

# Monday, November 22, 2010

## Response to CQ Press Crime Rankings

In 2006, the publishers of this data told a St. Louis reporter that even they would be “stunned if there is a criminologist out there who will support this.” The FBI, the American Society of Criminology and the Criminal Justice Journalists Organization all agree that these rankings are bogus and the FBI feels so strongly about it that the first thing you see when you visit their crime statistics website is a message denouncing using the data in exactly the way this company did.

One of the many major problems with these rankings is the fact that in spite of the FBI's request, cities don't all report crime in the same way. We're doing things exactly as the FBI asks us to do, unlike some other cities. New York doesn't count thefts of items worth less than \$1000. We report every theft. Cities in Tennessee used a different reporting system. Some cities, like Chicago, aren't even included in these rankings because they didn't meet the FBI criteria for reporting their crimes.

While St. Louis, like many urban cities, has its challenges, crime has decreased in this city every year since 2007. So far in 2010, violent crime is down 17% this year as compared to last year and overall crime is down nearly 9%. We are a city whose population is growing. That is something that certainly would not be happening unless people felt safe here.

The fact of the matter is that these rankings are not at all about providing useful information to the public. These rankings are about the publishers selling a \$70 book, while hoping that citizens won't realize that they can get the same statistical data online for free. You can view our crime statistics at [http://www.slmpd.org/crime\\_stats.html](http://www.slmpd.org/crime_stats.html) and view every other city that reported to the FBI at <http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/ucr/crime-in-the-u.s/2009>.

We also urge reporters to contact the Crime Statistics Unit of the FBI as well as the American Society of Criminology.