

Summary and Interpretation of Crime in the United States, 2004
Uniform Crime Report
Federal Bureau of Investigation
Released October 17, 2005
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November 14, 2005

CRIME VOLUME¹

Violent crime and property crime both dropped slightly from 2003 to 2004. Violent crime experienced a decrease of 1.2%, and property crime dropped 1.1%. Violent crime decreased in the categories of murder (-2.4%), robbery (-3.1%) and aggravated assault (-0.5%), but rape increased by 0.8%. For property crimes, burglary was down 0.5%, larceny/theft was down 1.1%, and motor vehicle theft was down 1.9%. The percentage change for 2003 to 2004 is shown below, followed by the five-year trend:

TABLE 1: VIOLENT CRIME VOLUME

CRIME CATEGORY	2003-2004	FIVE YEAR PERIOD (2000-2004)
Violent Crime	-1.2%	-4.1%
Murder	-2.4%	+3.5%
Rape	+0.8%	+4.9%
Robbery	-3.1%	-1.6%
Agg. Assault	-0.5%	-6.2%

Violent crime overall was down 4.1% during the five year period from 2000 to 2004. Aggravated assault decreased the most at 6.2%, followed by robbery with a decrease of 1.6%. Both murder and rape increased during that period with murders up 3.5% and rapes up 4.9%.

There were 16,137 murders in 2004, nearly identical to the 2003 number of 16,528. 401,326 robberies were reported in the United States in 2004. Rapes totaled 94,635, and 854,911 aggravated assaults were reported.

The West was the only region of the country where murder volume increased over the previous year. The nation’s cities experienced a 5.1% decrease in murders, but cities with populations between 25,000 and 49,999 saw an increase in murders of 2.1%.

The number of robberies has decreased 30.9% over the last ten years. In 2004, 60.1% of those arrested for robbery were under the age of 25, and 23.4% were under the age

¹ Volume is the total number of offenses reported.



of 18. It was the 11th consecutive year that aggravated assault decreased. In 2004, 40% of the aggravated assaults were committed by persons under the age of 25.

CRIME RATE²

The violent crime rate fell 2.2% from the 2003 rate. From 2003 to 2004 the rate of all categories was down over the previous year. With its 4.1% decrease over the previous year, robbery had the greatest decrease of all the categories, followed closely by murder with a 3.3% decrease. Property crime rates fell 2.1% from the previous year. The violent crime rate was down 8.1% over the five-year period. Aggravated assault decreased 10.1%, followed by robbery with a decrease of 5.7%. Murder decreased 0.8%, but rapes were up 0.6%. The changes in violent crime rates from 2003 to 2004 are shown, followed by the five-year trend:

TABLE 2: VIOLENT CRIME RATE

CRIME CATEGORY	2003-2004	FIVE YEAR PERIOD (2000-2004)
Violent Crime	-2.2%	-8.1%
Murder	-3.3%	-0.8%
Rape	-0.2%	+0.6%
Robbery	-4.1%	-5.7%
Agg. Assault	-1.5%	-10.1%

As with the *volume* of crime, the *rate* of violent crime decreased in 2004, but the decrease was approximately half of what it was the year before. Of all robberies, 40.6% involved the use of a firearm, whereas of murders, 66% resulted from firearms.

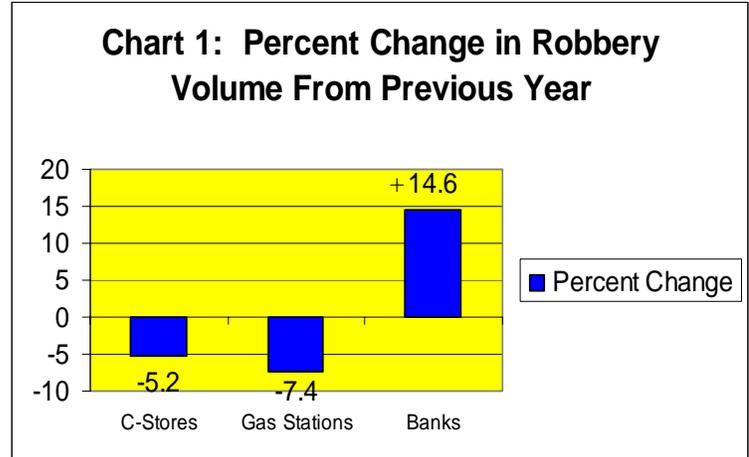
Of all murders, 7% were related to robberies. The murder rate per 100,000 people was down 33.2% compared to 1995.

² Rate is the number of offenses per 100,000 inhabitants.

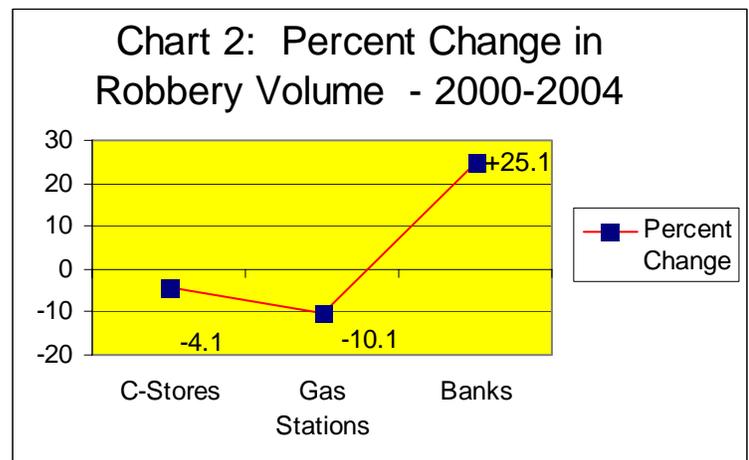


CONVENIENCE STORES, GAS STATIONS AND BANKS

- Convenience store robbery volume was down 5.2% from 2003 to 2004.
- Gas station robbery volume was down 7.4% from 2003 to 2004.
- Bank robbery volume, however, was up 14.6% from 2003 to 2004.
- In 2004, commercial house robberies and residential robberies were both up, with residence robberies increasing 11.4%

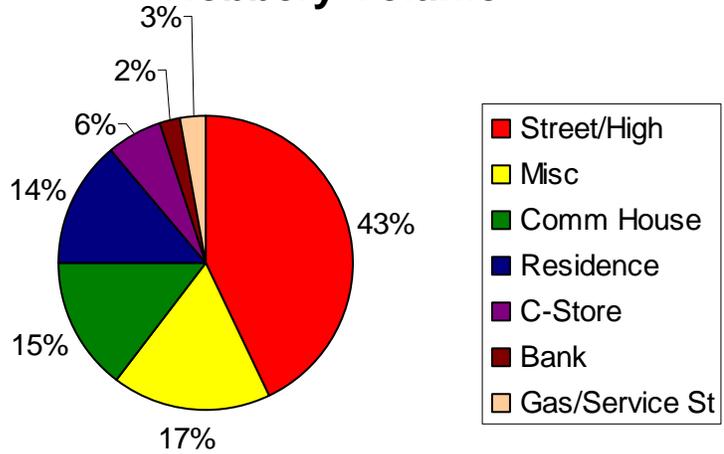


- ❖ Convenience store robbery volume was down 4.1% in the 5-year period since 2000.
- ❖ Gas station robbery volume was down 10.1% in the 5-year period since 2000.
- ❖ Bank robbery volume, however, was up 25.1% in the same five-year period from 2000.



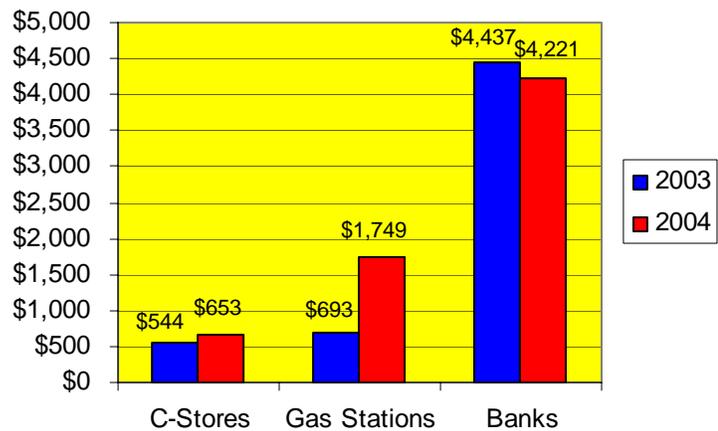
- Convenience store robbery made up 6.1% of the total robberies in 2004, down from 6.4% five years ago.
- Gas station robbery made up 2.7% of the total robberies in 2004, down from 2.9% in 2000.
- Bank robberies made up 2.4% of the total robberies in 2005, up from 2.1% five years before.

Chart 3: Percent Distribution Robbery Volume



- ✓ In 2004, convenience stores had an average dollar loss of \$653, up from \$544 the previous year.
- ✓ Gas station average dollar loss in 2004 was \$1,749, nearly three times higher than convenience stores and over twice what it was the previous year.
- ✓ Banks had by far the highest average dollar loss at \$4,221.

Chart 4: Average Loss per Robbery



Authors' Note: These are not just register losses, but include safe and merchandise losses.



CONCLUSION

While violent crime volume decreased overall in the five—year period from 2000 to 2004, it is important to keep in mind that two of those violent crimes, homicide and rape, increased over that period of time.

END NOTE:

MODIFICATION OF THE UNIFORM CRIME REPORT

In 2004, the FBI suspended the use of the Crime Index, a tool that had been in place since 1960. The Crime Index is simply the sum of the seven main offenses. It was determined that the Crime Index is not an appropriate measure of the degree of criminality. As an example, larceny/theft volume is by far the highest of all seven crimes included in the Index. A bias is created against a jurisdiction that has a high number of larceny/theft offenses, but a low number of other serious crimes such as murder and rape. The UCR Program is working to develop a more appropriate index.

