



Oakland Police Department
Deputy Chief Peter Dunbar
Deputy Chief Greg Lowe
Deputy Chief Michael Holland

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For Additional Information:
Deputy Chief Peter Dunbar
Bureau of Field Operations
Ph. 510.238.3801

Officer Danielle Ashford
Public Information Officer
Ph. 510.238.7230

HOMICIDES, VIOLENT CRIME DOWN IN OAKLAND

Oakland, CA—The year 2004 came to a close for the Oakland Police Department (OPD) after making 66 sideshow-related arrests, issuing 312 citations, and towing 91 vehicles on the night of New Year's Eve.

Though plagued by the chronic problems associated with the sideshow, limited resources and staffing, the Oakland Police Department announced today that the City of Oakland experienced a significant decrease in violent crime in 2004. Statewide, the number of homicides reported during the first nine months of 2004 increased 3.8 percent when compared to the same period last year, according to the California Office of the Attorney General. However, in the City of Oakland, the number of reported homicides took a 25 percent plunge compared to the previous year. There were 82 homicides in 2004, compared to 109 in 2003.

Preliminary data* has also shown that 2004 violent crime rates dropped 53 percent from 1992, the peak year for violent crime during the last two decades (see attached chart). Compared to 2003, aggravated assaults decreased 13 percent. Other crime rates that showed a decrease were rape, -8 percent; robbery, -12 percent; and burglary, -4 percent.

“We’ve been targeting hot spots and individuals involved in violent crime and getting positive results. The reduction in violence and other crime is based on the hard work of the men and women in the Department, problem solving with our Neighborhood Crime Prevention Councils and the support of the Mayor and City Administrator in funding and supporting this plan,” said Deputy Chief Peter Dunbar.

***These numbers are only preliminary, reported data and are not the official UCR numbers reported to the FBI by the Oakland Police Department.**