

Austin Police Department

Annual Crime and Traffic Report: 2009 Final Report



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Research and Planning Unit
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Background

Each calendar year, the Austin Police Department reports crime statistics to the FBI through the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) program. After federal review, these become our “official” statistics and are useful in tracking year-to-year performance and trends, as well as comparing our crime statistics to other US cities of similar size.

This report contains Austin’s final crime statistics reported to the FBI; it updates our preliminary report published in April 2010.

Overview

This document contains UCR crime data for the calendar year 2009 (January 1, 2009 through December 31, 2009). For comparison, we have included data from other large US cities; among them, Baltimore, Charlotte, Denver, Louisville, and Seattle (see Page 3 for a complete list). We have also included selected traffic statistics on fatal collisions and comparable data for other jurisdictions.

The report is organized by crime category (violent or property) and by type of crime within each category (e.g., murder and robbery within violent crime).

Notable Findings

This year’s crime statistics include the following noteworthy findings:

- Austin’s rate of 523 **violent crimes** per 100,000 residents was lower than the rate of 885 for other US cities of comparable size. (Page 4)
- Austin’s **property crime rate** of 6,245 per 100,000 residents was higher than the rate of 4,900 for other US cities of comparable size. (Page 11)
- The number of **murders** decreased from 23 in 2008 to 22 in 2009 and our rate per 100,000 residents was lower than other large US cities. (Page 5)
- Austin’s number of **robberies** grew from 1,333 in 2008 to 1,415 in 2009 but our rate per 100,000 residents was lower than other large US cities. (Page 8)
- The number of **thefts** increased from 33,582 in 2008 to 37,054 in 2009 and our rate per 100,000 residents was higher than other large cities. (Page 12)
- Austin’s number of **auto thefts** dropped from 2,633 in 2008 to 2,219 in 2009; of all vehicles stolen, 75% were successfully recovered, which was higher than the recovery rates for Texas and the US. (Page 13)
- Austin’s number of **traffic fatalities** grew from 59 in 2008 to 62 in 2009; our fatality rate per 100 million vehicle miles traveled (VMT) was lower than the rate for Texas but higher than the rate for the US. (Page 16)

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Overall Crime Statistics

The FBI identifies seven “Part I Index Crimes,” based on their seriousness and frequency of occurrence. Each crime is defined – including how incidents are counted – and grouped into two categories:

Violent crimes

Murder (number of victims)
 Rape (number of victims)
 Robbery (number of offenses)
 Aggravated Assault (number of victims)

Property crimes

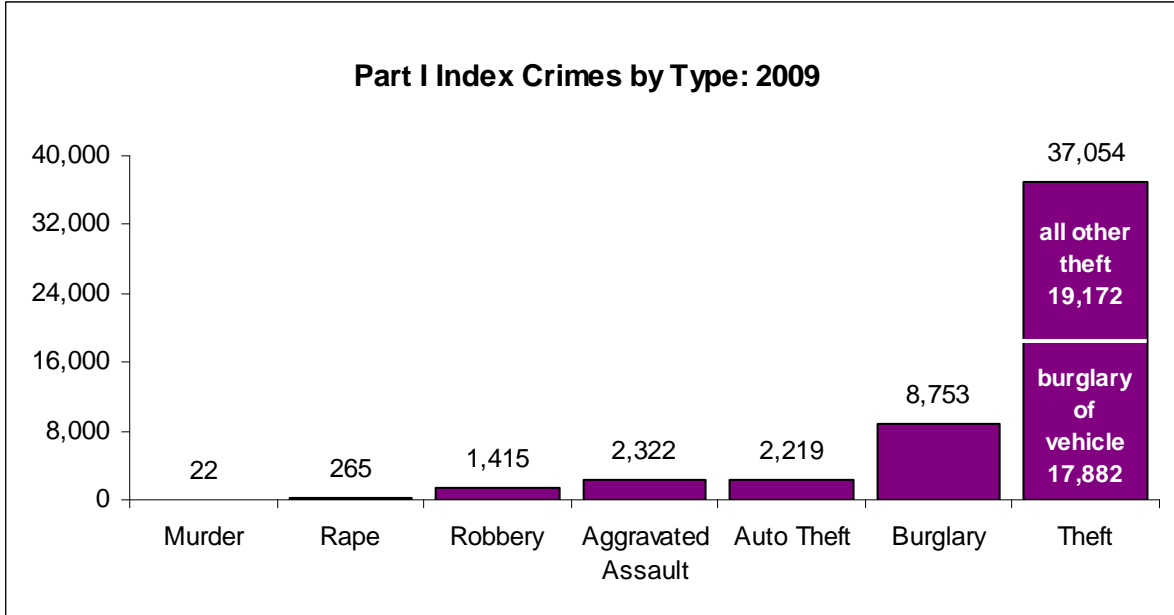
Burglary (number of premises entered)
 Theft (number of offenses)
 Auto Theft (number of vehicles)

These categories and crime definitions are used for reporting city-level crime statistics to the FBI under its Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) program.

Incidents and Rates

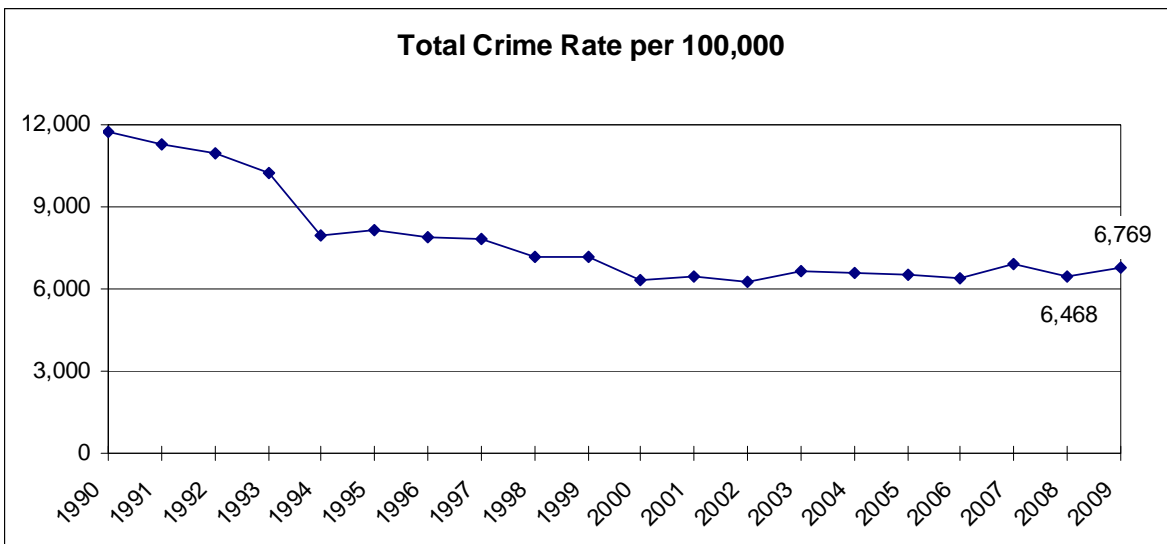
Throughout this report, crime is reported in terms of actual numbers (e.g., incidents, victims) as well as rate per 100,000 residents. Rates allow for comparisons to previous years and with other cities.

Part I Index Crimes	Offenses			Rate per 100,000		
	2008	2009	% chg	2008	2009	% chg
Murder	23	22	-4.3%	3.1	2.9	-6.3%
Rape	273	265	-2.9%	36.2	34.5	-4.9%
Robbery	1,333	1,415	6.2%	176.9	184.0	4.0%
Aggravated Assault	2,306	2,322	0.7%	306.0	302.0	-1.3%
Total Violent Crime	3,935	4,024	2.3%	522.2	523.3	0.2%
Burglary	8,586	8,753	1.9%	1,139.4	1,138.3	-0.1%
Theft	33,582	37,054	10.3%	4,456.6	4,818.7	8.1%
Auto Theft	2,633	2,219	-15.7%	349.4	288.6	-17.4%
Total Property Crime	44,801	48,026	7.2%	5,945.4	6,245.5	5.0%
Total Index Crime	48,736	52,050	6.8%	6,468	6,769	4.7%
			Population	753,535	768,970	2.0%



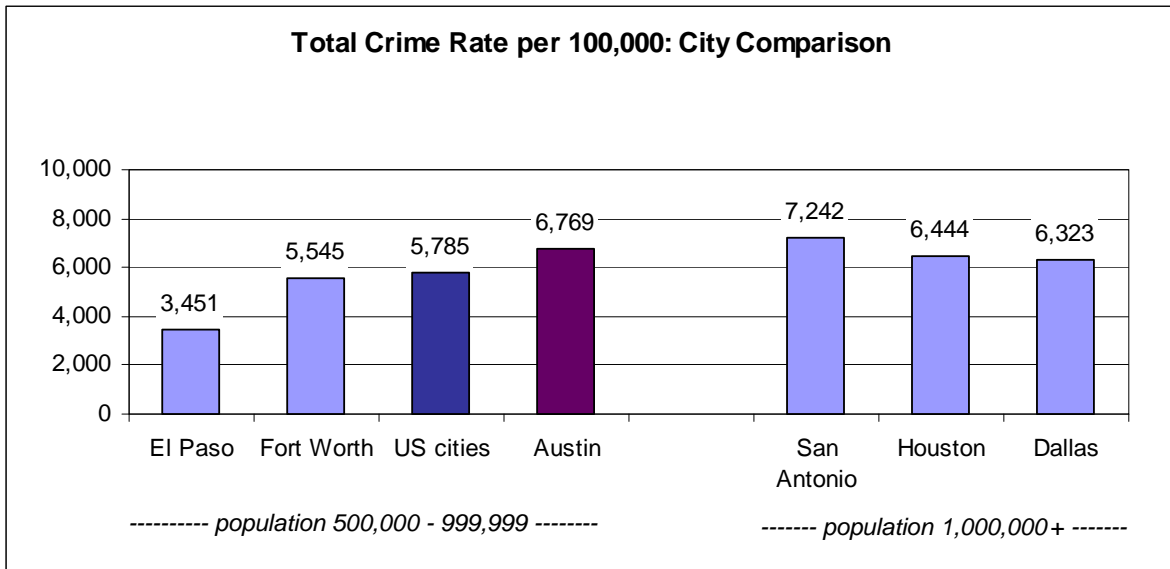
Trends

In 2009, the number of all Part I Index crimes for Austin was 52,050. This represents a 7% increase in incidents as compared with 2008 (48,736). The rate of crime per 100,000 residents was 6,769 in 2009 – a 5% increase from the rate of 6,468 in 2008. Over the previous 10 years (1998 to 2007), the rate ranged from 6,267 to 7,172.



Compared to Other Cities

This chart shows how Austin compares to other large US cities (those with population between 500,000 and 999,999; Austin's population was 768,970 in 2009, according to FBI UCR reporting). For regional comparison, Texas cities are also identified. Austin's rate of 6,769 offenses per 100,000 was 17% higher than the rate of 5,785 for all large US cities.

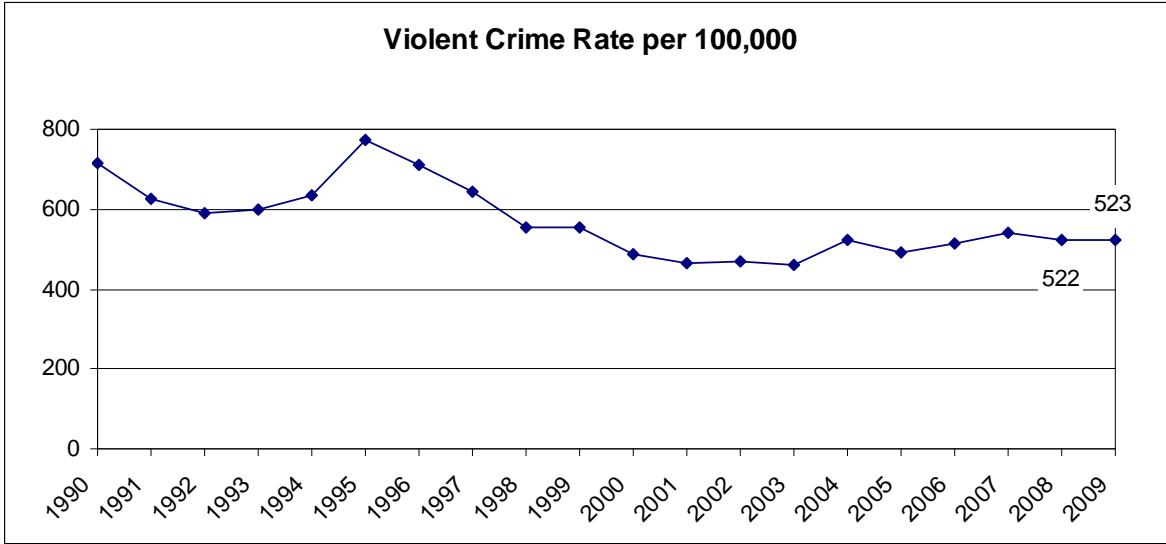


The following cities are included in the “US cities” category above, and elsewhere throughout this report:

- Austin
- Atlanta
- Boston
- Columbus
- Detroit
- Fort Worth
- Indianapolis
- Louisville
- Milwaukee
- Oklahoma City
- San Francisco
- Seattle
- Albuquerque
- Baltimore
- Charlotte
- Denver
- El Paso
- Honolulu
- Jacksonville
- Memphis
- Nashville
- Portland
- San Jose
- Washington

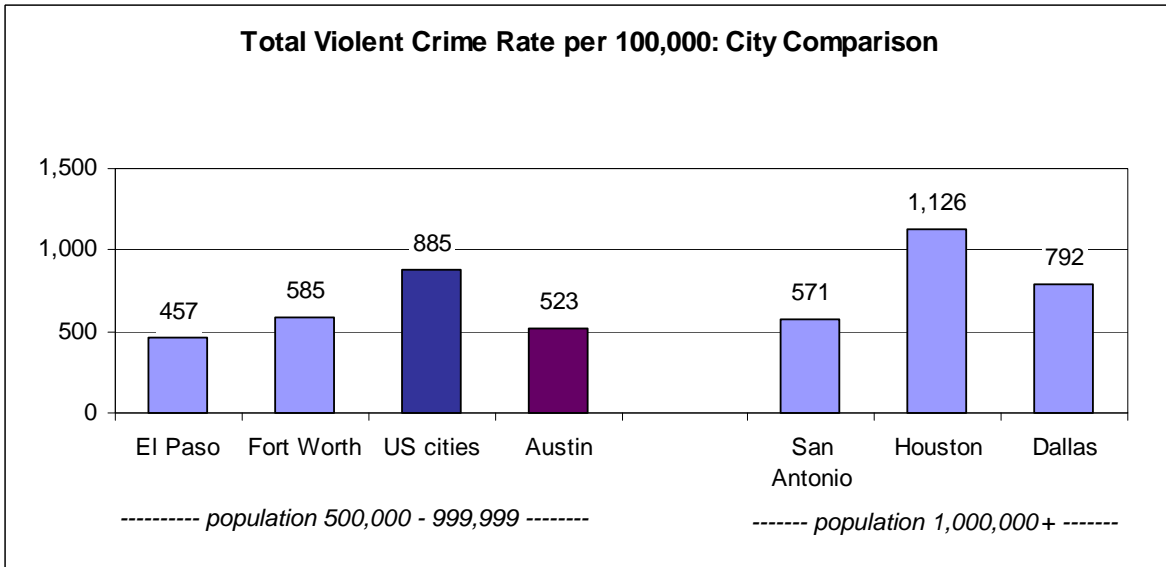
Violent Crime

In 2009, the number of violent crimes in Austin was 4,024. This represents a 2% increase in incidents as compared with 2008 (3,935). The rate of violent crime per 100,000 residents was 523 in 2009 – a slight (.2%) increase from the rate of 522 in 2008. Over the previous 10 years (1998 to 2007), the rate ranged from 462 to 556.



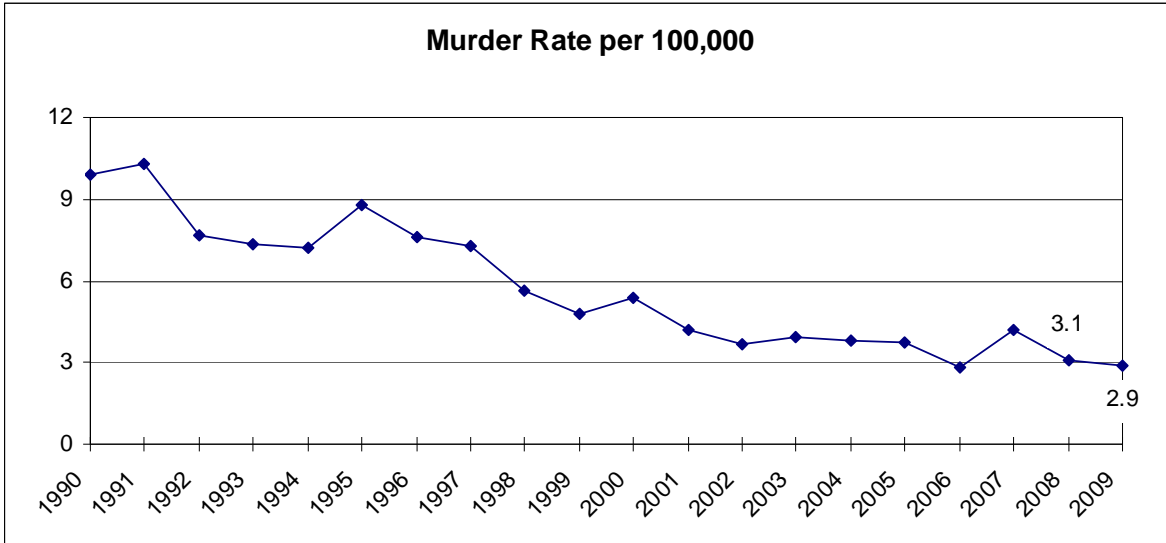
Compared to Other Cities

Austin's rate of 523 violent crimes per 100,000 was 41% lower than the rate of 885 for all large US cities.

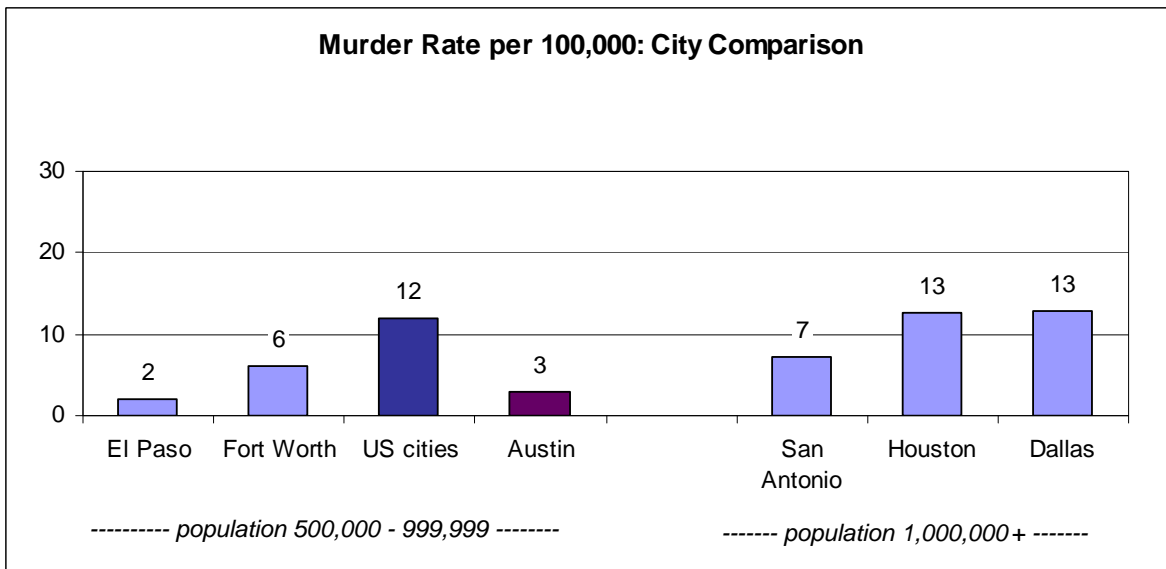


Murder

During 2009 there were 22 murder victims in Austin, down from 23 in 2008. The murder rate was about three per 100,000 residents, which was stable from 2008. Over the previous 10 years (1998 to 2007), the number of murder victims ranged from 20 to 33.

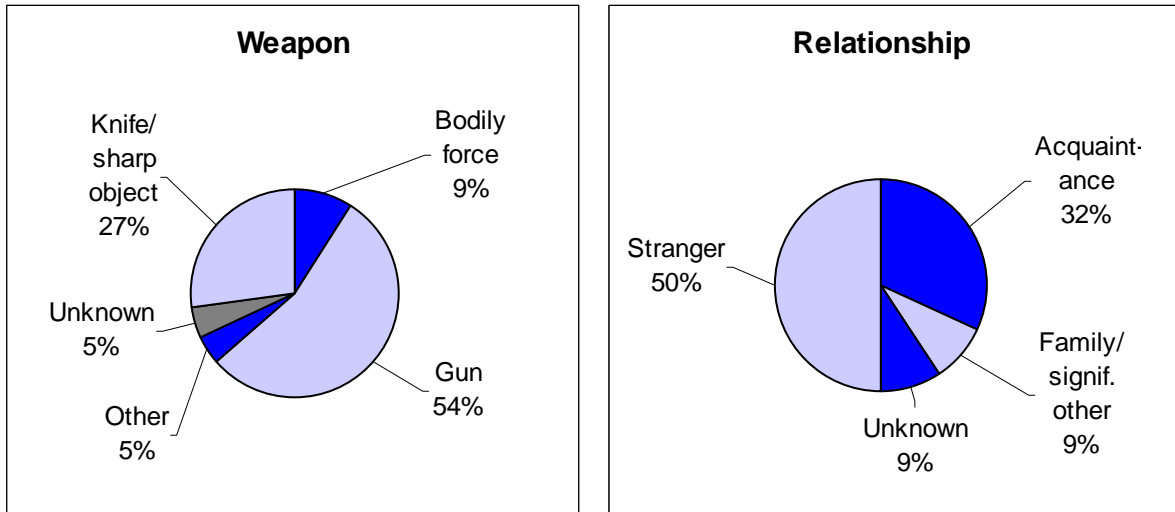


Austin's murder rate was 75% lower than that of other US cities our size.



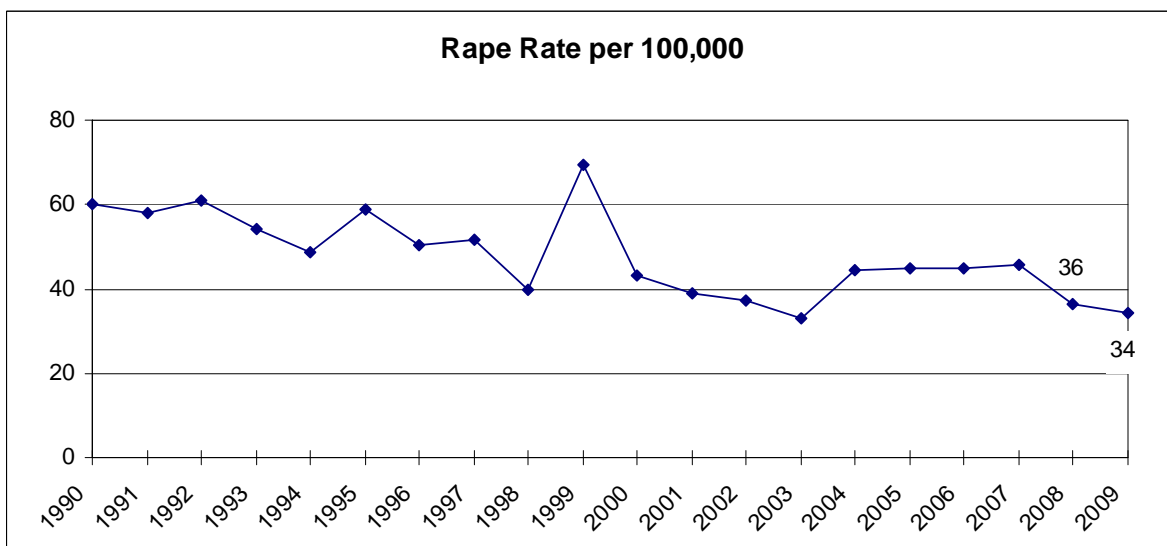
In 2009, guns were the most frequent weapons used in murders (54% of incidents), followed by knives or other sharp objects (27%). In 2008, guns were used in 78% of incidents and knives or other sharp objects were used in 17% of incidents.

In incidents where the relationship between the victim and suspect was established, the victim knew the offender in 45% of the murders, as compared with 70% in 2008.

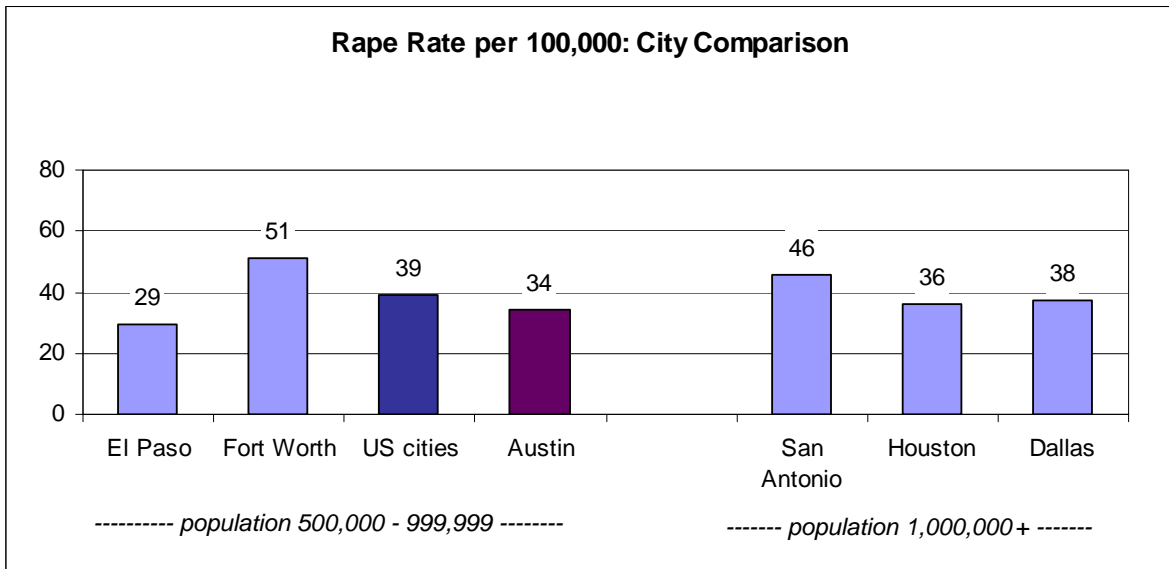


Rape

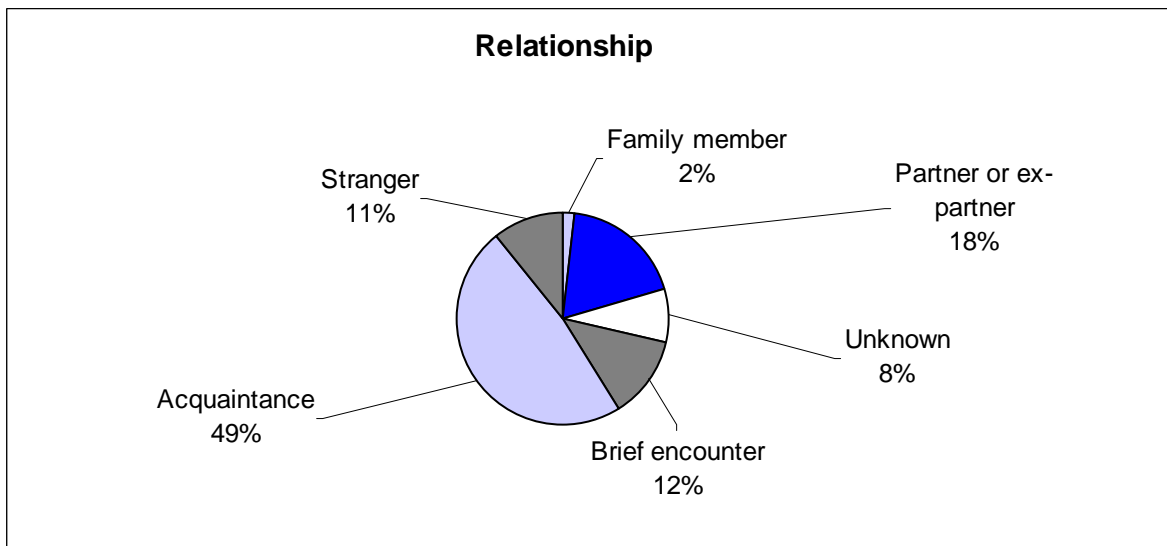
There were 265 reported victims of rape in Austin during 2009, down from 273 in 2008. The rate was 35 per 100,000 residents, which was down from the previous year's rate of 36. Over the previous 10 years (1998 to 2007), the rate ranged from 33 to 69.



Austin's rate of reported rapes was 12% lower than other US cities of the same size.

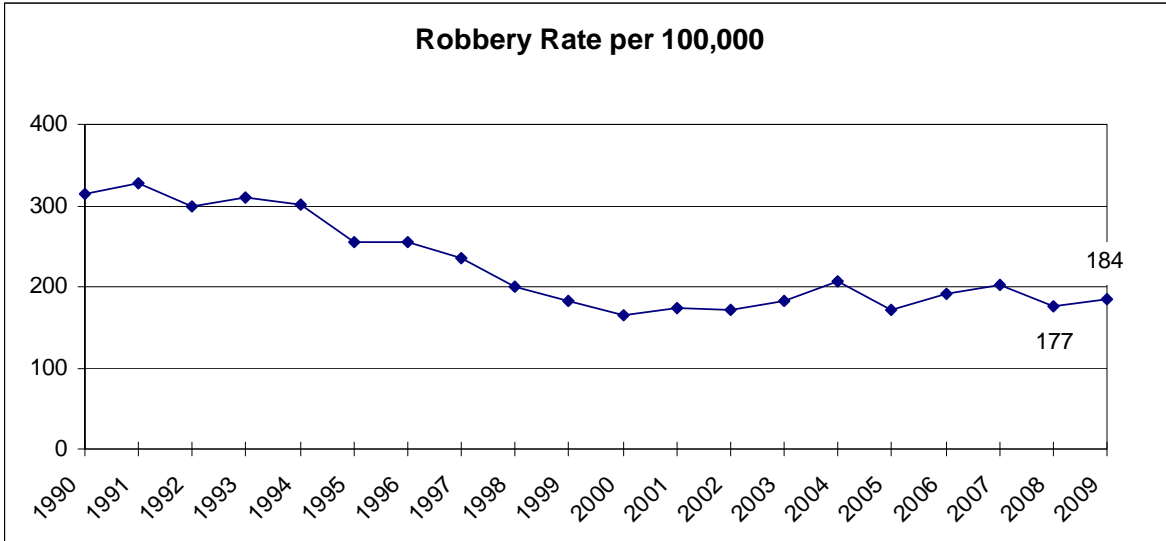


In 88% of the incidents where the relationship between the victim and suspect was established, the victim knew the suspect as an acquaintance, family member, partner, ex-partner, or from a brief encounter.

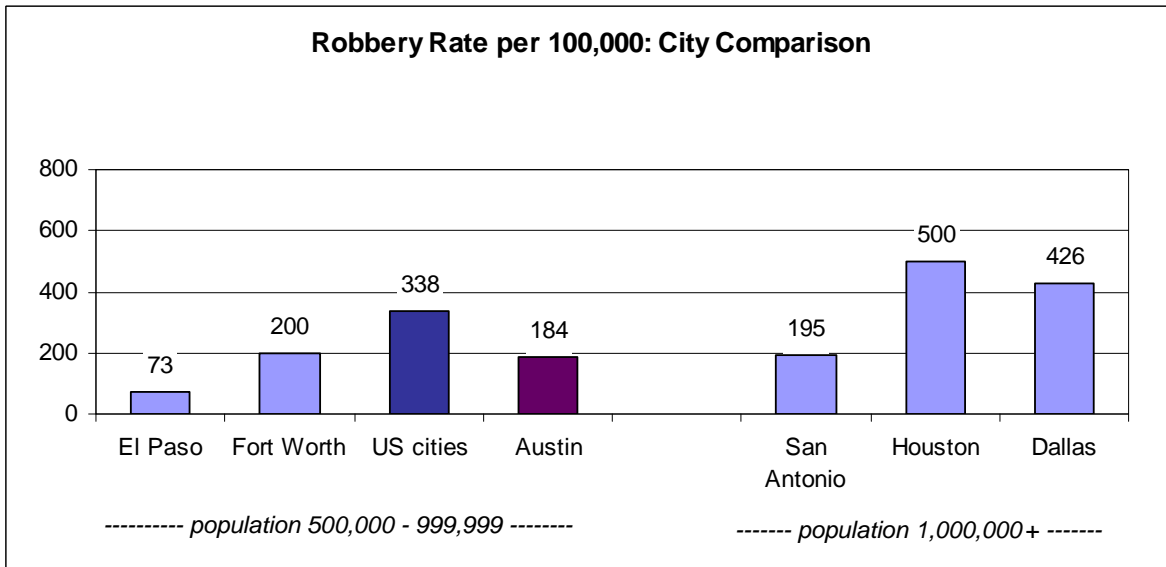


Robbery

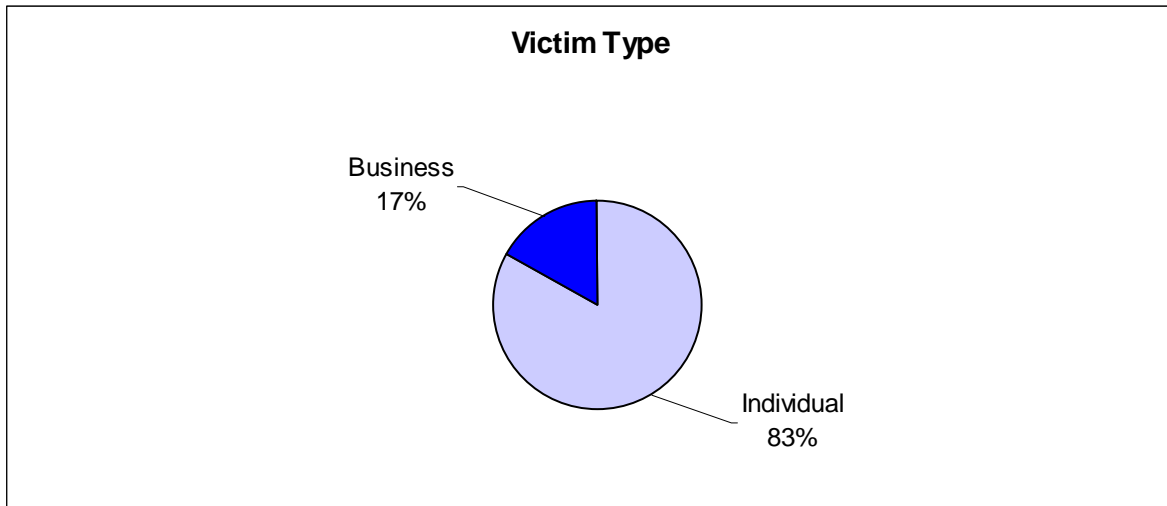
There were 1,415 robberies reported in 2009, up from 1,333 in 2008. The rate was 184 robberies per 100,000 residents, which represents an increase from the previous year's rate of 177. Over the previous 10 years (1998 to 2007), the rate of annual robberies ranged from 164 to 206.



Austin's rate of reported robberies was 46% lower than other US cities of the same size.

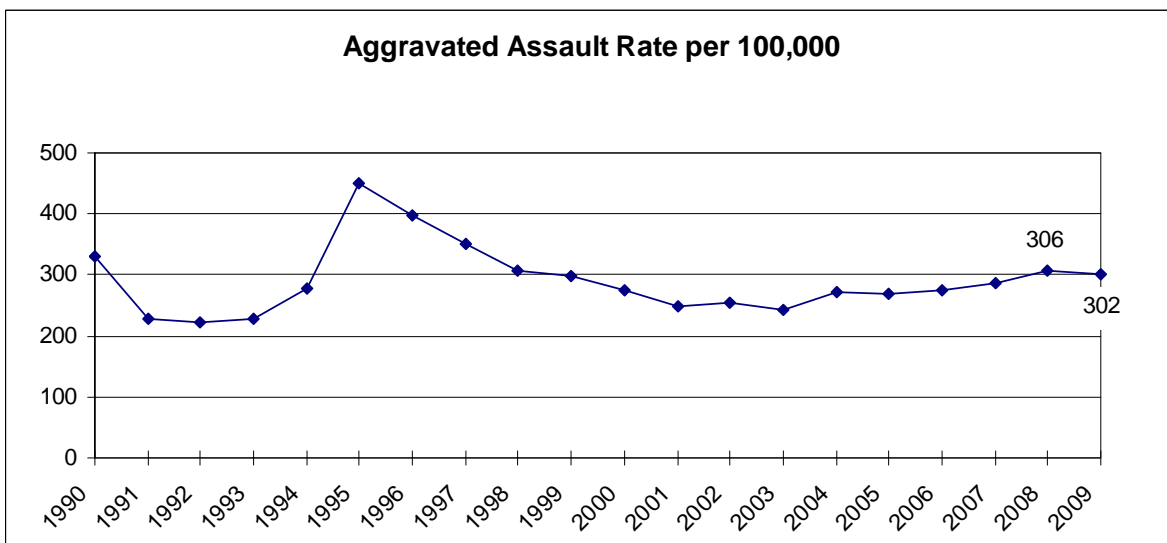


Eighty-three percent of robberies were committed against individuals, as compared with 17% that occurred at businesses. In 2008, 84% of robberies were committed against individuals and 16% occurred at businesses.

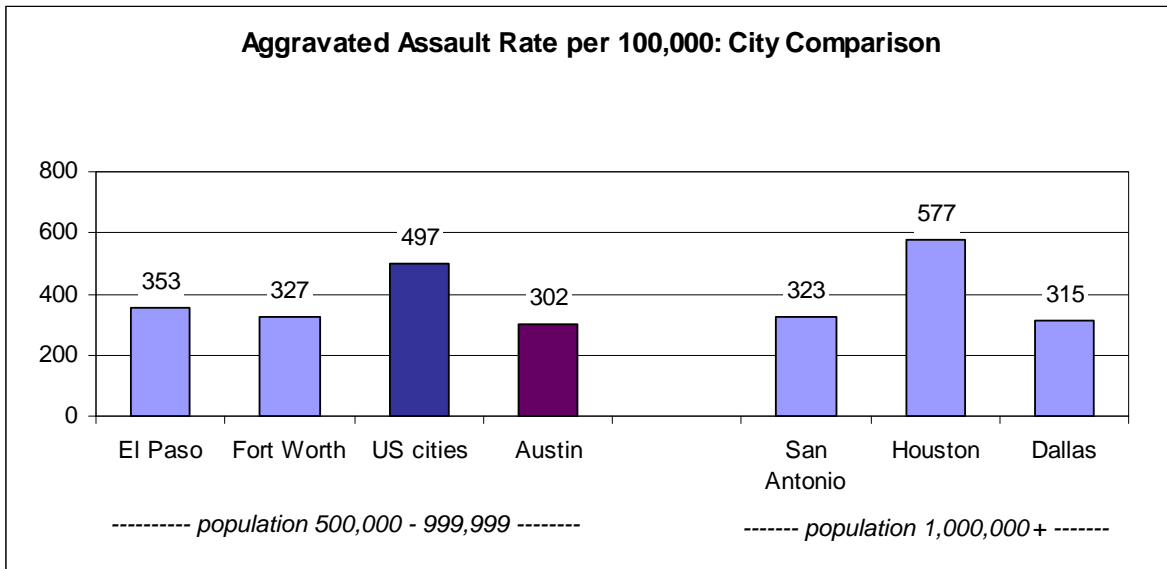


Aggravated Assault

There were 2,322 reported victims of aggravated assault in 2009, up from 2,306 in 2008. The rate was 302 victims per 100,000 residents, which represents a slight decrease from the rate of 306 in 2008. Over the previous 10 years (1998 to 2007), the rate of aggravated assault victims ranged from 242 to 307.

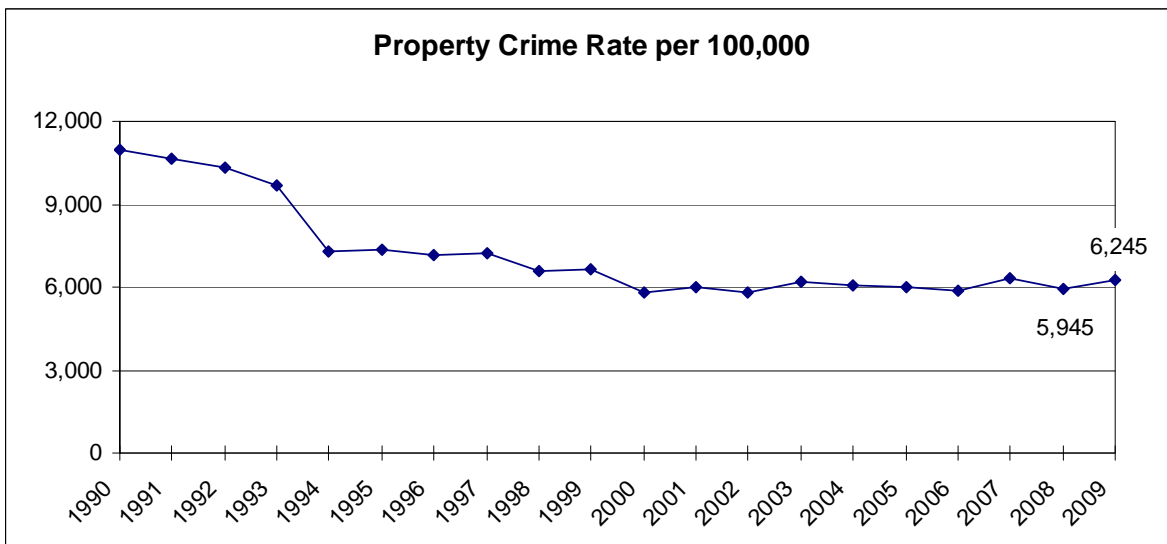


Austin's rate of aggravated assault victims was 39% lower than other US cities of the same size.



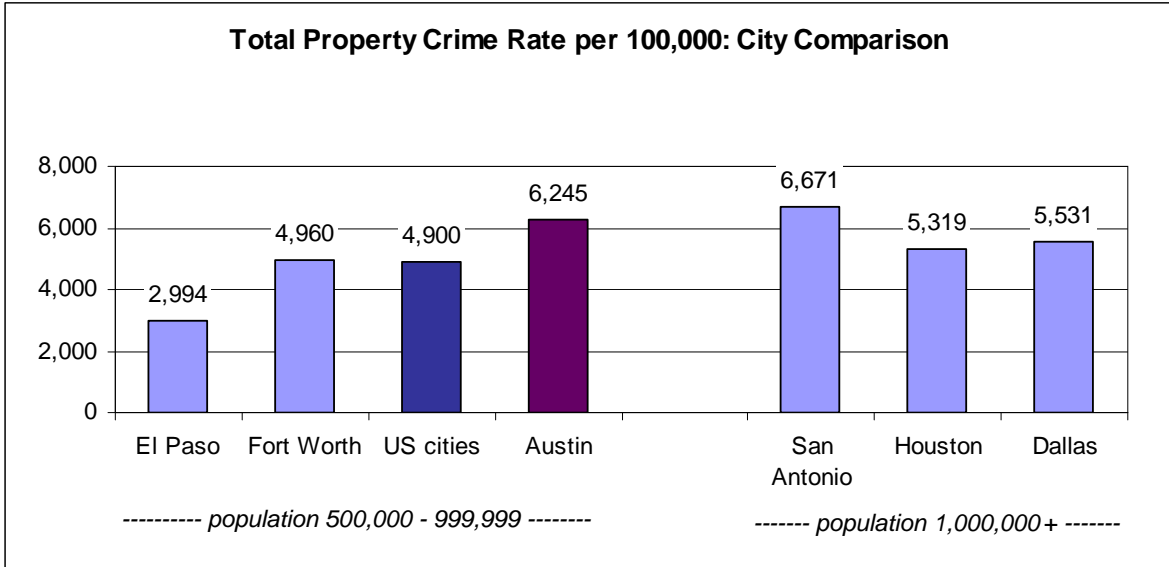
Property Crime

In 2009, the number of property crimes in Austin was 48,026. This represents a 7% increase in incidents as compared with 2008 (44,801). The rate of property crime per 100,000 residents was 6,245 in 2009 – a 5% increase from the rate of 5,945 in 2008. Over the previous 10 years (1998 to 2007), the rate ranged from 5,800 to 6,616.



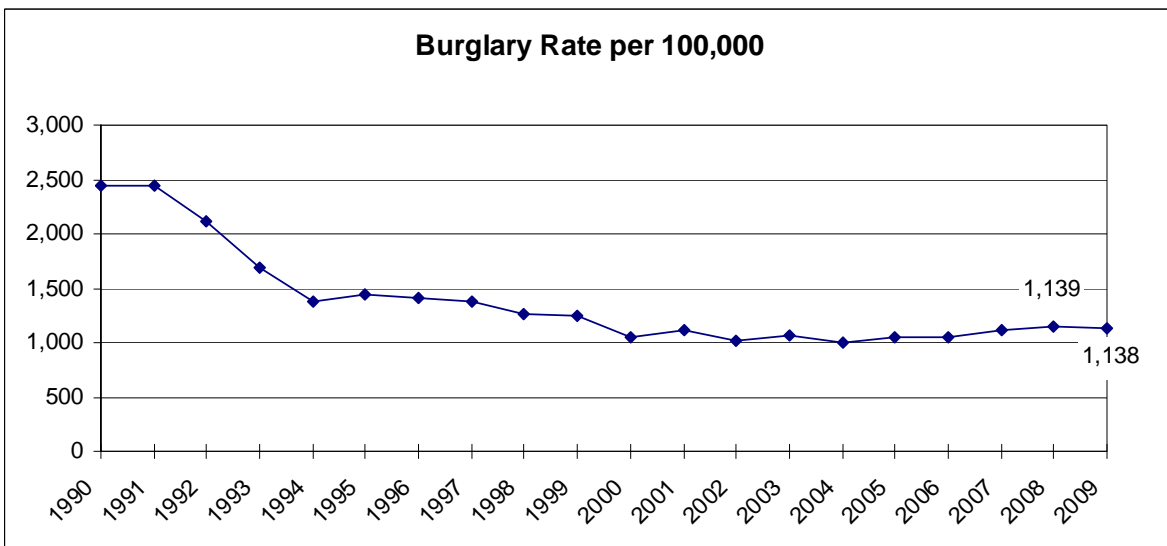
Compared to Other Cities

Austin's rate of 6,245 property crimes per 100,000 in 2009 was 27% higher than the rate of 4,900 per 100,000 for other US cities.

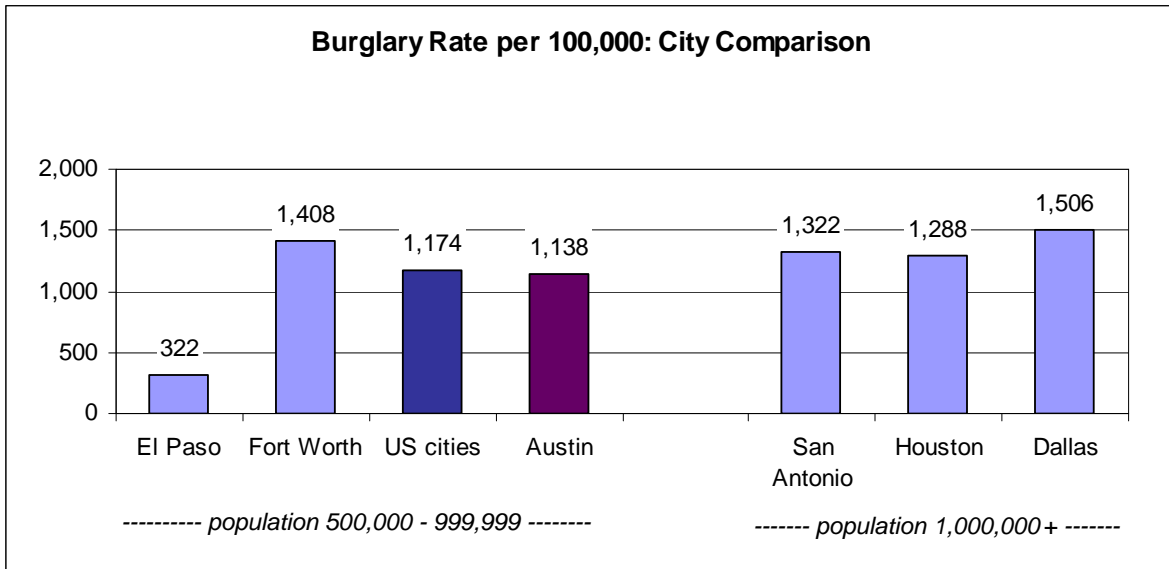


Burglary

There were 8,753 reported burglaries in 2009, up from 8,586 in 2008. The rate was 1,138 burglaries per 100,000 residents, which represents a slight decrease from the rate of 1,139 in 2008. Over the previous 10 years (1998 to 2007), the burglary rate ranged from 997 to 1,268.

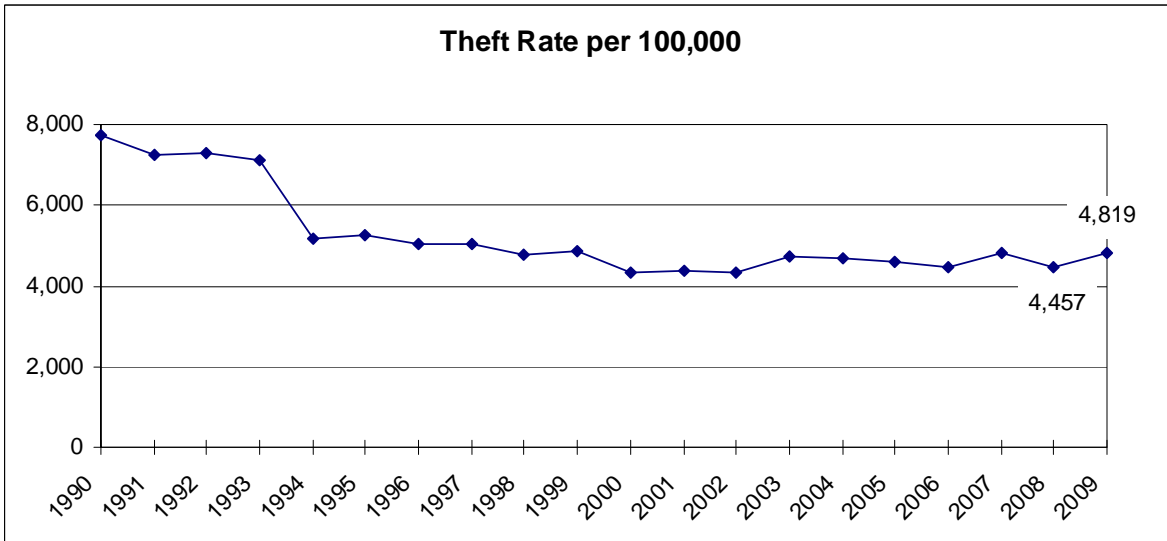


Austin's burglary rate in 2009 was 3% lower than other US cities of the same size.



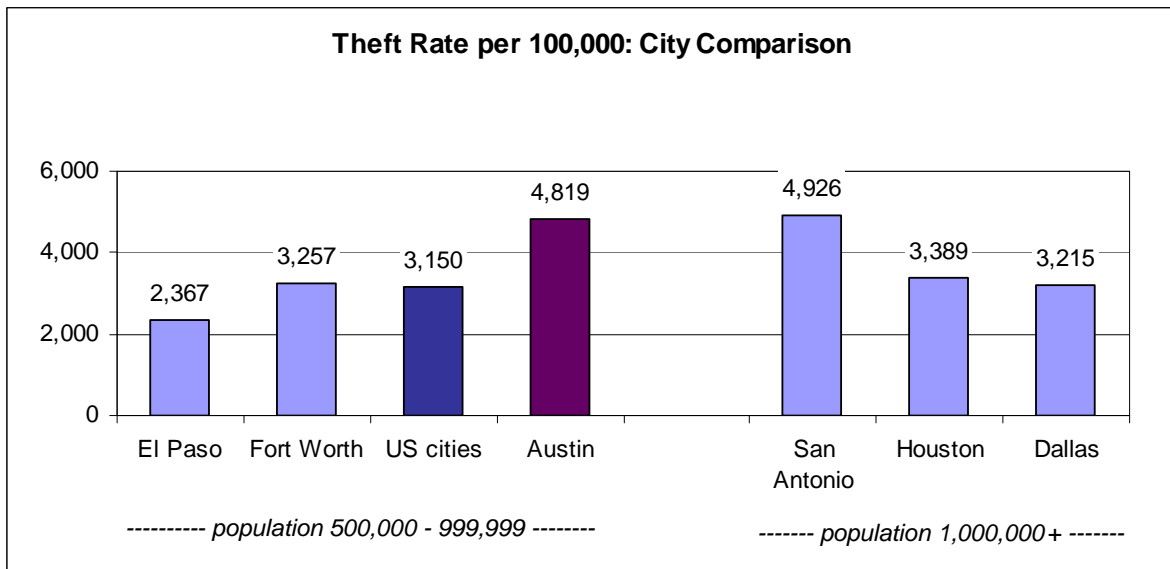
Theft

There were 37,054 reported thefts in 2009, up from 33,582 in 2008. The rate was 4,819 thefts per 100,000 residents, which represents an increase versus the rate of 4,457 in 2008. Over the previous 10 years (1998 to 2007), the theft rate ranged from 4,332 to 4,867.



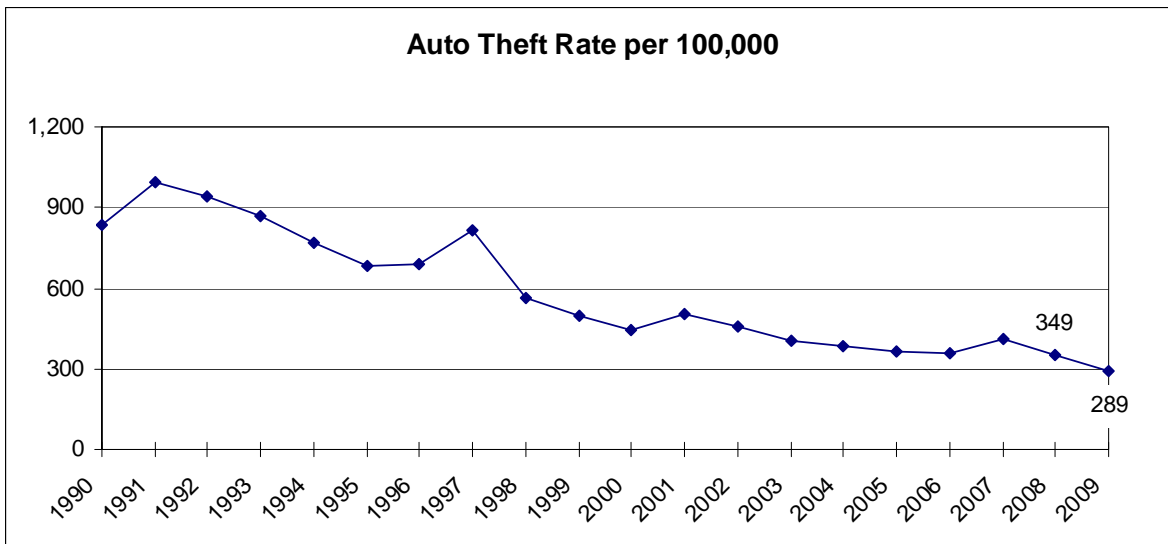
Of the 37,054 thefts reported this year, 17,882 (48%) were burglary of vehicle, or BOV offenses. This represents a 19% increase from the number of BOVs reported in 2008 (15,009; 45% of thefts).

Austin's rate of thefts in 2009 was 53% higher than other US cities of the same size.

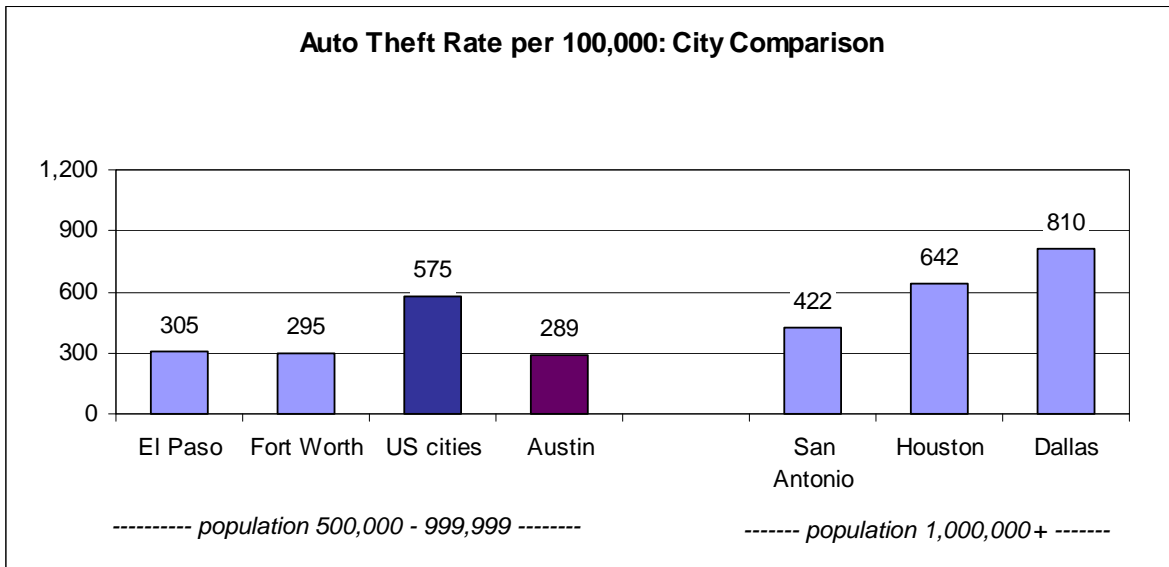


Auto Theft

There were 2,219 reported auto thefts (including attempted thefts) in 2009, down from 2,633 in 2008. The rate was 289 auto thefts per 100,000 residents, which represents a decrease from the rate of 349 in 2008. Over the previous 10 years (1998 to 2007), the rate ranged from 358 to 562.

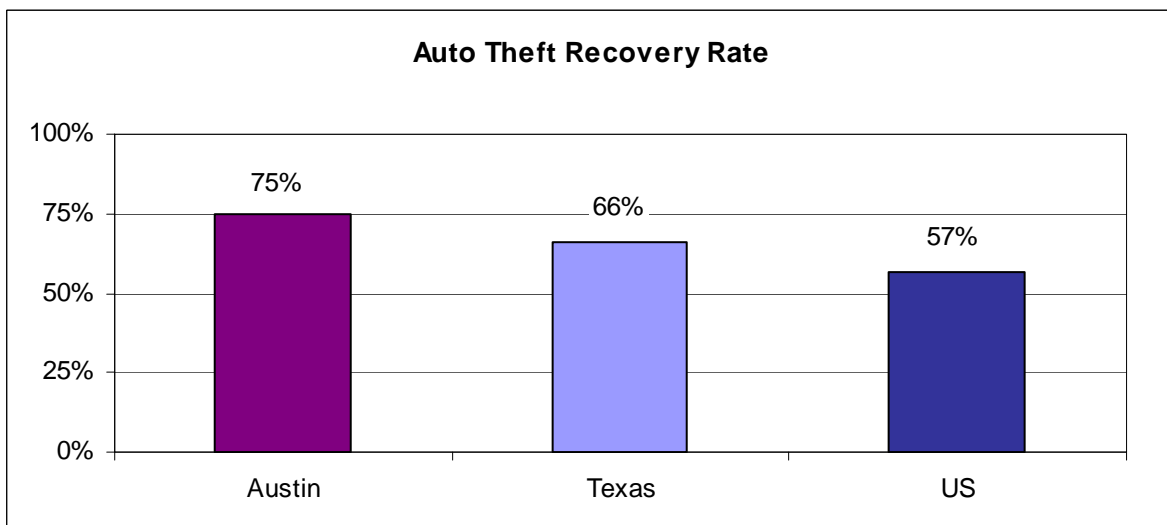


Austin's auto theft rate in 2009 was 50% lower than other US cities of the same size.



The most frequently stolen vehicles were Honda Accord sedans and trucks made by Ford, Chevrolet, and GMC. Together, they represent 57% of all stolen vehicles where the make and model were known.

In terms of recovery, of all vehicles stolen in 2009 (not including attempted thefts), 75% were successfully recovered. That rate is higher than those of either Texas or the US.



Solving Crime

Crimes can be cleared in two ways: by arrest and by exception. A crime is cleared exceptionally when a circumstance prevents an arrest. Examples include when the offender dies, the victim refuses to cooperate with the prosecution, or the offender is being prosecuted in another jurisdiction and cannot be extradited.

Part I Index Crimes	% of Crimes Cleared by Arrest or Exception	
	Austin	US Cities (pop 500,000 - 999,999)
Murder	86%	60%
Rape	46%	43%
Robbery	26%	23%
Aggravated Assault	53%	52%
Total Violent Crime	43%	41%
Burglary	5%	9%
Theft	12%	16%
Auto Theft	11%	9%
Total Property Crime	11%	14%

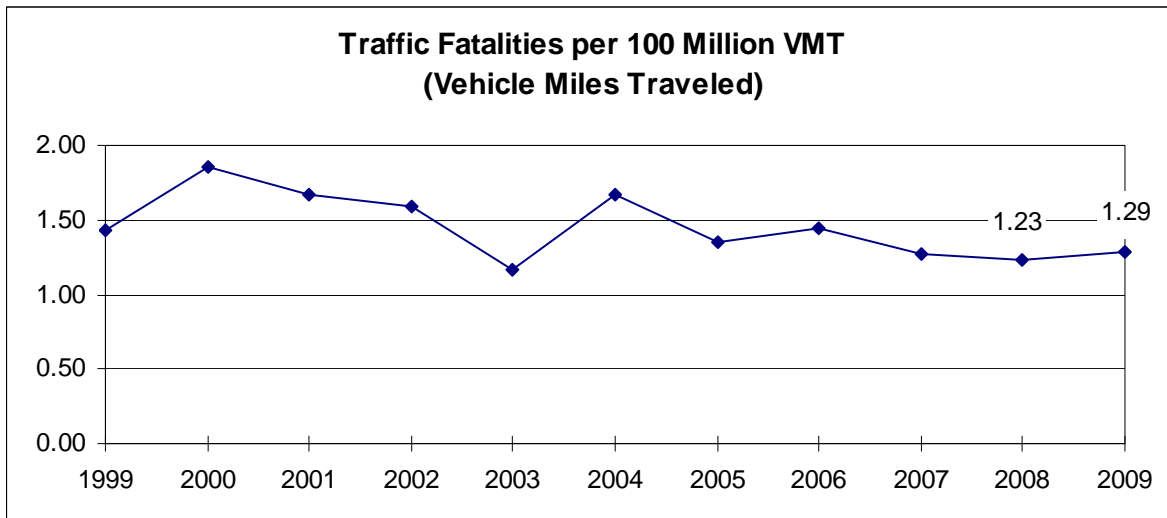
During 2009, Austin police solved, or cleared, 43% of the reported **violent crimes**. This compared with 41% for all large US cities (those with 500,000 to 999,999 residents). When looking at clearance by type of violent crime, Austin outperformed other cities on all types.

Solving **property crimes** is generally more difficult because many property crimes are discovered after the crime has occurred, with no known suspects or witnesses. During 2009 Austin solved 11% of property crimes, which was lower than the rate of 14% for other cities of similar size.

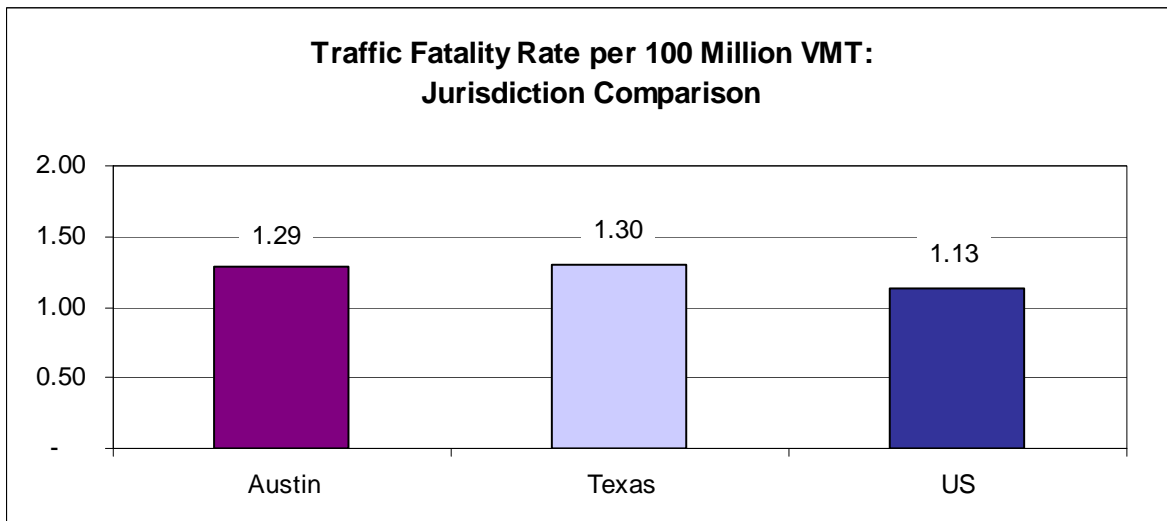
Traffic Fatalities

During 2009 there were 60 fatal collisions that resulted in 62 deaths, as compared with 57 fatal collisions that resulted in 59 deaths in 2008.

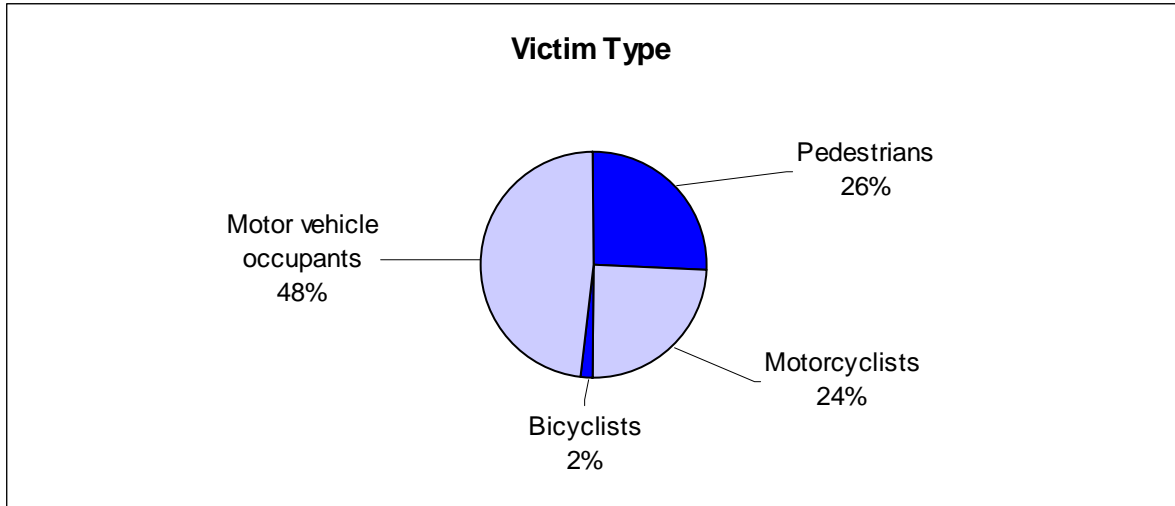
The 2009 rate was 1.29 fatalities per 100 million vehicle miles traveled (VMT), as compared with the rate of 1.23 in 2008.



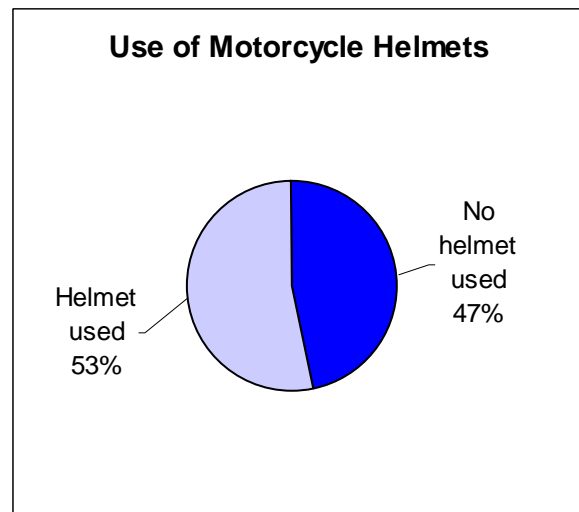
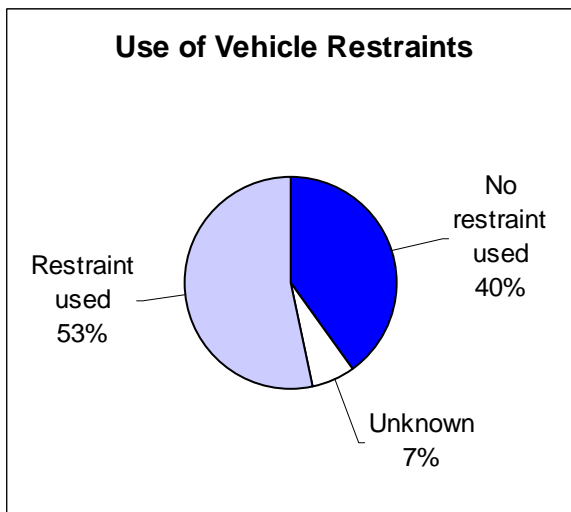
Austin's rate of 1.29 fatalities per 100 million VMT was lower than the rate of 1.30 for Texas but higher than the rate of 1.13 for the US.



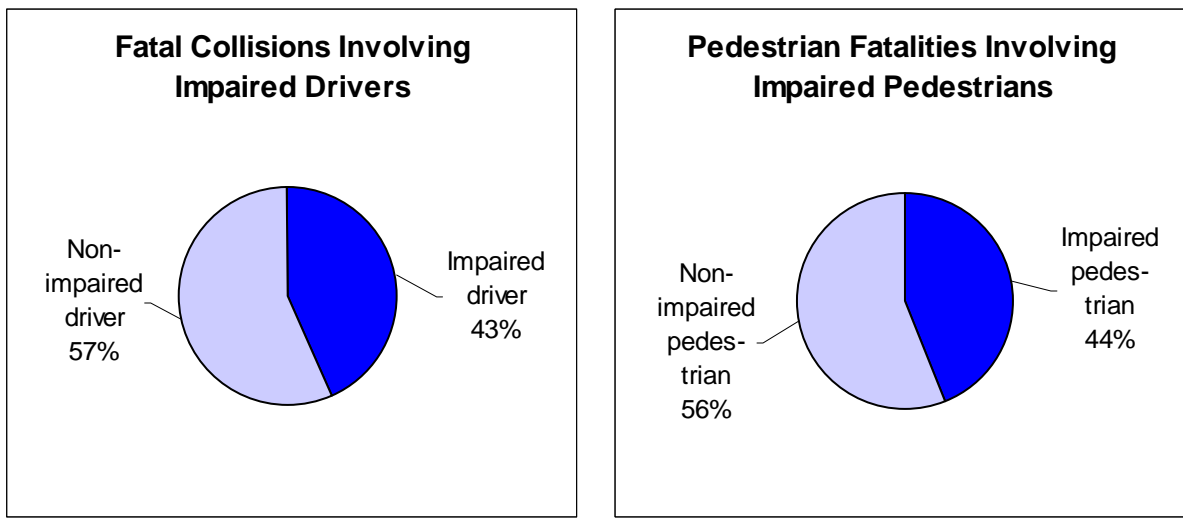
In 2009, most traffic fatalities involved motor vehicle occupants (30, or 48%), followed by pedestrians (16, or 26%), and motorcyclists (15, or 24%). In 2008, 42% of fatalities involved motor vehicle occupants, 25% involved pedestrians, and 31% involved motorcyclists.



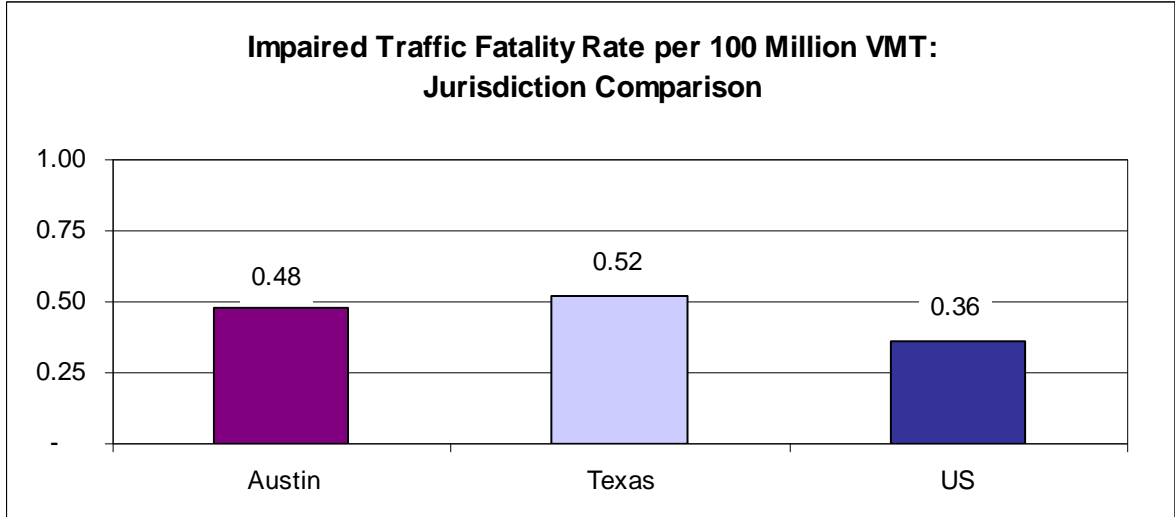
Of all motor vehicle fatalities, 12 (40%) victims were not using restraints, as compared with 28% in 2008. Of all motorcycle fatalities, seven (47%) victims were not wearing helmets, as compared with 67% in 2008.



Of all fatal crashes, 26 (43%) involved an impaired driver, as compared with 39% in 2008. Of all pedestrian fatalities, seven (44%) involved an impaired pedestrian, as compared with 47% in 2008.



Austin's rate of traffic fatalities involving impairment is .48 per 100 million vehicle miles traveled. That rate is lower than the rate for Texas (.52) but higher than the rate for the US (.36).



In 2009, 21 (35%) fatal crashes involved speed; the same proportion as in 2008. And in 2009, 26 (43%) fatal crashes occurred on freeways (e.g., IH-35, Mo-Pac, US Hwy 183, and State Hwy 71/290 West), as compared with 42% in 2008.

