



# Issue Area: Safety

## Digging a little deeper

On our website and in the summary report for Vital Signs, we have provided a number of statistics for each of our areas. Following is much more detailed data and sources for each statistic.

## Overview

How safe we feel in our community can affect our overall quality of life. One's sense of safety and security can be influenced by many different factors. These can include one's concern about different types of crime or other activities in their neighbourhood as well as one's general sense of connection to their community and their belief that they can rely on others in an emergency. Building a strong sense of safety and security is central to our success in creating strong, vibrant and liveable communities.

Our complex geography and climate necessitate the integration of safety services in many situations. Staff & volunteers in police, fire, ambulance, search and rescue and other organizations work together every day.

Safety is an integral part of any community and the emergency services responsible play a very important role. Recently, police and search and rescue cases have decreased, fire calls are steady, and ambulance calls have increased.

## Services

### Fire

The Golden fire department is comprised of a full-time Fire Chief and numerous volunteers. The department primarily responds to fire-related calls; however they also assist local RCMP and ambulance in motor vehicle accidents and as first responders for calls to administer medical assistance and first aid. In the past three years, from 2008-2010, the calls to the fire department have been fairly consistent with the average being 78 calls per year.

### Golden and District Search and Rescue

Golden and District Search and Rescue (GADSAR) is a non-profit organization comprised solely of volunteers that services 1200 square kilometers in Golden and the surrounding area, also referred to as 'Area A'. GADSAR is responsible for providing ground search and rescue services including incidents involving missing (lost), or injured persons. GADSAR is one of the few search and rescue teams in the province that assists local RCMP in road rescues and motor vehicle incidents (MVI) requiring extrication. In 2005 GADSAR responded to 53 MVIs and this number has steadily declined

to 35 MIVs in 2010. The decrease in calls may be due to the recent upgrading of highways and bridges in the area. Over the same period of time, GADSAR responded to an average of 30 calls per year to provide ground search and rescue services.

### **British Columbia Ambulance Service**

The British Columbia Ambulance Service (BCAS) is the largest provider of emergency medical services in Canada. Their services range from providing pre-hospital care and being the first on scene when a medical emergency arises to patient transport and air ambulance services. Statistically, the BCAS in Golden has experienced a steady increase in calls - from 874 in 2006 to 1050 calls in 2010. Golden BCAS partially attributes this increase to the addition of such resources as MRIs and CT Scans available at the East Kootenay Regional Hospital, thus requiring a higher number of patient transfers to Cranbrook, BC. The increase in calls can also be partially attributed to the increased calls to motor vehicle incidents (MIVs).

### **Police**

The Golden/Field Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) Detachment is comprised of 24 staff who attend to general duty calls, highway patrol, and administrative functions. Golden has seen a decrease in its file count from 4565 files in 2006 to 3507 in 2010. This decrease can be attributed, in part, to a new file recording system that was introduced in 2007. The other contributing factor has been the poor economy over the past few years that has impacted tourism in the community, therefore, leading to less visitors to the community and less complaints generated by those individuals.

## **Statistics**

### **II-1: Total Violent Criminal Code Violations Per 100,000 Population**

At 1,598 per 100,000 persons in 2010, the violent crime rate in Golden was 24.6 per cent above the national average (1,282 per 100,000) and 2.3 per cent above the provincial average (1,562 per 100,000). The rate decreased 11.3 per cent from 1,802 per 100,000 in 2009. It was down 5.6 per cent from 1,693 per 100,000 in 1998, the earliest year for which data are available.

### **II-2: Total Property Crime Violations Per 100,000**

At 4,132 per 100,000 persons in 2010, the property crime rate in Golden was 7.4 per cent above the national average (3,846 per 100,000) and 19.1 per cent below the provincial average (5,106 per 100,000). The rate decreased 17.5 per cent from 5,011 per 100,000 in 2009. It was down 41.2 per cent from 7,022 per 100,000 in 1998, the earliest year for which data are available.

### **II-3: Criminal Code Traffic Violations per 100,000 Population**

At 992 per 100,000 persons in 2010, the traffic crime rate in Golden was 141.6 per cent above the national average (410 per 100,000) and 121.8 per cent above the provincial average (447 per 100,000). The rate decreased 27.4 per cent from 1,365 per 100,000 in 2009. It was up 21.0 per cent from 820 per 100,000 in 1998, the earliest year for which data are available.

### **II-6: Motor Vehicle Theft Rate**

At 344 per 100,000 persons in 2010, the motor vehicle theft rate in Golden was 26.7 per cent above the national average (272 per 100,000) and 2.2 per cent below the provincial average (352 per 100,000). The rate increased 5.1 per cent from 328 per 100,000 in 2009. The rate was up 18.4 per cent from 291 per 100,000 in 1998, the earliest year for which data are available.

**II-8: Overall Crime Severity Index**

At 86.03 in 2010, the Overall Crime Severity Index in Golden was 4.0 per cent above the national figure (82.71) and 16.0 per cent below the provincial figure (102.39). The level decreased 4.0 per cent from 89.57 in 2009 and 22.4 per cent from 110.86 in 1998, the earliest year for which data are available.

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