Press Release

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Crime in Centralia, 2012; Gains Achieved in 2011 Hold

“In 2012, Centralia was able to hold onto the gains made over the past year, and continue the positive trend pertaining to crime reduction in our community. Since 2004, we have experienced a 44% reduction in index crime in our community. On a per capita basis, we experienced the lowest crime rate in more than 50 years, surpassing the previous record set last year. Holding on to the gains made in 2011 is made more satisfying by the 5.9% reduction in violent crime in our community in 2012,” Chief Bob Berg stated as he released the preliminary 2012 crime statistics for the City of Centralia. The overall number of Part One Index Crimes in Centralia decreased by less than 1% compared to 2011, but coupled with population increases (as estimated by the State Office of Financial Management), statistically this community was the safest it has been in many, many years. “Continued aggressive police work, coupled with support and cooperation from the community no doubt contributed to holding our own in 2012.”

In figures forwarded to the Washington State Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs (WASPC) for inclusion in their annual report on crime in Washington State, Centralia reported 881 index crimes in 2012, down from the 887 crimes in 2011 and continuing a long term trend line indicating a declining crime rate. The Centralia Police Department participates in the WASPC Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program and has submitted such reports to the FBI for years. The UCR program identifies and reports on specific crimes - called Part I Offenses, reported in a uniform way, as a measure of the criminal activity occurring in cities, counties, and states throughout the nation. Violent crimes under this reporting system consist of murder, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault. Property crimes include burglary, theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson.

While the overall crime rates for violent and property crime decreased in 2012, certain Part I Offenses increased; including murder (up 50% [1 to 2]), robbery (up 12.52% [16 to 19]), Burglary (up 7.19% [167 to 179]), and Arson (1 incident to 8 incidents). Four other UCR Part I Offenses were down, including:

- Forcible Rape – down 29.4% (from 17 to 12)
- Aggravated (Felony) Assault - down 7.69% (from 52 to 48)
- Theft - down 3.1% (from 580 to 562)
- Motor Vehicle Theft - down 11.8% (from 59 to 52)
“As a department we understand the ups and downs of crime in our community, but we remain pleased at the overall downward trend we have seen in the past eight years. This continued positive trend for Centralia is good for community safety and long term economic development” Berg said.

The following chart depicts the overall number of “Part One Index Crimes” committed in our community for the past nine years:

$\text{CPD Crime Rate since 2004}$

$\text{44.31\% Reduction in UCR Crime; 2004 - 2012}$

“The trend lines associated with crime in Centralia indicate a downward trend over time, with stability in 2012, a huge reduction in 2011 that offset the huge spike in 2010 that followed a huge reduction in 2009. We are glad to be back on the path we have been on since 2005,” Berg stated.

In terms of our community and its 16,670 residents, these statistics translate to the following crime frequencies in our community last year (2011 shown in parenthesis):

- One theft occurred every 15½ hours (one every 15 hours)
- One burglary occurred every 50 hours (one every 54 hours)
- One vehicle was stolen every 7 days (one every 6 days)
- An aggravated assault occurred every 7½ days (one every 7 days)
- A rape occurred every 4½ weeks (every 3½ weeks)
- A robbery occurred every 20 days (one every 23 days)
- An arson occurred every 6½ weeks (once per year)
- A homicide occurred every six months (once per year)
From a personal security perspective, our community remains a safe place to live. The statistical probability of a Centralia resident being the victim of a violent crime in 2012 was less than \( \frac{1}{2} \) of 1%, or 4.80 per 1,000 residents (down from 5.23 per 1,000 in 2011). For property crime, the 2012 rate was 47.93 per 1,000 residents (down from 48.78 per 1,000 in 2011). The overall crime rate for our community in 2011 was **52.85 crimes per one thousand residents**, compared with:

- 53.16 per 1,000 in 2011
- 78.23 per 1,000 in 2010
- 55.52 per 1,000 in 2009
- 73.78 per 1,000 in 2008
- 70.68 per 1,000 in 2007
- 68.33 per 1,000 in 2006
- 94.35 per 1,000 in 2005

The following chart depicts the breakdown of violent crime and property crime in Centralia in 2012:

**Crime Breakdown in Centralia, 2012**

- **Theft** 64%
- **Burglary** 20%
- **Aggravated Assault** 6%
- **Rape** 1%
- **Robbery** 2%
- **Motor Veh. Theft** 6%
- **Arson** 1%
- **Murder** 0%
Our Mission

Work in partnership with our community to protect life and property, reduce crime, and enhance the security and quality of life in our city.

The department's clearance rate for all index crimes in 2012 was 19.52%, a decrease of 5.17 percentage points from our 24.69% clearance rate in 2011. Our clearance rate for violent crimes in 2012 was 57.5% (down from 72.9% in 2011) and our clearance rate on property crimes was 15.7% (down from 19.6% in 2011).
Berg concluded “The police department continues to work hard to reduce the amount of criminal activity in our community. A recent upsurge in gang related graffiti and the attempted resurgence of some gang activity in Centralia is disconcerting, and we will target that criminal activity in 2013. In 2012, the hard work of our anti-crime team, traffic unit, school resource officer, along with our detective and patrol divisions has been outstanding. Officers of the Centralia Police Department made more than 2500 misdemeanor and felony arrests, including the service of almost 1,000 arrest warrants.

“At the end of the day, the crime rate in the community is not just a prism through which to observe the effectiveness of the police department. The crime rate also has much to do with employment, housing, schools, and parents as well.

“We continue to work cooperatively with surrounding law enforcement agencies, and work with neighborhood groups to address the challenges of drugs and crime. We ask for the public’s assistance in making our community a safe place to live, work, and play. Preventing crime is a community responsibility. Please protect yourself, secure your homes and vehicles, don’t leave your keys in your vehicle, and be sure to keep valuables out of sight if you leave them in your car. Be a good neighbor, and report suspicious activity to your police department.”

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