services.

Despite all that happened in 2021, one point was absolutely clear to members of the department. Our community supports our efforts. Aside from passing the second of two Public Safety Levy's, on occasions too numerous to count, business, community organizations, and community members donated food, gift cards, equipment, and other items to lift the spirits of our officers. In addition, we received hundreds of cards, letters, and emails expressing support from authors of all ages. For that support, we are eternally grateful.

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. As you review this report, I hope it provides you with an understanding of the challenges we face and the determined effort to provide exceptional service to the community.

I welcome you to visit our website [www.Billingsmt.gov](http://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

## 2021 Strategic Goal Highlights

### **Reduce levels of violent crime**

- Aggressively targeted violent criminal and drug activity through collaboration with Project Safe Neighborhood partners
- Continued to disrupt and dismantle international and multi-state drug trafficking organizations
- Added officers to the Street Crimes Unit

### **Strengthen traffic enforcement**

- Fully staffed the Selective Traffic Enforcement Program and augmented with K9 officers
- Expanded electronic citation software in additional patrol cars to reduce citizen time and increase officer efficiency during traffic stops
- Added additional speed trailers for neighborhood monitoring

### **More efficient service delivery**

- Through research and refinement, updated service delivery model to improve coverage and response times
- Following the operations review by the Center for Public Safety Management, changed the way officers' administrative time is recorded to better reflect time on work that has to be completed in the office
- Implemented on-line records requests and reporting cold crimes and concerns for citizen convenience

### **Improve sense of safety in our community**

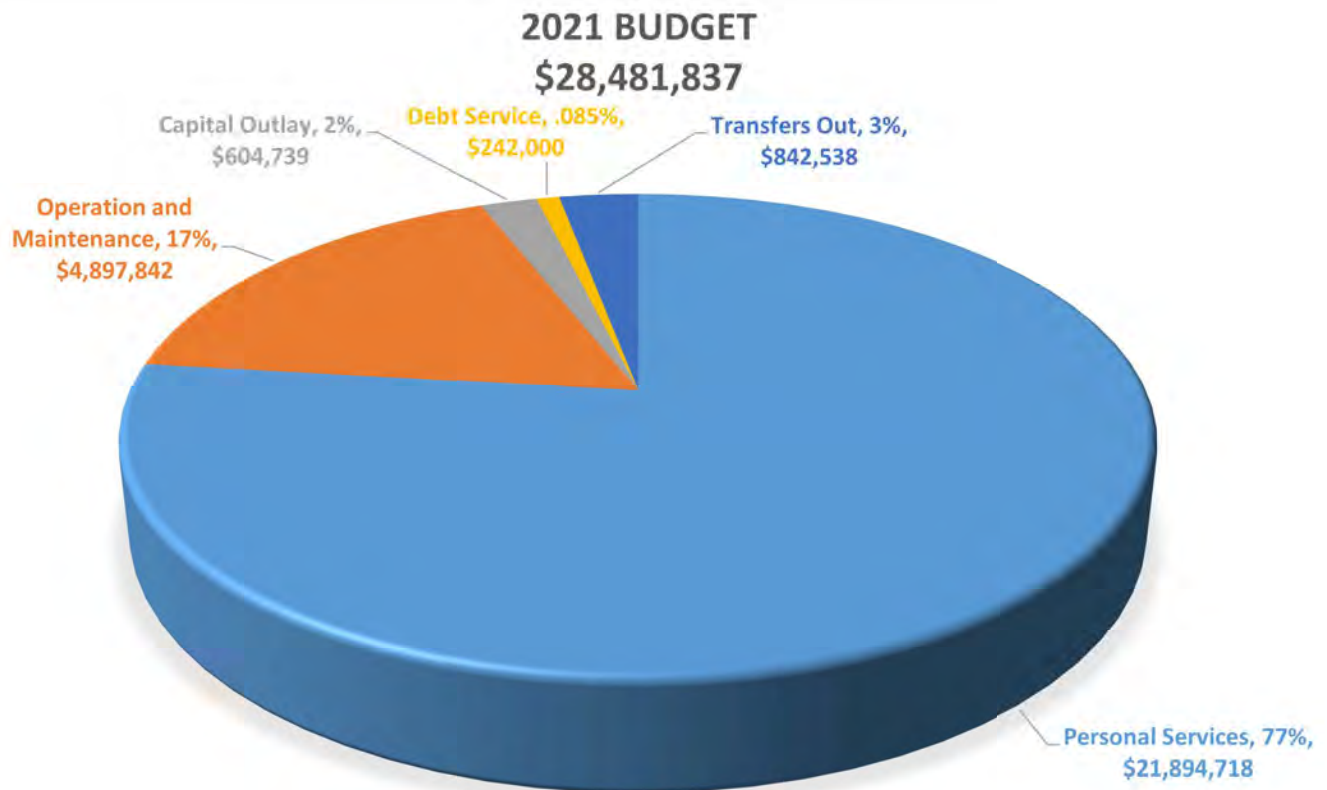
- Continued to implement Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design
- Built upon the success of the Park Officer program
- Worked with stakeholders to identify and address neighborhood and business concerns
- Worked with Scheels to establish a Community Meetup Spot for safe exchange of online marketplace sales and trades

### **Develop and strengthen partnerships**

- Partnered with Yellowstone Substance Abuse Connect Coalition to divert those in need to social services
- Continued active participation in the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council and with Downtown Billings Association, Billings Clinic and Billings Public Schools



## Billings Police Department 2021 Budget

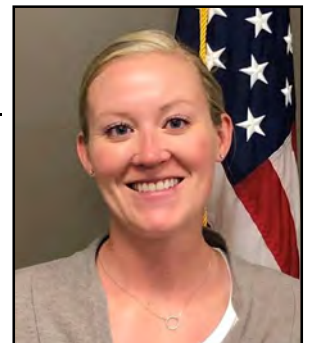


### *Did you know?*

Billings citizens approved a November 2021 ballot issue to fund much-needed staff additions. The levy provides \$2.5 million to BPD which will make it possible to add 28 employees, split between sworn and civilian personnel. The levy also provided for hiring additional prosecutors, a judge and court staff, which is an important addition to hold people responsible for crimes investigated by Billings Police Department. The fire department also received funding. And, part of the levy will be used for mental health and substance abuse services.

BPD was already planning ways to leverage the funding to not only maintain levels of service but improve delivery.

The department added a Sergeant who is responsible for training, so our officers meet state and department requirements for annual training. Training is offered locally whenever possible which saves on travel expenses. Sergeant Puckett, pictured here, was selected for the position. She also oversees hiring and recruitment and other administrative projects for the department. For information about applying with BPD visit [www.billingspolice.com](http://www.billingspolice.com).



Commanders are building a program for Community Service Officers. These non-sworn employees will be trained internally to do tasks that are part of BPD's work — such as obtaining retail video after thefts or taking non-injury accident reports—but don't require an officer to complete. Their efforts will free up officers to respond more quickly to property crimes and quality of life calls.

We will also hire additional civilian clerical and evidence staff who are needed to keep pace with officers' paperwork and case evidence, as well as requests for information from prosecutors.



# Billings Police Department Chain of Command



Chief St. John

## Chief of Police

Rich St. John

Administrative  
Coordinator  
Jamie Wegner

## Assistant Chief

Jeremy House



Assistant Chief House

Animal Control  
Supervisor  
Tom Stinchfield

Captain Operations  
(Patrol)  
Brian Korell

Captain Professional  
Standards  
Neil Lawrence

Captain  
Investigations  
R.D. Harper

Administration



Capt. Neil Lawrence

## Captain Professional Standards

Neil Lawrence

Administrative  
Lieutenant  
Brandon Wooley

Sergeant  
Special Events  
Sgt. West

Admin Secretary/  
Training Coord  
Taylor Bernhardt

Volunteer  
Coordinator  
Kallie Parsons

Public  
Relations  
Officer

2 DBA  
Officers

5 STEP  
Officers

8 SRO  
Officers

Parks & Rec  
Officer

Professional Standards

# Billings Police Department Chain of Command

## Operations



Capt. Brian Korell

### Captain Operations (Patrol)

Brian Korell



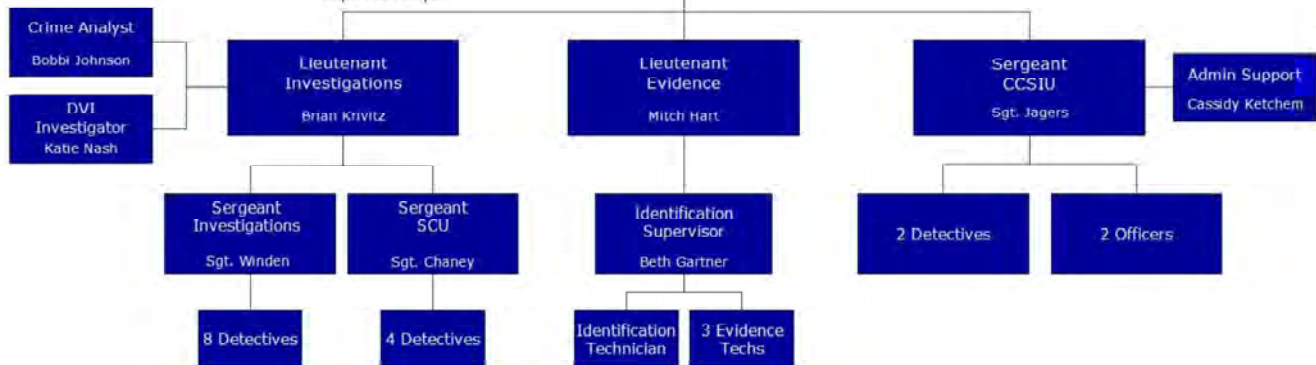
## Investigations



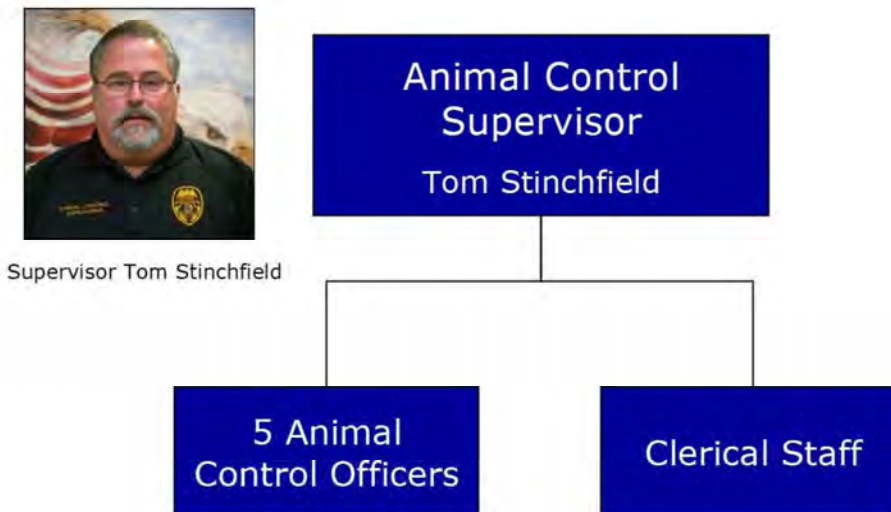
Capt. R.D. Harper

### Captain Investigations

R.D. Harper



## Billings Police Department Chain of Command



Animal Control

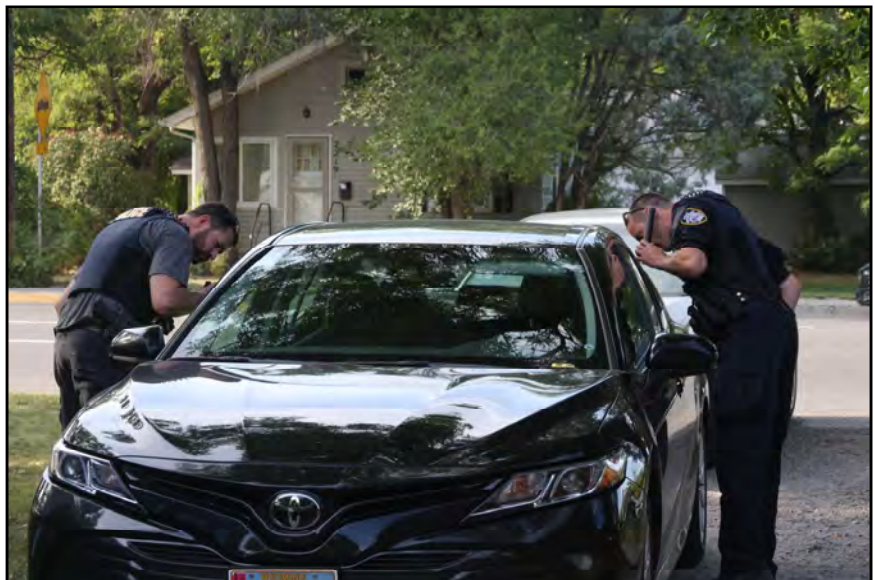
### *Did you know?*

Billings Police Department took reports of 1,091 stolen vehicles during 2021. Of those, 1,067 were recovered, that is 98 percent.

When a vehicle is reported as stolen, it is listed on the Department's daily briefing so officers know to look for it while on patrol.

Stolen vehicles can be recovered many ways, including when citizens report suspicious vehicles parked in their neighborhoods.

At right: Officers Beechie and Ihde look in a vehicle during an investigation.





## Calls For Service

### Where We Work

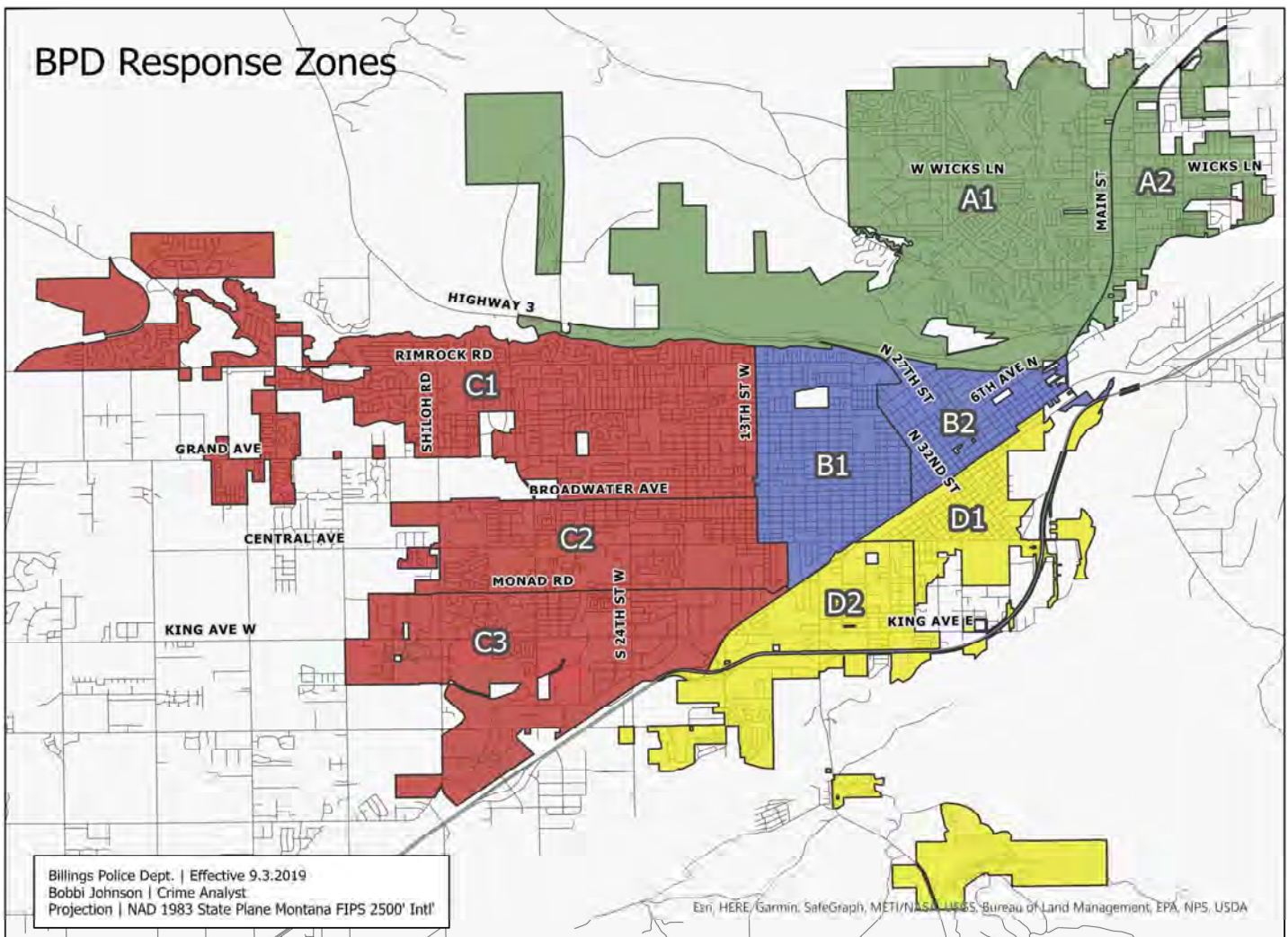
There are an average of 16 patrol officers and commanders on each of the three shifts Billings Police Department operates every day. At the beginning of each shift, commanders determine which part of Billings each officer will patrol that day. There are never less than 9 officers on duty.

Based on several workload studies, the department placed a few more officers on the afternoon shift to better meet citizen requests for service.

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.

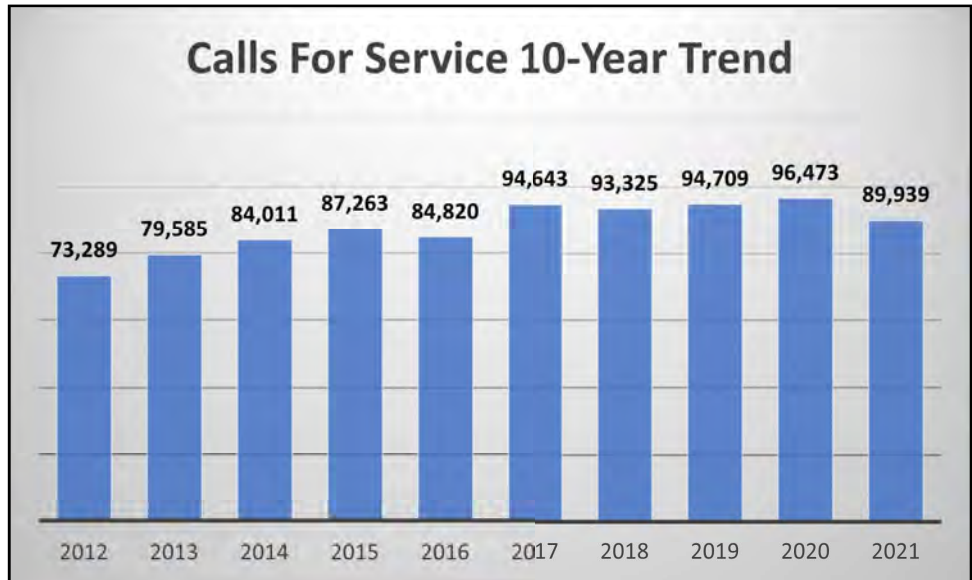
There are always enough officers to have one in each zone and if there are additional officers on duty, they work the busier zones. They also assist across the City as citizen requests increase during a shift or critical incidents pull officers into service outside of their assigned zones.





## Calls For Service by Zone

ZONE	2021
A1	8,911
A2	5,530
B1	10,409
B2	19,853
C1	9,468
C2	7,748
C3	9,024
D1	8,241
D2	7,728
Initial call mapped outside of Billings	1,250
Unknown offense location	1,777
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>89,939</b>



Billings Police Department put an emphasis on the Downtown areas during 2020. The effort was a response to citizen concerns about quality of life issues as well as crime. The focus result in about 3,400 fewer calls in the area which contributed to an overall reduction in Calls For Service.

### Did you know?



Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design is one of the Department's strategic goals to improve a sense of safety in our community.

The Downtown Billings Alliance and Downtown Resource Officers recently worked with building owners to improve conditions in an alley behind the Park 1 garage off of North 29th Street. Downtown Officer Mansur stated the changes reduced problems in the area "literally by 100 percent." The Chamber of Commerce is also a program partner.

The site is also on the Light Bike Trail, a walkable installation of neon-light bicycles that, along with overhead lights, deter crime and quality of life violations. Also, the murals have

made the alley a popular spot for engagement and graduation photos.

Below, Officer Carney leaves the area after a suspicious call nearby.



*Billings Police Department has officers who are trained to help citizens analyze property and suggest CPTED solutions. For more information, call the Crime Prevention Center at 247-8590.*

## Incidents

### Policing starts with an incident

When citizens request a police officer, the information provided is used to create a Call For Service (CFS) which is labeled with an incident type. The type of incident determines if 1 or 2 officers are dispatched. Depending on the circumstances or events, more officers may be called to assist. These are the most frequent incident types reported by citizens and initiated by officers. Not all incidents require that officers create a case, but if they do the offense listed in the case is what is used for state and federal crime reporting.

<b>20 Most Frequent Incident Types</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>
Suspicious Activity	10,910	11,955	12,916	13,086	15,018	14,402
Traffic Stop	10,135	14,224	11,035	12,442	10,898	8,872
Disturbance	8,114	8,912	9,323	8,830	8,844	8,250
Welfare Check	3,713	3,892	4,562	5,211	6,245	6,084
Trespass	1,678	2,015	2,813	3,512	5,590	5,402
Alarm	4,740	5,239	5,234	5,066	4,372	4,411
Traffic Complaint/Investigation	3,073	3,207	3,405	3,811	3,693	3,843
Theft	5,298	5,856	5,032	4,529	4,728	3,628
Area Check	2,982	5,567	5,210	3,512	3,402	2,440
Accident Property Damage	2,250	2,274	2,321	2,301	1,993	2,297
Threats/Harassment	1,336	1,465	1,346	1,484	1,444	1,683
Suicide Attempts/Threats	1,162	1,321	1,463	1,490	1,478	1,574
Follow Up	1,374	2,206	2,491	2,034	1,620	1,466
DUI	1,515	1,308	1,417	1,459	1,370	1,361
Service Assist Law Enforcement	1,184	1,202	1,009	1,098	1,432	1,307
Accident Hit and Run	984	1,026	987	1,069	931	1,192
Vehicle Theft	928	1,099	991	818	1,046	1,146
PFMA	79	62	634	772	1,080	1,074
Sick/Injured Person	537	608	707	856	1,073	1,010
Weapons	484	674	441	558	806	994

### Weapons Calls For Service 6-year Trend



## Violent Crime Statistics

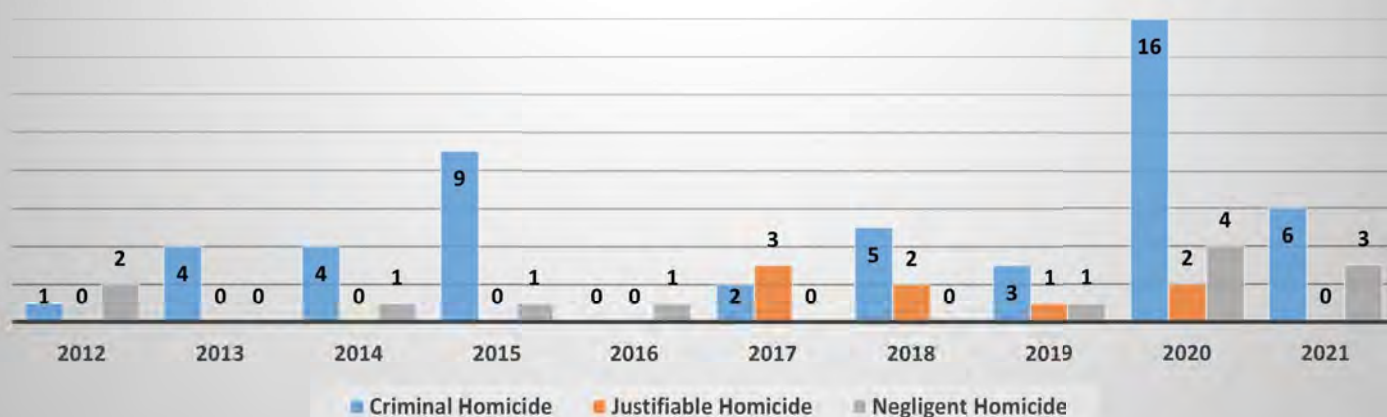
The FBI defines crimes that are reported through its National Incident Based Reporting (NIBRs) program. These are the NIBRs definitions for homicide:

**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.

### Homicide Offenses 10-year Trend



All homicide investigations during 2021 have been closed. Arrests were made in three cases; four cases are being reviewed for criminal charges at year's end and two were closed due to the death of the offenders.

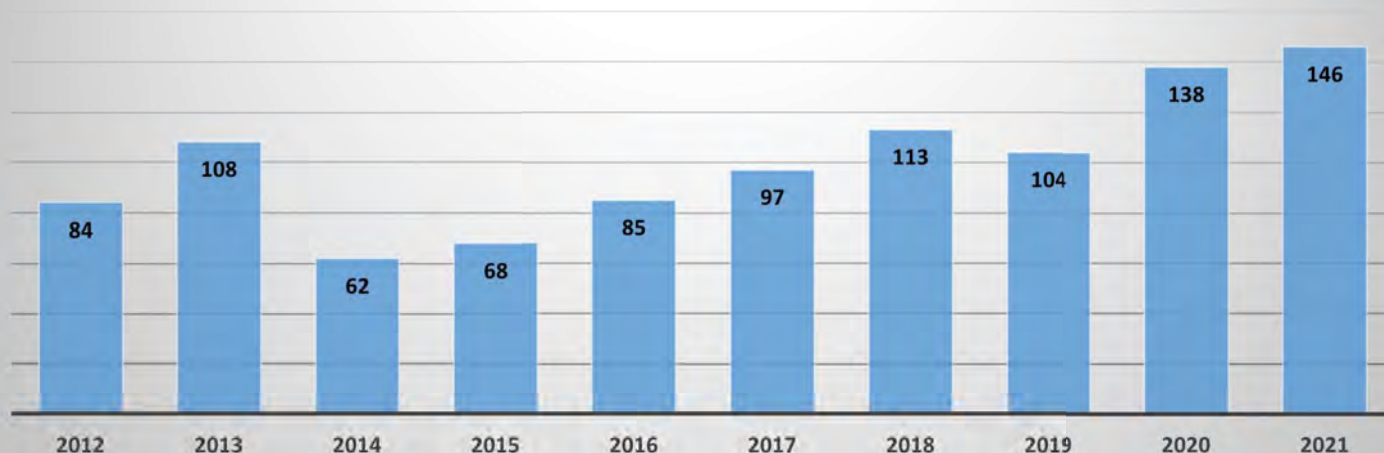
"Although each homicide reflects a tragic loss, the diligent and tenacious work of Department personnel resulted in a 100% case clearance and closure for families. And that is important to us," Chief Rich St. John

**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 Crime Statistics

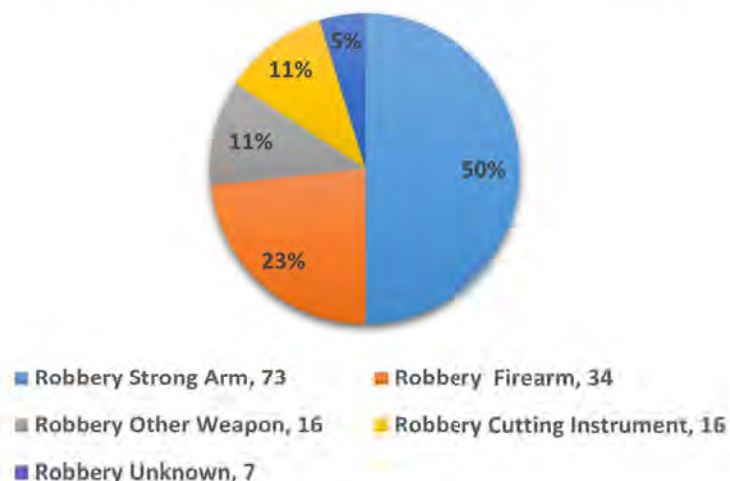
### Robbery Offenses 10-year Trend



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.

### Weapons Used in 2021 Robberies



### Did you know?

In September 2021, the Billings City Council created a Citizen Police Advisory Board. The 7-member board of citizen volunteers is appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by the City Council. There also may be 2 ex-officio representatives of city departments who are appointed by the City Administrator. The board acts in an advisory role. The board's key objectives are recruitment, retention and workplace diversity; crime prevention and diversion; community support and engagement and data collection and analysis.

#### Citizen Police Advisory Board Members

*Denise Boggio*  
*Dennis Bear Don't Walk*  
*April Veach*  
*Joseph Stout*  
*Christopher Simpson*

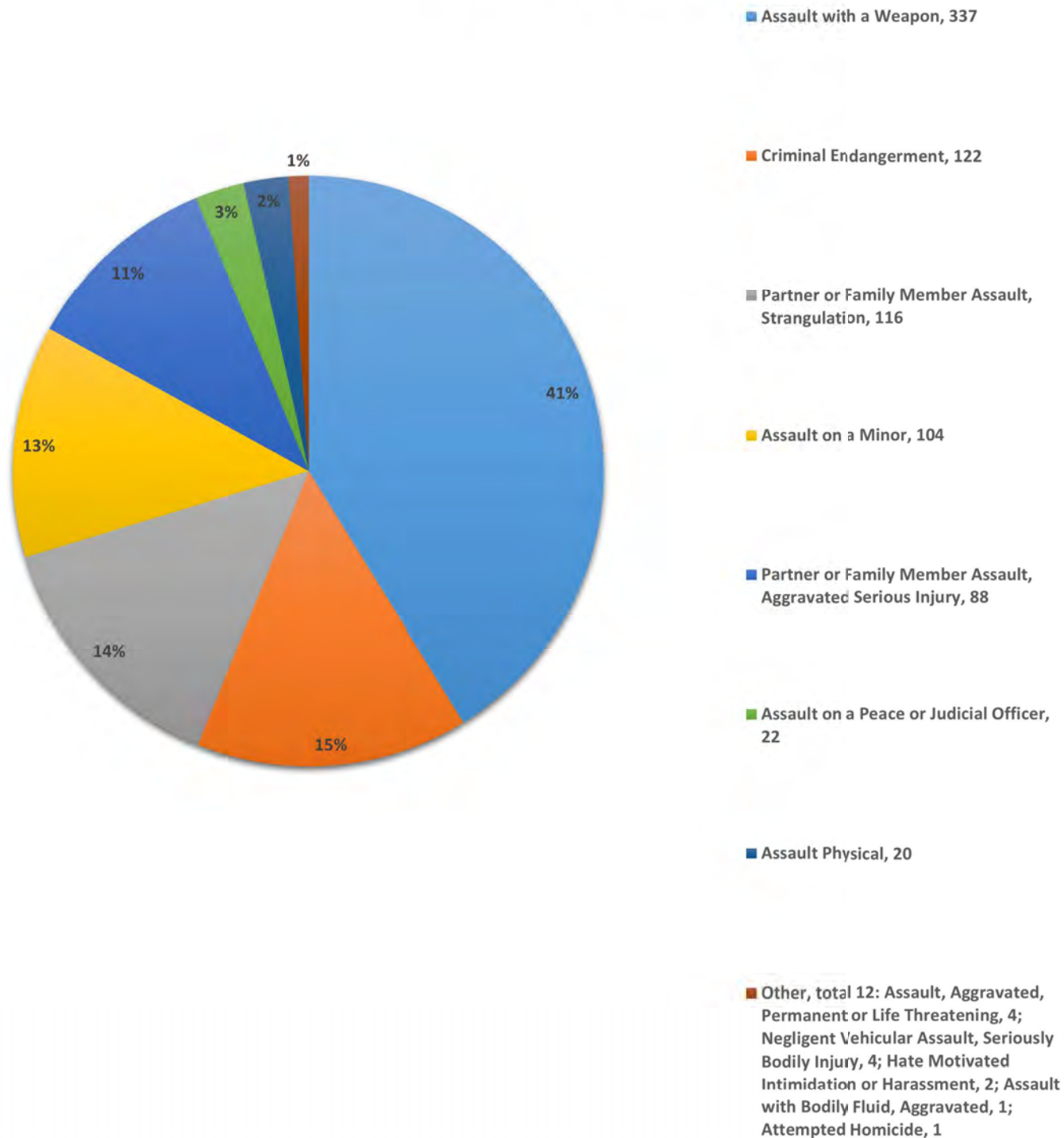
#### Coalition Representatives

*Kristin Lundgren, Substance Abuse Connect*  
*Erin Lambert, Continuum of Care*



## Violent Crime Statistics

### Aggravated Assault Offenses

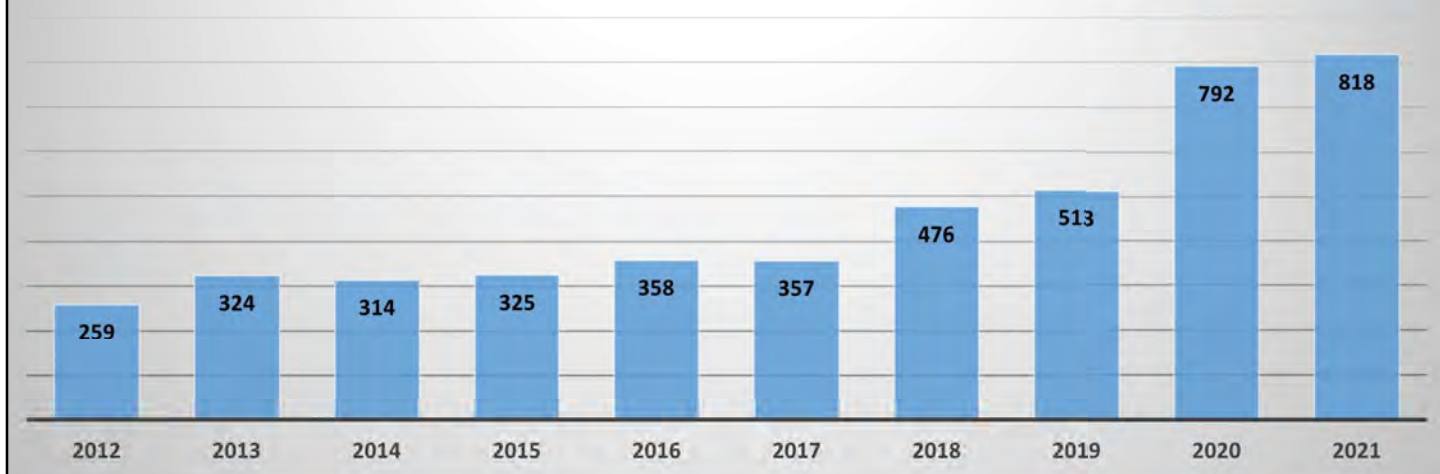


#### *Did you know?*

2021, the BPD fully implemented a body camera program to all patrol personnel. This was made possible by utilizing budgeted funds along with community donations. Local radio personalities Paul Mushaben and Mark Wilson generated \$50,000 in donated funds to implement the program. The department's body camera program is designed to enhance officer safety, increase and improve evidence quality, improve transparency and accountability, reduce civilian complaints, and enhance professionalism.

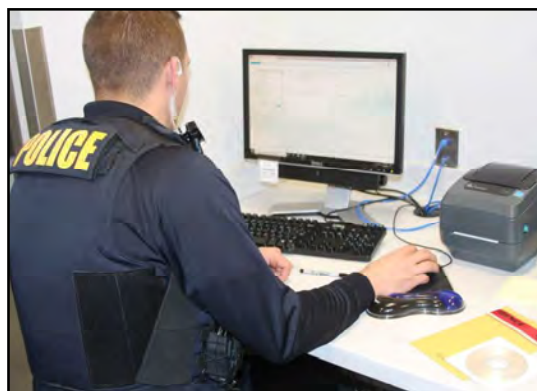
## Violent Crime Statistics

### Total Aggravated Assault Offenses 10-Year Trend



Due to the nature of violence, and the potential for devastating impacts on victims, investigating violent crime requires extra steps and documentation.

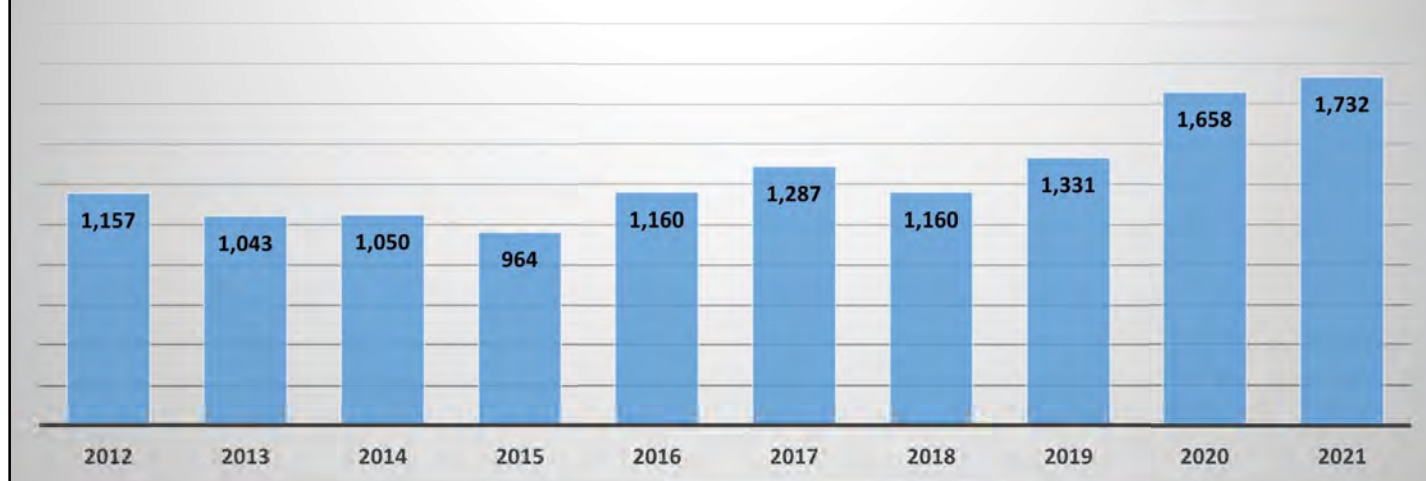
Some of the necessities include waiting for victims to be checked by medical personnel, either on



scene or at a hospital; taking additional statements and photos and uploading them onto Billings Police Department servers; logging evidence into the secure facility, with wet or bloody items requiring extra steps, and writing additional paperwork so victims are aware of their rights and prosecutors are provided thorough information. All of this work delays responses to other, less critical crimes and reports of quality of life issues.

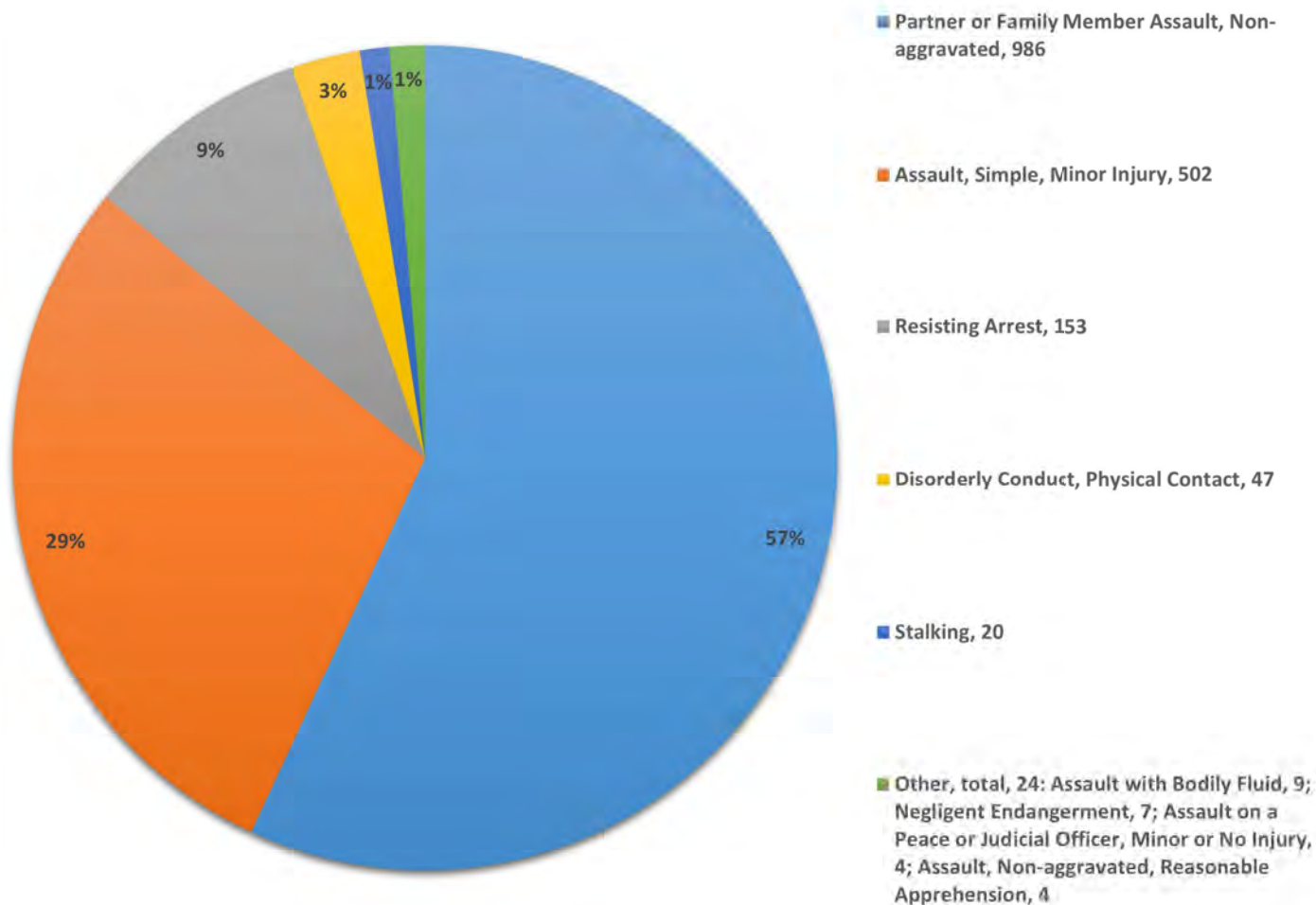
These charts show increases in violent crimes over most of the last decade. The only additional reporting started in 2018 when strangulation was added to domestic crimes.

### Total Non-Aggravated Assault Offenses 10-Year Trend

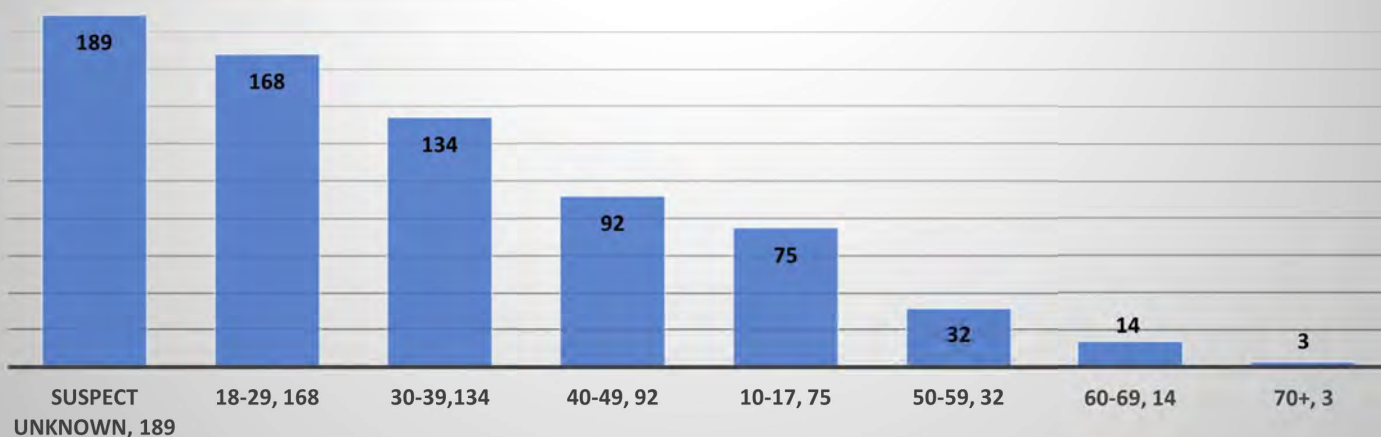


## Violent Crime Statistics

### Non-Aggravated Assault Offenses

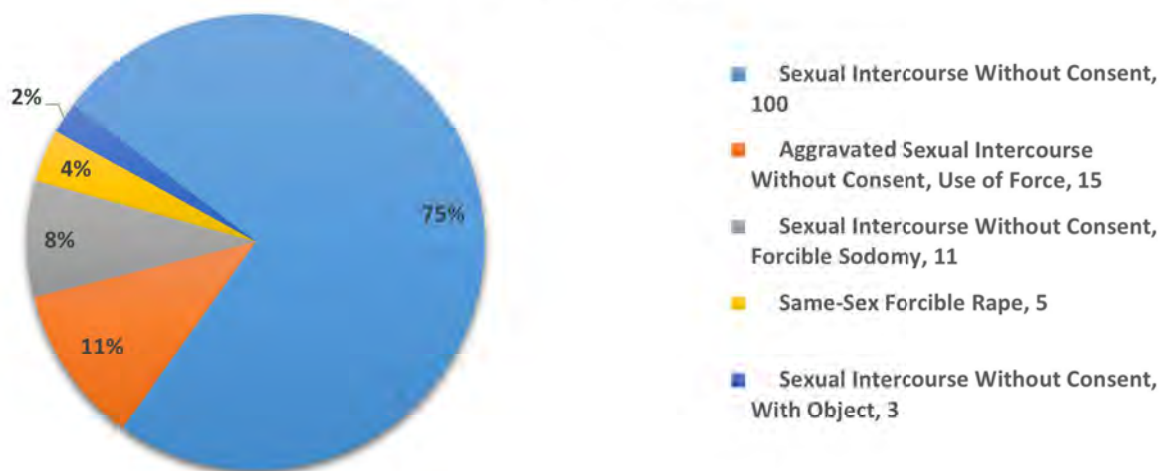


### Ages of Suspects in Simple Assaults

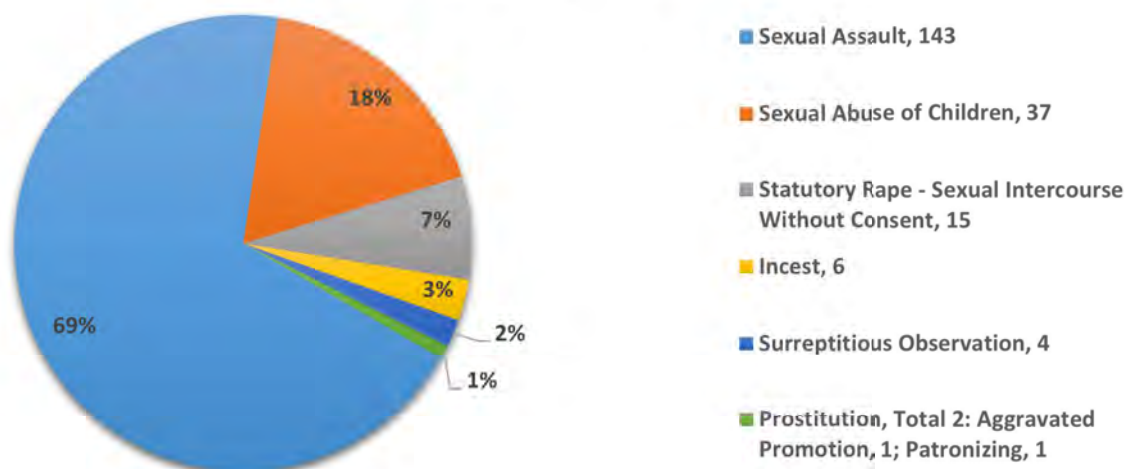


## Violent Crime Statistics

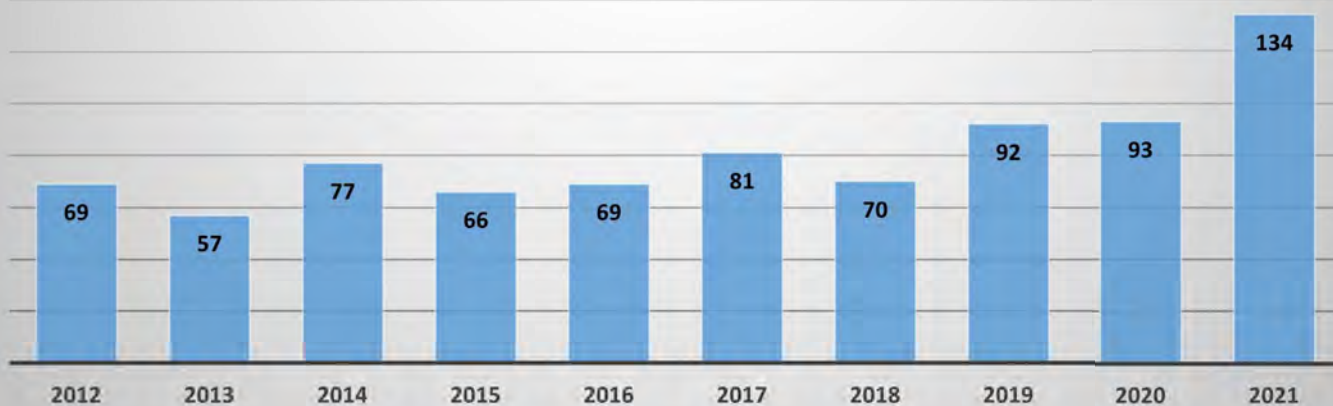
### Sexual Assault Offenses



### Other Sexual Offenses



### Sexual Assault Offenses 10-Year Trend



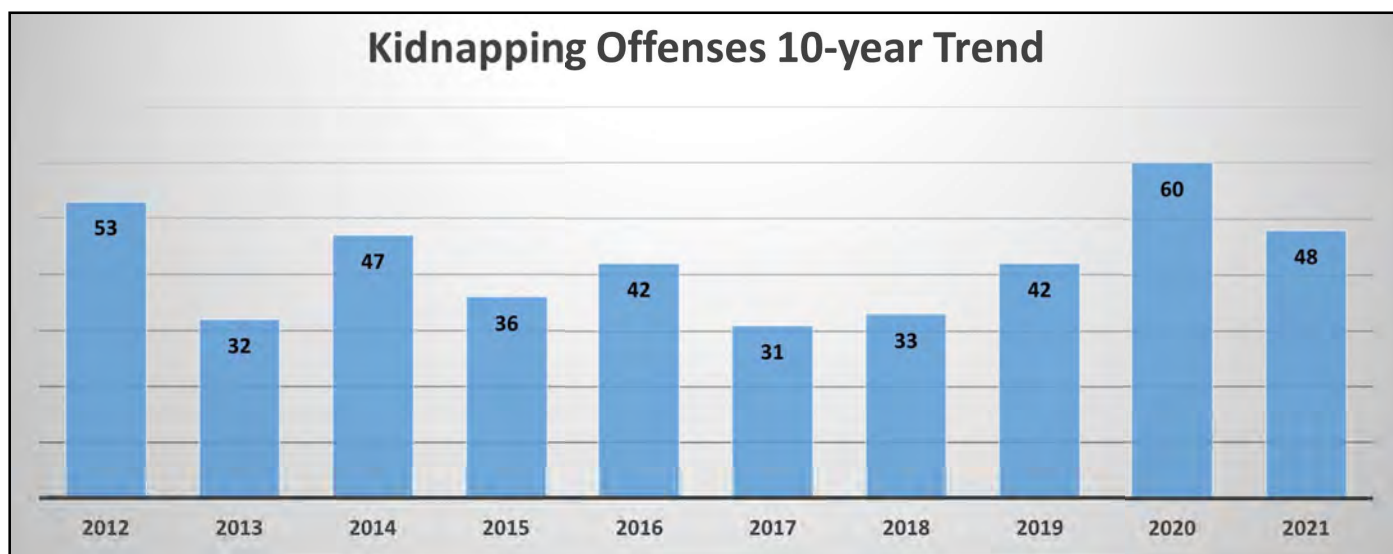
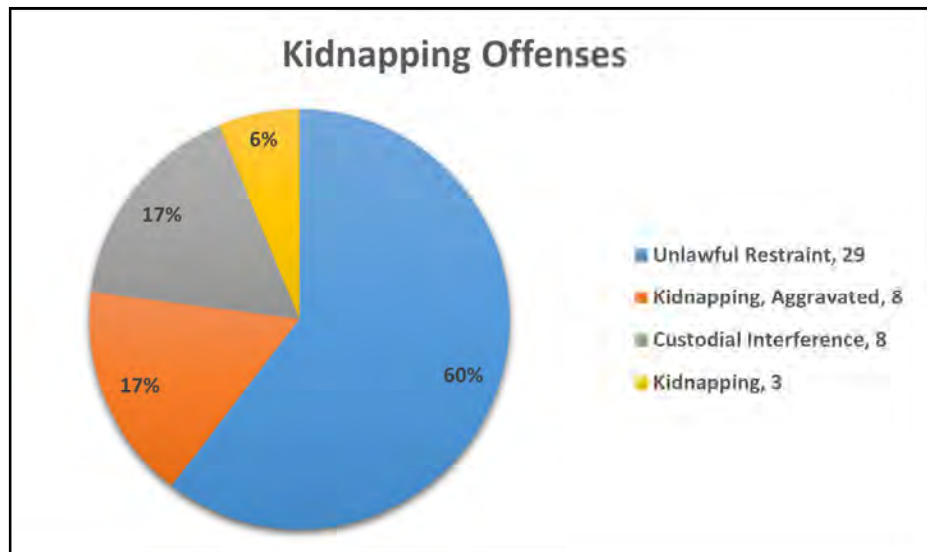


## Violent Crime Statistics

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 investigated 175 allegations of custodial interference in 2020, but only 8 rose to the level of a crime.



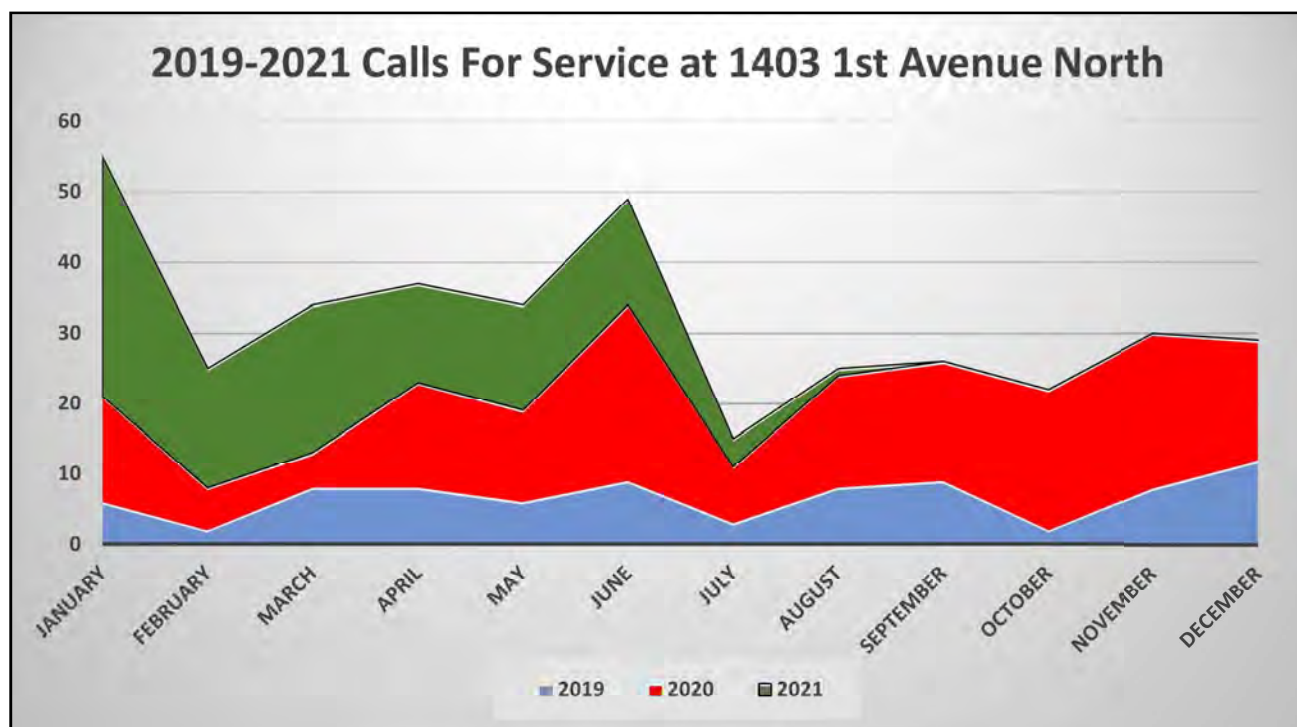
Running away is not a crime, but it is included in crime reporting. Children who are reported as runaways are considered missing persons and listed in a national law enforcement data base until they are found.



## Community Action



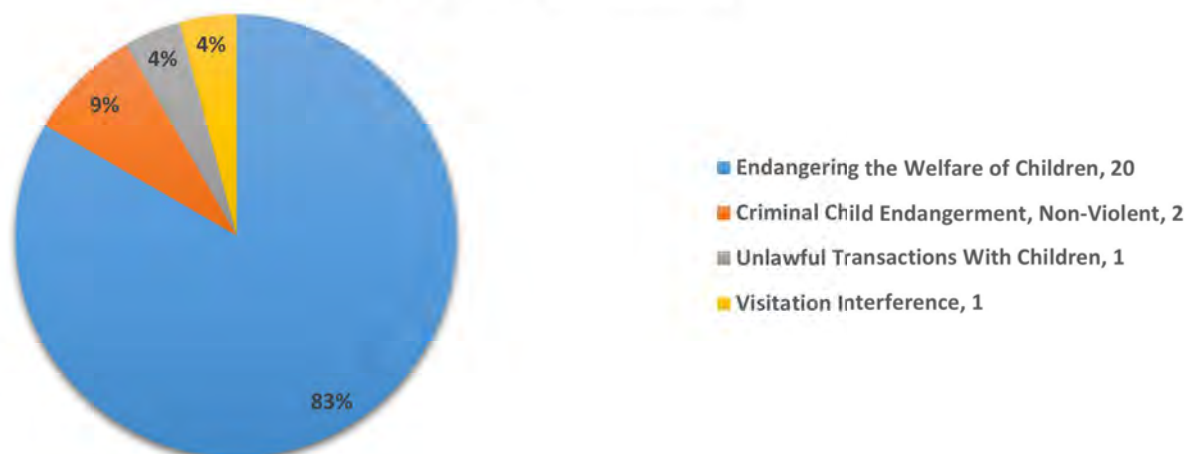
For the last few years, Officers were more frequently called to the Lazy KT for quality of life issues and violent crimes. During 2021, the Billings Industrial Revitalization District worked with a group of community partners, incorporated as the Empire Entrepreneurs, to purchase the property. City Council supported the effort which, in part, used tax increment finance funds from the East Billings Urban Renewal District. The project ultimately included funding for asbestos abatement, permits, dump fees and demolition.



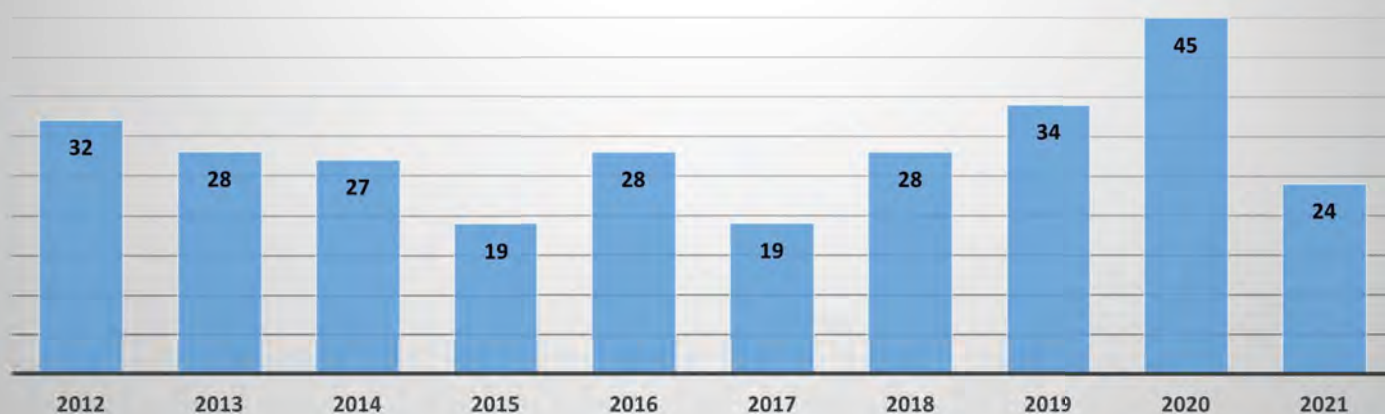
## Family Offenses

The FBI defines family offenses as “unlawful, nonviolent acts by a family member (or legal guardian) that threaten the physical, mental or economic well-being or morals of another family member that are not classifiable as other offenses such as assault, incest or statutory rape.”

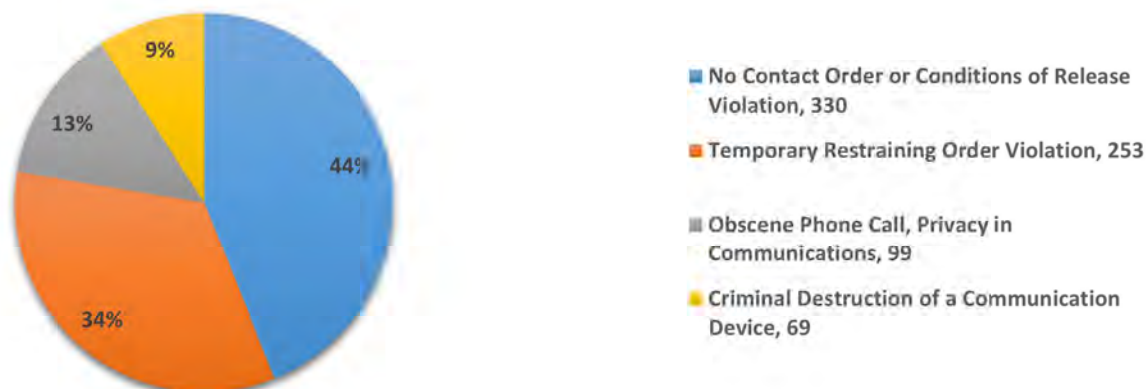
### Offenses Against the Family



### Family Offenses 10-Year Trend

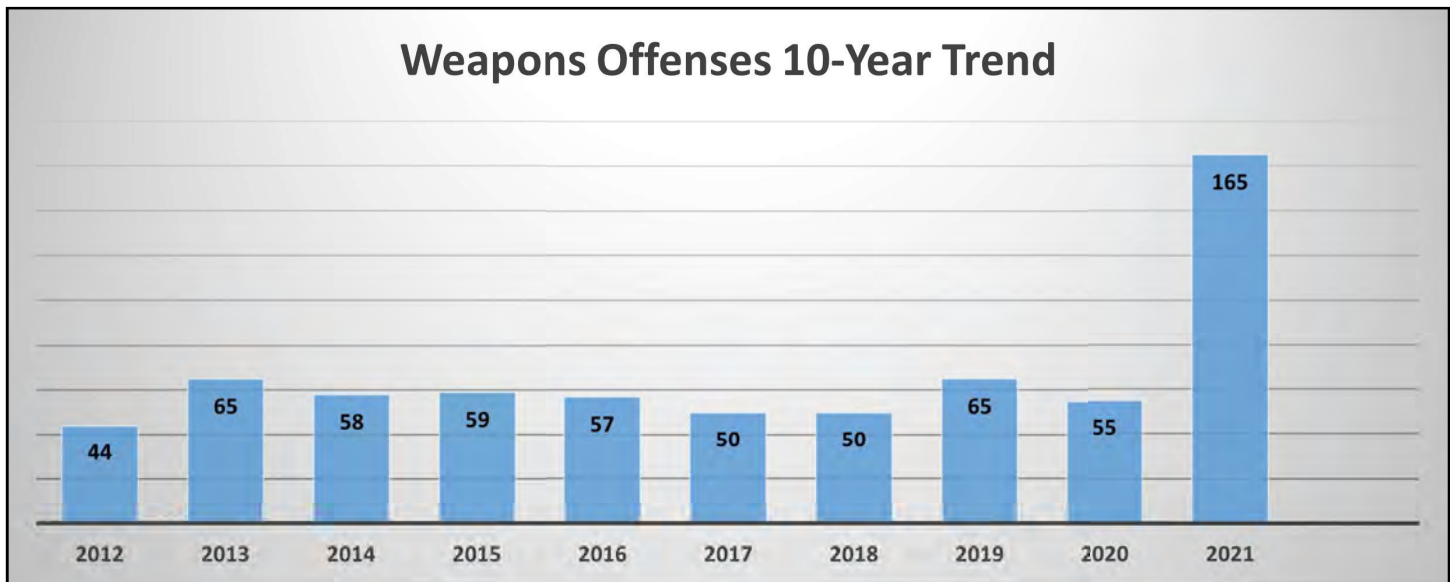
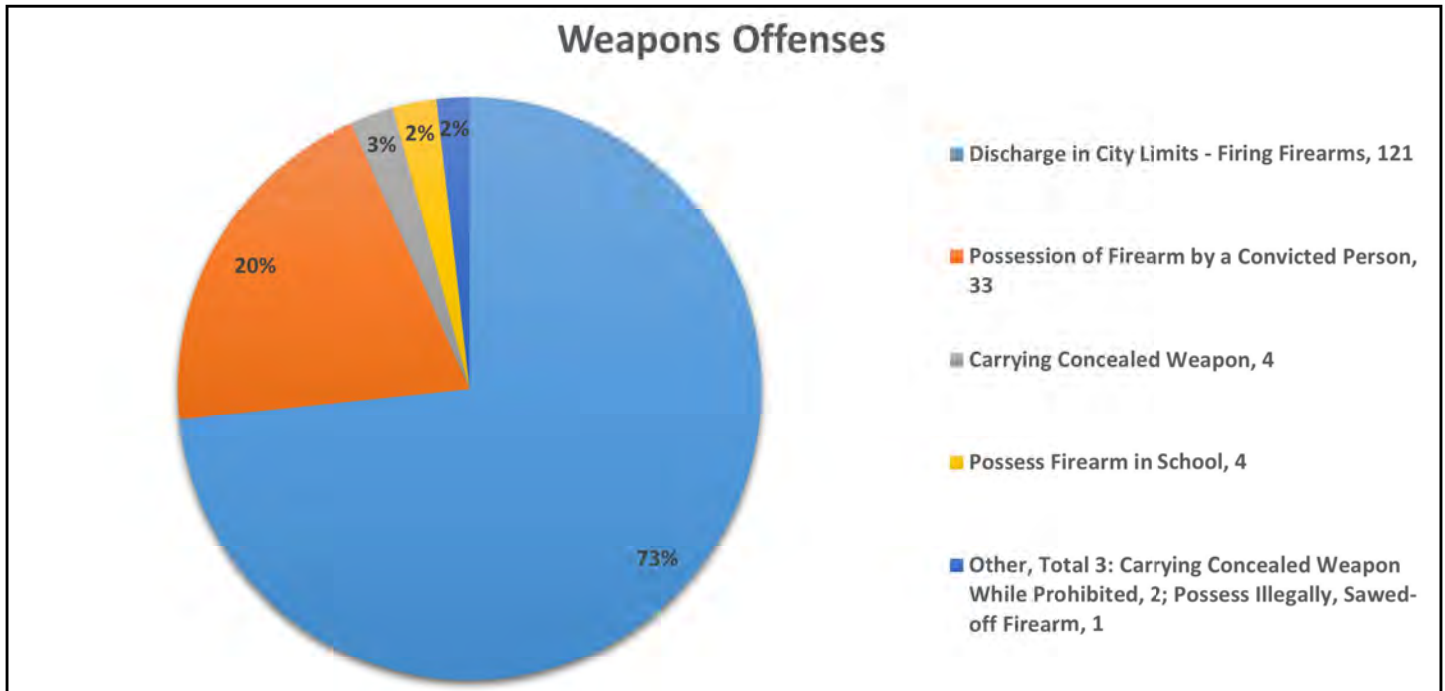


### Other Domestic Violations



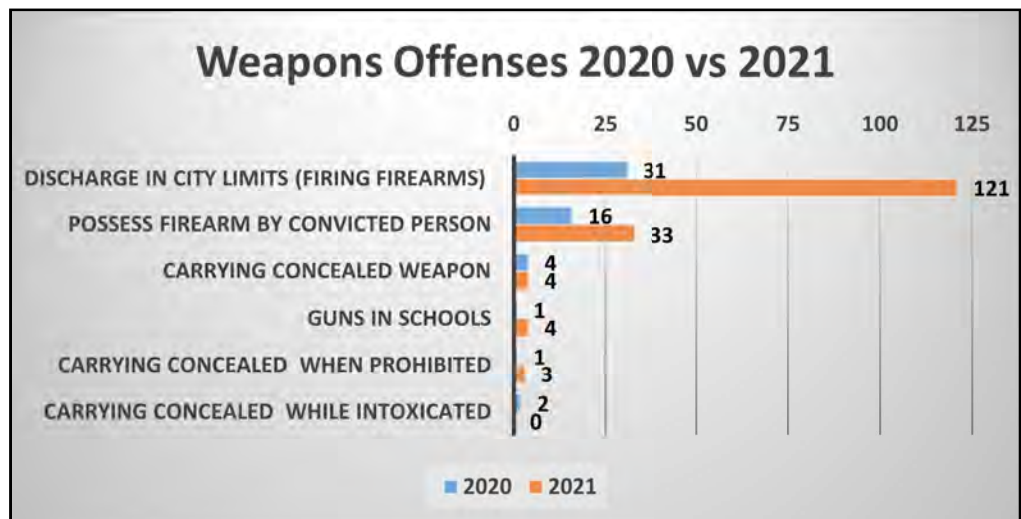


## Weapons Offenses



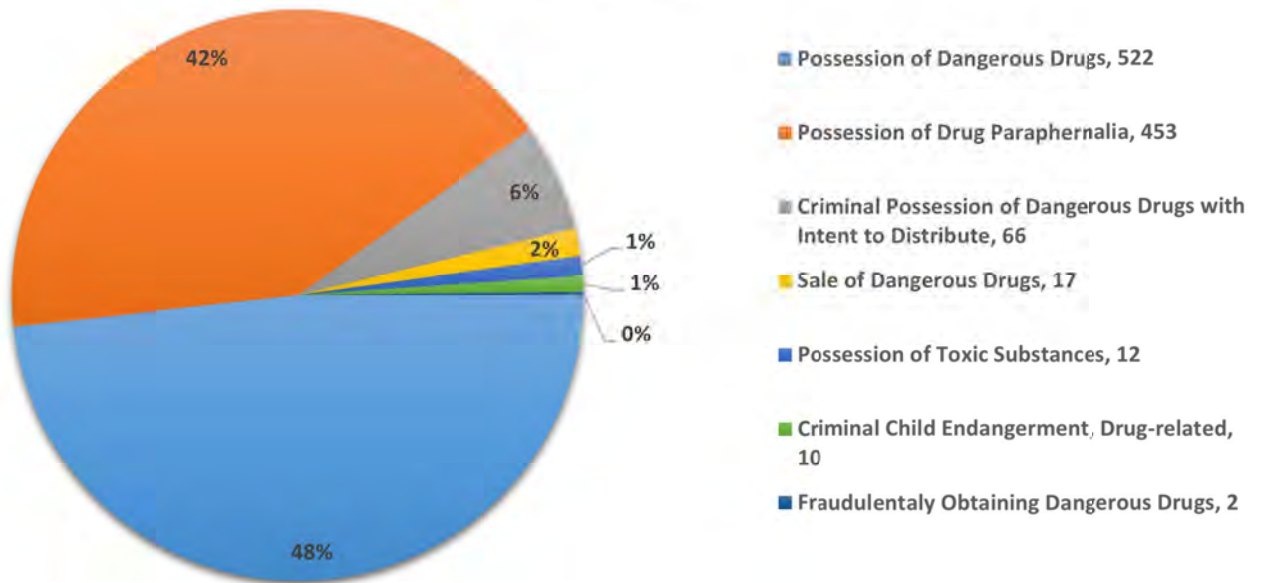
There were 233 reports of weapons discharged during 2021, compared to 114 in 2020.

Officers were able to find proof of a discharge in 121 incidents during 2021, compared to 31 in 2020. Also in 2021, there were 43 reports of shootings and 26 reports of people displaying weapons.

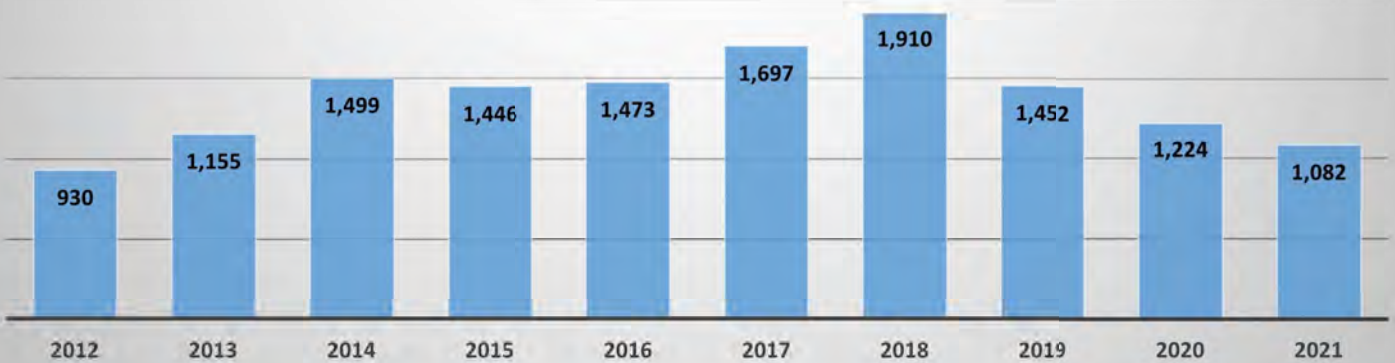


## Drug Offenses

### Drug Offenses



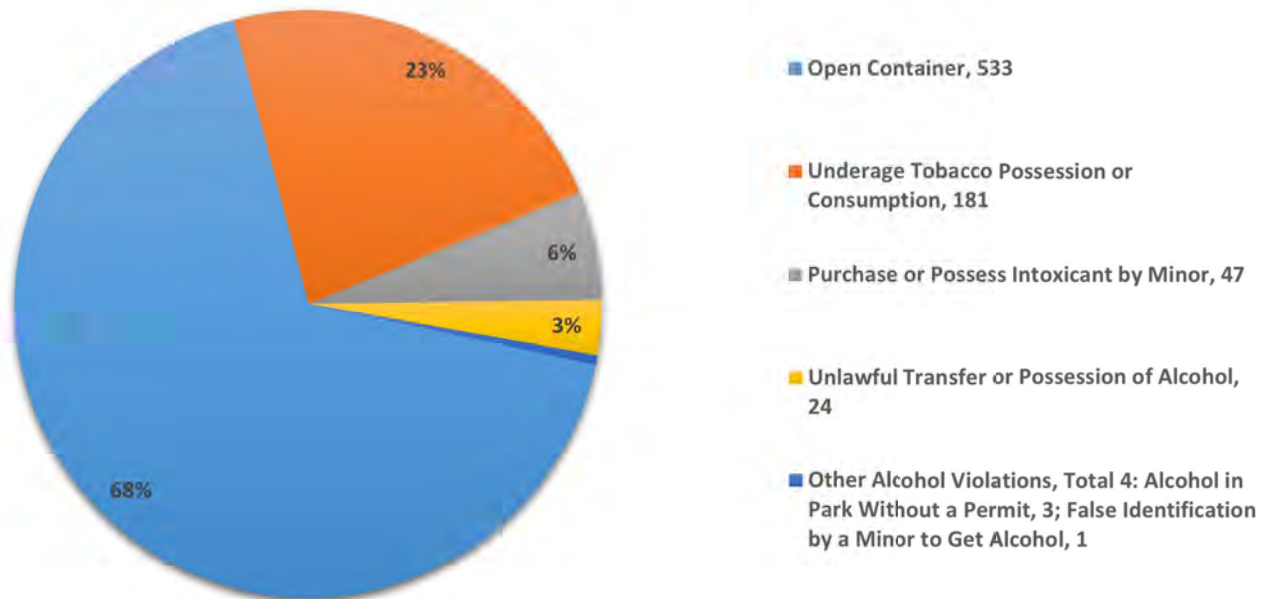
### Drug Offenses 10-Year Trend



A presumptive test is done to confirm seized items are drugs. Officer Catlin goes through the steps of putting a sample of the suspected drug into a test kit, then seals and shakes it to mix the crystalline substance with the reagent in the test. The mixture turned a dark blue, confirming the presence of methamphetamine. Items may be sent to the state crime lab for further testing.

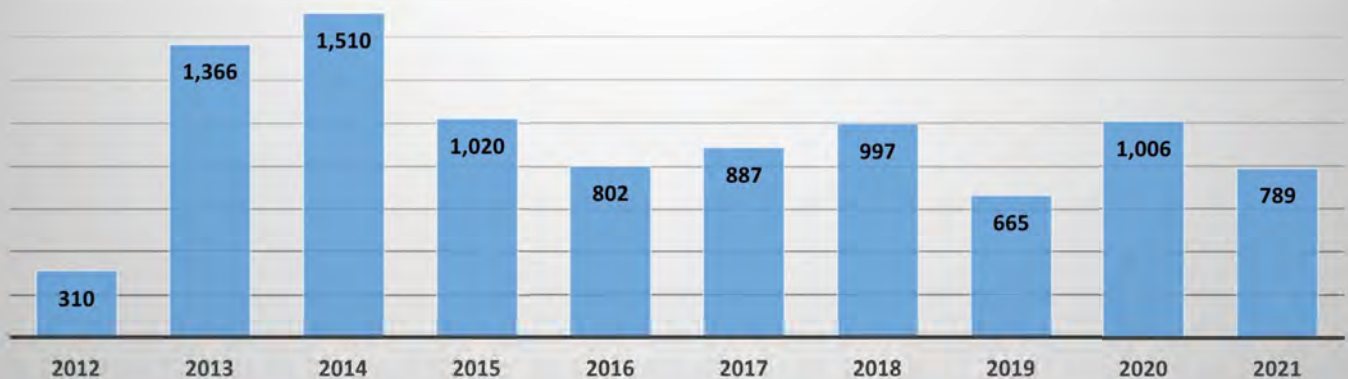
## Liquor Law Violations

### Liquor Law and Underage Tobacco Violations



In 2021, our Downtown Resource Officers changed their focus from a zero-tolerance style of enforcement on Open Container violations. In 2020 with most legal, social, and mental health services closed or limited on operation hours, Downtown Officers focused on issuing citations as the only recourse for violations. By the end of 2020, 64 individuals accounted for a significant increase in citations issued. In 2021 there was a renewed effort in all forms of treatment. Two Peer Support Personnel were assigned to the Downtown Resource Program through the Rimrock Foundation. They formed a Homeless Outreach Team (HOT). The primary focus of HOT was consistent outreach to those experiencing homelessness. This caused a shift in enforcement action. Best practice is to pour out the alcohol causing the violation of city ordinance and then work to connect the individual with treatment in that moment. During 2021, 65 individuals were engaged by the HOT team. Services included inpatient and intensive outpatient treatment, daily sobriety groups, helping breaking barriers to housing, employment, and mental and physical health treatment.

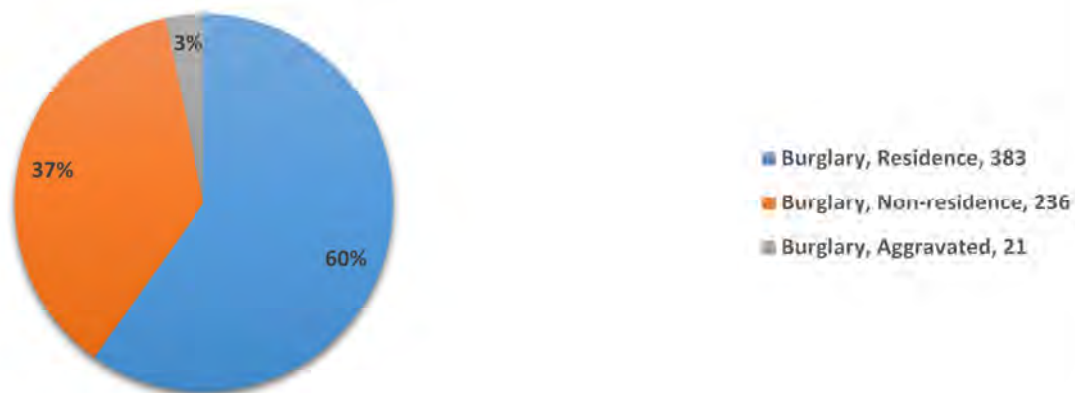
### Liquor and Tobacco Violations 10-Year Trend



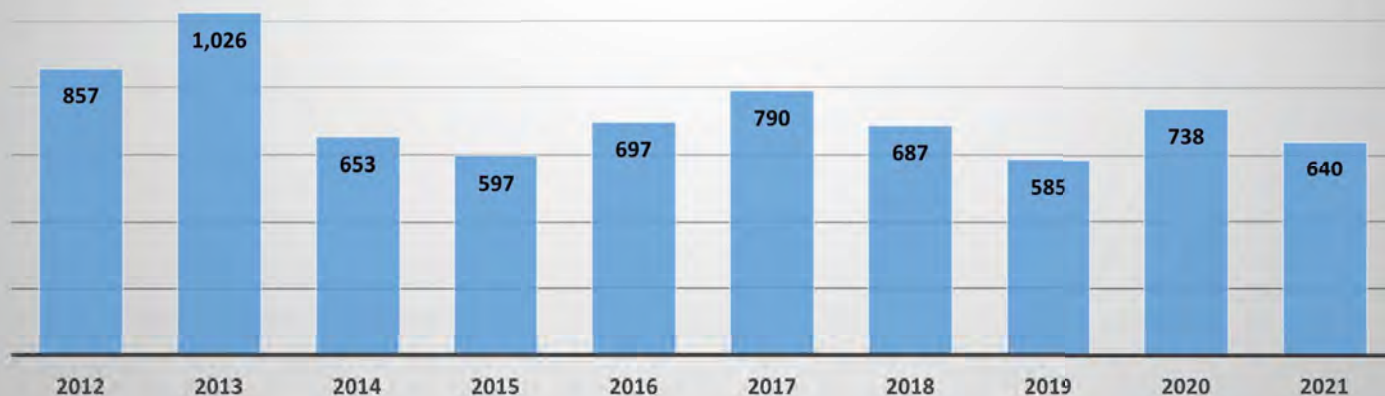


## Property Crime Statistics

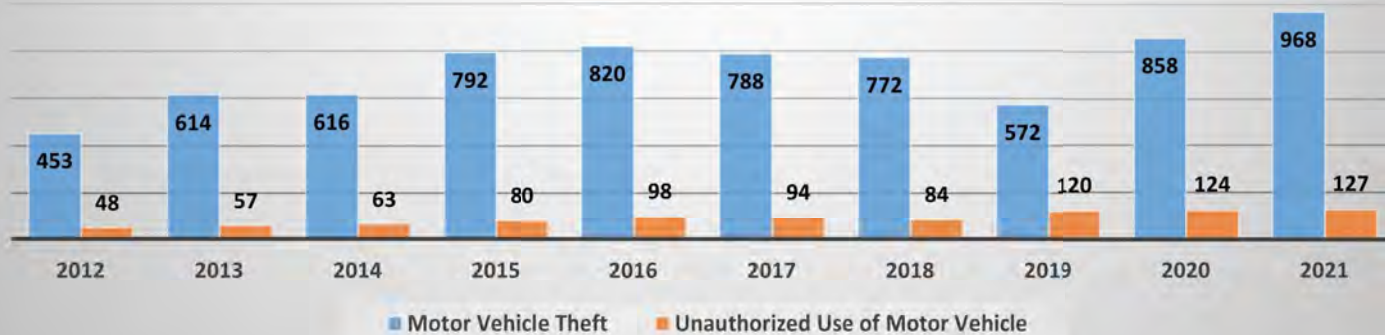
### Burglary Offenses



### Burglaries 10-Year Trend

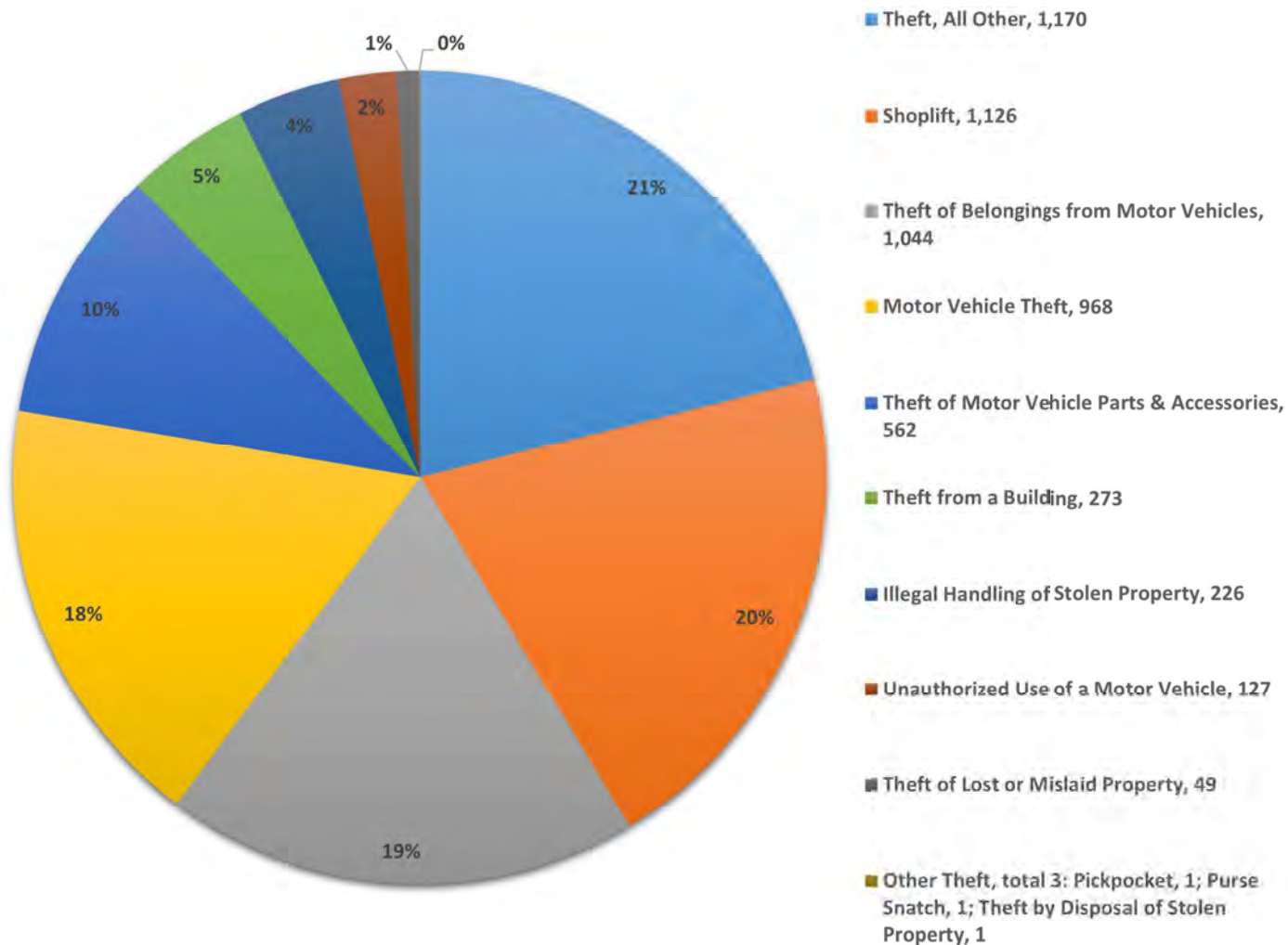


### Motor Vehicle Theft & Unauthorized Use of Vehicles 10-Year Trend

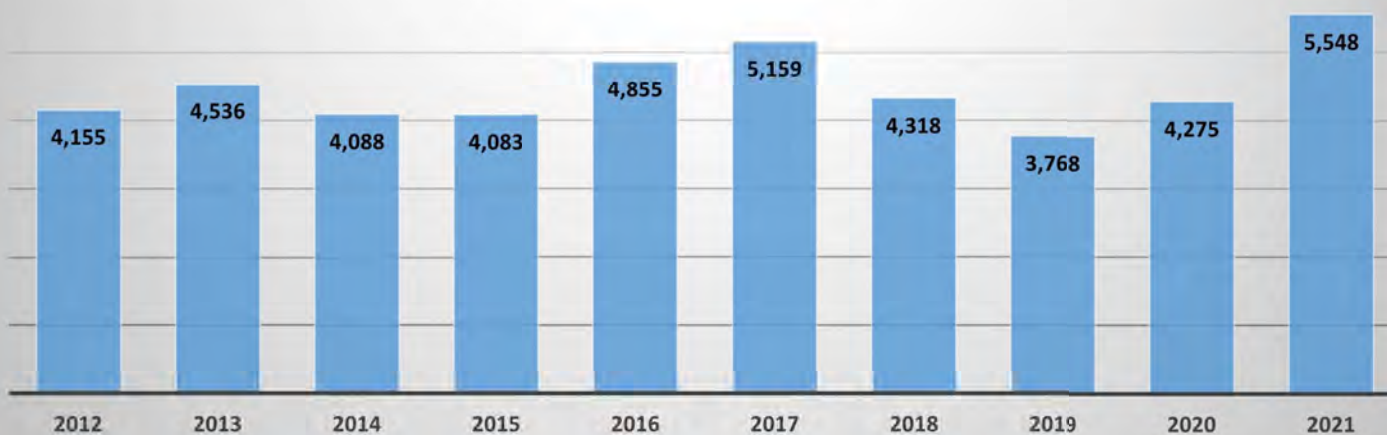


## Property Crime Statistics

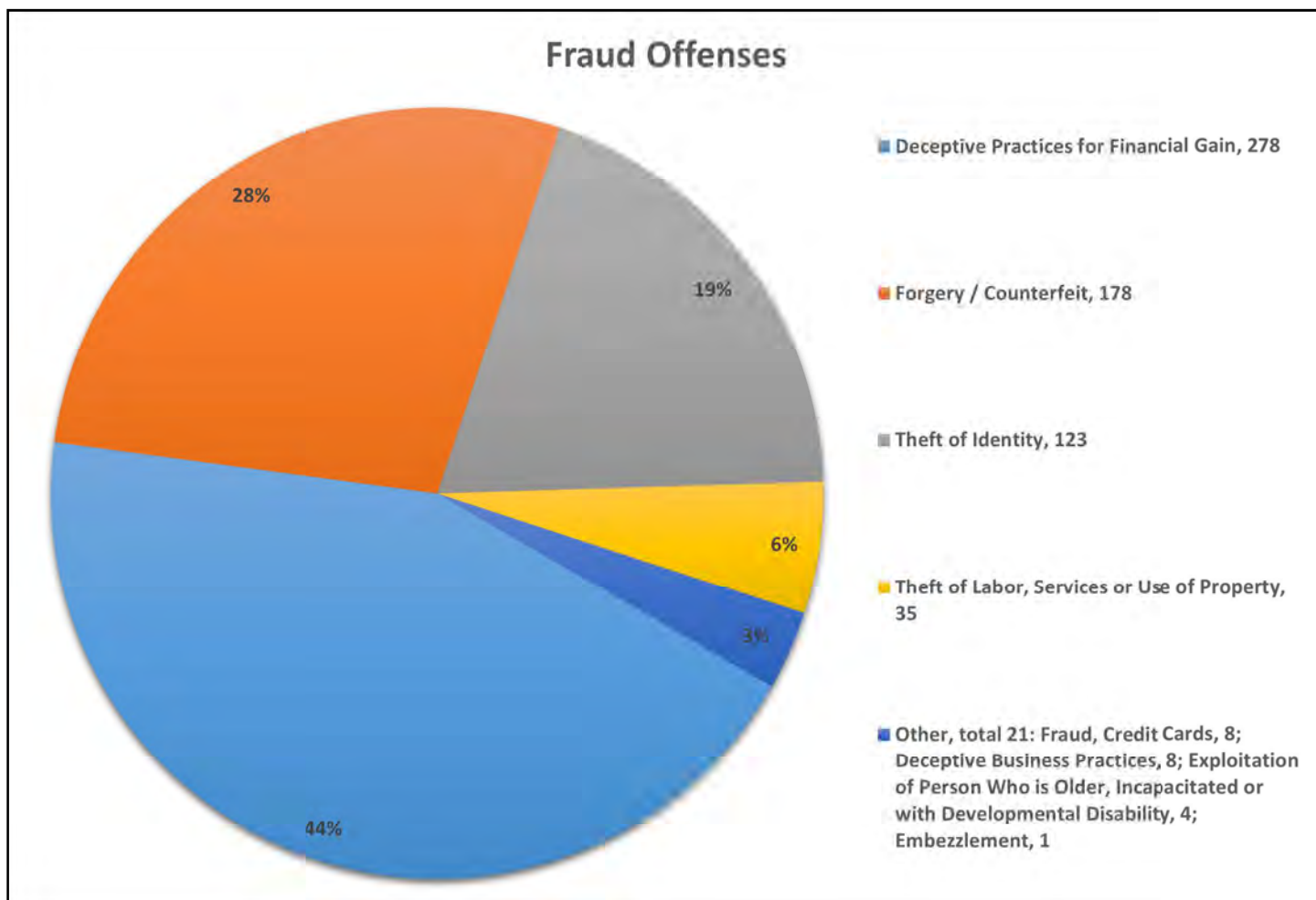
### Theft Offenses



### Theft Offenses 10-Year Trend



## Fraud Offenses



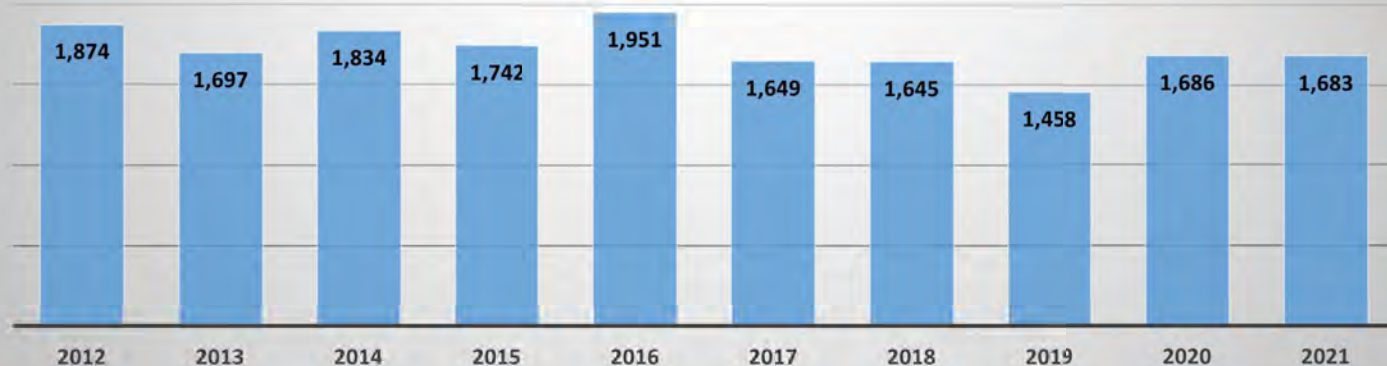
### *By the numbers ...*

The most frequent types of property forged during 2021 were: Personal or business documents, 101; money, 98; endorsed checks & financial documents, 69; identity documents, 11; blank checks & financial documents, 11; identity (to create accounts), 6; and credit cards, 5.

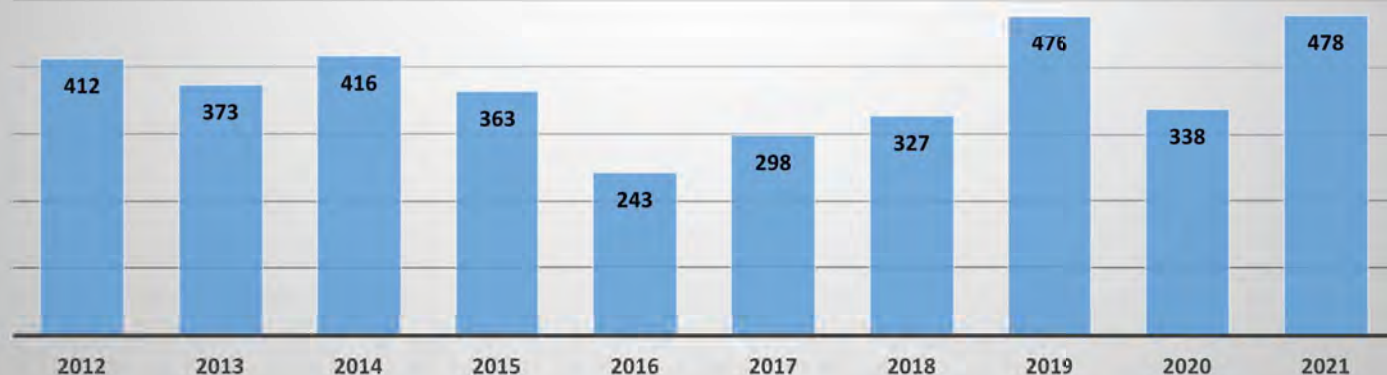


## Crimes Against Public Order

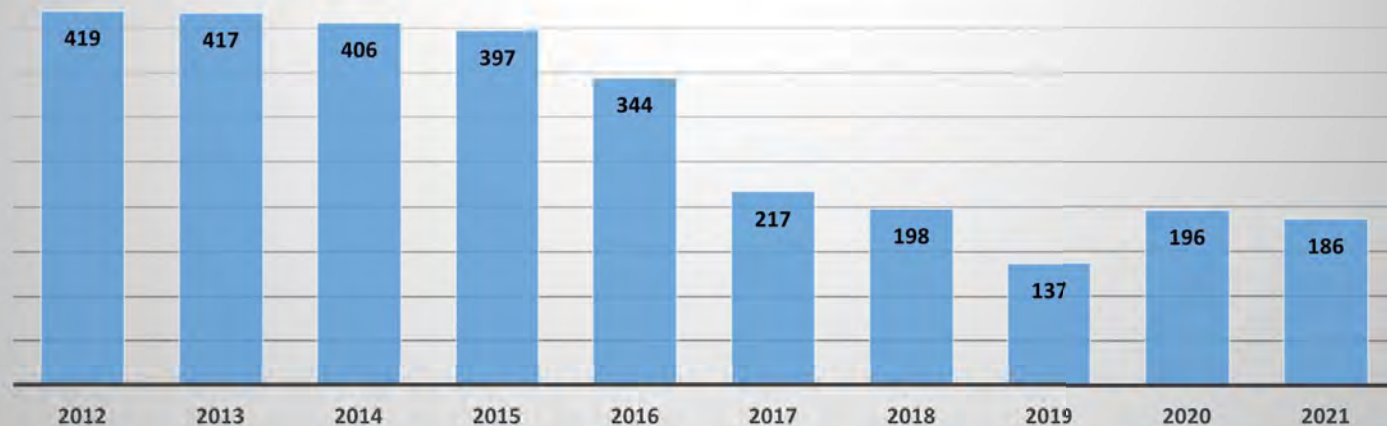
### Criminal Mischief Offenses 10-Year Trend



### Trespass Offenses 10-Year Trend

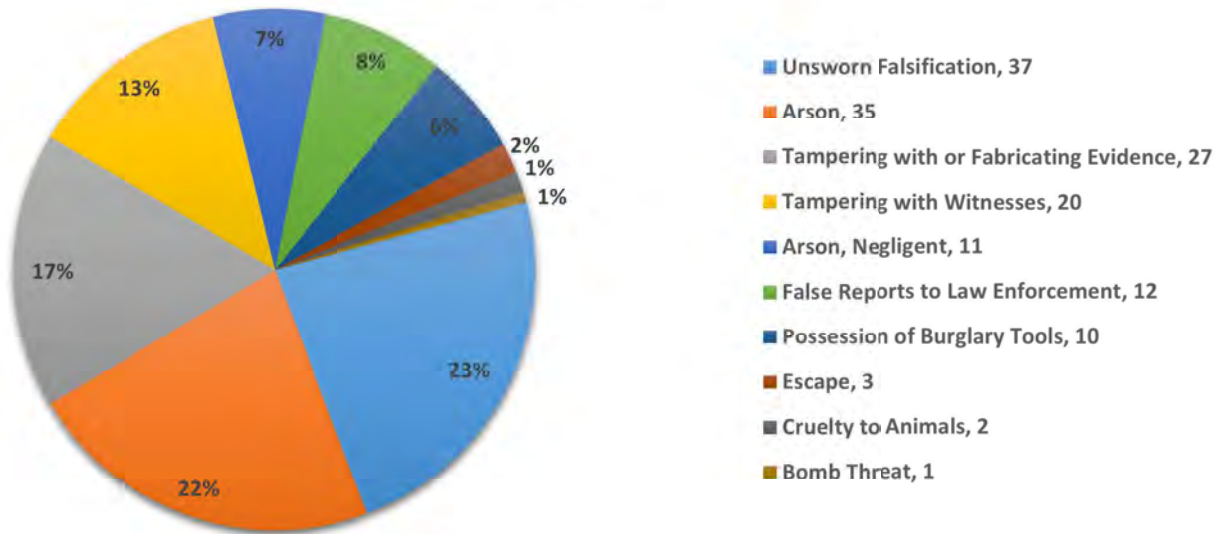


### Disorderly Conduct Offenses 10-Year Trend

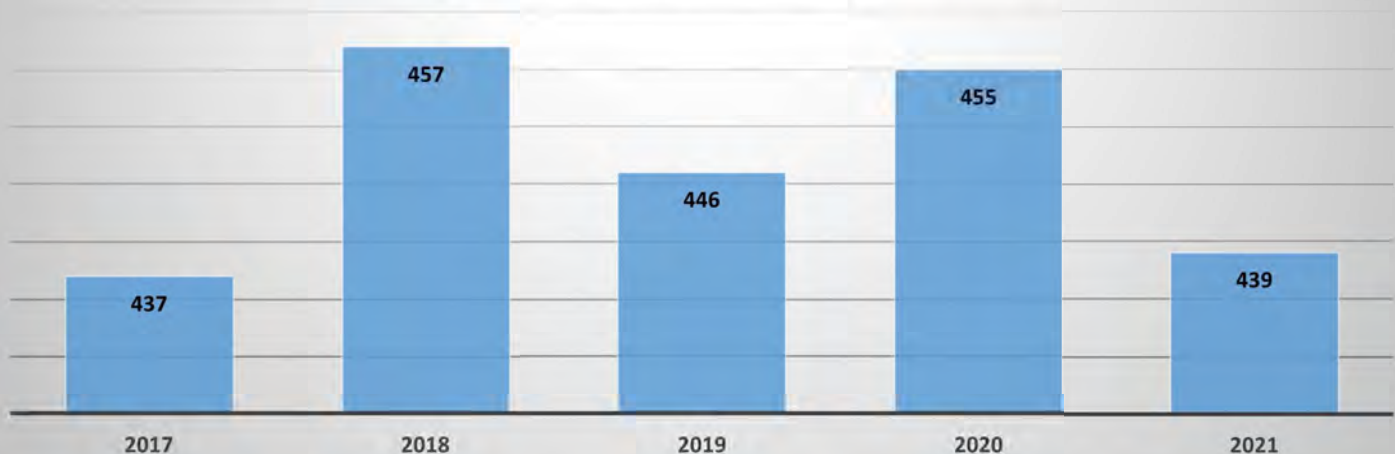


## Other Offense Statistics

### Other Offenses



### Obstructing Justice or a Peace Officer 5-Year Trend



### *Did you know?*

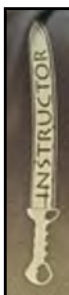
Billings Police Officers participate in the Shop with a Cop program. The kids' spending money is from community and business donations. From left, Officer Contreraz helps shop for jeans and Officer Lange, Sgt. Stovall and Officer Romero pose with their shopping companions.





## Defensive Tactics

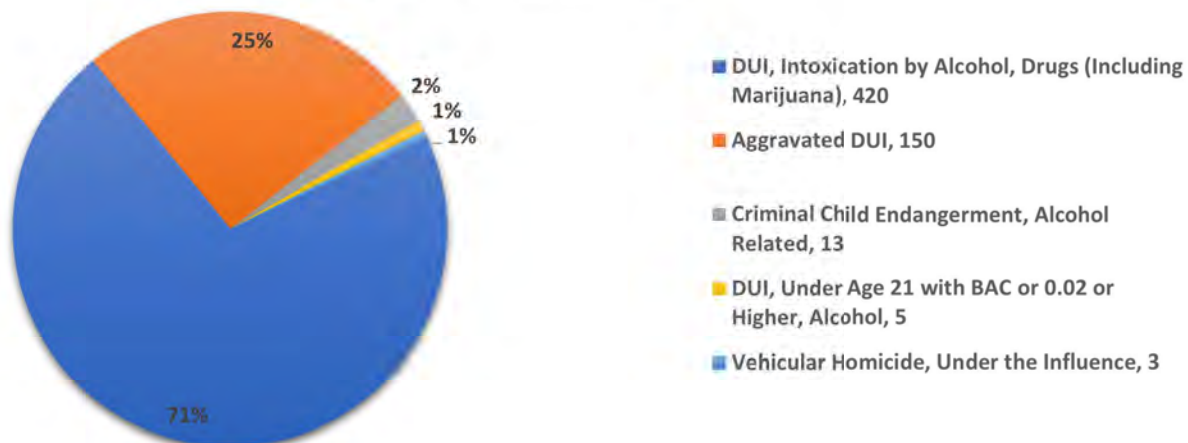
A group of commanders and officers took intensive courses and became defensive tactics trainers in 2021. All officers now take annual training and can take an optional refresher course each quarter. BPD officers are trained to de-escalate situations numerous ways, including verbal techniques. However, to protect themselves and others they may need to use physical tactics. The goal of this training is to integrate basic martial arts techniques to reduce injuries to suspects and officers and to minimize the need to escalate the use of force.



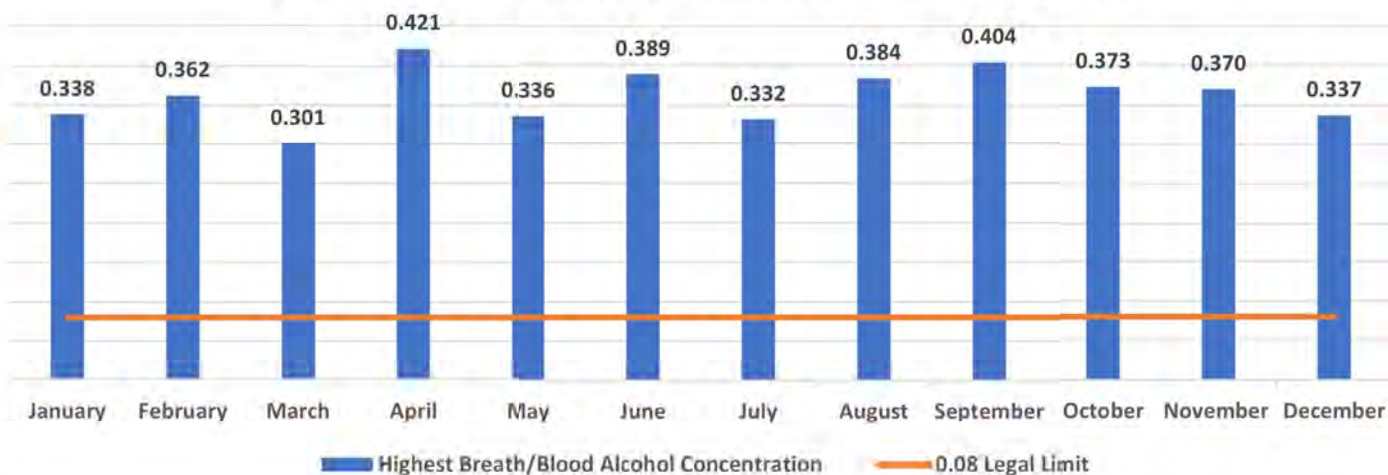


## Driving Under the Influence

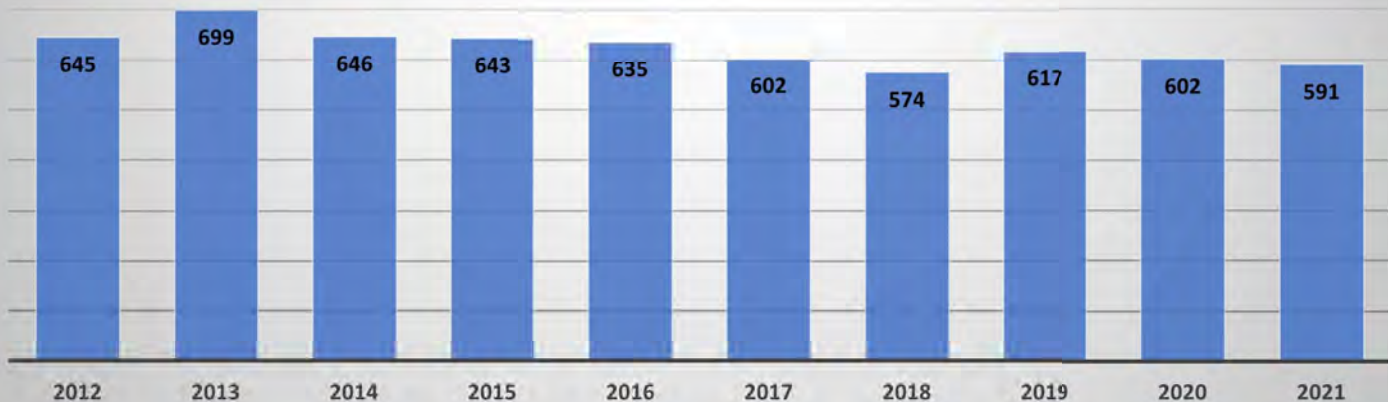
### Driving Under the Influence



### Highest Breath and Blood Concentration Readings by Month



### DUI Offenses 10-Year Trend



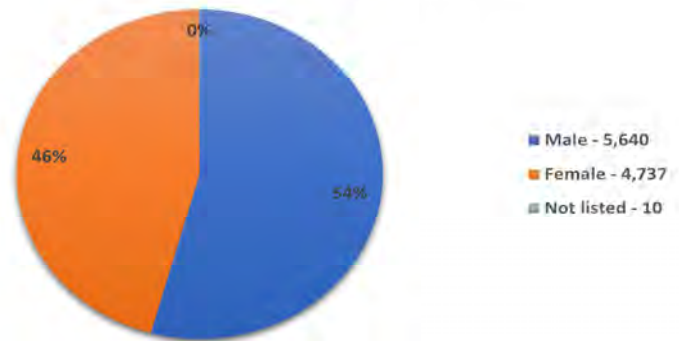
## Traffic Statistics

Officers wrote 15,521 citations and warnings to 10,387 individuals.

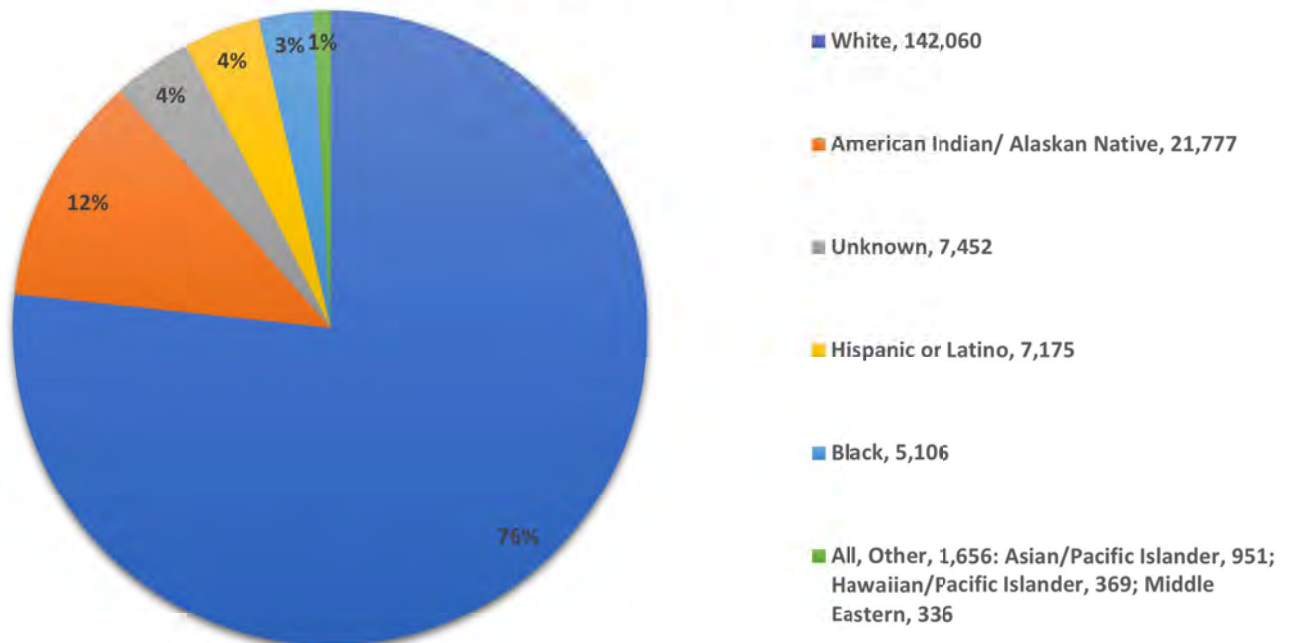
Drivers may receive multiple citations plus a warning on a single stop, due to court requirements.

State law requires law enforcement to track race and ethnicity which is based on observations by officers, not self-reporting.

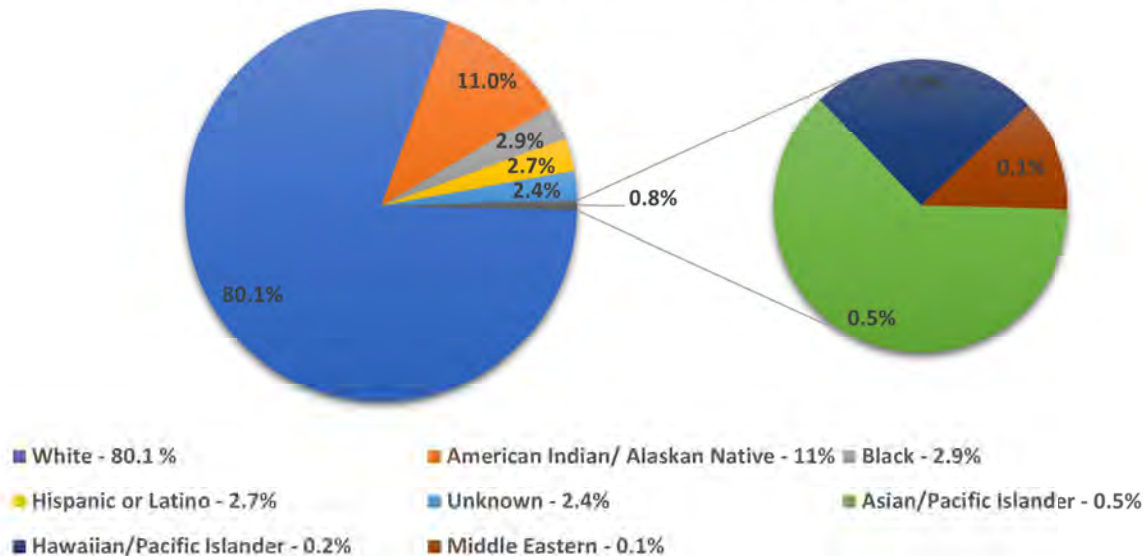
### Individuals Cited by Gender



### 10-Year Percentage of Citations Issued by Race

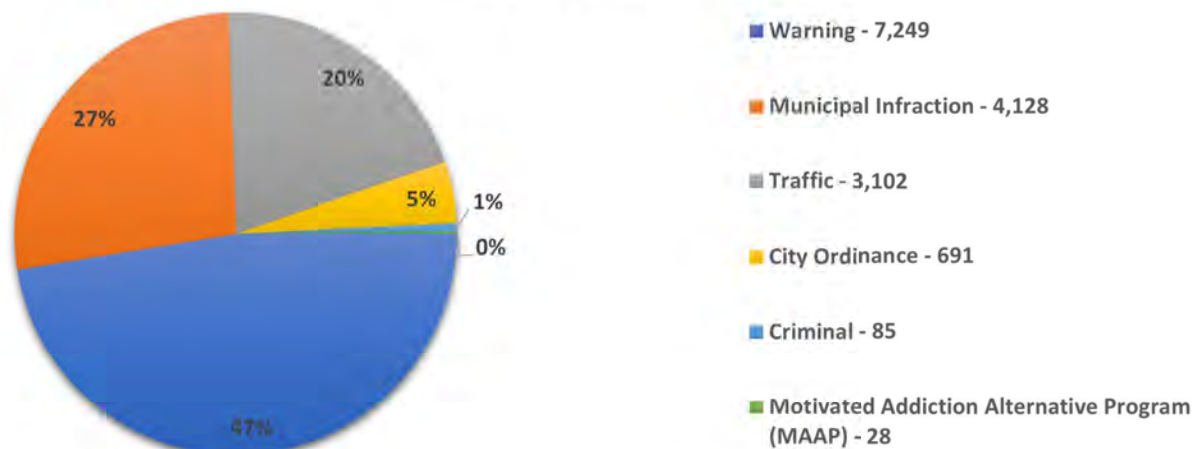


### 2021 Percentage of Citations Issued by Race

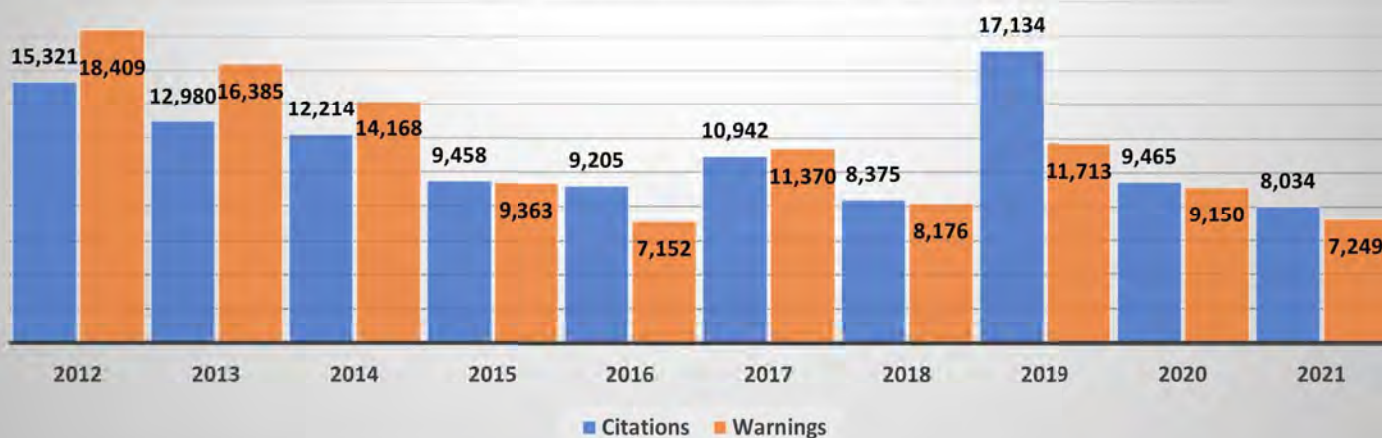


## Traffic Statistics

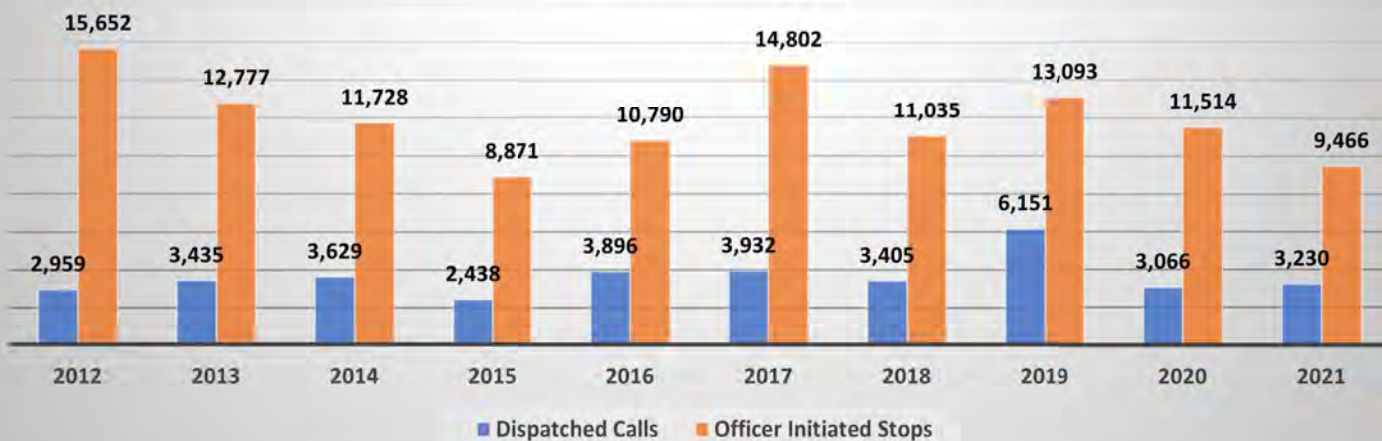
### Citations by Type



### Traffic Citations vs. Warnings 10-year Trend



### Dispatched Calls vs. Officer Initiated Stops 10-Year Trend





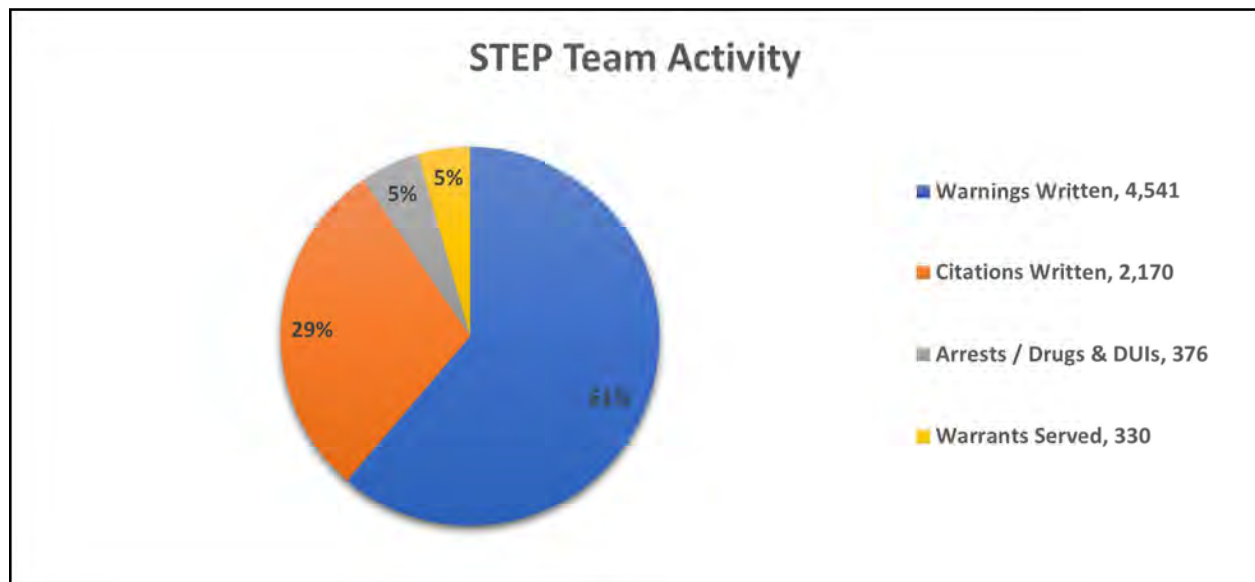
## Selective Traffic Enforcement Program

There are 5 officers and 1 Sergeant who work the Selective Traffic Enforcement Program. Part of the STEP team are K9 officers. The 6,711 citations and warnings they wrote were about 43% of the BPD total in 2021.

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, such as speeding or cell phone use in school zones.

They also can be assigned to areas where citizens have traffic complaints. To suggest an area that needs additional patrol, use the “report a crime” link at [www.billingspolice.com](http://www.billingspolice.com) and the information will be sent to the STEP sergeant.

STEP officers were the first in the department to use electronic citation software and in-car printers. In addition to printing tickets, officers use the printers to serve warrants at the road-side when the wanted person isn’t required to go to jail.



### *Did you know?*

Law enforcement officers park a specific way on traffic stops to protect themselves and the stopped vehicle from traffic.

All Billings Police Officers are required to pass a Patrol Vehicle Operations Course. They must attend the course at least every two years, as set out in Department policy. The course teaches various safety skills ranging from vehicle dynamics to evasive braking and skid avoidance.

Several Billings Officers are trainers and teach the course both locally and to new officers attending the Montana Law Enforcement Academy. Above, STEP Officer Z. Wallis issues a warning to a driver.



## Accident Statistics

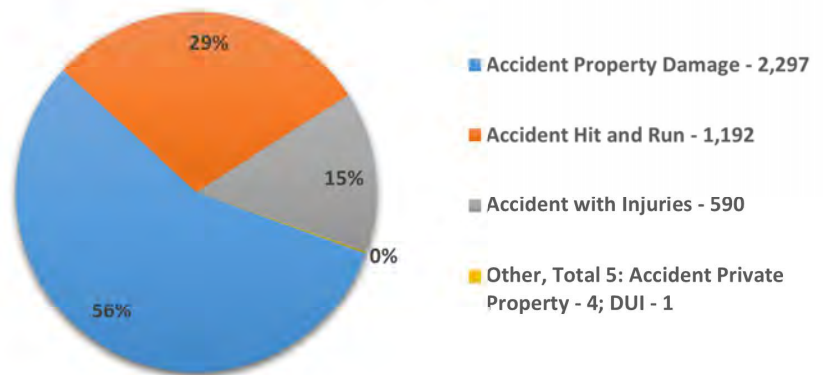
Not all crashes require an officer to investigate, including private property or minor damage accidents like fender-benders.

During some storms, there are not enough officers to investigate every minor damage accident. During these times, the Department implements the “slick streets” or accident diversion policy. Under this protocol, only accidents with injuries, impaired drivers and disabled vehicles are investigated. Commanders went to this status 53 times during 2021.

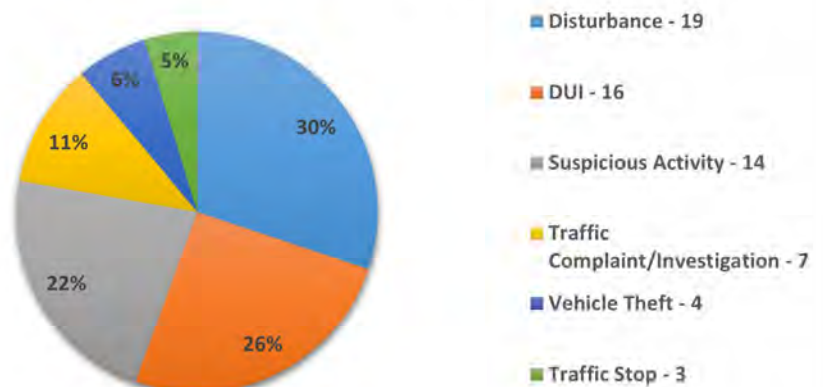
Of the 4,084 accidents reported, officers completed crash forms 3,081 times.



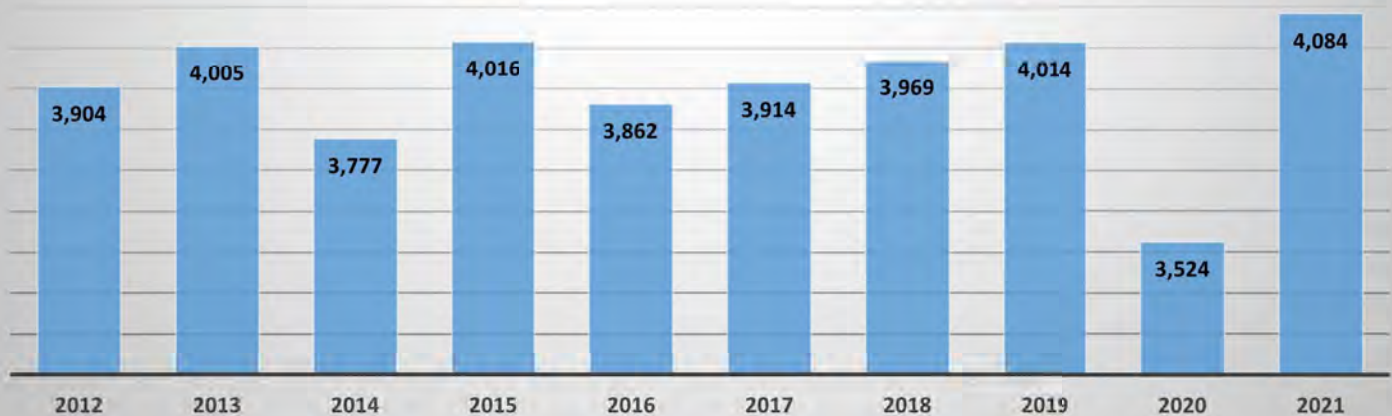
### Accident Reports by Type



### Other Report Types that Included Accidents

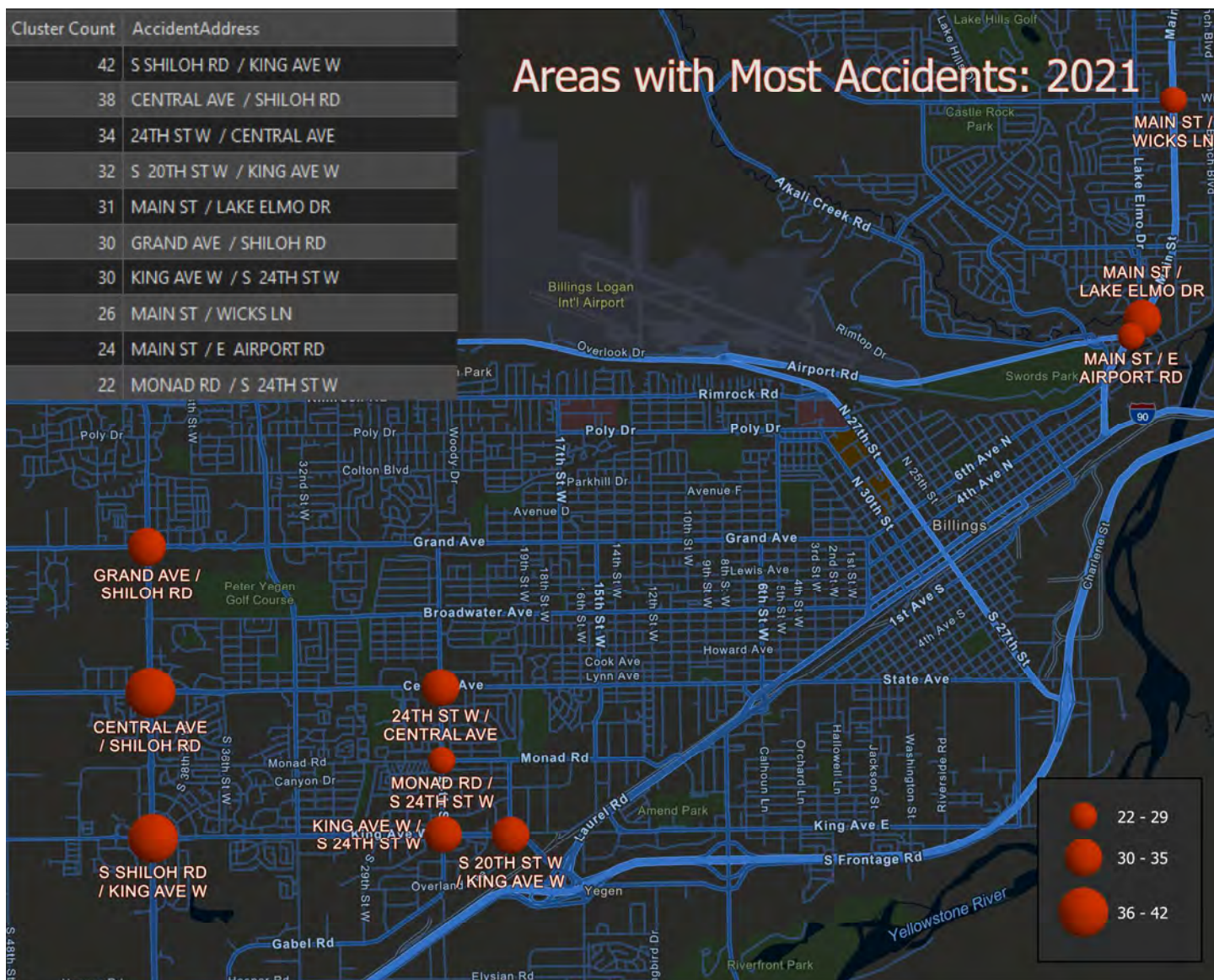


### Reported Traffic Accidents 10-Year Trend





## Accident Statistics



### Accidents by Time of Day





## Arrests

<b><u>Arrests</u></b>	<b><u>Most Frequent Adult Arrest Charges</u></b>
3,474	Warrant - Municipal/Misdemeanor
1,115	Warrant - Contempt, Municipal/Justice
737	Criminal Contempt
575	Partner or Family Member Assault, Non-Aggravated
514	Shoplifting
425	Revocation of Suspended/Deferred Sentence
410	Obstructing a Peace Officer
378	Possession of Dangerous Drugs
371	Driving Under the Influence of Drugs, Alcohol or Marijuana
316	Possession of Drug Paraphernalia
279	Probation Violation
262	Trespass, Criminal, to Property
221	Violation of Conditions of Release
205	Violation of No Contact Order
192	Criminal Mischief
163	Illegal Handling of Stolen Property
154	Theft All Other - Warrant, Municipal/Misdemeanor
150	Assault, Minor Injuries
148	Aggravated Driving Under the Influence
143	Assault with a Weapon

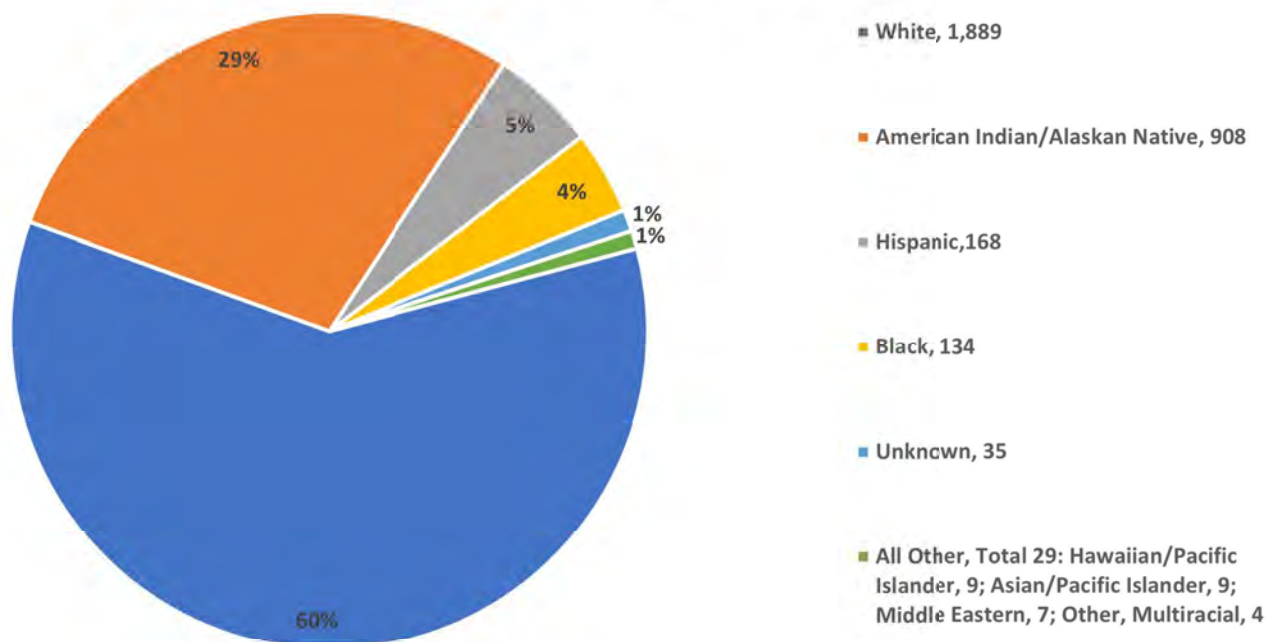
<b><u>Arrests</u></b>	<b><u>Most Frequent Juvenile Arrest Charges</u></b>
218	Under Age Tobacco Possession of Consumption
71	Shoplift
47	Partner or Family Member Assault, Non-Aggravated
44	Possession of Dangerous Drugs
35	Assault, Minor Injuries
34	Purchase or Possess Intoxicant by a Minor
34	Possession of Drug Paraphernalia
34	Disorderly Conduct
24	Criminal Contempt
23	Warrant - Municipal/Misdemeanor
23	Criminal Mischief
19	Obstructing a Peace Officer
14	Assault with a Weapon
10	Contempt of Court, Justice Court
9	Driving Under the Influence of Drugs, Alcohol or Marijuana
9	Obscene Phone Call - Privacy in Communications
8	Criminal Endangerment
8	Robbery
7	Burglary, Residence
7	Theft All Other - Warrant, Municipal/Misdemeanor

## Arrest Statistics

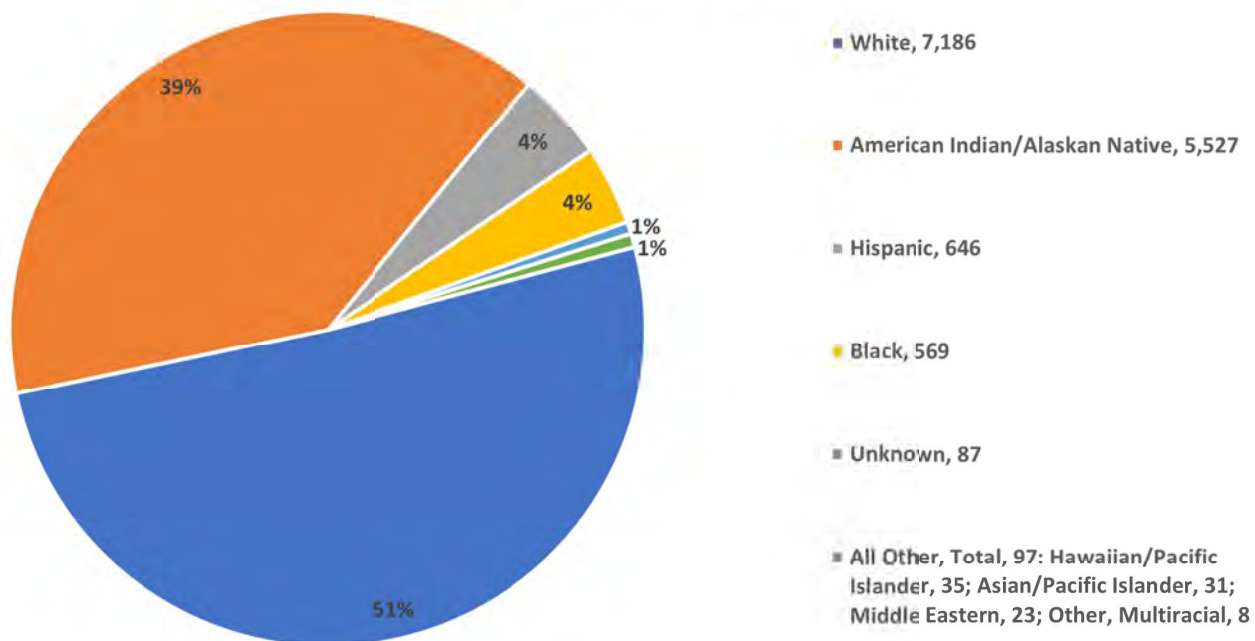
Officers made 3,163 physical arrests that resulted in 14,112 separate charges. One physical arrest can result in multiple charges. This illustrates why there are more charges than physical arrests.

*Race/Ethnicity is based on observations by officers, not on self-reporting.*

**Percentage of Physical Arrests (3,163) by Race**



**Percent of Charges (14,112) by Race**



## Investigations Division

There are 14 Detectives, a Lieutenant and two Sergeants assigned to the BPD Investigations Division.

The following is a break down of Investigations tasks during 2021:

- There were 531 cases assigned to Detectives that involved crimes against persons and property.
- That's an average case load of 31.2 cases per investigator.
- They closed 358 cases. That gave the division a 48% clearance rate with a 40% rate of arrest or warrant request.
- The Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services reported 544 cases to the division. These cases include sexual and other abuse against children and crimes reported by Adult Protective Services.
- Three Detectives with additional training completed 102 forensic interviews.
- There were 4,931 photo cards downloaded from patrol officers' and detectives' investigations totaling 556 gigabytes of data.
- The division completed 418 requests for information from the Yellowstone County Attorney's Office.
- Detectives extracted data from 72 cell phones.
- Detectives were called out 54 times for suspicious, criminal and suicide deaths as well as to arsons, child sexual abuse, robberies and assaults.



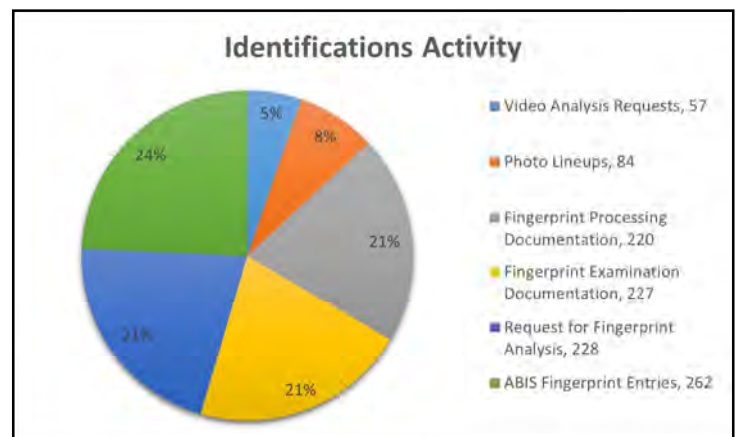
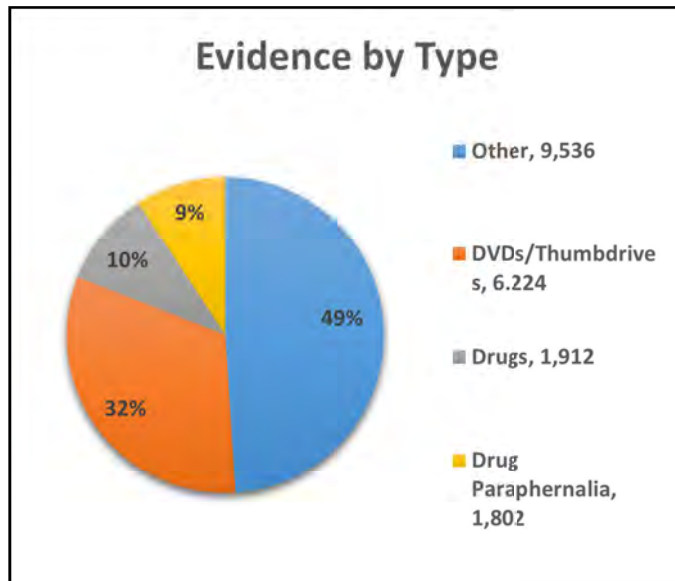
Billings experienced an increase in gun violence during 2021 that required Detectives being called out to investigate more shootings. Assault with a weapon, which is not always but frequently is a firearm, made up 41 percent of aggravated assaults in Billings during 2021. The number of these crimes increased to 337 from 225 in 2020.





## Investigations Division

Evidence and identification are a section of the Investigations Division. Staffed by a sworn Lieutenant and 5 civilians, this section processes all evidence gathered by Billings Police Department. Among the identification skills are video and fingerprint analysis and creating photo lineups for criminal cases. Evidence technicians see that items are properly stored and, when appropriate, destroyed or returned to their owners. They also work with prosecutors when they require information.



**2021 Number of Items Processed**  
 Items of Evidence Received: 19,484  
 Evidence Items Disposed Of: 11,270



### *By the numbers ...*

These photos show dozens of kilos of methamphetamine seized in Billings. Meth continues to be a problem in our community but, following national trends, Fentanyl and heroin sales and use have increased significantly. The City-County Special Investigations Unit seized 3.41 pounds of Fentanyl in 2021, up from 0.12 pounds in 2020. The BPD K9 team more than doubled the amount of heroin seized to 418 grams in 2021 compared to about 200 in 2020.



## Specialized Units

### Domestic Violence Program

BPD has had a Domestic Violence Investigator since 2006. Officer Nash has been the sole DVI during this time. She investigates domestic violent assaults, both felony and misdemeanor, and related crimes including court order violations and stalking in the context of domestic violence relationships.

All BPD officers investigate domestic violence, the DVI does additional follow up and documentation to strengthen the cases. During 2021 the program completed more than 450 investigations. These resulted in 90 new cases documenting additional offenses including stalking, court order violations and additional partner-family member assaults.

As well as investigating domestic violence and related crimes, officers are trained on a risk assessment procedure to that helps victims understand the potential for lethality in domestic violence. Using cell phones purchased with grant funding, officers are able to put victims in immediate contact with the YWCA so they can receive program assistance at critical times.

During 2021, additional BPD officers were available to assist in follow-up investigations, mainly by helping monitor and report on jail calls from suspects to victims. And, plans were completed to put a second investigator in place as well as building upon the team approach started in 2021.

### Internet Crimes Against Children

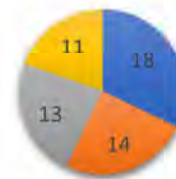
The Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force is a national initiative under the U.S. Department of Justice Office of Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention. The program encourages partnerships between local law enforcement and federal agencies. These partnerships ensure proper prosecution of those responsible, in addition to victim identification and assistance when applicable.

In January 2022, the Billings police officer assigned to this effort transitioned to be a member of the FBI's Montana Child Exploitation and Human Trafficking Task Force.

During 2021, task force members:

- Conducted 97 investigations including 22 cases of enticement, 19 on distribution of child pornography and 28 on possession of child pornography.
- Performed forensic exams on 5,286 gigabytes for data.
- Made 11 presentations that reached more than 400 community members.

### ICAC Forensic Examinations



■ Other Items (Thumb drives, SD cards)  
 ■ CDs/DVDs  
 ■ Cell Phones  
 ■ Hard Drives



Among the new employees hired in 2021 was Officer Ratzlaff, center at left, who posed with family after the swearing in ceremony. BPD commanders watched as families congratulated the new officers. These commanders are, from left, Lt. Krivitz, Lt. Wooley and Chief St. John.





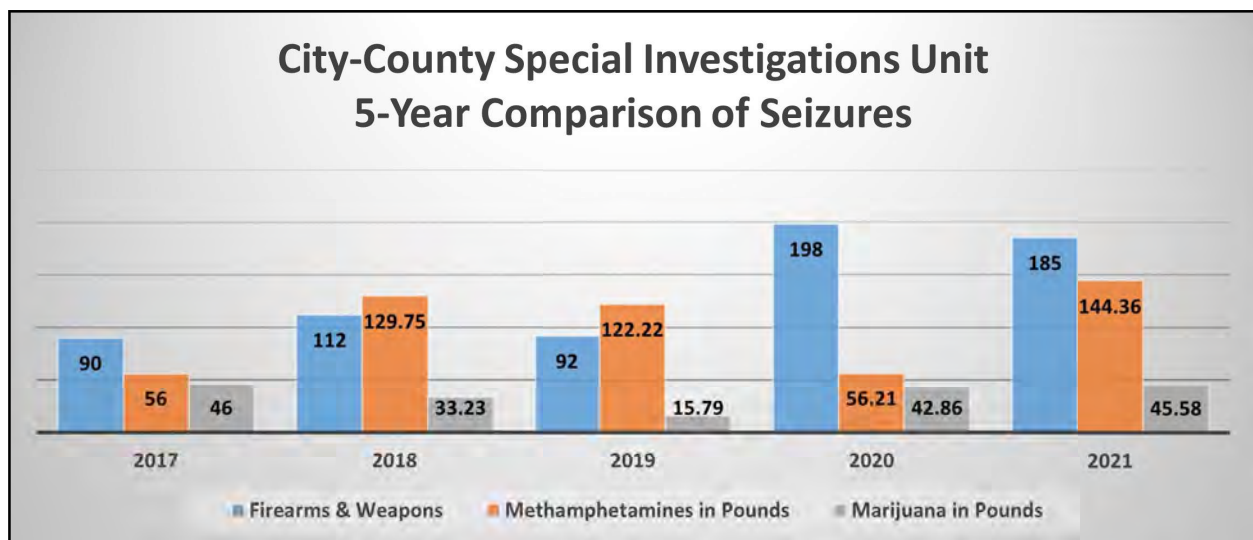
## Specialized Units



### City-County Special 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 and its harmful consequences. 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.

Items Seized		Arrests	
Methamphetamine	144.36 Pounds	Misdemeanor	1
Heroin	2.65 Pounds	Felony	27
Cocaine	8.14 Pounds	Federal Indictments	37
Marijuana	45.58 Pounds		
Fentanyl	3.41 Pounds		
Fentanyl Pills	31,822 Pills		
Hallucinogens	25 Doses		
Pharmaceuticals	636 Doses		
Assets Seized	\$408,475		
Firearms	185		
Drug Loads Intercepted	58		
Methamphetamine Lab	1		
		Drug Trafficking Organizations	
		Local Targeted	3
		Local Disrupted/Dismantled	1
		Multi-State Targeted	7
		Multi-State Disrupted/Dismantled	7





## Specialized Units

### K9 Program

The Billings Police K9 team deployed their dogs 1,334 times. The dogs sniffed 329 vehicles, the officers made 531 arrests and seized \$343,184 in cash. They also responded to 75 requests to assist other agencies. The 2021 team, led by Sgt. Becker, included: Officer Anderson with Sam; Officer Best with Evan; Officer Contreras with Tabasco; Officer Ihde with Mira; and Officer Firebaugh with Dutch.

In addition to intensive initial training, K9s and their handlers must re-certify annually.



#### Grams of Drugs Seized

Heroin	418
Cocaine	277
Other Drugs/Pills	6,000
Methamphetamine	19,368
Marijuana	24,585

#### Other Activities

Parcel Sniffs for Shipping Organizations/ Agencies	52
Firearms Seized	47
Search Warrants Written by Handlers	34
Agency Assistance Requests	75
Arrests	531



Billings K9 dogs live with their handlers and train regularly as a team.

From left: Officer Ihde with Mira; Officer Contreras with Tabasco and Officer Anderson with Sam (photo courtesy of the Billings Gazette).

### 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 involved in the incident.

### Bomb Squad



BPD has 1 of the 2 FBI accredited bomb squads in Montana. The squad's 6 bomb technicians 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, ammunition and commercial and military explosives.

## Specialized Units



### Montana District Violent Offenders Task Force

One Billings Police Department officer serves on the Billings District Violent Offenders Task Force. 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 18,235 warrants. The 2021 total was 1,447 with 463 of those occurring in the Billings District.

Weapons Seized					Warrant Closures			
Hand Guns	24	39	9	15	2018	2019	2020	2021
Long Guns	12	77	1	3	660	659	461	463

### SWAT

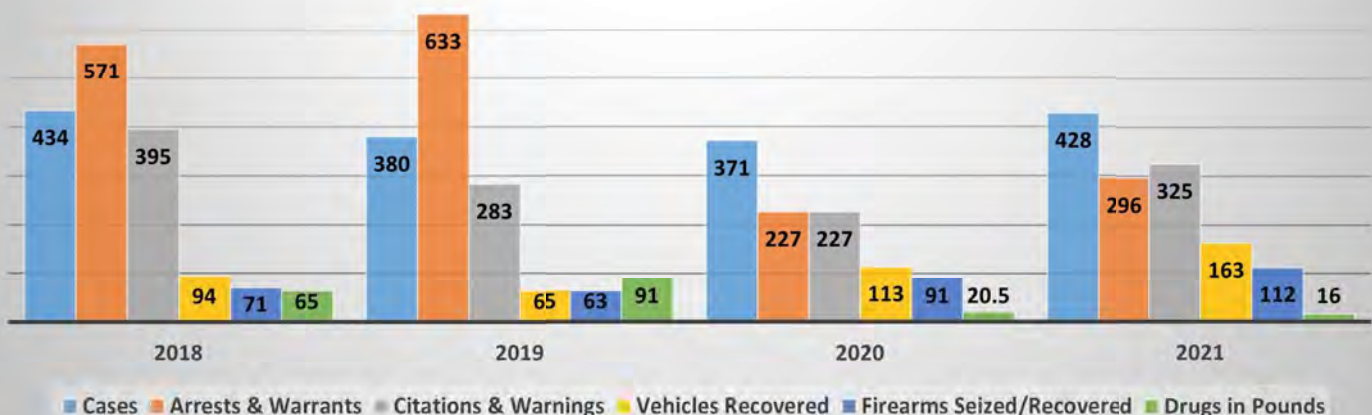
This a group of 15 highly trained officers specialize in high-risk warrant service, fugitive apprehension, hostage rescue, barricaded gunman, response to active shooters, dignitary protection and sniper/observer support of these activities. The SWAT team is activated when a situation requires advanced training or tools that are not commonly available to the patrol division. During 2021 they had 15 activations.

### Street Crimes Unit

The Billings Street Crimes Unit was established in 2018. Initially, one Detective Sergeant, a detective and 2 patrol officers were assigned to the unit. Due to successes in disrupting crime, the unit was expanded in 2020 to include 4 patrol officers. The members must apply and interview for these positions. The patrol officer slots are on a two-year rotation. The detective assigned to pawn shop duties works closely with the Street Crimes Unit.



### Street Crimes Unit Comparison of Activity & Seizures





## Specialized Units

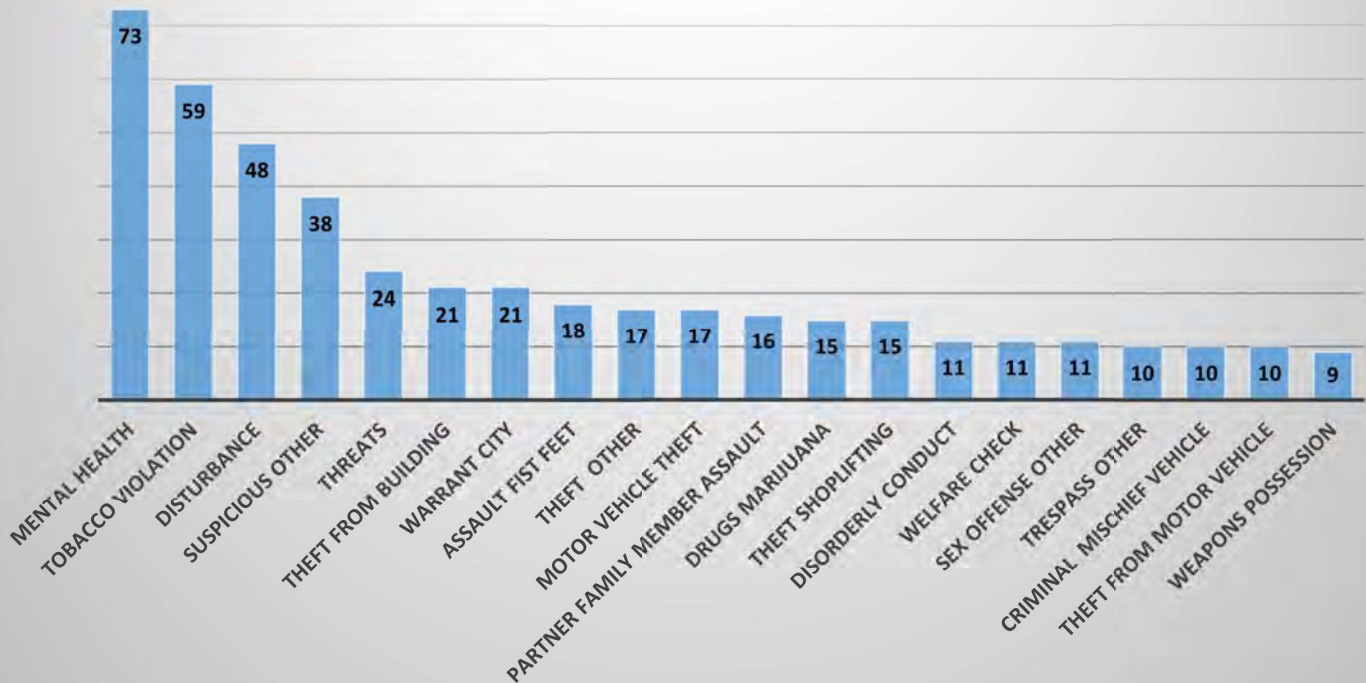
### School Resource Officers

Billings School Resource officers are funded in cooperation with School District 2. There are 8 SROs and during 2021 the Department added a Sergeant who also works in the schools.

The officers are assigned to individual high schools or middle schools and visit several elementary schools as part of their duties.

During the 2020-2021 school year, the officers wrote 633 cases, a significant decrease from previous years due to distance learning. More than 400 of those investigations resulted in an arrest, including 95 related to alcohol, drugs and underage tobacco use.

### Most Frequent Cases and Offenses Investigated by SROs



### Downtown Officers

The Billings Police Department and the Downtown Billings Alliance have a contract which provides two Downtown Resource Officers dedicated to the downtown area. During 2021, Officer Mansur and Officer Tanis rejuvenated the Motivated Addiction Alternative Program (MAAP). Through this program they worked in partnership with Rimrock Foundation, the City Attorney's Office, the Public Defenders Office, the Yellowstone County Detention Facility, and many other community partners. The Downtown Billings Alliance hosted a 3 person Peer Support Specialist team and with the Resource Officers, they formed the Homeless Outreach Team (HOT). Using a combination of enforcement and voluntary treatment options, the HOT team was able to resource 65 homeless individuals into treatment through the use of the courts, jail, and voluntary treatment. (from left) Officers Tanis, Flam-mang and Mansur working during Farmers Market.

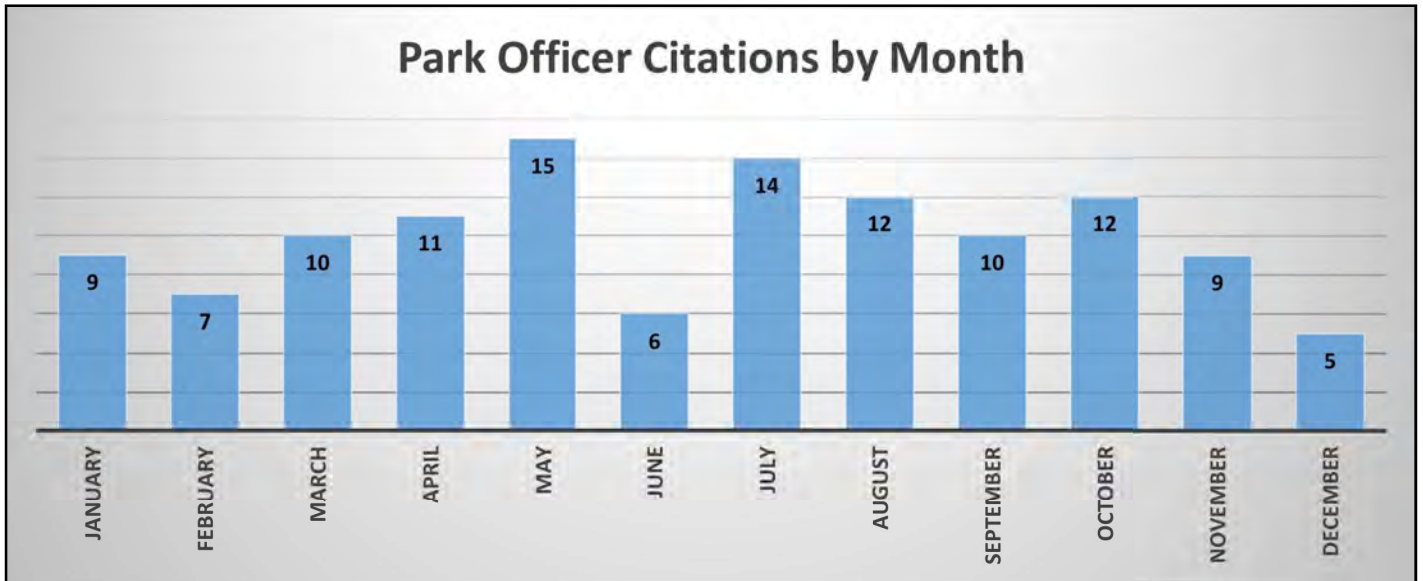




## Specialized Units

### Parks Officer

Officer Schara works with the Parks and Rec Department to patrol trails, assist parks employees and work toward keeping the public safe while enjoying Billings' parks. During 2021, he focused on public relations with community members around the parks. He also worked special events. While patrolling in parks, he wrote 120 citations including violations of alcohol in parks with permits and camping parks.



### *Did you know?*

There are a group of Chaplains who serve Billings Police Department and the law enforcement community. The Chaplains rotate being on call and are available to assist whenever called upon. The Department provides a used patrol vehicle so they are easily recognized when responding to crime scene. During 2021 they spent more than 70 hours on call outs, working with people in times of crisis. The Chaplains also logged more than 90 hours at officers' daily briefing meetings. They also spent 14 hours working with people at Yellowstone County Detention Facility. The Chaplains meet each month.



Left: Officer Foltz receives his badge from Chief St. John after being sworn in. Center: Officer Malcom made the most of receiving his commendation by giving the Chief a kiss. Officer Hilde, holding his son, continued the 'giving' spirit. Right: New commanders Sergeants Stovall and Puckett and Lieutenant Lennick pose with their certificates of promotion. (Center and right photos courtesy of Amber Renee Photography)

## Specialized Units

### Billings Police Bicycle Patrol

During warm weather bicycle officer ride from Downtown to the Heights and West End. They often provide police presence at community events. Officers who pass specialized training and maintain that training can patrol on bicycle. Sixteen officers successfully completed the training during 2021. The course, taught by Billings officers who are certified as instructors, was held at Amend Park and included classroom and riding sections. The bike portions included obstacle courses, timed over-land and obstacle events that included stair climbing and curb jumping. They also completed day and night road rides throughout Billings.



At left, Officers Larkin leads as Officers Fonte, Pearson and Prindle wind through a serpentine drill. Above Officer Fonte practices a cross-over dismount.



Above at left, Officer Prindle weaves through a course. At right, Officer Korb moves through the S-turn course as Sgt. Shelden (blue shirt) counts the required three revolutions and times the trial.



## Crime Prevention Center

Billings Police Department services are enhanced by our volunteers.

Volunteers work with citizens who are reporting certain types of crimes and write reports for the Department. During 2021, the volunteers started using the same software used by Officers to submit reports.

Some volunteers are trained to take fingerprints. This service is \$20 per card and is provided by appointed.

The CPC is staffed by a Public Relations Sergeant and officer as well as the Volunteer Coordinator, who are all BPD employees. The staff is available for community presentations.

During 2021 they developed the several crime prevention programs. These included:

A holiday season pickup service to prevent theft of packages from porches. Residents could have their packages delivered to the CPC building where they were held until the owners could pick them up.

Providing stencils to local auto shops so vehicle catalytic converters can be marked "stolen call 911" which deters thieves and makes resale difficult.

The CPC continues to provide pill disposal so citizens can properly dispose of unused and expired prescription medications.

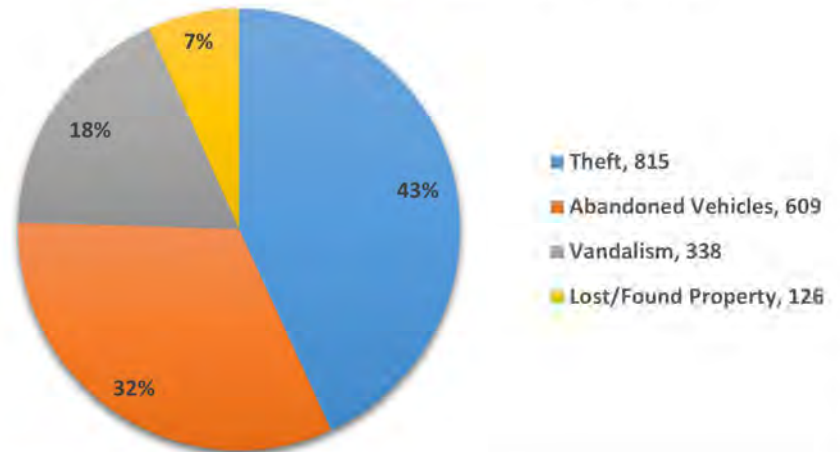
The Crime Prevention Center is located at 2910 3rd Avenue North.

Hours are 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday.

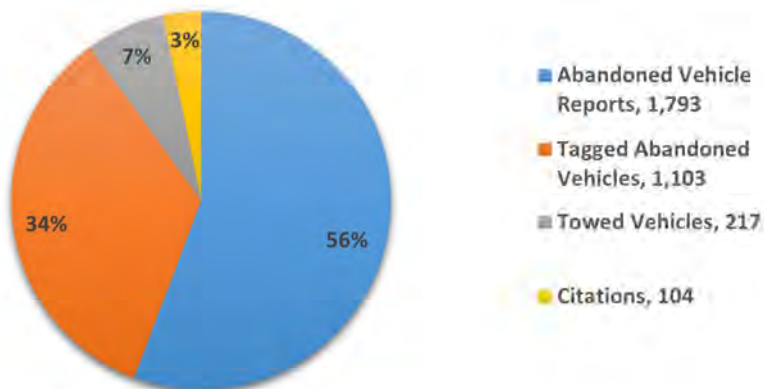
Volunteers serve as Report Writers in the CPC office completing reports for citizens. They also serve with the Volunteer Patrol Unit who tag abandoned vehicles and issue non-moving violations.

For information, visit the CPC page at [www.billingspolice.com](http://www.billingspolice.com).

### Volunteer Report Writing Activity



### Volunteer Patrol Unit Activity



### Did you know?

The inaugural Firefighters vs Police Charity Softball Game was held in August.

Firefighters raised money for the Muscular Dystrophy Association and police officers for the Education Foundation for Billings Public Schools.

A 6-4 victory brought the Chief's Cup to BPD.

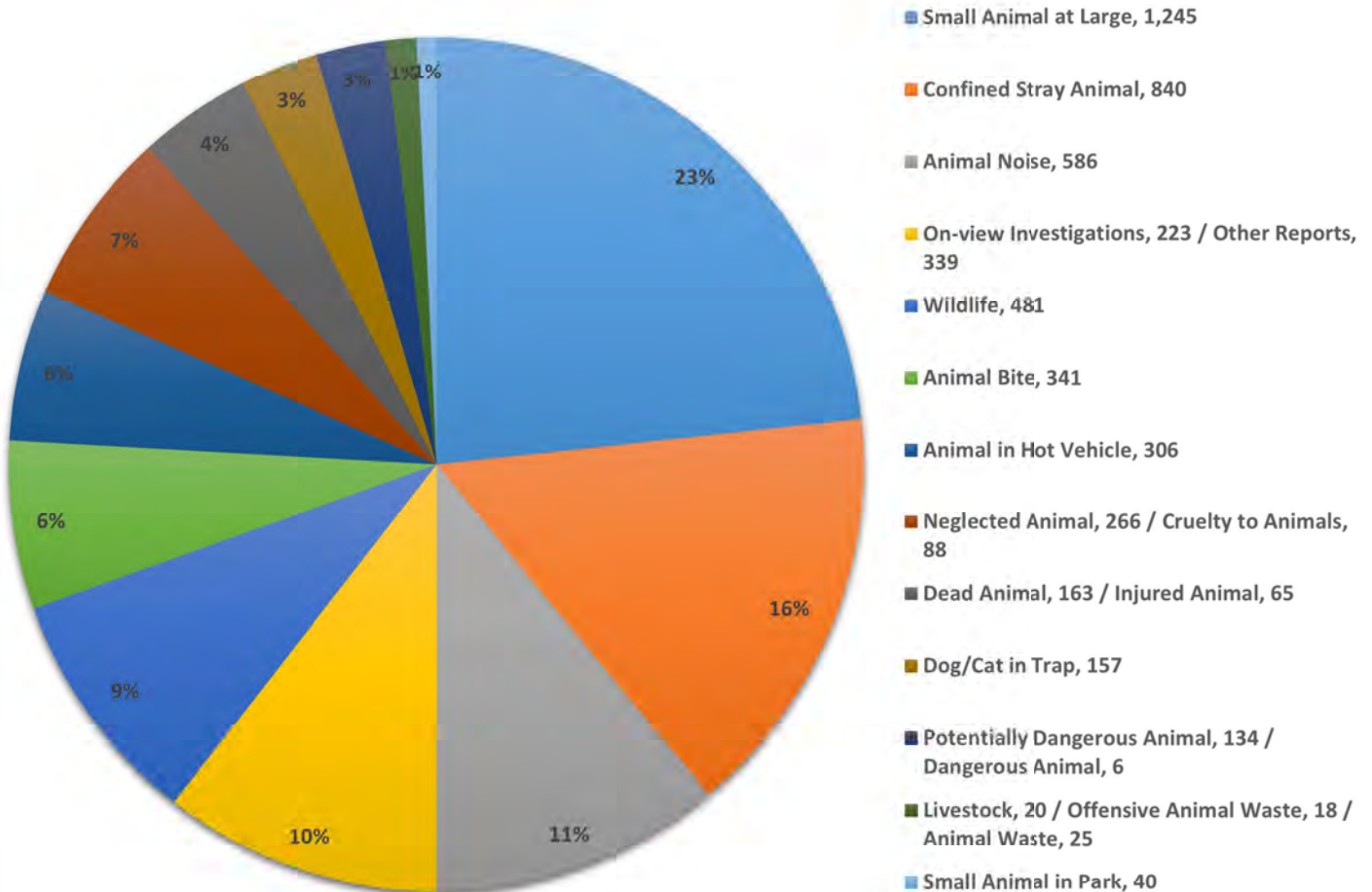




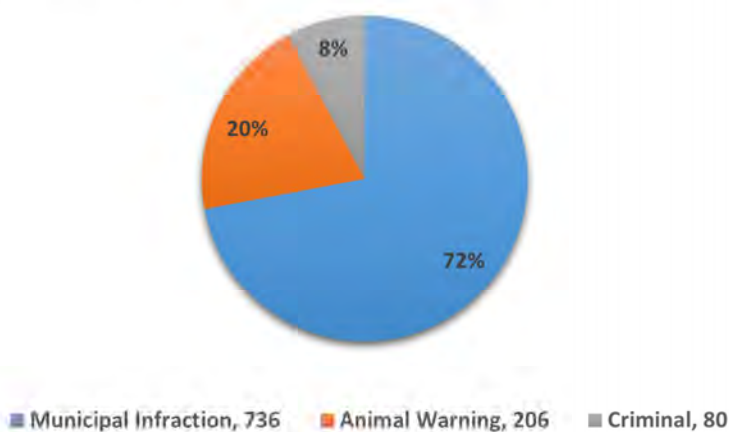
## Animal Control Division

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

### Animal Control Calls For Service By Type



### Animal Control Officer Citations by Type

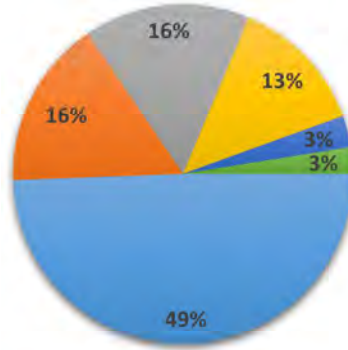


K9 Evan in his Police vest.

## Animal Control Division

The Billings Police Department Animal Control Division shares a location with the Yellowstone Valley Animal Shelter at 1735 Monad Road. YVAS and the City have a contract for the shelter to care of Billings' lost and stray animals. Because of this partnership, shelter statistics are included in this report. During 2021, the shelter sold licenses for 3,304 dogs and 1,001 cats. There are 9,587 active cat and dog licenses in Billings.

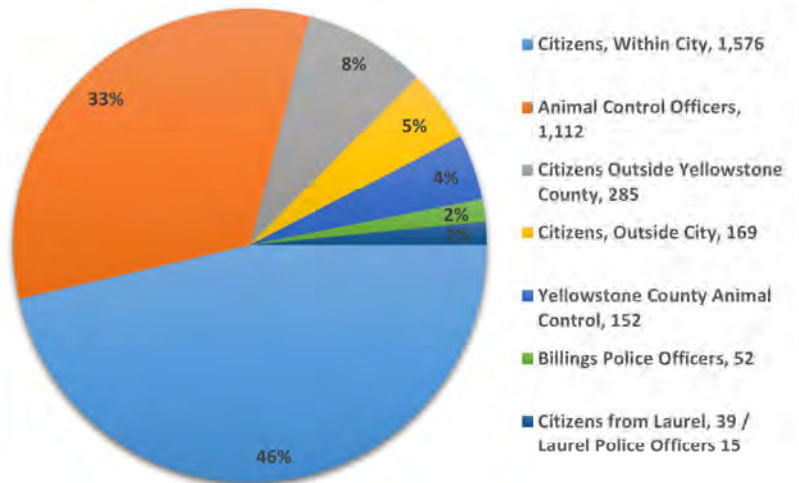
### Animal Activity at Yellowstone Valley Animal Shelter



■ Dogs & Cats Adopted, 3,431 ■ Stray Dogs Handled, 1,118 ■ Stray Cats Handled, 1,09  
 ■ Stray Dogs Claimed, 914 ■ Dogs & Cats Euthanized, 208 ■ Stray Cats Claimed, 176



### Yellowstone Valley Animal Shelter Animals Received by Source



At left: BPD employees sometimes bring their dogs in for a short visit. Here Police Support Specialist Amy gives attention to both of Lt. Hart's family dogs. The department's K9 Officers' dogs also come in with their handlers.

## Welcomes & Farewells

### New Officers

Billings Police Department welcomed 9 new officers during 2021. Two officers had already completed Police Officer Standard Training. The others spent 12 weeks at the Montana Law Enforcement Academy for the training. All officers begin their Billings Police career going through field training with seasoned officers.

Dane Yeager	Matthew Bistline	Kristie Funk
Richard Cofield	Tyler Geiger	Karlie Heisterman
David Woody	Sutton Foltz	Aariad Ream

### Retirements

Six officers and commanders bid farewell to Billings Police Department during 2021. Officers Adams and Bickford retired medically. Lt. Cardillo returned to BPD as our Quartermaster. Here is the full list of retirees and the year they started.

Jeremiah Adams — 2017	Dan Brown — 1993	Lt. David Cardillo—2007
Justin Bickford — 2018	Sgt. Tina Hoeger—2002	Lt. Riley Finnegan—2006

## Promotions

### New Commanders

The following officers were promoted to Sergeant and two Sergeants were promoted to Lieutenant. The changes were prompted by retirements and a new Sergeant position created by passage of the Public Safety Mill Levy.

<b>Sergeant</b>	<b>Lieutenant</b>
Samantha Puckett	Matthew Lennick
Ryan Kramer	Shane Shelden
Kodi Kaiser	
Jeff Stovall	
Benjamin Beck	

## Commendations

### Officer of the Year

*Detective Rob Miller*

### Supervisor of the Year

*Sergeant Jeff Stovall*



## Commendations

### Life Saving Medal

*Officer Brett Hilde ~ Officer Dustin Stroble ~ Officer Trey Malcom*

On June 24<sup>th</sup>, 2021, at approximately 11:45 p.m., Night Shift officers were dispatched to 2701 1<sup>st</sup> Ave N (near Jakes Restaurant) for a report of shooting incident. During this call, officers were advised that multiple shots had been fired at this location and further that one victim was laying on the ground with a gun near him. Officer Hilde was first on scene and located the first victim in the alley behind the business. Officer Hilde discovered the victim had sustained multiple gunshot wounds to the abdomen and armpit area. While attending to the first victim, Officer Hilde located a second gunshot victim laying on the ground, underneath a nearby car. The second victim, later discovered to be the suspect in the shooting, was also found to have sustained multiple gunshot wounds to his lower extremities. After radioing for additional resources, Officer Hilde was joined by Officer Stroble and Officer Malcom. After retrieving his personal medical bag, Officer Hilde and Officer Stroble began emergency medical care on Victim 1 while Officer Malcom was instructed to begin treatment on Victim 2. Officer Hilde and Officer Stroble, utilizing their training, assessed the victim's condition and injuries, locating two gunshot wounds. Chest seals were applied, and the victim was transported to the hospital for further medical attention. Officer Malcom provided medical attention to the second victim, applying a chest seal to the victim's back and further controlling the additional bleeding due to a bone pultruding from the victim's leg. Victim 2 was also transported to the hospital for further medical attention. Victim 1 later succumbed to his injuries, despite the efforts of Officer Hilde and Officer Stroble, and was pronounced dead. The medical attention provided by the officers, however, prolonged the victim's life and gave him a fighting chance of survival at the hospital. Victim 2 survived as a result of Officer Malcom's medical care and has been charged with deliberate homicide.

### Distinguished Service Medal

*Sergeant Justin Jagers*

In October 22, 2021, the Billings Police Department joined forces with the FBI, Homeland Security, Yellowstone County Sheriff's Office, Yellowstone County Attorney's Office, and the United States Attorney's Office, to conduct "*Operation Dream Crusher*," an undercover operation to arrest those seeking to sexually exploit children. Although championed by the FBI, it relied heavily upon local resources. Originally, the City County Special Investigations Unit under the direction of Sgt. Jagers was only tasked with assisting in the arrest of suspected predators. However, Sgt. Jagers quickly realized the scope of the operation was rapidly expanding and needed more resources to be successful. Sgt. Jagers energized the City and County tactical units to affect the numerous high-risk arrests. He worked directly with the investigation units of the FBI, HSI, YCSO and BPD to equalize the high volume of caseloads generated for Federal Prosecution. Simultaneously, he supervised the target surveillance conducted by CCSIU, at the take down locations. For two days during late October 2021, Sgt. Jagers was the centerpiece for the efficient functioning of this entire operation. When a serious rift occurred in the operational command center, Sgt. Jagers took control and called for an operational pause, allowing him time to work with the parties to resolve the issues and get the operation up and running again, resulting in another five arrests. Without the high drive, leadership, determination of Sgt. Jagers this critical joint operation would have failed or been marginally effective at best. Instead, Operation Dream Crusher resulted in 8 child predator arrests in less than 48 hours.



Sgt. Jagers receives his commendation from Chief St. John.  
(Photo courtesy Amber Renee Photography)

## Commendations

### Life Saving Award

*Officer Seth Foster*

On November 2, 2021, Officer Foster was contacted by Child Protective Services (CPS) workers requesting his assistance in locating a 6-week-old child who was reportedly born in a bathtub by her drug-addicted mother and was having serious health risks. The baby was premature, sick, and had not been taken to the doctor. CPS workers had attempted to locate the child and had received physical threats from the family. CPS was told the mother was on the run and in hiding knowing CPS and the police were looking for her and were going to take the child. Officer Foster requested help from other agencies as the female resided in the county but received no assistance. Taking it upon himself he began an intensive search with little assistance. Officer Foster checked dozens of homes, local hotels and interviewed several associates of the mother. Finally, after two days of searching, Officer Foster located the mother who was hiding in a Billings motel with child. Officer Foster immediately detained the mother and called for medical help. The child was horribly malnourished, dehydrated, and had mold growing on her genitals. At 6-weeks-old the child weighed only 6 pounds, had a heart murmur and had been significantly neglected by the mother. The child was near death. Officer Foster investigative prowess, dedication and determination most certainly saved this baby's life.

### Life Saving Award

*Officer Casey Bigelow ~ Officer Tim Doll ~ Officer Daniel Shreeve ~ Officer Zach Wallis ~ Sgt. Glenn Gunther*

On March 14, 2021, Officers Shreeve and Bigelow were dispatched to a suicidal subject they eventually located on the top of the Rimrocks. A friend of the victim stated the victim had depression and relationship issues and they were concerned that she may commit suicide by jumping off the Rims. The victim was located by officers, curled up in a ball on a small ledge just down from the edge of the Rims. Officers Bigelow and Shreeve tried to approach her from a different direction while she was distracted by Sgt. Gunther who was trying to establish rapport with the victim. As the officers were maneuvering down to her position and Sgt. Gunther was talking with her she quickly became uncooperative and it was determined unsafe to attempt to grab the victim. Officer Wallis arrived on scene and contacted the victim's hysterical mother, also on scene. Officer Wallis was able to calm her down enough to talk with the victim and buy additional time for Officer Doll to take up a position with Officer Bigelow and Officer Shreeve on the ledge. While the mother was speaking with the victim, the four officers climbed and maneuvered around the victim, and while she was distracted snatched her to safely from the ledge and secured her at the serious risk of falling for all the officers. These officers prolonged the stand-off with the victim for more than 30 minutes buying valuable time to position themselves for life saving intervention should she attempt to step or jump off the 100-foot ledge. The quick thinking and decisive actions by Officers Shreeve, Bigelow, Wallis, and Doll prevented the victim from executing her plan to commit suicide and resulted in the safe return of a daughter to her mother.

#### *Did you know ...*

The commendations and awards highlighted on these pages are outlined in Billings Police Department policy. They are meant to properly honor officers who perform meritorious service or acts of bravery. Earning these honors gives the recipients the right to add ribbons to their dress uniforms. Additionally, their names are added to plaques at BPD so the honors are memorialized in Department history.

In 2021, the Billings Police Protective Association (BPPA) formed a committee to plan and host an awards banquet for the Department where the honors were presented. Sgt. Winden, shown here, worked extensively on fundraising and organizing the event. BPPA is comprised of a group of officers who volunteer their time to promote the law enforcement profession, educate the public and build camaraderie within the department. BPPA is part of a state association. Its largest local fundraiser is a community concert.



## Commendations

### American Legion Law Enforcement Award

*Detective Mike Robinson*

Throughout his 19-year career, Detective Robinson has become known for his stubborn qualities, commitment to this profession and desire to make his community better. He has worked incredibly hard throughout his career and will always do what is right, no matter how long it might take him. He's spent several years as a detective, worked within the drug task force, investigated homicides, crimes against children and currently spends most of his time investigating financial crimes. This past year, Det. Robinson took it upon himself to begin presenting financial cases to the U.S. Attorney's Office for prosecution. No matter what assignment he serves in, Det. Robinson will proactively search through other officers' reports, connecting them with other cases and identifying suspects, which ultimately lead to arrests. Often, he asks for cases that were already inactivated by other officers, to be opened again and assigned to him for further investigation. While doing all of this, for several years, he has volunteered his time to coach Little League baseball which will without a doubt have a long-lasting impact on the kids that he's coached. He also helped volunteer as a coach during the police vs. firefighters softball game which helped raise money for School District 2 and the Muscular Dystrophy Association.

### Life Saving Award

*Officer Tyler Bishop ~ Officer Jonathan Simpson*

On Dec. 11, officers responded to a stabbing at the Colonial Apartments. Upon arrival, officers discovered a male with a stab wound to his abdomen. While Officer Simpson was cutting clothing and doing a wound sweep, he discovered a small stab wound that was bleeding profusely from the victim's lower left abdomen. Officer Simpson took out a chest seal from his vest and instructed Officer Messerschmidt to place it over the wound. Officer Bishop observed that the wound was bleeding out of the chest seal, and the area around the chest seal was bloating with blood. Once the chest seal was removed, the wound was identified as an arterial bleed. Due to the training, experience and clarity of thought the officers on scene knew that without immediate treatment, the victim would bleed out and die within minutes. Officer Bishop retrieved wound-packing gauze from his personal medical kit, and packed the stab wound. He continued to pack the wound until he was unable to force any more gauze into the wound and AMR arrived on scene. The victim was transported to Billings Clinic where he was in surgery for hours. An Emergency Department Technician at Billings Clinic advised Officers the ER "ran out of blood" because they used so much on the victim and that it was clear that without the initial wound-packing done by BPD officers, the victim would have most likely succumbed to his injuries and died.



These are some of the BPD retirees who attended the 2021 Awards Banquet. They are, from left, Mark Cady, Archie Botts, Gary Hatfield, Chief Rich St. John, Gary Wichman, Gordon "Short" Hirschi, Tom Hanel, Scott Forschee, John Gibson, Rich Millard, Mark Kirkpatrick, Jesse Johnson and Paul Roberts. Archie Bott, has been retired the longest and Jesse Johnson,, travelled from Arkansas to attend the event.





# Office of Professional Standards

The Office of Professional Standards is directed by a police Captain who reports directly to the Chief of Police and Assistant Chief.

The primary function of this office is to receive, assign and investigate complaints on employees' actions received from citizens or initiated by the department. This office monitors all investigations for timely completion and reports the findings to the complaining parties and subject employees.

The office records and evaluates all incidents of Response to Resistance.

*2021 Annual Report*

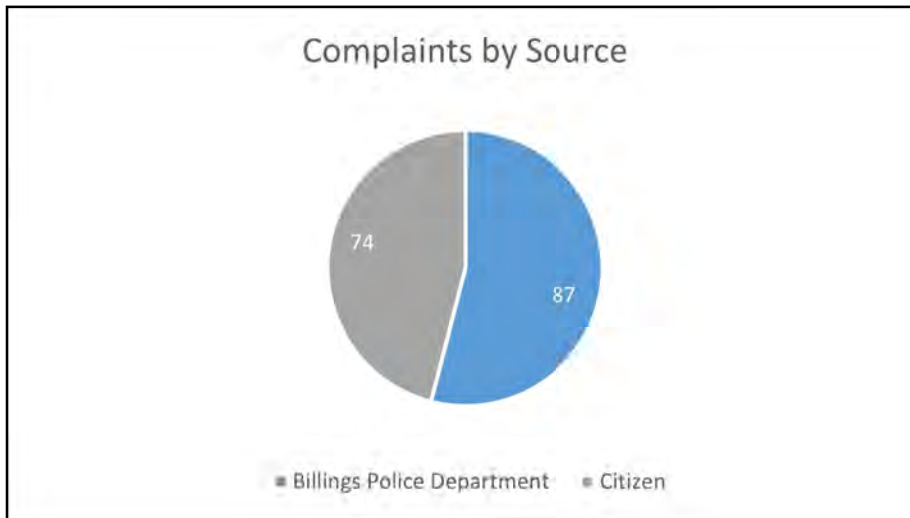
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## Complaints

A complaint is an incident which gives rise to one or more allegations of misconduct. A single complaint may allege misconduct by multiple employees and/or multiple violations of departmental policies. The number of complaints filed may not equal the number of allegations and findings resulting from the investigation.

Complaints may be *external* which are entered by citizens or *internal* which are from Billings Police Department supervisors.

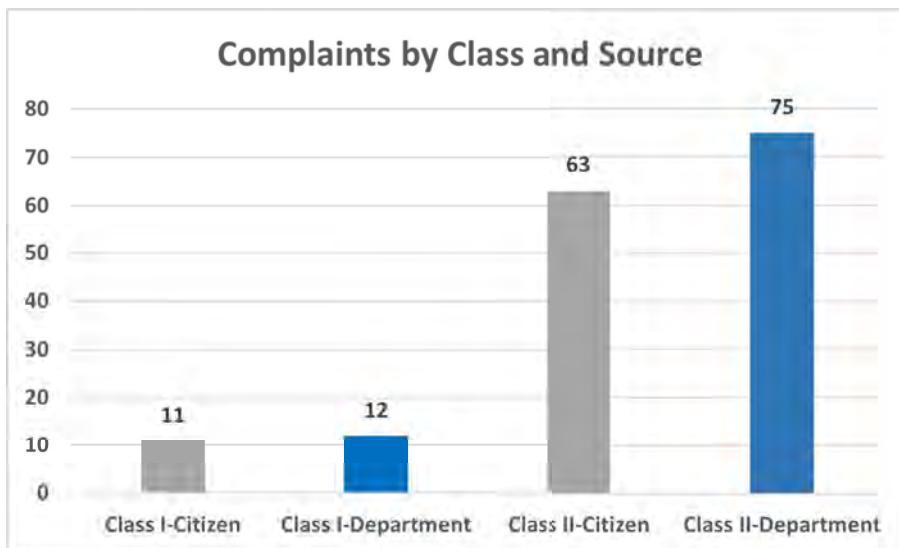
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**Class I** complaints are more serious and include allegations such as excessive force, violations of criminal law, breach of civil rights, bias policing and other, more serious, allegations. A pattern of Class II complaints is elevated to a Class I level.

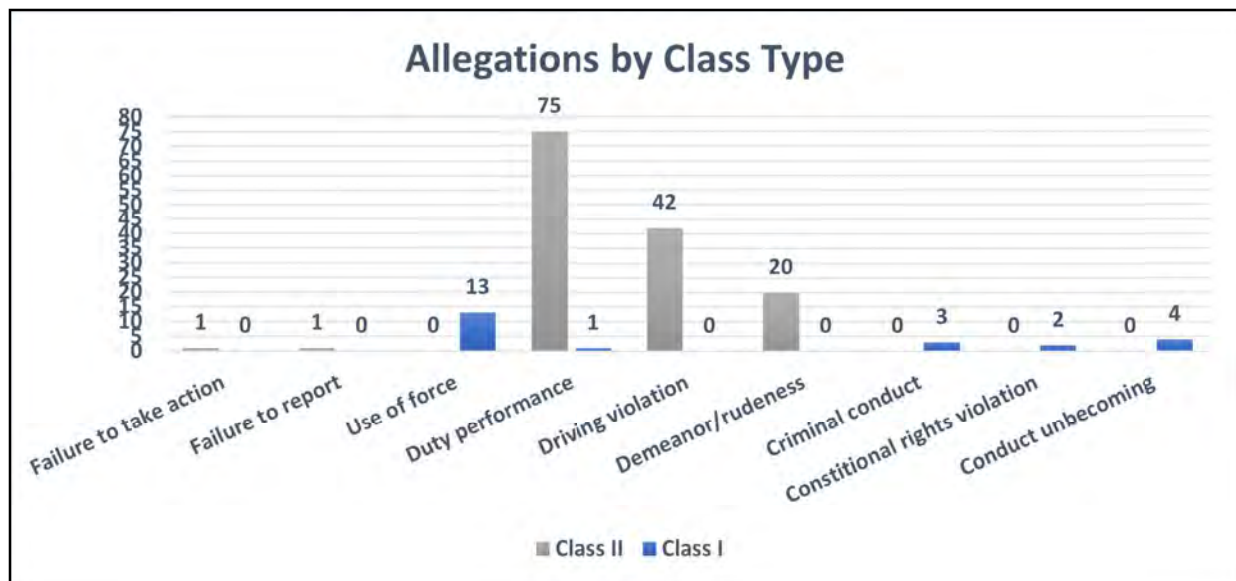
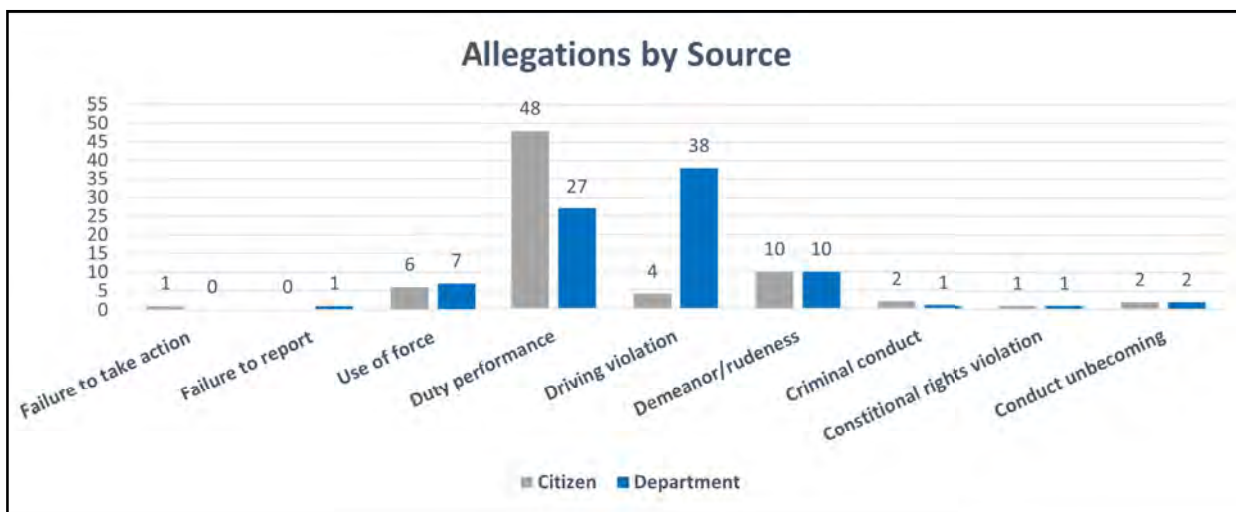
**Class II** complaints include allegations of inadequate service, discourtesy, minor performance issues, improper procedure and other less serious and non-criminal conduct.

Billings Police Department tracks the findings for each allegation, rather than a single overall finding for individual complaints. This approach helps gain a more accurate understanding of areas of concern to citizens and the department.



**Allegations** — This is a distinctly different category than complaints. They are assertions of an employee's behavior that, if proven, would amount to a violation of department policy. A single complaint may result in multiple allegations of misconduct against one employee, single allegations against multiple employees or a combination of these.

**Findings** — A finding is issued for each allegation in an investigation, including those made by the complainant and those discovered during the investigation. Findings also are issued when policy violations are discovered during a review of employee performance following an incident such as a pursuit, response to resistance, or employee vehicle accident. For these reasons, the number of findings issued will exceed the number of complaints reported.





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### Billings Police Department uses these definitions for complaint findings:

**Exonerated** — Findings of proper conduct, training deficiency and policy failure. Overall, the acts which were the basis for the complaint or allegation occurred but were justified, lawful and proper or the acts were not proper or justified but resulted from a lack of training or policy.

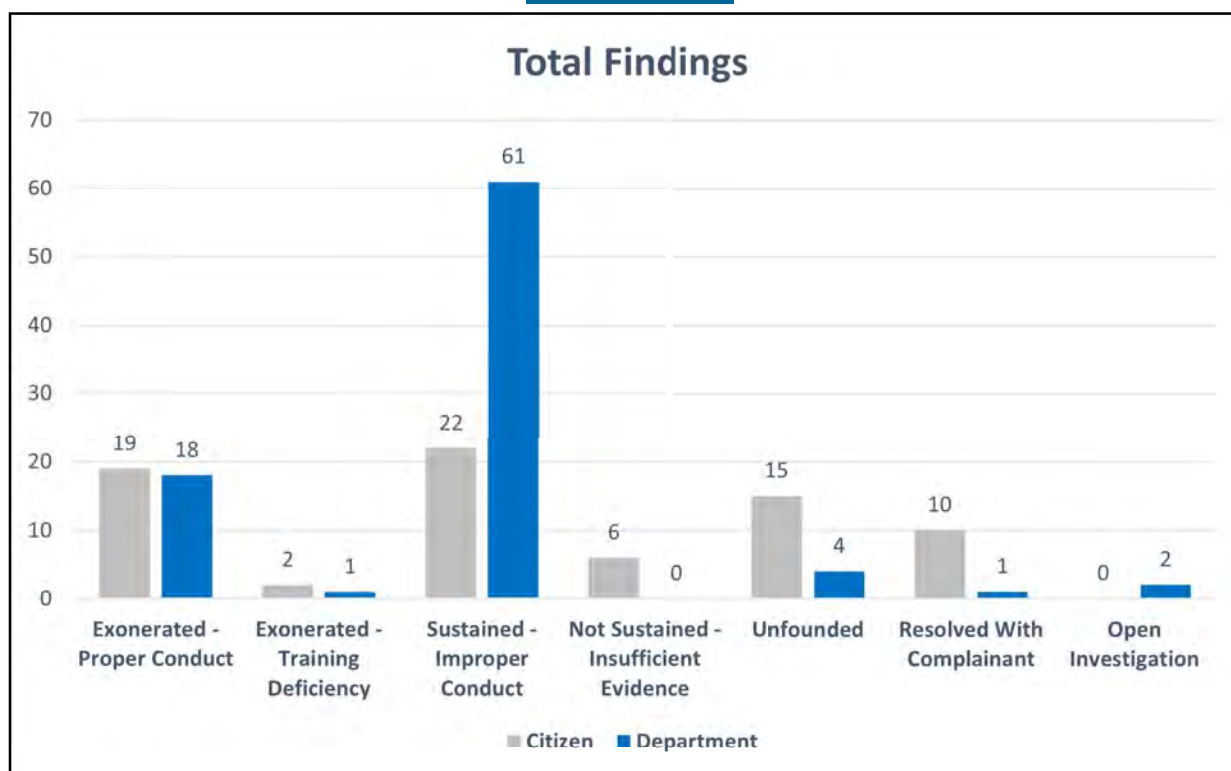
**Sustained** — Improper conduct. The investigation disclosed sufficient evidence to clearly prove the allegations made.

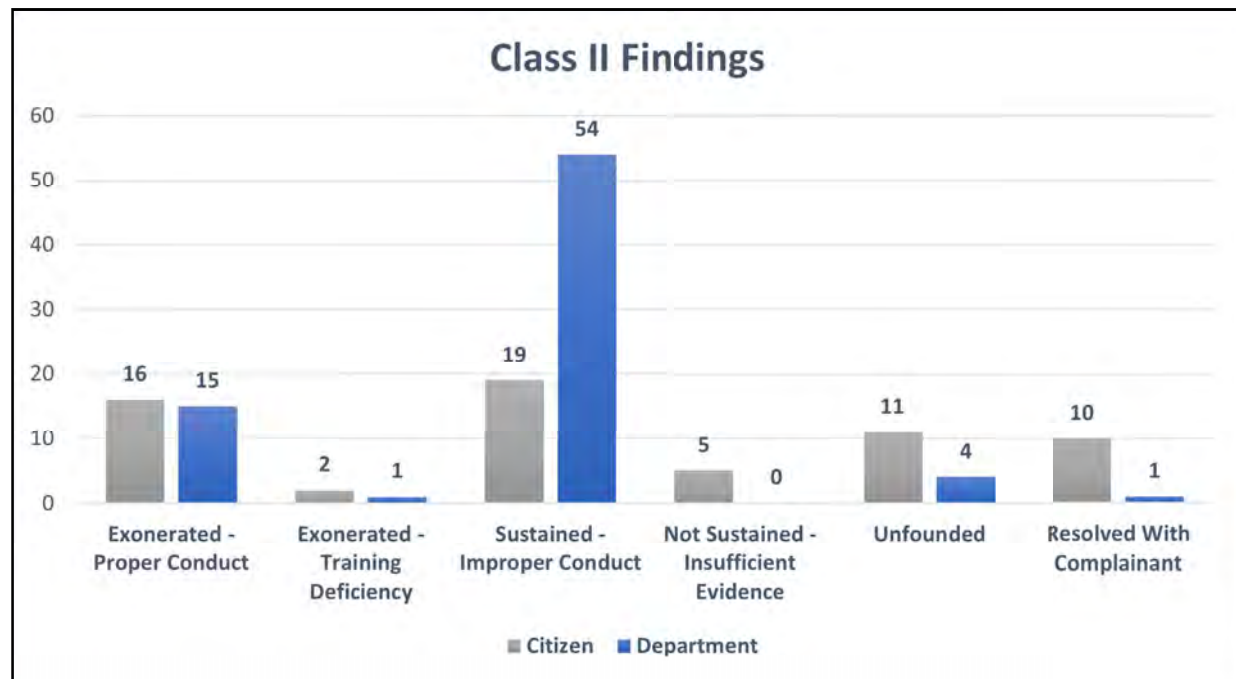
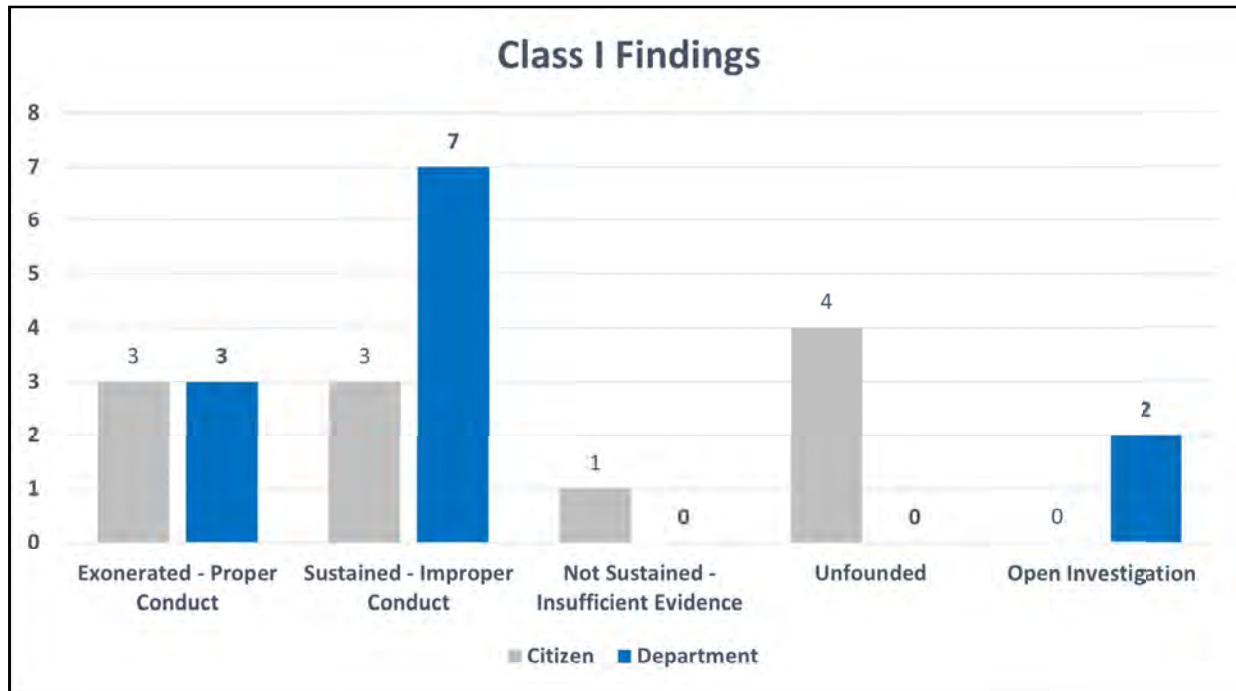
**Not Sustained** — Insufficient evidence. The investigation failed to discover sufficient evidence to clearly prove or disprove the allegations.

**Unfounded** — The investigation conclusively proved the act(s) in the complaint did not occur. This also applies when individual officers or employees were not involved in acts which may have occurred.

**Resolved with Complainant** — This applies only to Class II complaints. The determination of guilt may or may not be sustained but the complainant is satisfied with the results of the investigation.

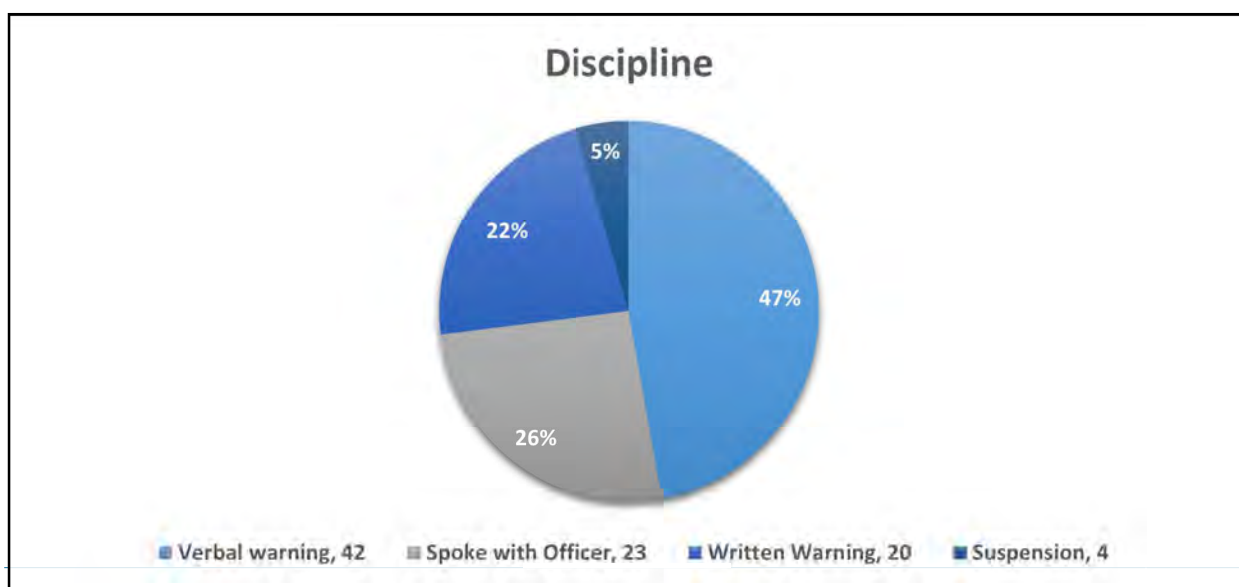
*There were no complaint findings issued in 2021 in the following categories: Exonerated—Training Deficiency, Class I; Exonerated—Policy Failure, Class I and Class II.*





***Citizens may submit complaints and commendations by completing an on-line form found on the Office of Professional Standards page at [www.billingspolice.com](http://www.billingspolice.com).***

***The BPD Policy Manual is also posted on this page.***



Citizens frequently contact the Department to thank or commend employees for acts of service or their response to a particular incident. These commendations are received in letters, e-mails, phone calls and numerous face-to-face comments. Written feedback is tracked, but some phone calls and personal contact go undocumented. The written feedback is tracked by the Office of Professional Standards. These numbers exclude commendations by our Command staff.

	Officer Commendations	Employees Recognized
2012	50	152
2013	65	116
2014	46	123
2015	47	99
2016	47	75
2017	55	68
2018	49	88
2019	73	70
2020	92	64
2021	50	20



# Response to Resistance Report

At the end of 2020, Billings Police Department updated its procedures for gathering Response to Resistance data. This increased the number of Response to Resistance reports to 184 during 2021. With this change, the Office of Professional Standards captures additional information so the department can more clearly analyze these incidents.

Officers record the details of the incidents for their commanders to assess. The Office of Professional Standards evaluates the incidents throughout the year. Officers are trained on numerous techniques to de-escalate situations so the public, themselves and the subjects involved remain as safe as possible. Officers may use any of these techniques, at any time, to meet the circumstances of the situation.

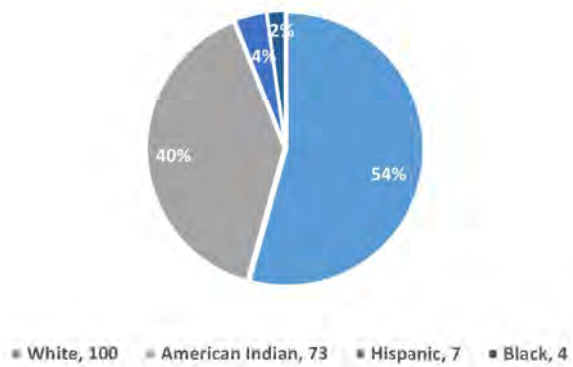
The decision to use force requires careful attention to the facts and circumstances of each particular case, including the severity of the crime at issue, whether the suspect poses an immediate threat to the safety of the officer or others, and whether the subject is actively resisting arrest or attempting to evade arrest by flight.

The reasonableness of a particular use of force must be judged from the perspective of a reasonable officer on the scene, rather than with the 20/20 vision of hindsight. The question is whether the officers' actions are 'objectively reasonable' in light of the facts and circumstances confronting them in the moment.

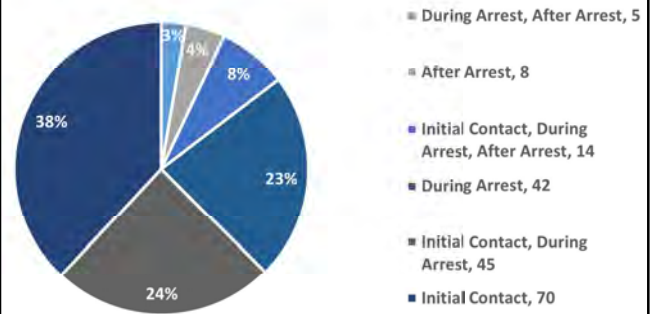
This diagram, which is in BPD policy, shows the tools officers might pivot to during responses.



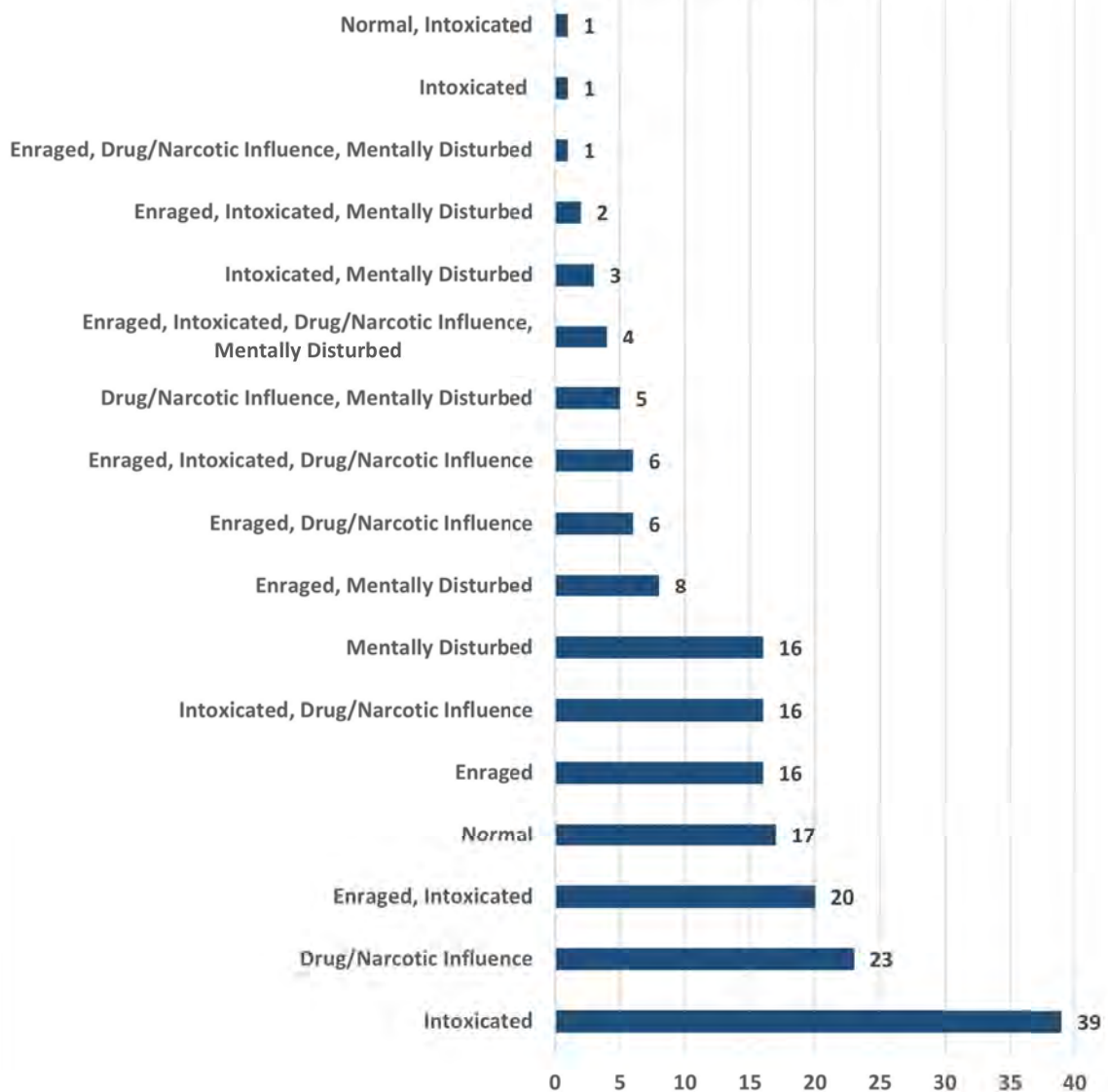
**Subjects by Race**

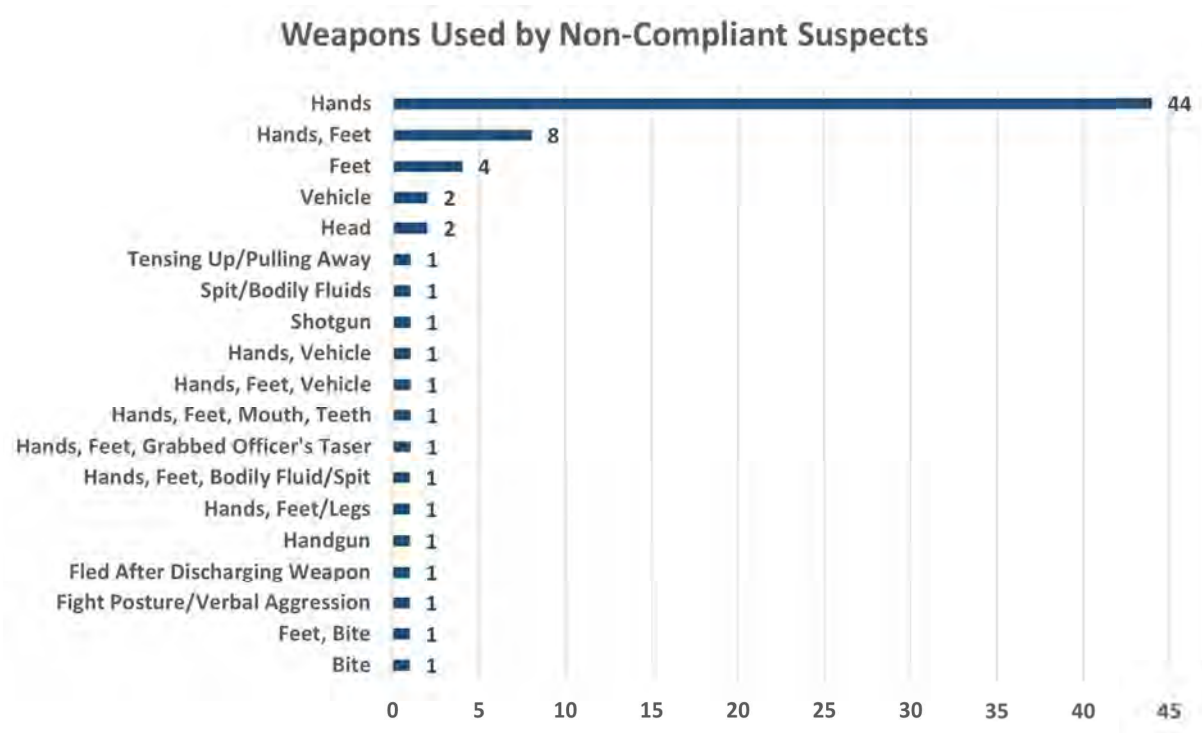


**Onset of Resistance**



**Subjects' Perceived Mental Condition**



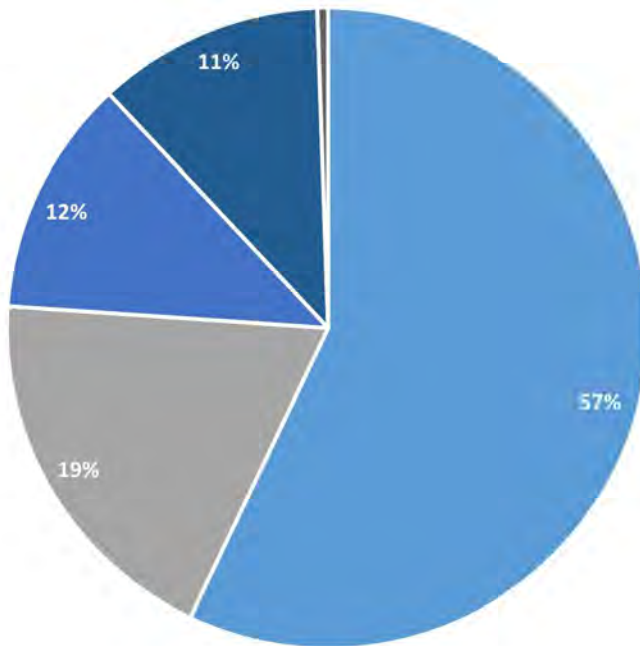


The changes to Response to Resistance reporting in 2021 yielded a spike in instances in which non-compliant suspects are listed as using no weapon. This “none” category was documented 100 times. When commanders reviewed the reports and videos of the incidents, they found several commonalities. Frequently officers were able to contain the situation before suspects started to resist. In 127 of the 184 reports (69 percent) suspects were perceived to be under the influence of alcohol or other drugs which can inhibit their ability to engage physically.



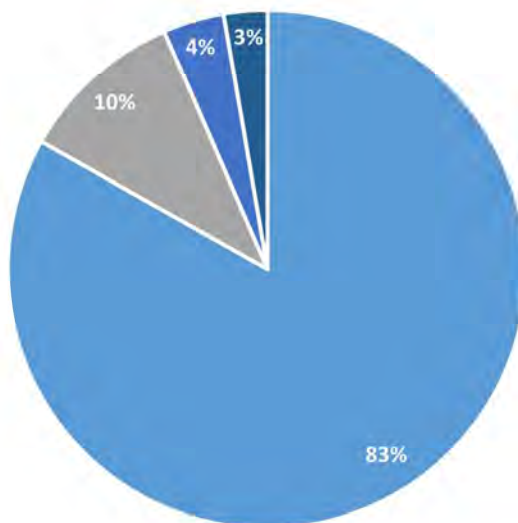


### Suspect Level of Injury

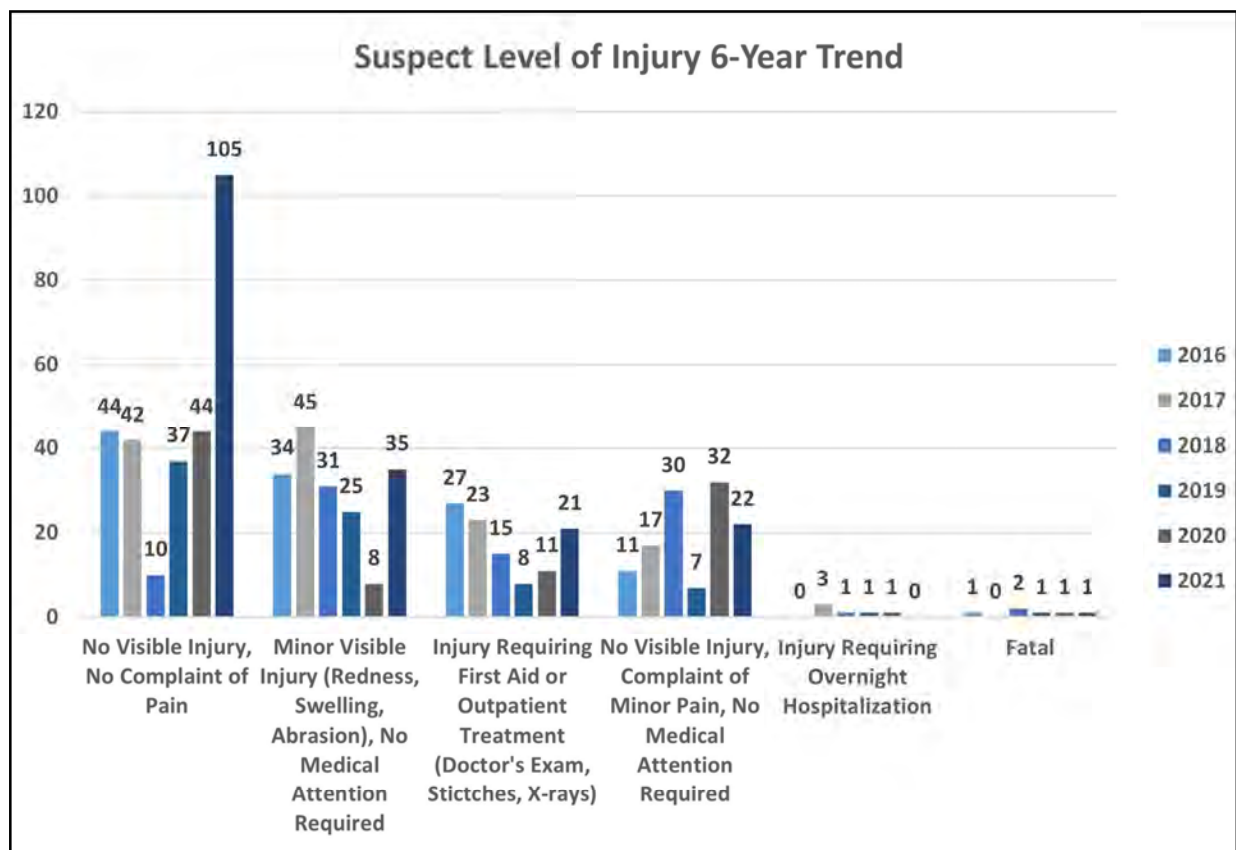
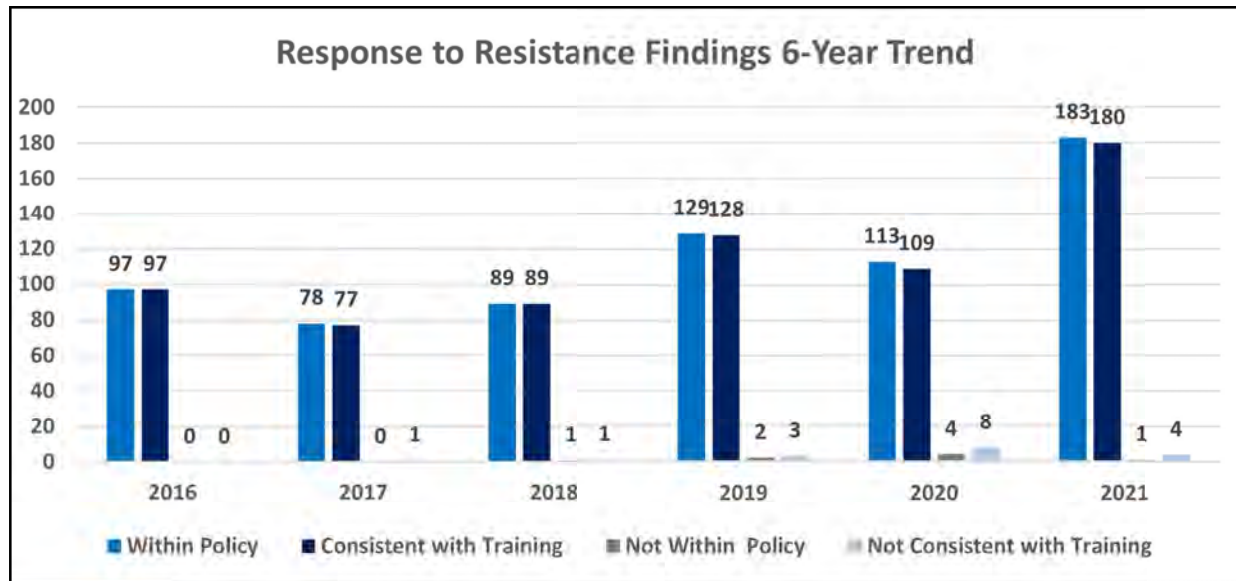


- No visible injury / No complaint of pain, 105
- Minor visible injury (redness, swelling, abrasion), no medical attention required, 35
- No visible injury, complaint of minor pain, no medical attention required, 22
- Injury requiring 1st Aid or outpatient treatment (doctor's exam, stitches, x-rays), 21
- Fatal, 1

### Officer Level of Injury



- No visible injury / No complaint of pain, 153
- Minor visible injury (redness, swelling, abrasion), no medical attention required, 19
- No visible injury, complaint of minor pain, no medical attention required, 7
- Injury requiring 1st Aid or outpatient treatment (doctor's exam, stitches, x-rays), 5



# ANNUAL REPORT

2021



**FIRE**

**EMS**

**RESCUE**

**9-1-1**





# 2021 ANNUAL REPORT

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**Billings**  
**FIRE**  
**DEPARTMENT**

# 2021 ANNUAL REPORT



2021 was an incredible and challenging year for the men and women of the Billings Fire Department and 911 Communications Center. With the help of our City Council and the community, we procured funding from a \$7.1 million Public Safety Mill Levy to share between Fire, Police, Courts, and Public Health Services. \$1.5 million will aid the fire department with our ongoing and ever-changing demands.

With the new funding source, we can move forward to develop a program to help us meet the increased challenges of emergency medical services while becoming more efficient with our service delivery model. The 911 Center also moved to an enhanced system called Priority Dispatching. In conjunction with our EMS delivery model, our new dispatching system has enabled us to better allocate resources to more specific types of calls received by the 911 Center.

We made substantial improvements to the Fire Department Fleet with the addition of three new Pierce PUC Engines delivered in early December and one additional Quint on order. All BFD divisions improved from receiving upgraded equipment, technology, and procedures. None of these things are possible without the remarkable people of our organization and the collaborative effort between labor and management. The people of Billings can be proud and rest easy as we have a diverse and highly professional team in the BFD and 911 Center. In all, we live in an extraordinary community that expects and deserves the first-class service we deliver.

On behalf of the men and women of the BFD and the 911 Communications Center, I am delighted and privileged to present the 2021 Annual Report. Thank you for your support and as always, stay safe.

Respectfully,

Pepper Valdez  
*Fire Chief*

MESSAGE FROM THE FIRE CHIEF



# 2021 ANNUAL REPORT

**We ARE...** The City of Billings organized the first Billings Fire Department in 1883. Billings Fire has 161 personnel, including firefighters, paramedics, EMTs, dispatchers, administrative staff, and fire prevention staff.

**We PROUDLY SERVE...** All residents, businesses, and organizations within our response area including the Billings Urban Fire Service Area (BUFSA).

## MISSION STATEMENT

The Billings Fire Department is dedicated to utilizing the latest education, methods, and technology in providing outstanding emergency services.

## VISION STATEMENT

The Billings Fire Department aspires to be the finest provider of emergency services.



## DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

**ADMINISTRATION** — Department oversight by the Fire Chief, three Asst. Chiefs, Senior Admin Coordinator, and Administrative Support staff.

**OPERATIONS & EMS** — 110 line personnel of firefighters, EMTs, and paramedics, responding to diverse fire, rescue, hazardous materials, and medical emergencies.

**FIRE PREVENTION BUREAU** — Fire Marshal, Asst. Fire Marshal, three Deputy Fire Marshals, a temporary assignment from suppression, and administrative support staff are committed to education, fire and life safety code enforcement, fire investigations, and community risk reduction programs.

**MAINTENANCE** — The City of Billings Fleet Maintenance Department conduct all maintenance for Fire Department vehicles.

**TRAINING** — A Training Chief, an Assistant Training Chief, and a temporary assignment from suppression ensures personnel at all levels have the knowledge, skills, and abilities to respond to emergency calls.

**9-1-1 COMMUNICATIONS CENTER** — Dispatchers, Shift Supervisors, Asst. Manager, and Manager of the 911 center field calls from public to dispatch public safety agencies of Yellowstone County.

## DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW



**Total Calls for Service**  
18,777



**EMS/Rescues**  
49.74%



**Fires/Service/Other**  
50.26%



**BFD and 9-1-1 Employees**  
161



**Apparatus & Vehicles**  
40



**Billings Population**  
110,000 people  
10,000 in our BUFSA



**Service Area ISO Rating**  
3/10



**Response Area — 90.16 sq miles**  
45.18 sq miles (city limits)  
44.98 sq miles (BUFSA)





2021





# 2021 ANNUAL REPORT

## ADMINISTRATION

The Administrative Office is considered the business side of the Fire Department. The Fire Chief, Executive Assistant Chief, Assistant Chief of Operations, Assistant Chief of EMS, Senior Administrative Coordinator, and Administrative Support staff help maintain a budget overview, all internal and external correspondence, policy distribution, health and risk management, fleet management, facilities maintenance, and guidance for personnel matters. This division is also responsible for grants and procurement of new revenue resources and is directly accountable to the City Manager and Assistant City Manager.

### FIRE STATION DEFERRED MAINTENANCE PROGRAM

BFD made significant progress in 2021 on implementing the Fire Station Deferred Maintenance Program which was funded by a long overdue budget increase. This program includes all Fire Department infrastructure and station renovations and become more energy efficient. The City of Billings Facilities Services Department helps manage these projects which rely heavily on firefighter input to improve the functionality, appearance, and livability of the stations. We hope to continue using this cost-effective model to refurbish our fire stations on a more regular, consistent basis, to improve and maintain our facilities and assets in an effort to take care of our employees and, in turn, better serve our customers.

### STATION 4 REPAIR



Old asphalt shingle roof with EIFS Siding



New metal roof and cement board lap siding

### OFFICE OF PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

The Office of Professional Standards (OPS) was created to responsibly address citizen and member commendations and complaints under the direct supervision of the Executive Assistant Chief. It is of the utmost importance that the Billings Fire Department maintains public trust and ensures the integrity of the department's membership.

The BFD and OPS works diligently to hold all members to a high standard of conduct and professionalism by providing a fair and consistent complaint process. It is also the responsibility of the BFD and OPS to recognize members who have gone above and beyond the call of duty by processing public and internal requests for commendations. In 2021, OPS developed a policy to expand the awards process to include citizens and civilian employees who demonstrate outstanding public services.



## FISCAL YEAR 2021 BUDGET

The administration's goal is to secure appropriate financial resources so that department personnel can provide the best public safety services to our community. Billings Fire's FY 2021 approved budget totaled \$21.3 million, representing an increased spending authority of 1.57% over FY 2020. Suppression costs, including wages, overtime, and fringe benefits, accounted for 64% of the expenditure of FY 2021. The remaining 36% contributes to fuel, equipment, maintenance, the Fire Prevention Bureau, training, and the 911 Call Center.

### Approved FY 2021 Operating Budget

Administration	\$1,430,959
Prevention/Investigation	\$911,924
Training	\$437,610
Equip/Maintenance	\$1,538,528
Suppression	\$13,629,012
9-1-1 Center	\$3,259,267
Communication Equip	\$96,138
Fire's Total	\$21,303,438

### Key Metrics



**161**  
Employees



**8**  
Facilities



**110**  
Firefighters



**6**  
Administrators



**2**  
Training Officers



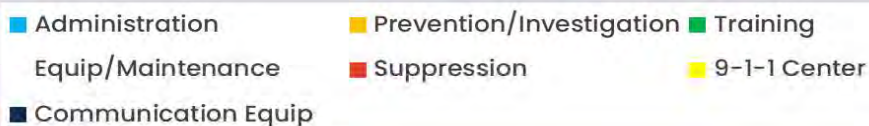
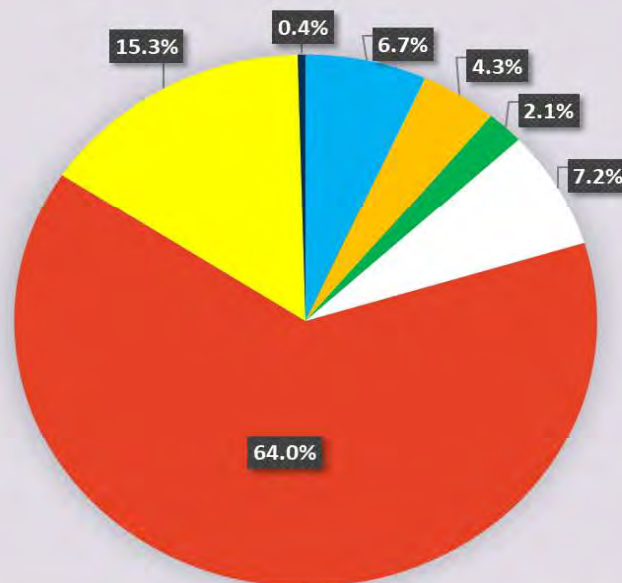
**37**  
9-1-1 Staff



**5**  
Investigators



**1**  
Comms Specialist







# 2021 ANNUAL REPORT

## BILLINGS FIRE EMERGENCY RESPONSES

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) regularly updates the publication *Standard for the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations, and Special Operations to the Public by Career Fire Departments*, known as NFPA 1710. This national data model helps develop fire departments' planning, execution, and evaluation of fire and EMS services and response times.



Response times are developed by evaluating the initial time a call is received by 9-1-1 to the first and last arriving units of an incident. Engine company turn-out time and travel time equal response times, known as dispatch to arrival. The National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) classifies emergency incidents as fire, EMS, rescues, hazardous material, severe weather, or natural disasters. NFPA 1710 states that responses must meet a standard goal of a 90th percentile in time for fire, EMS, and total emergency responses. While the overall performance is essential to department evaluation, these standards do not reflect the entirety of emergent and non-emergent responses combined.

Using an average time is one of the accepted "normalized" standards in response time analysis. An average of such an extensive data set will contain skewed numbers with many outliers, inaccurately reflecting performance. Using a percentile measurement will demonstrate that most of the data set has met a particular performance level compared to the national standard. Of the 18,042 response calls, we deleted 5,188 that did not possess an emergency identification or an arrival time for evaluation.

### BFD Overall Emergency Response Performance, 2021

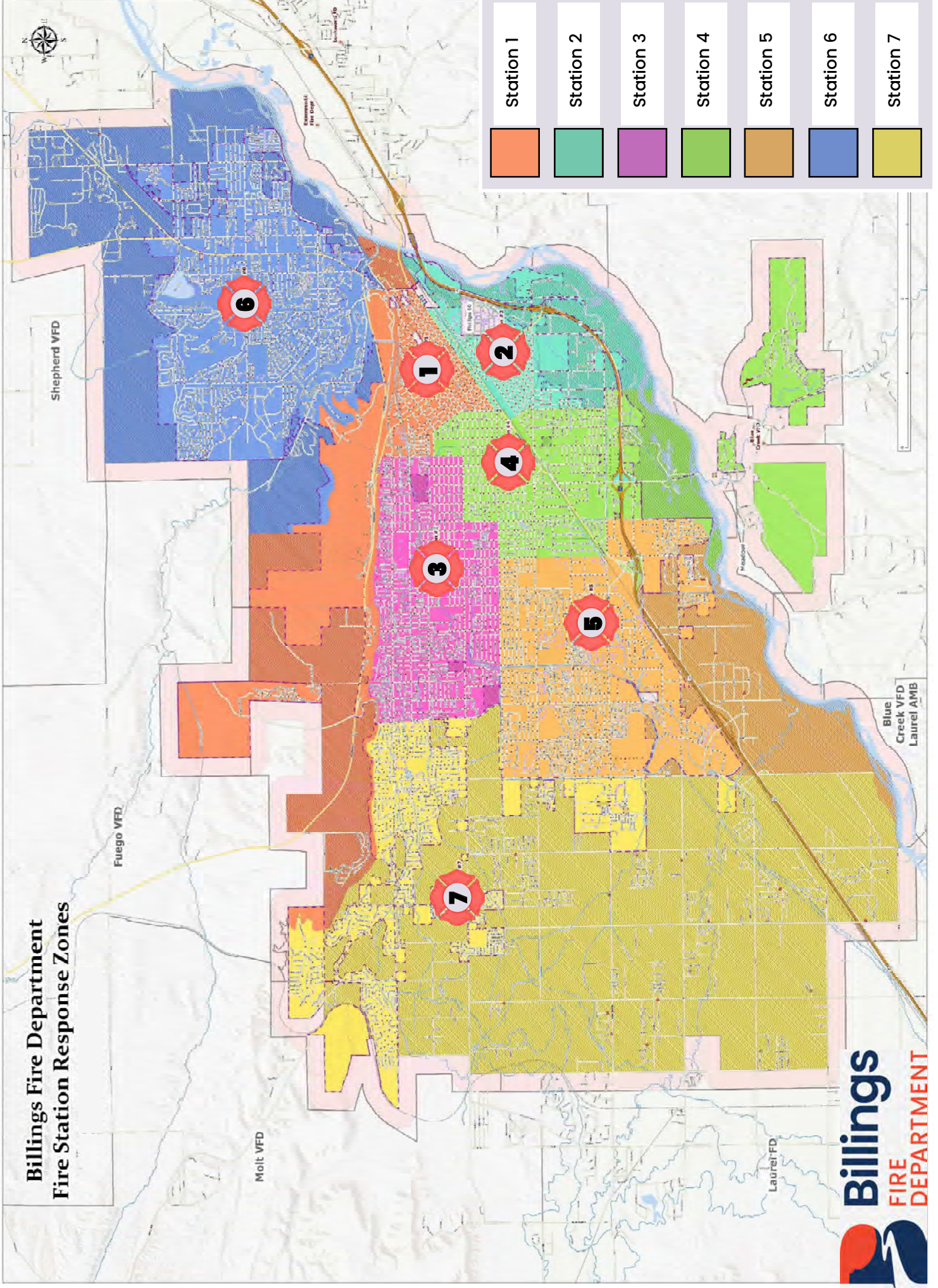
	Call Processing	Turnout Time	Travel Time	Total Response Time
Average	02:07	01:34	04:28	08:09
90th Percentile	02:35	02:37	07:45	12:41

Response Element	NFPA Recommendation	BFD Response Times
Call Processing (First Unit)	60 Seconds @ 90th Percentile for EMS	01:58
	80 Seconds @ 90th Percentile for Fire	01:11
Turnout Time (First Unit)	60 Seconds @ 90th Percentile for EMS	02:33
	80 Seconds @ 90th Percentile for Fire	02:15
Travel Time (First Unit)	4 minutes @ 90th Percentile for EMS	07:06
	4 minutes @ 90th Percentile for Fire	05:40
Travel Time-Full First Alarm (Fire Suppression Incident)	8 minutes @ 90th Percentile (5 apparatus total response time)	17:01

NFPA 1710, *Standard for the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations, and Special Operations to the Public by Career Fire Departments* (National Fire Protection Association 2020)



# Billings Fire Department Fire Station Response Zones





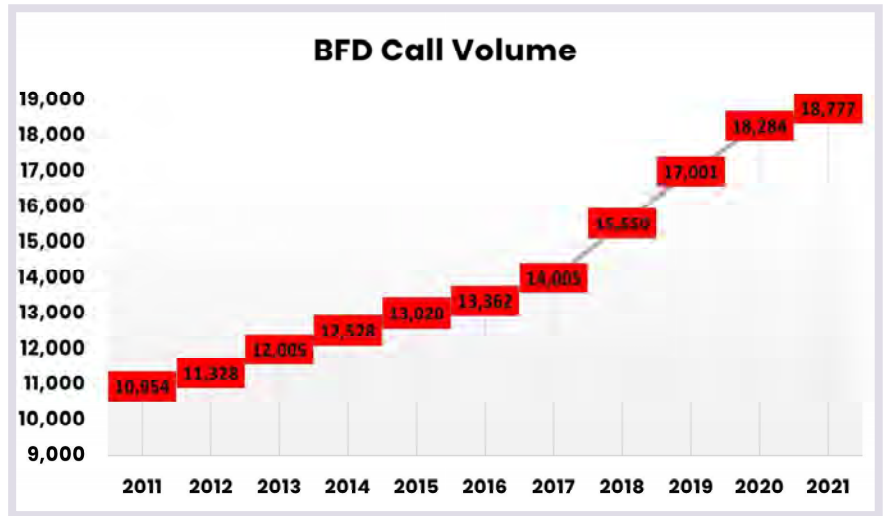


# 2021 ANNUAL REPORT

The Billings Fire Department experienced a 66.8% increase in call volume since 2011. The rise in population, land utilization, and events held in Billings account for the greater demand on the department's services.

## RATE OF MULTIPLE CALLS IN 2021

CONCURRENT INCIDENTS	PERCENTAGE
Single Incident	40.87 %
2	33.21 %
3	16.35 %
4	6.25 %
5 or more	3.31 %



Billings Fire documents each call for service in an incident report held at the National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) standards. Through NFIRS, fire departments can assess local, state, and national level trends of fire service and resource use. Calls for service include fire, emergency medical, rescues, and good intent calls for the public. The Fire Prevention Bureau contributes to fire investigations, public education, smoke alarm installations, and business inspections.

This page's graphs indicate Billings Fire Department's 2021 trends in total call volume, call volume in each fire station response area, and the percentage of calls per hour of the day. The "Rate of Multiple Calls" chart states that nearly 60% of calls occur with two or more at one time, illustrating the hard work of the men and women of the Fire Department.

## INCIDENT RESPONSES



**18,777** Total Calls for Service



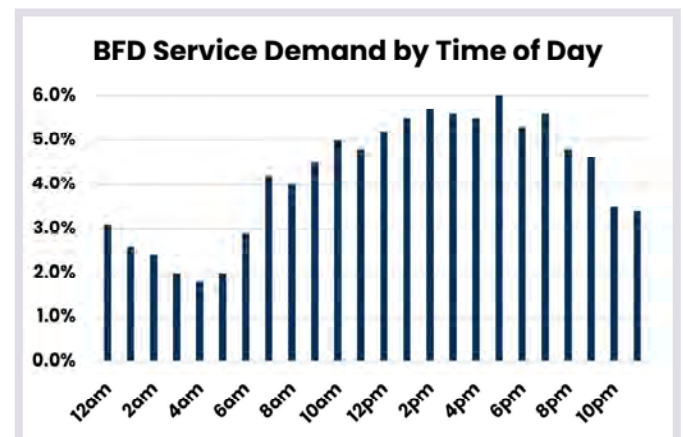
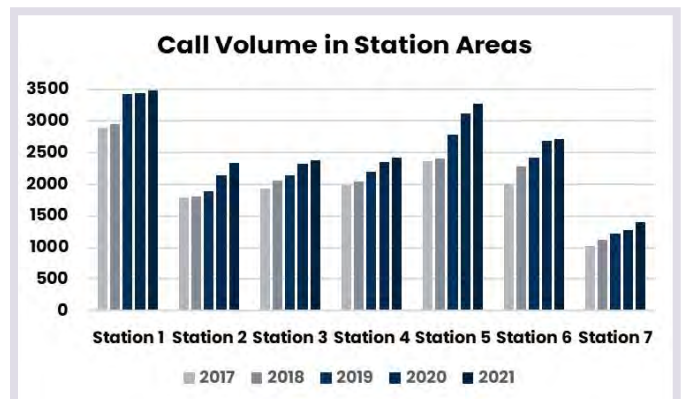
**9,339** EMS/Rescue



**447** Fires



**8991** All "Other" Service





# 2021 ANNUAL REPORT



## OPERATIONS

Aside from fighting fires, the Operations Division oversees the Training Division, Logistics, and specialized teams to handle all other emergencies. These teams include *Rescue*, *Hazardous Materials*, and *Air Teams*. The geographical locations of Billings challenge the technicians on every call, from the Yellowstone River to the Rimrocks. Operations also supports public education with fire engine drive-bys to comply with social distancing guidelines. The BFD's vehicles were dispatched and operated 23,154 times in 2021, compared to 22,122 in 2020.



### SUPPRESSION PERSONNEL

4 Battalion Chiefs  
30 Captains  
30 Engineers  
46 Firefighters

### RESCUE TEAM

32 Technicians

### AIR TEAM

9 Technicians

### HAZMAT TEAM

30 Technicians

## BILLINGS FIRE VEHICLES/EQUIPMENT

6 Engines + 3 Reserve  
1 Ladder Truck + 1 Reserve  
1 Quint (Ladder/Engine Combo)  
2 Water Tenders  
5 Wildland Trucks  
2 Water Rescue Crafts  
1 Rescue Truck + Response Trailer  
1 Haz-Mat Regional Response Unit  
1 Mobile Air Unit and Trailer  
1 Hose Van  
1 Shuttle Bus  
1 Fire Investigation Truck  
2 Battalion Chief Response Units  
12 Bureau and Staff Vehicles  
3 Unmanned Aircraft Systems



OPERATIONS

# 2021 ANNUAL REPORT



## BILLINGS FIRE EMS

Billings Fire's Emergency Medical Services offer a large range of professional care, from Basic to Advanced Life Support, including medical care after rescues. With increased demands on EMS, firefighters often ride in ambulances to aid critical patient care. As medicine perpetually evolves, the men and women stay up-to-date with the latest trends in patient care, such as purchasing camera guided laryngoscopes in 2021, offering better intubation outside of a hospital. Billings Fire responded to 9,339 total EMS calls, a 8.9% increase from 2020.



**9,339 Total EMS Calls**



**≈ 25.59 EMS Calls per Day**



**350 Firefighter Ride-Ins**



**1363 Interventions Done**



**471 Medications Given**

## NOTABLE EVENTS

**Childbirth / Field Deliveries** — Three babies were delivered successfully prior to arrival to hospital by BFD firefighters and AMR

**CPR Saves** — Of the 58 reported CPRs performed at EMS incidents, five patients were discharged from hospital care with "good functional status," showing a 8.6% success rate, above the national average of 8.4%.

**Reading After Wreck** — Billings Fire made international news when a BFD firefighter read to a young child after a vehicle accident. The firefighter and child sat on a curb while the parents took care of the wreck. A photo of the heart-felt moment circulated news networks across United States and United Kingdom websites.



## Most Common Injuries/Illness

Sick Person	18.41%
Cardiac	16.29%
Falls	14.99%
Stroke/Seizure	13.27%
Breathing Problems	11.34%
Vehicle Accident Injury	8.54%
Trauma	9.46%
Other	7.71%



# 2021 ANNUAL REPORT



## FIRE SUPPRESSION

All seven fire stations staff a minimum of three firefighters, trained to perform fire suppression. In 2021, Billings and its surrounding areas experienced a 13.2% increase in fire related incidents from 2020.

Structure fires happen on permanent constructed buildings, fences, detached garages, or storage sheds. Trash, grass, and other fires include any fire outside a structure or vehicle. Exposures include another object ignited or damaged because of an initial fire; an example is a vehicle fire setting a fence on fire, or a grass fire setting a structure on fire.



**447 Total Fires**



**133 Structure Fires**



**201 Trash/Grass/Other Fires**



**75 Vehicle Fires**



**38 Exposure Fires**



## FALSE ALARMS

Per Department policy, when an alarm sounds in a building a fire engine will respond, even if there is no fire or hazard. False alarms may occur from equipment malfunction, response to non-hostile smoke from cooking, and malicious/mischievous fire-alarm pull.

Types of False Alarm	Number of Alarms
Malicious, Mischievous	39
System Malfunction	249
Unintentional	396
<b>Total</b>	<b>684</b>



## WILDLAND FIREFIGHTING

During the dry, hot months of the year, BFD personnel who are qualified as wildland firefighters provide assistance to the Montana Department of Natural Resources Conservation (DNRC). Wildland fires consist of natural grass, forest, and open land fires with no water readily available for suppression. In 2021, BFD wildland firefighters fought over 35 wildland fires within Yellowstone, Carbon, Stillwater, Musselshell, and Big Horn Counties.





# 2021 ANNUAL REPORT

## TECHNICAL RESCUE AND EXTRICATION TEAM

The Billings Fire Department Technical Rescue Team comprises of 32 rescue experts who perform advanced skills in technical rope rescue, swift water, ice rescue, watercraft rescue, vehicle extrication and stabilization, structural collapse, confined space, trench rescue, animal rescue, and heavy lifting (Air bag) techniques. Throughout 2021, the team continued to update equipment, training, and techniques to standard practices in the search and rescue fields.

### VEHICLES AND EQUIPMENT

**RESCUE 2** — A specially outfitted GMC 4500 carrying all ropes equipment and hauls rescue response trailer or water crafts trailer.

**Collapse Response Trailer** — An Enclosed utility trailer carrying all collapse and confined space rescue equipment. Houses power tools, hardware, and lumber to construct walls and struts for cave-in prevention during rescues.

**Water Rescue Crafts** — Two Sea-Doo water crafts with tow-in rescue boards to easily maneuver the Yellowstone River and Lake Elmo.

### NOTABLE EVENTS

**Western Sugar Coop Rescue** — A “sugar beet factory” employee became entrapped inside a sugar silo. The rescue required the team to utilize techniques based on high-angle rope rescue, confined space, industrial/grain silo rescue, and stabilization and shoring construction. Governor Greg Gianforte presented all responders with the Spirit of Montana Award for their teamwork and their service.

**Vehicles into Buildings** — Numerous incidents involved vehicles into buildings. Rescue Techs used advanced techniques for shoring and stabilization of the structures. Each call needed lumber and tools located from the Collapse Trailer and/or the Paratech Strut Air Bag System to stabilize structure parts.



**78 Total Rescues**



**42 Extrications**



**25 Other Rescues**



**6 Water Rescues**



**5 High-Angle Rescues**



# 2021 ANNUAL REPORT



## HAZARDOUS MATERIALS RESPONSE TEAM

The Billings Fire Department and its personnel are the largest hazardous materials response agency in eastern Montana. All members of suppression are trained at the hazmat operations level and 30 firefighters are designated as Hazmat Technicians or Specialists, qualified to respond to incidents ranging from tanker and rail car accidents to terrorism involving chemical, biological, or explosive agents. With three nearby refineries, an extensive railroad presence, and interstate highway crossroads, the presence of hazardous materials is a fact of life in Billings and Yellowstone County. When activated by Montana Disaster and Emergency Services (MT-DES), the BFD's Regional Hazmat Team may also be mobilized to support hazmat responses throughout the state.

## VEHICLES AND EQUIPMENT

**HAMMER 5** — A Freightliner truck outfitted to handle initial hazmat incidents and tow the hazmat response trailer.

**HazMat Response Trailer** — A three axle enclosed trailer housing a command center and hauls all monitoring, containing, and decontamination equipment for hazardous materials responses.



**368 HazMat Calls**



**186 Utility/CO Calls**



**92 Gas Leaks**



**24 Chemical Spills**



**66 No Hazard Found**



## NOTABLE EVENTS

**Rockvue Apartments** — The BFD HazMat Team responded to the Rockvue Apartments for a complaint of an airborne irritant coming from the 4th floor and elevator. The HazMat team monitored all levels of the apartment and determined the hazard to be non-toxic. Ventilation was conducted and residents were able to return safely to their dwellings.

**Montana Rail Link** — Three MRL rail cars derailed, initiating a hazardous materials response. The BFD and MRL HazMat teams were able to identify the rail car contents and established a plan if a leak were present. No rail car spilled chemicals and MRL crews re-railed the cars without incident.

**I-90 & Zoo Drive** — Semi-Truck transporting ammonium nitrate and fuel oil tipped over on the interstate. The BFD Hazmat Team secured the scene, identified hazardous products, notified a clean-up contractor, and ensured public safety.







# 2021 ANNUAL REPORT

## SCBA AIR TEAM

The Air Team is made up of nine technicians that are Scott In-House Repair Certified. Each member is required to take a class and recertify every two years. Duties consist of making repairs to air packs, mask mounted regulators, self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) masks, cylinders, as well as filling air and O<sub>2</sub> Cylinders. The Air Team fits all Suppression and Fire Prevention Bureau personnel for SCBA masks, half masks, and N95 masks. During fit and flow tests, if any equipment is out of factory specifications, technicians make proper adjustments to bring them into compliance. The Air Team also provides fit testing for Billings Police and Yellowstone County Sheriff departments, and can provide mutual-aid to surrounding areas for any major incident.



On average, a tank of pressurized air will last a firefighter 20-30 minutes, depending on their breathing rate and how active they are during a fire. A firefighter may use 2-3 tanks during a fully involved fire.

## VEHICLES AND EQUIPMENT

**Mobile Air Unit & Trailer** — An outfitted van that carries extra air equipment, air cylinders, and tools to make repairs in the field. The van tows a portable air compressor that can be used in the field to fill cylinders. The trailer is equipped for supplied air for hazmat and rescue operations.

### **Equipment**

- 90 Air packs
- 155 Mask Mounted Regulators
- 6 Supplied Air Packs
- 6 Rapid Intervention Team Packs

## HIGHLIGHTS

**Cylinders Filled** — The Air Team filled over 1200 SCBA cylinders that were used during BFD operations.

### **Fit Tested**

- 144 SCBA Masks
- 122 Half Masks
- 122 N95 Masks
- 5 Half masks for YCSO Deputies
- 7 Half masks for BPD Officers





# 2021 ANNUAL REPORT



## **BECOMING EXCEPTIONAL FIREFIGHTERS**

### 2021 Training Highlights



After a twelve-week academy, the department welcomed nine new firefighters. The academy consists of taking each recruit through high-stress environments and its rigors, teaching the technical skills to be effective firefighters.

The BFD conducted Development Programs to aid firefighter career paths which provides qualified personnel to work in higher ranks. Seven Engineers attended Captain Development Program and six attended Engineer Development Program.



The BFD partnered with the Billings Flying Service to conduct department wide training on helicopter emergencies. The training consisted of walking through how to safely disable helicopters and aircrafts in the event of an accident or crash.



The BFD partnered with the Exxon Refinery Rescue Squad and conducted industrial rescue training, specific to entanglements in machinery. Exxon Rescue demonstrated at Station 2 life-saving approaches in common machinery at refineries.



## **BILLINGS FIRE TRAINING DIVISION**

The Training Division consists of two full-time employees, the Training Chief (TC), the Asst Training Chief/ Emergency Medical Services Coordinator (ATC/ EMS), and one temporary assignment from suppression filling the Logistics Officer position. The TC oversees the ATC/EMS and Logistics Officer, working together to accomplish training goals and fire department logistics management.

2021 was spent with focusing on reconnecting firefighters with all disciplines of the BFD. Billings Fire completed collectively **26,934 hours** of training, a 7% increase from 2020. Goals for 2022 included quarterly training and refresher programs specific to specialty teams, and further broken down for each engine crew.



TRAINING



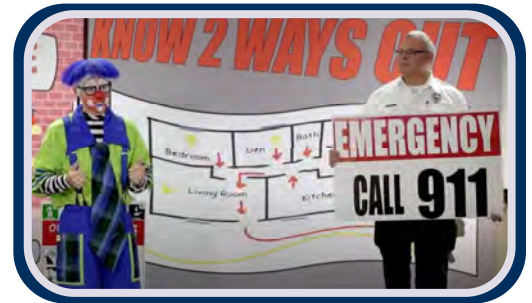
# 2021 ANNUAL REPORT

## FIRE PREVENTION BUREAU

The Fire Prevention Bureau's mission is to prevent and control fires, reduce fire-related deaths and injuries, and promote community fire safety through enforcement, education, and investigation.

### FIRE ORIGIN AND CAUSE INVESTIGATIONS

Part of preventing fires is determining where and how they started by applying scientific methodology. Although not all fires require FPB involvement, incidents where investigations are needed continue to rise each year, with a 10.9% increase in fire investigations since 2020.



### BUSINESS INSPECTIONS

The FPB enforces locally adopted fire codes inside the Billings city limits through inspections of buildings and businesses, including educational, institutional, assembly, and business occupancies.

### PRE-APPLICATION MEETINGS

Prior to breaking ground, a developer will need to meet with the FPB to ensure they're doing so under certain parameters, such as fire department access and a water supply that will aid in protecting homes and businesses. The number of meetings nearly doubled from 2020.

### PLANS REVIEWED

The FPB conducts compliance reviews on plans for new and remodeled buildings and fire protection systems.

### PUBLIC SAFETY EDUCATION

Fire safety and education is particularly important in the FPB. COVID-19 precautions continued in 2021 and moving away from in-person presentations to year-round online features such as fire safety videos and interactive games. Videos and activities are available on the BFD's website.

The education program also provides free fire and carbon monoxide detectors in local residents' homes through a program with the American Red Cross.

### PUBLIC RECORDS REQUESTS

Requests for copies of reports and audio associated with incidents are fielded by the FPB/911 Administrative Support.



Fire Investigations  
**122**



Inspections  
**735**



Pre-Application Meetings  
**72**



Plans Reviewed  
**300**



Website/Video Views  
**8834**



Home Detector Installations  
**21**

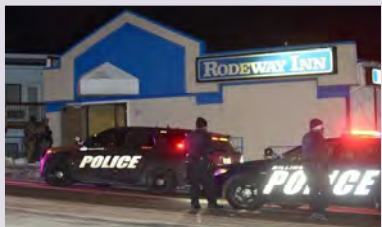


Public Record Requests  
**742**

# 2021 ANNUAL REPORT

## THE BILLINGS CITY / COUNTY COMMUNICATIONS CENTER

The Billings City / County Communications Center provides the critical link between the community and public safety resources, assisting an estimated 160,000 citizens, excluding the City of Laurel. Dispatchers handle calls for service to 26 different fire, EMS, and law enforcement organizations within the county. Thirty-one Dispatchers work in tandem with four Shift Supervisors to receive, coordinate, and process emergency and non-emergency radio/telephone traffic 24-hours a day. The 9-1-1 Manager and Assistant Manager provide operational support while overseeing the 800 mhz radio system.



The Communications Center implemented Priority Dispatching, a process for Dispatchers to process EMS calls intently, determining the caller's severity of illness or injury. Initial status is created to dispatch units based on acuity. Low acuity/non-life threatening receives a basic life support response; and high acuity/immediate danger to life receives a full advanced life support response.

Dispatchers created 161,034 calls for service to the public, a 2% increase from 2020. From the time a 9-1-1 call is answered to the first unit dispatched, 90% of all emergency calls were processed within 91 seconds.



The Communications Center dispatches municipal, county, state, and federal public safety resources within Yellowstone County. Units dispatched in 2021 totaled 136,056, an average of 15.53 units per hour.

Dialing 9-1-1 is nationally recognized to receive emergency help. Additionally, The Communications Center has a non-emergency line to alleviate the 9-1-1 phone lines. Dispatchers answered 302,344 emergent and non-emergent calls, occurring roughly every 90-100 seconds.



CITY / COUNTY 9-1-1





# 2021 ANNUAL REPORT

## 2021 PUBLIC SAFETY MILL LEVY

On November 2, 2021, with the help again from the community, Billings Public Safety procured funding from a \$7.1 million Public Safety Mill Levy to share between Fire, Police, Courts, and Public Health Services. \$1.5 million will aid the fire department. This is the second in 14 months, allowing sustainable, future growth.

The BFD expanded it's staff by adding an Assistant Fire Chief of EMS to its roster. This position specializes in BFD's efforts to enhance its EMS capabilities.

## EQUIPMENT

The BFD purchased three new replacement fire apparatus to add to their fleet. The trucks were purchased with funds from the City Equipment Replacement Plan.

## LEADERSHIP TRAINING

BFD hosted special guest Michael Wallace to conduct command staff training. Wallace, a retired Fire Chief of east coast fire departments, facilitates chief and executive leadership programs, focusing on managerial processes in the fire industry.



### New Hires

Firefighter Aamold  
Firefighter Claassen  
Firefighter Hanscom  
Firefighter Kramer  
Firefighter Osterdyk  
Firefighter Ray  
Firefighter Scheidt  
Firefighter Walton  
Firefighter Welton

### 2021 Retirements

Bill Rash, Fire Chief - 7 yrs  
Mike Spini, Fire Marshal - 22 yrs  
Les Solheim, Captain - 36 yrs  
James Lynch, Captain - 25 yrs  
Jeff McCullough, Dep. Fire Marshal - 16 yrs

### Promotions

Assistant Chief Johnson  
Assistant Chief Banfield

Battalion Chief Bentz  
Battalion Chief Cotrell

Captain Ellis  
Captain Zimmerman  
Captain Schauer  
Captain Compson  
Captain Moore

Engineer Stamper  
Engineer Hauf  
Engineer Gates  
Engineer Ferguson  
Engineer O'Donnell  
Engineer Aguirre



## BFD STRATEGIC GOALS



### GROWTH

Continue to monitor and gather data for proper timing and placement of Fire Station #8 (Heights) and Fire Station #9 (West End).

Achieve having one paramedic on each engine and truck company 24/7, with implementation of Mobile Response Team program.

Continue the cooperative process for a new Emergency Operations Center.

Enhance the level of service by utilizing neighboring resources.



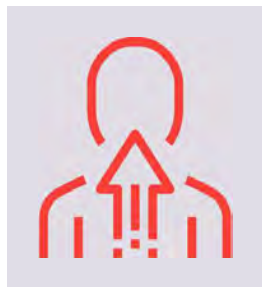
### STANDARDS

Continue to evaluate EMS service delivery to ensure best practices are being utilized.

Complete and maintain Policies and Procedures.

Maintain positive partnership between Labor and Management.

Continually reevaluate operational effectiveness of BFD resource deployment.

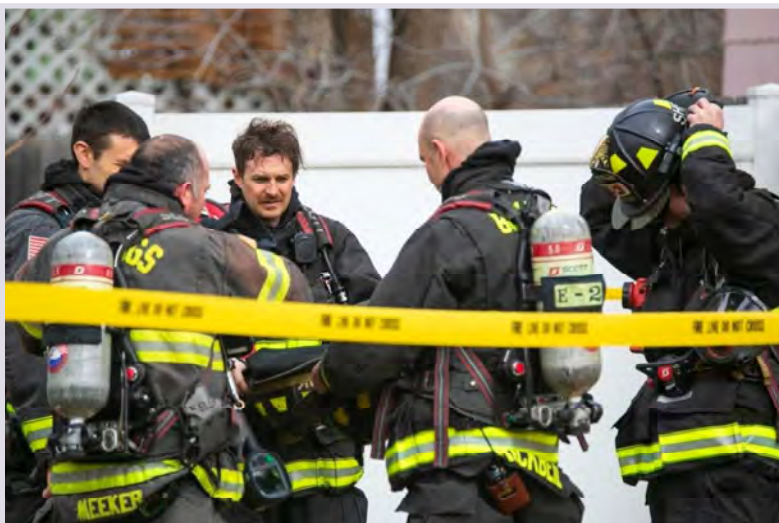


### DEVELOPMENT

Enhanced integration between Fire and 9-1-1.

More emphasis on programs for firefighter and 9-1-1 dispatch mental health, developing and implementing a Behavioral Health Unit with community partnerships.

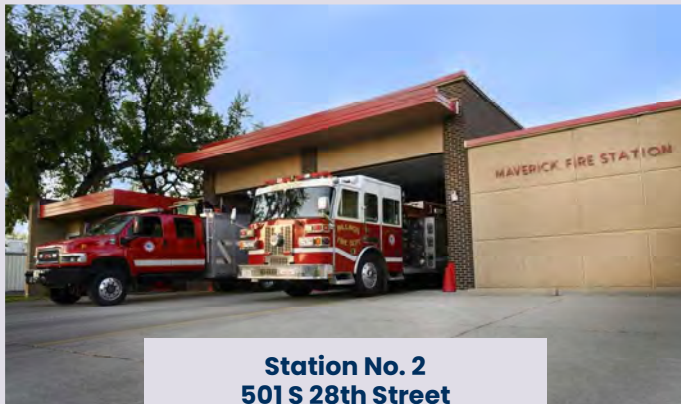
Provide more opportunities for professional development and succession planning.







# 2021 ANNUAL REPORT



**Station No. 2**  
501 S 28th Street



**Station No. 4**  
475 6th Street W



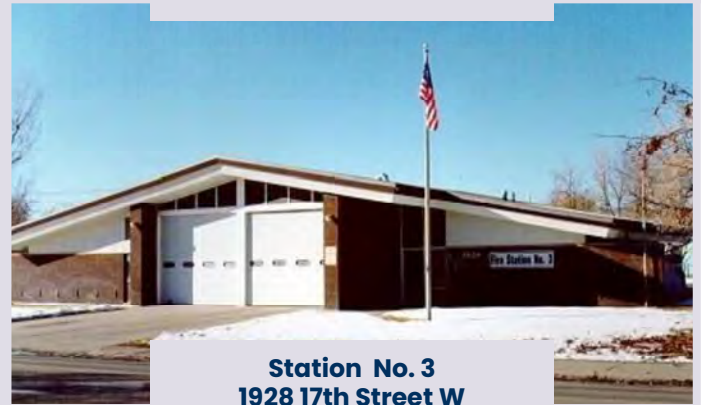
**Station No. 6**  
1601 St Andrews Drive



**BFD Training Facility**  
Billings Logan International



**Station No. 1**  
2305 8th Avenue N



**Station No. 3**  
1928 17th Street W



**Station No. 5**  
605 S 24th Street W



**Station No. 7**  
1501 54th Street W





**OUR FAMILY  
SERVING  
YOUR FAMILY**



# ANNUAL REPORT

## 2021

**2305 8TH AVENUE N • BILLINGS, MT • 59101**

**(406) 657-8423**

**[www.billingsmt.gov/fire](http://www.billingsmt.gov/fire)**

March, 2022

In response to Former Council Member Ewalt's recent public comments regarding sober living homes and placing a cap on Department of Corrections (DOC) releasees into Billings, I am providing some additional information:

Unfortunately, Former Council Member Ewalt has misconstrued the subsection cited in his public comment. MCA 53-1-202(2) does not establish guidelines or requirements for DOC, rather it simply provides what DOC programs are offered to adults.

**53-1-202. Department of corrections.** (1) Adult and youth correctional services are included in the department of corrections to carry out the purposes of the department.

(2) **Adult corrections services consist of the following correctional facilities or programs:**

- (a) a state prison as defined in **53-30-101**;
- (b) appropriate community-based programs for the placement, supervision, and rehabilitation of adult felons who meet the criteria developed by the department for placement:
  - (i) in prerelease centers;
  - (ii) under intensive supervision;
  - (iii) under parole or probation pursuant to Title 46, chapter 23, part 2; or
  - (iv) in other appropriate programs; and
- (c) the Montana correctional enterprises prison industries training program authorized by **53-30-131**.

Further, the term "intensive supervision" as it is used in 53-1-202(2)(b)(ii), is a specific level of community supervision that is separate from traditional probation, parole, or conditional release. "Intensive supervision" is not the default level of supervision of every person on community supervision. It is much more intensive than traditional probation, parole, or conditional release and is a more costly program offered only to certain offenders based on their offense or their poor performance on community supervision. The Intensive Supervision Program is only offered in Missoula, Bozeman, Butte, Great Falls, and Billings. There are not many people on this program anymore because of other services offered through DOC like the Enhanced Transitional Services/Supervision program. This is a referral program through Alternatives, Inc. that P&P officers can utilize. This program can include drug/alcohol monitoring, GPS monitoring, weekly check ins, Cognitive Behavioral Classes, job development services, and assistance in filling out applications. It is the P&P Officer's discretion as to what service they would like the offender to sign up for.

I previously provided information about passing an ordinance/resolution placing a "cap" on DOC inmates in my email correspondence to you on November 18. For the benefit of new Council members who did not receive this email, I will reiterate that information:

*Under state law, a local government with self-government powers is prohibited from exercising any power "in a manner inconsistent with state law or administrative regulation in any area affirmatively subjected by law to state regulation or control." MCA 7-1-113(1). "An area is affirmatively subjected to state control if a state agency or officer is directed to establish administrative rules*



*governing the matter or if enforcement of standards or requirements established by statute is vested in a state officer or agency.” MCA 7-1-113(3).*

*The Department of Corrections (DOC) is a division of the executive branch of the government. Its purpose is to “develop and maintain comprehensive services and programs in the field of adult and youth corrections.” MCA 53-1-201(1). Adult corrections services are specifically under the power of the state government and subject to state regulation and include “appropriate community-based programs for the placement, supervision, and rehabilitation of adult felons who meet the criteria developed by the department for placement: (i) in prerelease centers; (ii) under intensive supervision; (iii) under parole or probation...; or in other appropriate programs...” MCA 53-1-202(2).*

*Under state law, the DOC is required to adopt rules for the admission, custody, transfer, and release of persons in department programs. MCA 53-1-203(1)(a). Therefore, this is an area that is “affirmatively subjected to state control” and enforcement of the standards and requirements is vested in the DOC. Therefore, this is not an area that City Council has the power to regulate, and city staff will not be able to further this initiative should it be directed to do so.*

Former Council Member Ewalt has also referred to a statement made by the County Attorney’s office and DOC Director Brian Gootkin at a public safety forum on January 13, 2021, indicating there is no law preventing this City Council from enacting such a cap. Again, this is not accurate information. County Attorney Scott Twito was not present at the forum, so I asked Mr. Twito to clarify his office’s statement provided at that forum. On January 26, 2022, Mr. Twito clarified his position and Brian Gootkin’s statement made at this public safety forum as follows:

*Gina,*

*I just spoke to Director Gootkin on the phone. I know how he answered the question at the community event as I reviewed the link but he told me he meant the exact opposite. By “No” I believe he meant there is no authority of a city to enact an ordinance or other rule to force DOC to cap offenders coming into the community. He also recalled and told me he had this specific conversation with Councilmember Purington at a dinner before this event specifically on this issue and indicated the same to her. He even mentioned that at some point he spoke DOC legal on this very issue. Prior to this event before the start of the new year, I met with Purington then Councilmember Ewalt at their request and explained to them when they raised the idea that it was unlikely that city council could prevent or cap DOC from putting offenders in Billings. I was very specific to this point. But I also told them ultimately that they needed to speak with you. I did tell them they could continue to raise awareness about the offender issue and even discuss the issue as part of their public safety discussion but that was up to them.*

*To be clear at no time did I tell any member of Billings City Council or Director Gootkin that the council would have this authority. That makes no sense to me as it is contrary to the law.*

*Thanks for calling this to my attention.*

*Scott Twito  
Yellowstone County Attorney  
217 North 27th Street, Room 701  
Billings, Montana 59101*

I would be happy to provide links to this public safety forum or a copy of this email to any member of Council that would like to review it.

Given this information, it remains my opinion that Council and staff's efforts would be more effective if they were focused on working collaboratively with the DOC and the state legislature to make changes to the way felony offenders are supervised in Billings rather than trying to force a limitation on DOC by local ordinance/resolution that cannot be enforced.

Additionally, staff will present an update regarding the research and data needed to effectuate non-discriminatory regulations on sober living homes at the May 23 meeting.

Please let me know if I can provide any additional information. Thank you.

Gina



## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

### Memorandum - Consolidated Planning Processes

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This guide is intended to provide an outline of the City of Billings' Consolidated Planning process for decisions relative to Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnerships program (HOME), and other funding allocated through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

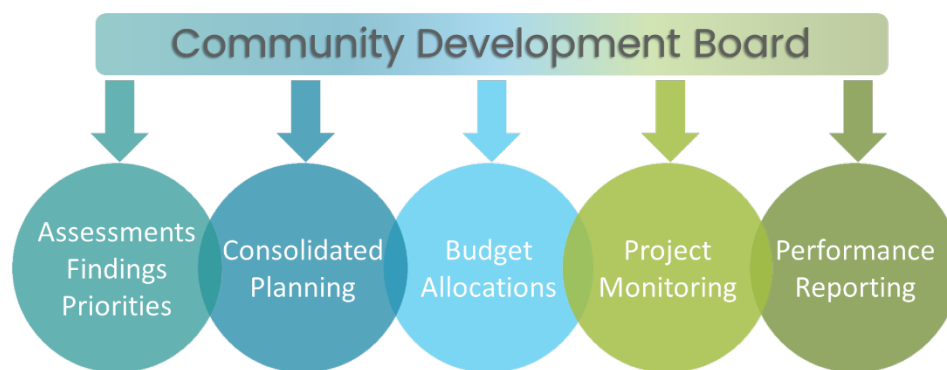
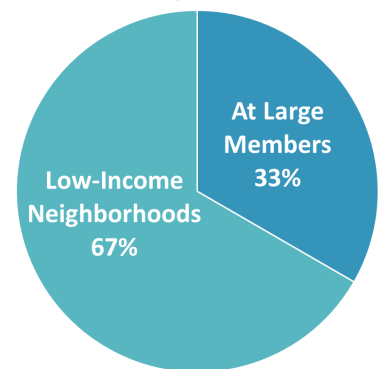
### Funding Source and Intent

The City of Billings has been a recipient of HUD entitlement CDBG allocations since the mid-1970s and HOME funds since the early 1990s (*over \$47 million collectively*). Investments in CDBG and HOME has generated nearly \$10 million in loan repayments since 2001. Projects, programs, and activities funded through CDBG and HOME are regulated and monitored by the federal government and must be primarily targeted to address community affordable housing for low-income citizens and poverty-impact needs in Billings.

### Guidance & Recommendations Process

The Community Development Board provides staff guidance relative to assessment, planning, allocation, monitoring, and reporting processes for HUD federal funding. The Board is composed of six low-income neighborhood representatives and three at-large members. This composition complies with a federal regulation to ensure decision-making processes include involvement from residents of low-income neighborhoods. The Board is also responsible for making funding recommendations to the City Council for review and approval.

Community Development Board Representatives

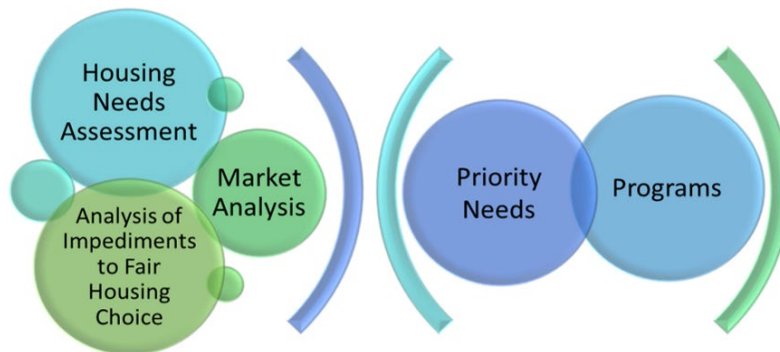


### Planning Process

The Consolidated Plan is the primary planning document directing the City's CDBG and HOME investments and it covers a five-year period. The Consolidated Plan includes a comprehensive housing needs assessment and a housing market analysis, (*refer to page 4 for a list of the Consolidated Plan components*). The City must also complete an Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice every five years (*summary begins on page 6*). Key findings establish priority needs, and City programs are developed based on findings and priorities.



Data Studies ➡ Key Findings ➡ Priority Needs ➡ City Programs



Planning for each five-year Consolidated Planning cycle begins in September with a public hearing to obtain data and public comment on community needs to assist the Community Development Board in designing the application process for the upcoming program year. The Consolidated Plan includes the Annual Action Plan for the first year of the five-year period.



### Allocation Process

To allocate CDBG and HOME resources, the Community Development Division staff and Board members facilitate an extensive process to gather public input on the use of federal funds beginning each September. The Board sets priorities for funding based on demonstrated community need.

Applications are made available at the beginning of December and due at the end of January. Applications are then forwarded to the Community Development Board and recommendations are prepared for City Council consideration. The Staff facilitates a 30-day public comment period, the City Council takes action, and the Annual Action Plan is submitted to HUD by May 15.

### Allocation Compliance

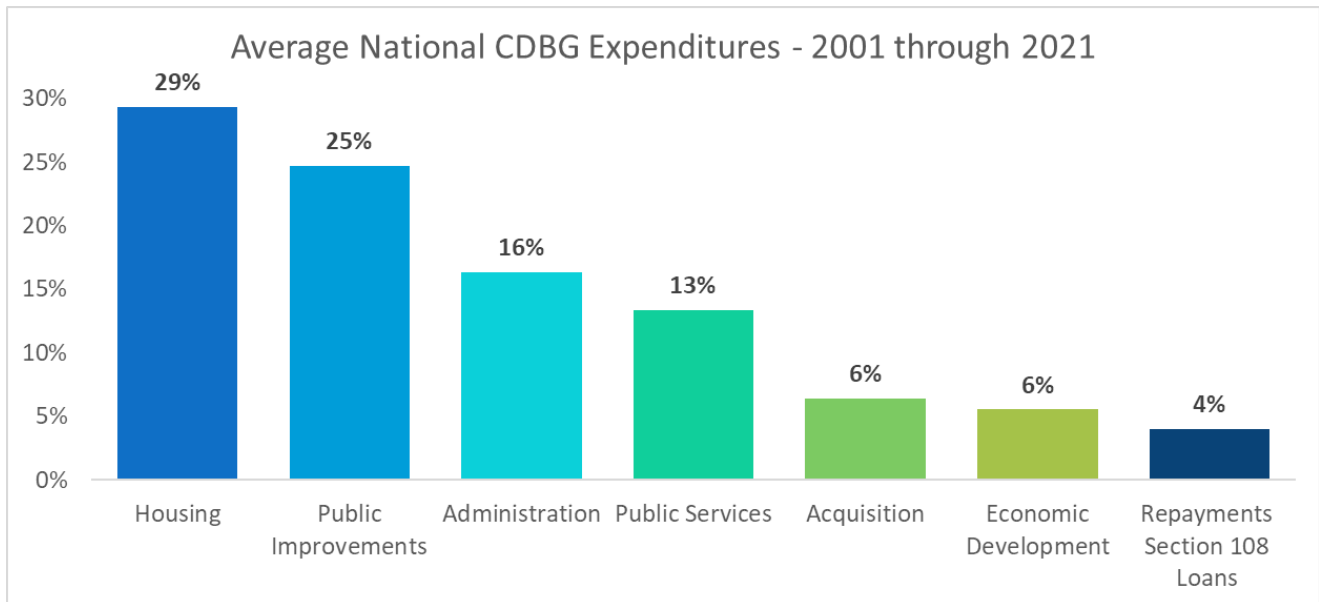
Allocations must be consistent with the goals and priorities of the approved five-year Consolidated Plan for the use of CDBG & HOME resources in Billings. Allocation recommendations must conform to pre-determined spending requirements on several categories including: CDBG and HOME administration caps (*maximum of 20% and 10% of new funding respectively*); public service caps (*up to 15% of new CDBG funding*); and Community Housing Development Organization set-aside for affordable housing development (*minimum 15% of new HOME funding*).

If the City is non-compliant with federal spending requirements, the City's entitlement status for federal funds would be at risk. Non-federal funding repayment is required for noncompliant project, program, and activity expenditures.

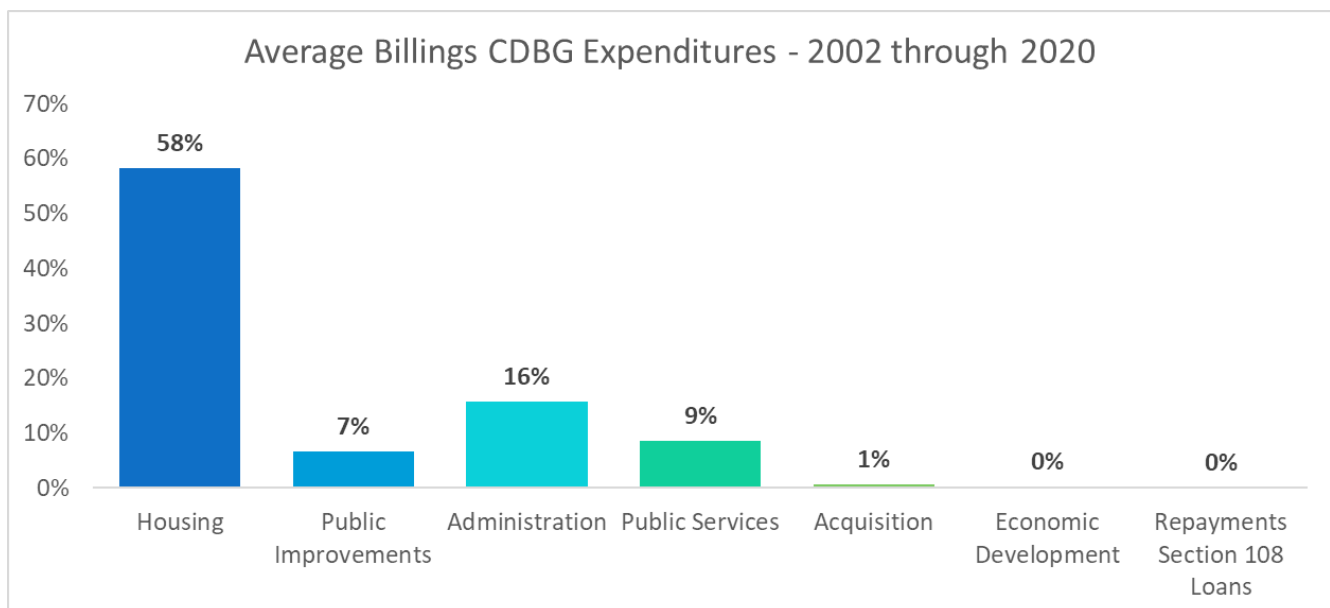


### Average Expenditures

Across the nation, housing has been the number one expenditure for all participating jurisdictions, followed by public improvements, administration, public services, acquisition, economic development, and repaying Section 108 loans (*loans the City can leverage to borrow against future CDBG funding allocations*).



In Billings, housing is also the number one expenditure. However, the City has not dedicated similar amounts of CDBG funding to support public improvements. Local administration costs matches the percentage costs for the nation and the City has expended slightly less than the national average on public services, five percent less on acquisition. Economic development training was funded in 2002 and several years thereafter. HUD later notified the City that economic development training would need to be funded within the public services cap in future years. The City has not borrowed against future CDBG entitlement allocations through the Section 108 program.



## Consolidated Plan Components

The [Consolidated Plan](#) is an extensive assessment including Housing Needs Assessment, a Housing Market Analysis, Strategic Planning, and the first Annual Action Plan for the Consolidated Plan's five-year period. The City is also required to conduct an Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice as part of the Consolidated Planning process. Every five years, the City has the opportunity to reassess community needs, identify key priorities, and determine strategies to meet community needs.

### Executive Summary

- Introduction
- City of Billings Objectives & Outcomes
- Evaluation of Past Performance
- Citizen Participation & Consultation
- Summary
- Special Needs Facilities and Services
- Barriers to Affordable Housing
- Non-Housing Community Development Assets
- Education
- Needs and Market Analysis Discussion
- Broadband Needs of Housing
- Hazard Mitigation

### The Process

- Responsible Agencies
- Introduction
- Public Housing & Assisted Housing Providers
- Participation & Consultation
- Citizen Participation Process & Outreach

### Housing Needs Assessment

- Demographics
- Number of Households by Income Level
- Housing Problems
- Disproportionate Need - Housing Problems by Income Level, Race, & Ethnicity
- Disproportionate Need - Severe Housing Problems by Income Level, Race, & Ethnicity
- Disproportionate Need - Housing Cost Burdens
- Disproportionate Need - Discussion
- Public Housing
- Homeless Needs Assessment
- Non-Homeless Special Needs Assessment
- Non-Housing Community Development Needs

### Housing Market Analysis

- Overview
- Number of Housing Units
- Cost of Housing
- Condition of Housing
- Public and Assisted Housing
- Homeless Facilities and Services

### Strategic Plan

- Overview
- Geographic Priorities
- Priority Needs
- Influence of Market Conditions by Affordable Housing Type
- Anticipated Resources, Leveraging, Land
- Institutional Delivery Structure
- Goals Summary, Categories & Needs Addressed, Outcomes, Objectives, Goal Outcome Indicators, Five-Year Goals
- Public Housing Accessibility and Involvement
- Barriers to affordable housing
- Homelessness Strategy
- Lead based paint Hazards
- Anti-Poverty Strategy
- Monitoring

### Annual Action Plan

- Expected Resources
- Annual Goals and Objectives
- Projects
- Geographic Distribution
- Affordable Housing
- Public Housing
- Homeless and Other Special Needs Activities
- Barriers to affordable housing
- Other Actions



## Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice

As recipients of HUD funding, entitlement communities are required to: conduct an analysis to identify impediments to fair housing choice (AI); and take and maintain records of appropriate actions to overcome the effects of identified impediments. HUD allocates funding to the State and entitlement communities through the CDBG and HOME programs.

According to HUD's Fair Housing Planning Guide, impediments to fair housing choice are defined as any actions, omissions, or decisions taken because of race, color, religion, sex, disability, familial status, or national origin that restrict housing choices or the availability of housing choice, or other protected characteristics and any actions, omissions, or decisions that have this effect. The list of protected classes included in this definition is drawn from the federal Fair Housing Act, which was first enacted in 1968. State and local governments may enact fair housing laws that extend protection to other groups, and the AI is to address housing choice for these additional protected classes as well. Montana state code has extended additional fair housing protections based on creed, marital status, and age. The Cities of Bozeman, Butte, Helena, and Missoula have adopted ordinances prohibiting housing discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity or expression.

The AI process involves a thorough examination of a variety of data related to housing in Billings, much of the data highlighted are based on HUD recommendations. This data is collected, analyzed and assessed to determine barriers to affordable housing. Identified impediments are then used to establish quantifiable goals and the reduction of the barriers to fair housing choice. The AI is also subject to a 30-day public comment review process before submission to HUD.

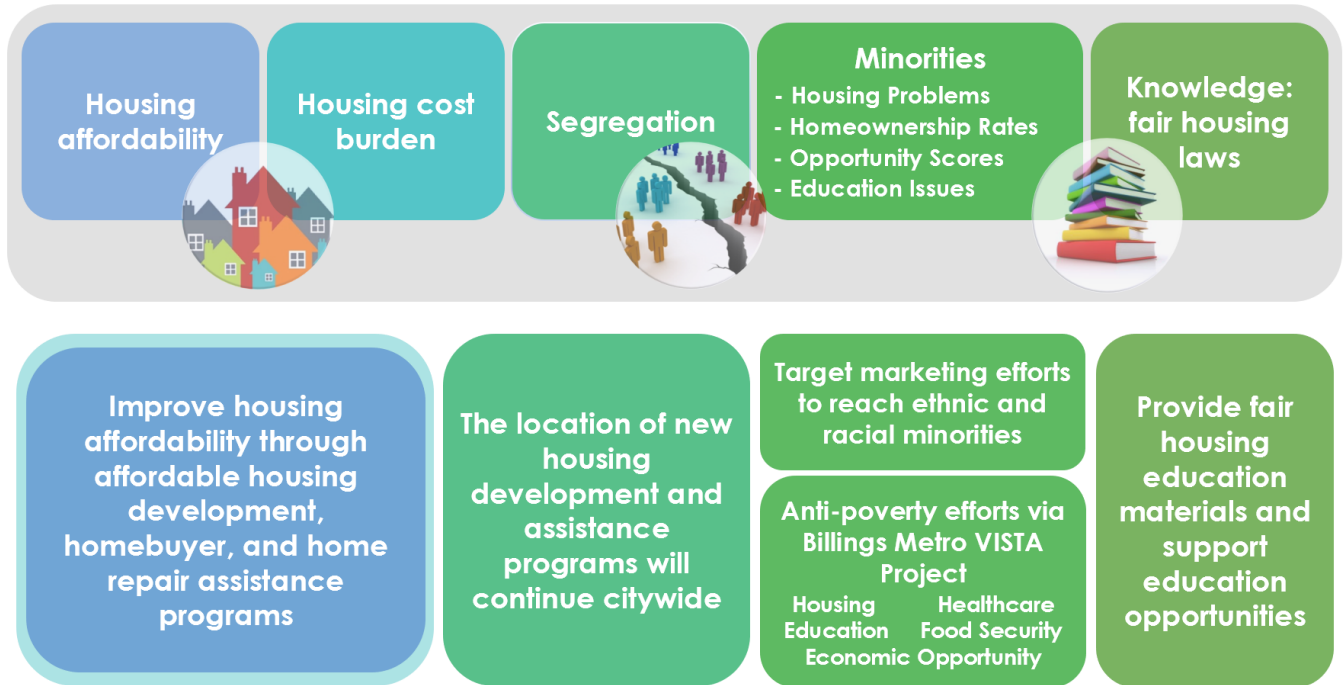
The City of Billings [Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice](#) was completed in 2020 in preparation for the [FY2020-2024 Consolidated Plan](#). A summary of impediments is illustrated below.

## Impediments

### Factors limiting fair housing choice



# Impediments & Strategies



## Impediments & Strategies

- **Housing affordability limits rental and owner housing choice and opportunity.**
- **Housing cost burden is the most significant issue for both rental and ownership households.**
  - City staff will continue efforts to improve housing affordability for homeowners and renters through affordable housing development, homebuyer, and home repair assistance programs.
- **Billings is in the beginning stages of segregation.**
  - The location of new housing development and assistance programs will continue on a citywide basis.
- **Low-Income racial and ethnic minorities are disproportionately and negatively impacted by: housing problems; homeownership rates; opportunity scores; and access to education.**
  - The City will continue to target marketing efforts to reach ethnic and racial minorities to improve access to housing opportunity.
  - The City will also continue to support the Billings Metro VISTA Project as an anti-poverty strategy to expand access to: housing; healthcare; education; food security; and economic opportunity.
- **Citizens are unfamiliar with fair housing laws.**
  - City staff will continue efforts to provide fair housing education materials on the City's website, in the office, at the Home Center, and will support fair housing educational opportunities with Montana Fair Housing.