

CITY OF
BEDFORD

2000 Forest Ridge Drive - Bedford, TX 76021
(817)952-2100 www.bedfordtx.gov

July 27, 2012

Tim Rogers
Editor
750 North St. Paul Street, STE 210
Dallas, Texas 75201

Re: July 2012 Suburb Rankings

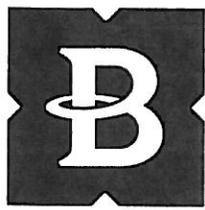
Dear Mr. Rogers:

The July 2012 edition of *D Magazine* included a feature ranking the suburbs in North Texas. As Mayor of Bedford, I've received a few inquiries about this article particularly in relation to the crime statistics. The article claims that Bedford is the 5th worst suburb in terms of incidents of violent crime per 1,000 residents. I wanted to provide your publication with some information that will help clarify our crime statistics and assist in future efforts to compare North Texas suburbs.

In this area, law enforcement agencies report their crime statistics under one of two reporting systems, either UCR (Uniform Crime Reporting) or NIBRS (National Information Based Reporting System). There are distinct differences between the two reporting systems. The FBI describes the difference as follows:

"In the (UCR) Summary reporting system, the "Hierarchy Rule" governs multiple offenses reporting. If more than one crime was committed by the same person or group of persons and the time and space intervals separating the crimes were insignificant, then the crime highest in the hierarchy is the only offense reported. Agencies do not use the Hierarchy Rule in the NIBRS. If more than one crime was committed by the same person or group of persons and the time and space intervals were insignificant, all of the crimes are reported as offenses within the same incident. For example, if a criminal burglarizes a residence and assaults the inhabitant, only the assault is reported as it takes precedent over the burglary (in UCR reporting) on the Hierarchy Rule. NIBRS reports all offenses involved in a particular incident (i.e. one burglary and one assault)."

These reporting differences can lead to significant discrepancies when accurately attempting to compare crime statistics where some report under UCR and some report under NIBRS. For example: The 2010 Annual Report for Bedford captured 175 offenses involving Aggravated Assaults. Had this data been reported under UCR, this number would have been significantly lower at 126. This is a 39% difference and is a telling example of the difficulty in attempting to accurately compare UCR versus NIBRS reporting cities. Specifically, if Bedford's violent crime statistic that was reported in the article was converted UCR it is 3.96 incidents of violent crime per 1,000 residents rather than 4.56.



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Bedford is one of 52 Texas agencies currently reporting under NIBRS. There are 1,010 Texas agencies reporting under UCR – including the vast majority of the cities listed in your article. Bedford will continue to report under NIBRS as we firmly believe it is the best process. There is a progression to NIBRS among law enforcement agencies but it has been a slow process. A quote from the Texas Department of Public Safety Uniform Crime Reporting Division summarizes this transition, "NIBRS is the future of crime statistics in the U.S., and every effort is being made to encourage law enforcement agencies across the nation to become part of it."

We do appreciate your efforts to keep the community informed and to that point we are committed to trying to help your magazine and other media sources. In the future, Bedford will still report under NIBRS. However, we will also report our data on our website and in our annual report under UCR as well. We feel this will better assist the media and our citizens who are attempting to accurately weigh various factors such as you described in your article.

Beginning with August 1, 2012, Bedford will begin presenting our crime statistics on the website www.bedfordpolice.com in both NIBRS and UCR. Future annual reports will also report the data under both systems. If we can ever be of assistance or provide clarification on our statistics, you may also contact the Bedford Record's Supervisor Debbie Carlisle at 817.952.2438.

Sincerely,

Jim Griffin
Mayor