



Location:

Richland Hills, TX,
Police Department

Population:

55,600 Citizens

Challenge:

- Small Agency with little funding
- Citizens felt crime information was lacking
- Lack of crime data from surrounding areas

CrimeReports:

- Low cost
- Free web-based, public-facing map solution
- Cross-agency integrated crime data

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CrimeReports

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– Chief Barbara Childress

Small Agency Gets the Big Picture from CrimeReports.com

Richland Hills, Texas

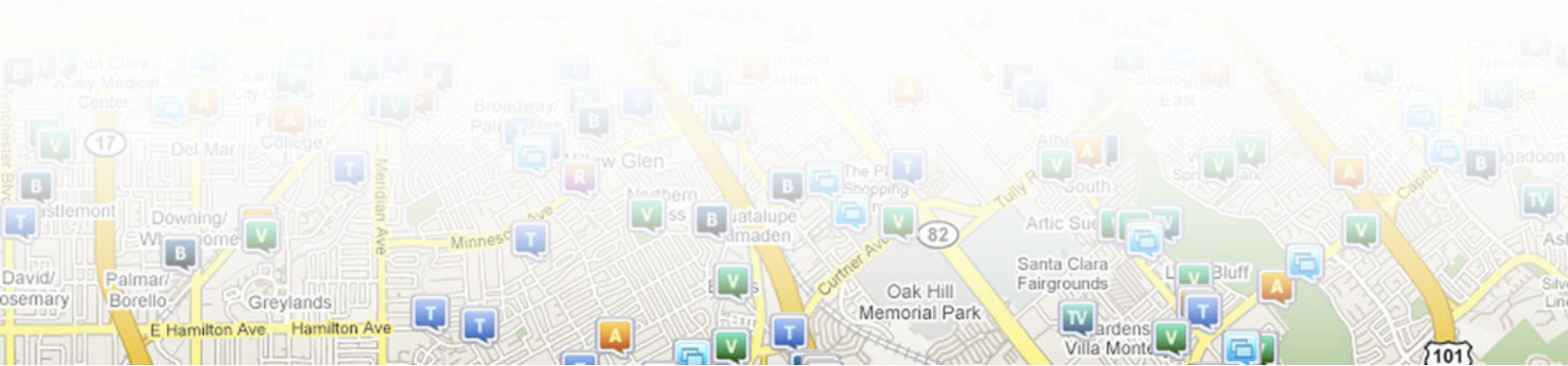
The Richland Hills Police Department covers 8,500 residents in its small, 4.2 square mile town. But the department lies in the Dallas/Ft. Worth metroplex and is surrounded by a multitude of other municipalities whose borders are not always clear to average citizens. As Chief Barbara Childress puts it, "criminals don't know where one city ends and the next begins." So, when Childress was looking for crime mapping solutions, she knew right away that in order for it to be effective, she needed the cities that bordered her town to be on the same system that she was. Keeping this in mind, she turned to CrimeReports.com.

When doing a public survey about citizens' satisfaction with the police department, Childress says that the Richland Hills PD received high marks on everything except keeping the public informed. To remedy the situation, she began looking into ways to better inform the public through the internet. She looked into a few solutions, including the creation of an email listserv, but she says other solutions "just would not serve the same purpose" and were too expensive. When she read about CrimeReports being used in Utah, she did some research and says, "I knew right away it was right for us."

Since signing up with CrimeReports, she feels the department has now met the goal of increased public awareness. Childress says that she finds "if most citizens have the knowledge, and they know what to do with it, they'll act." So, she feels comfortable with the knowledge that CrimeReports gives the public. However, she and her staff now see the internal benefits that CrimeReports provides their department as well, like the crime analytics and its usefulness as a shift briefing tool. In addition, Childress says the largest benefit is increased officer knowledge of crimes outside of the Richland Hills jurisdiction.

In one instance, Richland Hills had a series of daytime, residential burglaries, where the criminal was kicking in the front doors of private residences. One of the Richland Hills officers checked CrimeReports and saw the same type of burglaries occurring in a neighboring jurisdiction. The two departments were quickly able to work together, share information, and allocate resources toward the targeted area. The same scenario occurred with a series of nighttime business burglaries along the northern border of Richland Hills, and, again, Childress was able to reallocate resources to the targeted area and share information across jurisdictional boundaries.

Childress says that, in instances like these, they used to have to wait days or weeks for information in a bulletin to circulate, or they would have to call all the surrounding agen-



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cies individually. With CrimeReports, they have an accurate picture of regional information within twenty-four hours.

Childress says that the increased knowledge that her officers now have is invaluable. And it's not just knowledge about Richland Hills. Since the surrounding areas have signed up with CrimeReports as well, she can begin to see patterns and pick up on trends that extend outside the boundaries of her small town. "Since there is no possibility of all these cities being on the same RMS or CAD," says Childress, "now we have data sharing through CrimeReports, which enables us to take a look at the big picture."

About CrimeReports.com

Serving almost 500 agencies across North America, CrimeReports.com is the largest online resource for accurate, up-to-date crime information. CrimeReports offers a family of affordable, easy-to-use software tools for law enforcement agencies to understand crime trends and share up-to-date neighborhood crime data with the public.

Community members can access the information for free at www.CrimeReports.com, empowering them to make informed decisions to help improve the safety of their neighborhood and community. CrimeReports services are offered by Public Engines, Inc. For more information, visit www.CrimeReports.com.



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