

# Popular article links legalized pot to reduced crime during 2014, but is that a fact?

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DENVER - A popular online article states that crime fell precipitously during 2014 in Colorado, alongside with the legalization of marijuana. But since the article provides no justification or source for the supposed statistics, 7NEWS decided to evaluate the claims for ourselves.

Originally published by Metro UK, but republished by Cannabis Culture, the article states, "Anti-marijuana activists have warned that legalizing (sic) weed would lead to increased drug addiction, mental problems and crime – but in Colorado, which legalised (sic) recreational use of marijuana, the opposite has happened."

From what we can tell, this claim might be based on old information. However, the subsequent claims of the degree to which crime fell during 2014 are unsupported and premature.

The story has engaged nearly 900,000 local readers, according to TopicPulse, a service that tracks the popular news and social media topics in real-time. It was at the top of Denver's regional trending topics list all morning.

While the article includes statistics, it includes absolutely no attribution for the source of the data. 7NEWS could not find a way to contact the author of the original story, so we decided to check our trusted sources to see what they have to say about crime during 2014.

The [FBI's Uniformed Crime Report](#), which compiles crime statistics across states, cities and counties, has not published any data for 2014. Data from the first half of the year will be published during early 2015, but a more specific date has not yet been announced.

That was our number one idea for where we could find statewide data that would make reliable comparisons year to year.

So instead, we moved down a level to the [Colorado Bureau of Investigation's annual reports](#) -- which are part of the UCR program. They have also not yet published a 2014 report.

Down one more level, to the city, we find an data set published by the Denver Police Department with information for the first 11 months of the year.

While the Metro UK article states that murder dropped by 50 percent during 2014, data proves that claim is false in the City of Denver. Through November, DPD reported 29 murders, which constitutes a decrease of 24 percent from 2013.

The article also states that overall crime has fallen by 15 percent, but the grand total of crimes reported in Denver during the first 11 months of 2014 shows an increase over the previous year.

**LINK | [See the DPD data for yourself](#)**

Other major cities, including Aurora and Colorado Springs, have not yet updated their posted crime statistics to include data from 2014.

A statement emailed by the Marijuana Industry Group on Dec. 9, does say that the legalized industry contributed to reduced violent crime, teen use of the drug and traffic fatalities. But they reference articles from August or earlier and the same 11 months of data we found from the Denver Police Department.

So where did the so-called facts of the popular article come from? We genuinely have no idea.

Maybe crime will be down for the year and maybe marijuana played a role in that, but the data is either not available or inconclusive.

*If you can find one piece of supportable data that proves the claims of reduced crime in Colorado throughout the whole year of 2014, or makes a provable case for a link between pot and reduced crime of any amount, please [email me](#). I'd be happy to update this article.*