



Robert C. Haas
Police Commissioner

City of Cambridge Police Department

TELEPHONE
(617) 349-3300

FAX
(617) 349-3320

WEB
www.cambridgepolice.org

Robert W. Healy
City Manager

August 27, 2010

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City Manager

Re: City Council Order No. 12 dated May 24, 2010

Dear Sir:

As requested I am responding to the above City Council Order regarding University Crime and how best to address the statistics presented in the Daily Beast report of September, 2009.

1. **Report Used Flawed Methodology** – The methodology used in the Daily Beast report has received criticism and may not be accurate in truly representing dangerousness of colleges. The system includes: weighting some crimes much more heavily, including off campus crimes “corresponding with a broader map of campus reach”, projecting school crime data “we adjusted each school’s number for the violent crime rate increase or decrease in the local area”, further adjusting the score based on size of student body, and other factors that aren’t readily apparent.
 - a. The study combines standards from both the FBI and the Department of Education. Specifically, the article employs two different methodologies, from two different agencies, over two different years to form its conclusion.
 - b. The geographic areas evaluated beyond campus boundaries are also not clear and subject to vast differences. For example, a school could be located in a small area with only a few city roads which border it. This is much different than a campus like MIT which spans a large area of Cambridge, has many busy roads (Massachusetts Ave.) which pass through it, etc.
 - c. These schools are also located in heavily trafficked areas. In MIT’s case, it is located on a main thoroughfare into and out of Boston, which is likely to

contribute to increased crime. Harvard Square is a heavily visited area by tourists and other visitors to the city which are frequent targets of opportunistic thieves.

- d. Harvard also has several campuses and extension schools located in higher-crime areas of Boston which may contribute to its ranking while affecting few students at their main campus in Cambridge.
- e. As an example of the flawed and confusing methodology, and inconclusive results, The Daily Beast Report ranked Emerson College in Boston as the most dangerous in the country. Though, they acknowledge in the report that "*Emerson College is an extremely safe campus with little or no crime on campus each year*".

2. College Crime Reporting is Not Accurate or Consistent – The report acknowledges that schools, such as Harvard, may appear to have higher crime numbers because they do a superior job reporting incidents.

- a. It is widely believed that the college crime reporting system is flawed and that may schools may vastly under report crime in order to "save face."
- b. Depending on how institutions classify certain times of crime, i.e. "burglary" vs. "larceny," they may have been counted differently by this analysis, weighted more heavily, or in the case of larcenies, not counted at all. In fact, the majority of crimes reported at Harvard were burglaries which are considered the most prone to over reporting because of the confusing 216 page manual published by the U.S. Department of Education which governs the reporting of college crime.
- c. The Daily Beast acknowledges that Harvard has a high number of reported rapes, but that "*is likely because the university is particularly good at getting students to report date and acquaintance rape, and therefore may actually reflect campus safety instead of danger.*"

3. Strong City Relationships with Schools – The City of Cambridge and the Cambridge Police Department both have very strong relationships with MIT and Harvard.

- a. Cambridge Police will begin providing regular in-service training to Harvard University Police and MIT Police in a combined setting with Cambridge Police Officers.
- b. CPD is working with universities to incorporate CPD crime prevention and safety tips geared towards students in the welcome/orientation material they receive. Members of the Cambridge Police Community Relations Unit met with students this at orientation days at the beginning of the fall semester to pass out informational packets containing information on how to report crimes, how to keep their belongings safe, how to sign up for our Citizen Alert program, etc.

- 4. Report is Several Years Old and Crime in Cambridge is at a 40-Year Low -** The data used in this analysis was for the years 2007 and 2008 which saw an uptick in crime in Cambridge. Crime is currently at record lows.
- a. Since 2007, crime in Cambridge has steadily declined, and as of the first quarter of 2010, is at a 40-year low. Between 2008 and 2009, we recorded a 10% decrease in total crime in Cambridge, and in the last decade from 2000 to 2009 there was a decrease of 19% (See Appendix I and II).
 - b. With the drastic reductions in city-wide crime that we have experienced in Cambridge since the data from this report were used, we are hopeful that when the numbers for 2009 are released Harvard and MIT will both see their rankings improve.

Should you require additional information please contact me.

Sincerely,

Robert C. Haas
Police Commissioner

RCH/bk

Witness a Crime or Suspicious Activity?

Send an ANONYMOUS Text Message to Tip411 (847411). Begin your text with Tip650 and then type your message.



You will receive a response from police with the option to continue communicating.

*Remember, this is not a replacement for 9-1-1. If you witness an emergency situation, please call 9-1-1 immediately!

Help CPD Fight Crime

Call our 24 Hour Anonymous Drug Tip Hotline at
617-349-3359

Take your time when leaving a message. Speak clearly and don't rush. Be as specific as possible when providing the following information:



- Location of the incident. Include the street address of building or house, names of nearest intersecting streets, landmarks near the scene.
- Description of the persons involved. Include the height, weight, sex, age, skin and hair color, clothing, and distinguishing marks.
- Description of vehicles. Include the make, model, color, and license plate.

Emergency 9-1-1 Facts

If you've ever called 9-1-1 you may wonder why the dispatcher seems insistent upon asking you a series of questions instead of dispatching help. Rest assured, they are doing both!

Cambridge uses a specialized system (Caller Aided Dispatch) that allows the dispatcher to transfer information electronically and automatically. You don't hear them telling someone where to go because there is nothing to be heard!

So why answer all those questions?

It helps us provide the appropriate equipment and resource response as well as begin providing immediate life saving instructions.

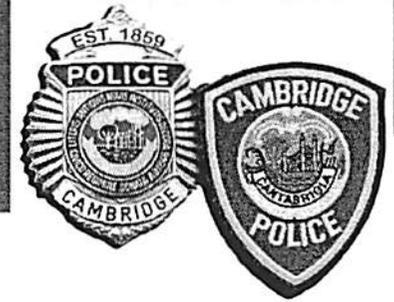
If you need to call 9-1-1 and you are unable to speak for reasons such as a physical disability, domestic violence, home invasion, no access to a TTY or a language barrier, etc., please follow these simple instructions when using a touch-tone telephone:

First: DIAL 9-1-1, then:

IF YOU NEED POLICE PRESS (1)

IF YOU NEED FIRE PRESS (2)

IF YOU NEED AMBULANCE PRESS (3)



Important Information from the Cambridge Police

Cambridge Police Department
125 Sixth Street
Cambridge, MA 02142

Main Telephone Numbers
(Non-Emergency): 617-349-3300
Emergency: Call 9-1-1

www.CambridgePolice.org

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Our Mission:

The Cambridge Police Department is committed to the enforcement of laws and preservation of order that protect the rights and property of every person within the City of Cambridge. Our mission is to provide the highest quality of police service and to impact crime and its associated elements through the utilization of new and proven crime prevention strategies and problem-solving partnerships with our community.

CPD in Partnership with University PD

When on campus, many colleges and universities have their own police officers who take reports and handle crimes. However, when a crime reaches a certain level of seriousness, university police may reach out to the Cambridge Police Department or other law enforcement agencies for assistance.

Out in the City...

When off campus, at restaurants, bars, or walking city streets, Cambridge Police Officers will be the law enforcement officials that you encounter. Our job is to serve and protect you as citizens of Cambridge during your time here as students. Please remember to call 9-1-1 if you need immediate assistance.

Want to Know What CPD is Doing?

CPD recently launched its Twitter and Facebook accounts to update the public on community events, share crime alerts, and get feedback from citizens by using social media to interact via channels where people now get their news and share information.

Follow @CambridgePolice on



and

Fan "Cambridge Police Department" on



Important Crime and Citizen Alerts

Sign up to receive alerts via email and/or text message when Cambridge Police need to notify you about important information. Often, this is information about an incident that occurred in your area so that you can be alert and pay extra attention to your surroundings to help avoid becoming a victim of crime.



To sign up for Citizen Observer, visit www.CambridgePolice.org and click on "The Alert Network" link on the left side of the page. Once there, click "Sign Up for Alerts" and follow the simple instructions.

Protect Yourself!

Safety tips for walking and jogging:

- Walk with a friend or in a group whenever possible.
- Be aware of your surroundings at all times while talking on your cell phone or listening to music while walking or jogging alone.
- Walk in well-traveled, well-lit areas, avoiding shortcuts through parks, construction sites, alleys and parking lots.
- Walk with confidence on the street and at a good steady pace. Keep your head up and observe your surroundings. Don't look down at the ground.

Safety tips to protect your belongings:

- Don't label your keys with your name and address. Don't leave house keys on the same chain as car keys when having work done on your car.
- Never hang your purse or jacket with valuables in the pockets over the back of your chair while dining out.
- Keep a list of all credit and identification cards at home along with the card number and customer service phone number in the event you need to close the account due to theft.
- Exercise caution when using ATM machines. Only use ATMs located in well-lit, well-travelled areas.
- Do not keep your social security card in your purse or wallet.

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APPENDIX I

**CAMBRIDGE UNIFORM CRIME REPORT STATISTICS
1990-2009***

Crime	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	Avg. 1990-1999	Avg. 2000-2009	Avg. 1990-2009	% Change 2008-2009**	% Change 2000-2009**
Murder	3	5	2	2	1	3	1	2	2	2	1	1	6	3	0	3	2	0	1	2	2	2	2	Inc.	Inc.
Rape	29	38	33	30	28	35	34	24	25	15	11	15	10	7	10	14	11	16	17	20	29	13	21	18%	82%
Robbery	431	399	286	253	276	295	227	176	208	165	186	181	195	229	245	239	208	161	177	172	272	199	235	-3%	-8%
Aggravated Assault	614	567	551	643	473	463	381	370	369	348	322	272	284	271	248	244	237	243	274	255	478	265	371	-7%	-21%
Burglary	1,470	1,098	866	929	774	953	791	596	695	567	552	688	720	651	724	623	685	653	467	429	874	619	747	-8%	-22%
Larceny/Theft	3,136	3,363	3,326	3,563	3,351	3,313	2,973	2,779	2,753	2,819	2,820	2,740	2,764	2,389	2,654	2,396	2,377	2,838	2,788	2,496	3,138	2,626	2882	-10%	-11%
Auto Theft	1,353	1,012	887	964	761	558	544	483	397	431	498	523	425	419	438	295	233	244	244	196	739	352	545	-20%	-61%
Total Violent	1,077	1,009	872	928	778	796	643	572	604	530	520	469	495	510	503	500	458	420	469	449	781	479	630	-4%	-14%
Total Property	5,959	5,473	5,079	5,456	5,086	4,824	4,308	3,858	3,845	3,817	3,870	3,951	3,909	3,459	3,816	3,314	3,295	3,735	3,499	3,121	4,771	3,597	4184	-11%	-19%
Total	7,036	6,482	5,951	6,384	5,664	5,620	4,951	4,430	4,449	4,347	4,390	4,420	4,404	3,969	4,319	3,814	3,753	4,155	3,968	3,570	5,531	4,076	4804	-10%	-19%

* Note: Inc = percentages are not calculated for numbers so small so as to prevent a statistically misleading percentage.

*The Cambridge Police Department voluntarily submits Uniform Crime Report statistics to the FBI for national comparison. See <http://www.fbi.gov/ucr/ucr.htm> for more information.

**Percent changes are rounded to the nearest whole number. A 0% change means that there was less than a .5% increase or decrease.

Please Note: Due to reclassification year to year, final numbers are subject to change.