



WEST DES MOINES POLICE DEPARTMENT  
CRIME ANALYSIS PROGRAM  
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY  
**Federal Part I Crime Statistics for 2008**  
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**Background**

The purpose of this document is to provide a concise report of major crimes occurring in West Des Moines. Major crimes, also known as **Part I Offenses**, include **willful homicide, forcible rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny/theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson.** These eight categories are established by the Federal Bureau of Investigation. By convention, the total number of these eight offenses serves as the basis for calculating the city's overall crime rate. The total number of **willful homicides, forcible rapes, robberies, and aggravated assaults** serve as the basis for calculating the city's **violent crime rate.** The remaining four categories are classified as crimes against property. The data presented in this report is current on the date reported, but may be subject to change.

All West Des Moines crime information is for 2008. The West Des Moines population estimate for 2008 of 56,629 was obtained through the City of West Des Moines Community Development Department. All other population and crime information is taken from the FBI Crime in the United States 2007 UCR report and a FBI press release dated January 12, 2009 on Preliminary Semiannual UCR data (complete 2008 national statistics will not be available until April, 2009).

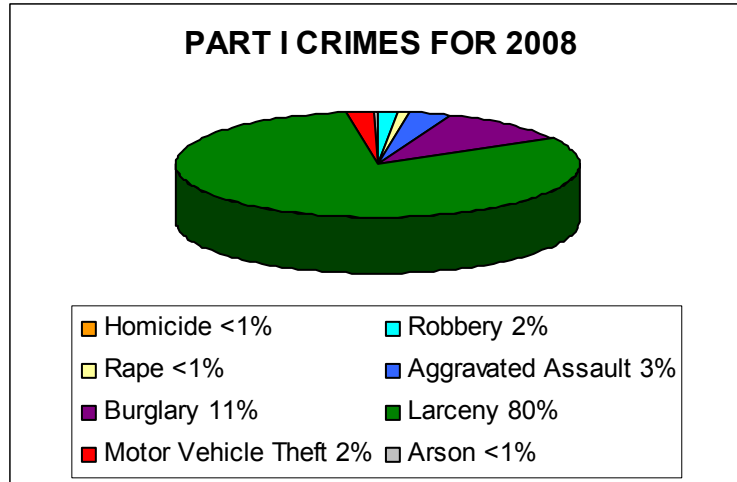
**Year of 2008 vs. Year of 2007 Crime Summary**

For 2007, West Des Moines reported a total of 1717 Part I offenses. In 2008, this number increased by 201 (12%) to 1918 offenses.

West Des Moines had 62 violent crimes reported in all of 2007, and this number increased by 51 reports (82%) to 113 for 2008. Nationwide for the first 6 months of 2008, FBI statistics showed a decrease in violent crimes of 3.5%.

There were 1805 crimes against property in 2008 compared to 1655 in 2007, an increase of 150 (9%). Larceny represents the majority of crimes against property in 2008, with 1544 reports. Included in this report is a breakout of these larcenies by type. Nationwide, FBI statistics showed a decrease in crimes against property during the first six months of 2008 of 2.5%.

The following graph shows all Part I offenses broken out by total percentage.



**Part I Offenses: Two Year Comparison**

The following table represents the number of Part I Offenses reported in the years 2007 and 2008.

TOTAL YEAR	07	08	Change	%
Homicide	2	1	-1	-50%
Rape	10	14	4	40%
Robbery	16	32	16	100%
Aggravated Assault	34	66	32	94%
Arson	9	6	-3	-33%
Burglary	229	214	-15	-7%
Larceny	1365	1544	179	13%
Motor Vehicle Theft	52	41	-11	-21%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1717</b>	<b>1918</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>12%</b>

The overall crime rate in West Des Moines for the entire year of 2008 for Part I offenses is approximately 33.89 offenses occurring for every 1000 residents. The violent crime rate for 2008 is 2.0 per 1000, while the property crime rate is 31.89 per 1000. The national crime rate for Part I offenses per 1000 for 2007 was approximately 37.30, with the national violent crime rate at 4.67 and national property crime rate at 32.64. The 2007 crime rate for the state of Iowa was 2.95 per 1000 for violent crime, and 26.16 per 1000 for property crime.

**Summary of 2008 Violent Crimes in West Des Moines:**

- ❖ There was 1 homicide reported in 2008 which occurred in January of 2008 and involved the death of a child. A family acquaintance was arrested and stood trial, with the jury finding him guilty of willful injury causing serious injury and child endangerment resulting in death.
- ❖ There were 14 reported rapes in 2008, an increase of 4 (40%) from 2007. There were two

cases which were unfounded upon investigation. Three cases remain open and still under investigation. There were six cases which were cleared by the detective and two reports which resulted in an arrest. The clearance rate for forcible rape cases in West Des Moines was 79%. In 2007, the national clearance rate for forcible rape cases was 40.0%. In the majority of reports no charges were filed because the evidence did not support filing charges, the victim did not wish to pursue charges, or the reports were determined to be unfounded upon investigation. Eight (57%) of the cases had circumstances involving either the presence of alcohol, and/or situations with an acquaintance or family member.

- ❖ There were 32 robberies reported in 2008, an increase of 16 (100%). This is an unusually large amount of robberies for West Des Moines, and the most recorded in nine years of record keeping. There were arrests in 17 of the cases, one was determined to be unfounded, and five were cleared by the detective leading to a clearance rate for robberies of 71.9%. The national clearance rate in 2007 for robbery was 25.9%. There were five robberies of banks, with four of these committed by the same person. Those four cases were cleared when the suspect died in an accident after a high speed crash after robbing a bank in Des Moines. There were four robberies of convenience stores, all unrelated. Ten reports were shoplifting incidents that evolved into robberies when the offender was confronted (compared to eight similar reports in 2007).
- ❖ Aggravated assaults increased by 32 (94%) during 2008 from 34 to 66 reports. Thirty seven of the reports occurred at drinking establishments or involved alcohol (56%). Eighteen of the reports were made from bars, seven of those from Boom Boom Room at 3320 Westown Parkway. Arrests were made in forty three (65%) of the cases. The clearance rate for aggravated assaults in West Des Moines was 83.3%. In 2007, the national clearance rate for aggravated assaults was 54.1%

Nationwide, FBI statistics showed a decrease in the first six months of 2008 in aggravated assaults of 4.1% and homicides decreased by 4.4%. Forcible rape nationwide decreased 3.3%, while robbery reports decreased by 2.2%. Final statistics for all of 2008 will not be available until April of 2009.

#### **Summary of 2008 Property Crimes in West Des Moines:**

- ❖ Arson reports in West Des Moines decreased by 3 reports (33%) to 6 in 2008. One of the reports involving a single family residence was determined not to be arson upon further investigation. There was one vehicle fire, one semitrailer in a wooded area, a mattress left by the street during spring cleanup, and two residential fires which were determined to be suspicious upon investigation. None of the suspicious fires were related, and there were no arrests made.
- ❖ Burglaries decreased by 7% in 2008 to 214 cases. Around 62% of the burglaries occurring in West Des Moines in 2008 were of residential locations. The next highest locations for burglaries included structures such as apartment building garages, and commercial or office buildings. Reports of burglaries from construction sites decreased from 18 reports in 2007 to 14 reports in 2008. There were no burglaries of school buildings in 2008, while 6 had been reported in 2007. Twenty-two cases were cleared by arrest, and the clearance rate for residential burglaries through arrest or exceptional means in West Des Moines was 16.8% during 2008. Nationally, the clearance rate in 2007 for all

burglaries was 12.4%.

- ❖ Larcenies, which make up the largest part of property crime in West Des Moines, increased by 13% during 2008, and were therefore the main contributing factor to the overall increase in the 2008 crime rate.

<b>Type of Larceny</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>% Change</b>
Bicycles	33	33	n/a
From Building	122	69	-43%
From Coin-Op Machines	3	1	-67%
From Motor Vehicle & Parts	318	293	-8%
Larceny Other	482	575	19%
Pickpocket/Pursesnatch	3	0	-100%
Shoplifting	404	573	42%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1365</b>	<b>1544</b>	<b>13%</b>

- Theft from motor vehicle and motor vehicle parts decreased by 25 reports during the year, after a sizeable decrease experienced in 2007. Continued identification and arrest of suspects, sharing of intelligence information across jurisdictional lines, and increased patrol presence in identified problem areas continue to have a noticeable affect on this crime.
- Larceny Other includes thefts of cell phones, wallets or purses which are left someplace and believed stolen, gas driveoffs, etc. There were 12 more gas driveoff reports in 2008 compared to 2007, but these only made up a small part of the overall increase. There was a general increase in the thefts of all kinds from various locations in West Des Moines during 2008.
- Shoplifting reports increased by 42%. By far the majority of this increase was experienced in Territory 5 as a result of increased efforts to apprehend shoplifters by some existing retail stores, and continued ongoing development of retail establishments.
- ❖ There were 41 reports of motor vehicle thefts reported, which was 11 less (-21%) than reported in 2007. Recovery of the vehicle was made in 34 (81%) of the reports. Seventeen of the cases or 40% involved domestic situations, employee situations, or vehicles that had been misplaced or repossessed. The majority of stolen vehicles were located in Des Moines. There were vehicles recovered in other areas of the metro including Ankeny, Johnston and Adel. There were two vehicles taken during the same night from parking lots along EP True Parkway which were recovered at 4600 Park in Des Moines. They had been stripped prior to recovery.

The types of vehicles stolen were a mixture of makes and models, with the majority being Chevrolet, Dodge and Honda. Nationally the Honda Accord, Civic and Toyota Camry are the most frequently stolen vehicles according to the National Insurance Crime Bureau. In Iowa, the vehicles most likely to be stolen are full size Ford and Chevrolet pickups, the Ford Taurus and the Chevrolet Blazer. During 2007, the clearance rate nationally for motor vehicle thefts was only 12.6%. West Des Moines experienced a clearance rate of 51% for stolen motor vehicle reports in 2007.

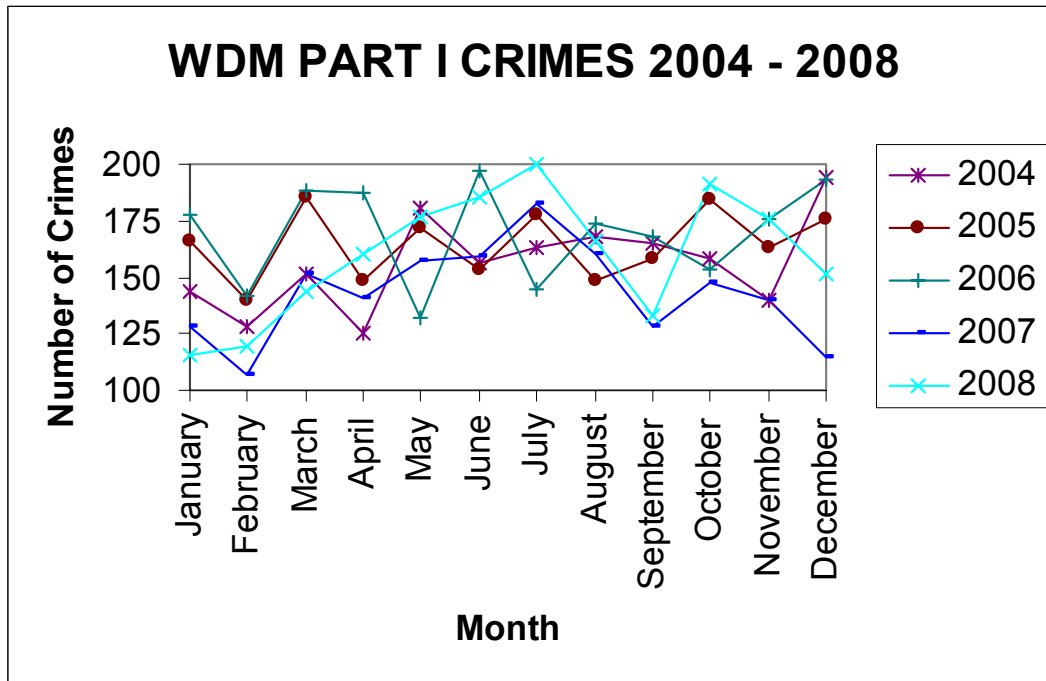
At the national level, decreases in property crime were being experienced during the first six months of 2008. FBI statistics show that motor vehicle thefts decreased 12.6% in the first six months of 2008 while burglary decreased 0.8% and larcenies decreased 1.2%. Additionally, arson offenses decreased 5.6% in the first six months of 2008.

**Part I Offenses by Territory**

The following table represents the Part I Offenses for 2008 by territory. Territory 1 reports declined 1%, led by a decrease in burglary. Territory 2 reports decreased 14%, and that decrease was mostly due to a decrease in larceny. Territory 3 reports increased 12%. This increase was mostly caused by an increase in larceny, aggravated assaults, rape and robbery. Territory 4 reports increased 5%, and this was because of increases in aggravated assaults, burglary and larceny. Territory 5 reports increased 86% with increases in robbery, aggravated assaults, arson, burglary, and larceny. Territory 5 continues to grow with new residential and commercial construction, and accounted for 26% of the total reports for West Des Moines in 2008.

<b>Year of 2008 by Territory</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Homicide	1	0	0	0	0	1
Rape	4	3	5	2	0	14
Robbery	6	10	4	2	10	32
Aggravated Assault	23	22	6	8	7	66
Arson	3	0	2	0	1	6
Burglary	39	32	45	63	35	214
Larceny	194	394	258	252	446	1544
Motor Vehicle Theft	17	7	8	6	3	41
<b>Total</b>	<b>287</b>	<b>468</b>	<b>328</b>	<b>333</b>	<b>502</b>	<b>1918</b>
<b>Percentage of Total</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>100%</b>

**A Year-to-Date Comparison of Part I Crimes from 2004 to 2008**



scale does not start at zero to show more detail

During 2008, there was a steady increase in crime from the beginning of the year to a peak in July, and then a marked decrease through September. There was another spike during the month of October, with a gradual decrease for the remainder of the year.

**Five Year Comparison**

TOTAL YEAR	04	05	06	07	08	Change 08-04	% 08-04
Homicide	0	0	0	2	1	1	nm*
Rape	20	16	16	10	14	-6	-30%
Robbery	9	11	10	16	32	23	256%
Aggravated Assault	47	43	49	34	66	19	40%
Arson	18	16	14	9	6	-12	-67%
Burglary	275	277	237	229	214	-61	-22%
Larceny	1437	1546	1643	1365	1544	107	7%
Motor Vehicle Theft	68	69	71	52	41	-27	-40%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1874</b>	<b>1978</b>	<b>2040</b>	<b>1717</b>	<b>1918</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>2%</b>
<b>% Increase from Previous Year</b>		<b>6%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>-16%</b>	<b>12%</b>		

\* nm – not measurable: there was no activity in 2004 to compare to 2008

In looking at the data for the last 5 years, it should be noted that even with the growth West Des Moines has experienced through annexation and development during this time (particularly in Territory 5), the percentage increase in UCR Part I crimes has grown by only 2%. As stated earlier in this report, a large part of the increase seen in 2008 is due to increased reports, including larceny, in Territory 5.

Any questions or requests for further information should be directed to the Crime Analysis Program of the West Des Moines Police Department at (515) 222-3308.