

Violent Crime / Property Crime – 2024 Data for Orange County (CA) Beach Cities

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By Dave Kiff, City Manager of Laguna Beach

Hi Laguna Neighbors –

Living in the social media age means that a lot’s out there, both in information and misinformation (or just questions). Here’s what’s up regarding this matter:

- On September 15th, the Laguna Beach Police Department put out a [press release](#) noting that, using 2024 Department of Justice data, Laguna Beach was the safest “Coastal OC city” for violent crime, and the second safest for property crime.
- This is a good benchmark that aligns with Chief Calvert’s stated mission for the Laguna Beach PD – “to be the safest coastal community in Orange County through exceptional policing and community engagement.”
- Folks wanted to see the data behind this – the below chart shows that. I did the chart using all publicly-available portals (CA DOJ and the US Census). You can replicate the same chart yourself.

Comparing OC Beach Cities - Violent or Property Crime per Capita (Calendar Year 2024)							
OC Beach City	Incidents of Violent Crime	Incidents of Property Crime	Population (2024)	Violent Crime / Population	Rank Among OC Beach Cities (VC)	Property Crime / Population	Rank Among OC Beach Cities (PC)
San Clemente	112	782	62,627	0.0017884	2nd	0.0124866	3rd
Dana Point	61	283	32,585	0.0018720	3rd	0.0086850	1st
Laguna Beach	37	210	22,564	0.0016398	1st	0.0093069	2nd
Newport Beach	206	1,533	82,970	0.0024828	5th	0.0184766	4th
Huntington Beach	394	3,781	193,151	0.0020399	4th	0.0195754	5th
Seal Beach	116	662	24,421	0.0047500	6th	0.0271078	6th

Source for Incidents: <https://openjustice.doj.ca.gov/exploration/crime-statistics/crimes-clearances>

Source for Population: www.census.gov

- Some folks didn’t read the press release carefully – we always referred to striving to be the safest coastal **Orange County** (emphasis added) city, and this was clear in the press release. At no time did we say we are the safest California coastal city - although that is a good goal, too.
- Others alleged that something nefarious had happened to our crime analyst, or that the wrong information was put out. Nope, all is well in that regard – we are recruiting for a new Analyst, though, after the incumbent moved on to other opportunities.
- Lastly, we are the ones who “deemed” us as the safest OC coastal city, following our review and analysis of DOJ data for 2024. The honor isn’t an “attaboy” that DOJ doles out. We should have phrased that more precisely.

We do our best to put out the right information to you – me included. I think we did so in this case. If you think we didn’t, let us know - we’d be happy to review it.

We appreciate the interest in this issue. In fact, we're all pretty proud of this effort – and I'm proud of the PD team for all of their good work keeping the community safe.

If Laguna Beach residents ever want to discuss crime stats or community engagement with our PD team, please don't hesitate to do so.

Sincerely,

Dave Kiff
City Manager
dkiff@lagunabeachcity.net