

Taking Action

Annual Report 2011

Jefferson County

Sheriff's Office

Golden, Colorado





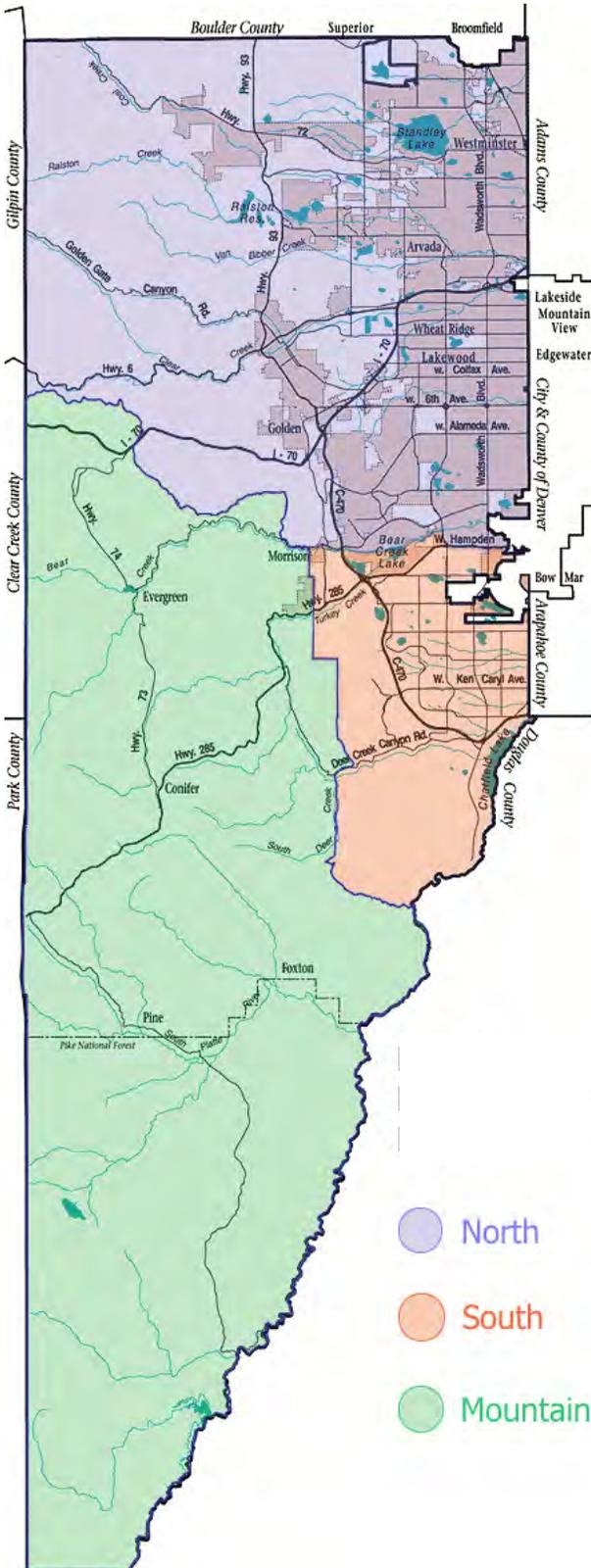
Sheriff Ted Mink

Sheriff Ted Mink was re-elected in the 2010 election to serve his final term. He has been in law enforcement for nearly 40 years, including three decades with the Arvada Police Department. In his tenure as sheriff, the agency has focused on community partnerships and proactive policing strategies to reduce crime throughout the county.





Public Safety in Jefferson County



Jefferson County, Colorado is nestled between the world-class city of Denver and the storied Rocky Mountains. Its unique geographic area includes densely populated suburban centers and rural, rugged mountain regions.

It's bisected by Interstate 70, one of the nation's busiest highways. These factors combine to make for a wide variety of calls including burglary, drugs, identity theft and domestic violence and black bear break-ins.

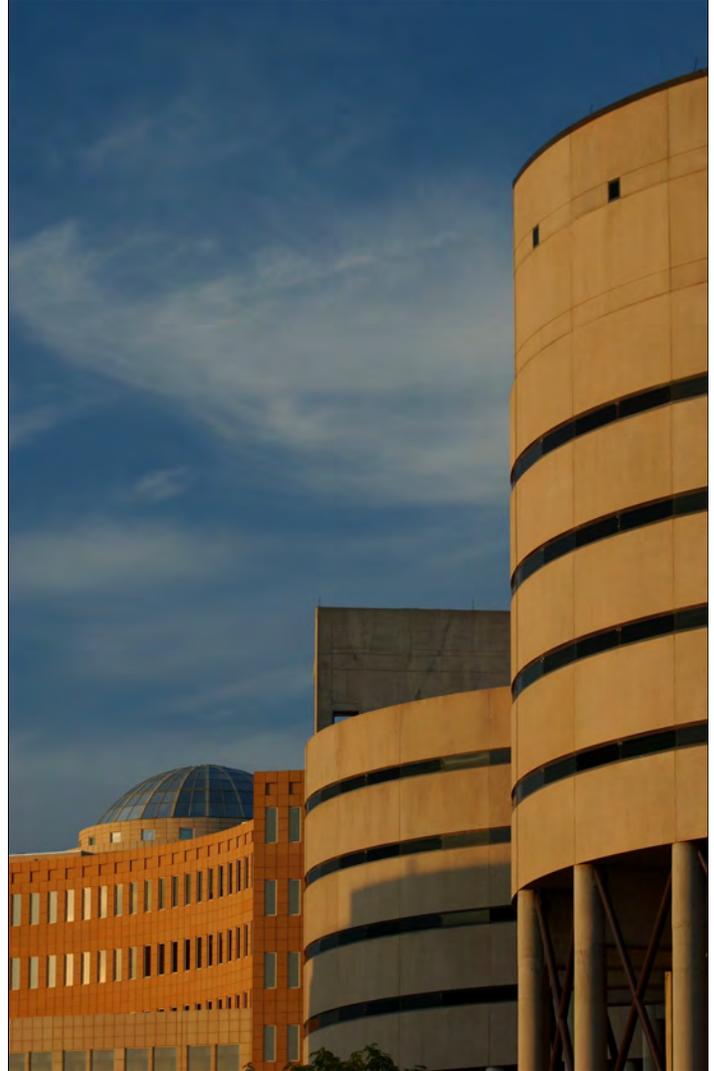
Both major and minor crimes have been steadily decreasing in Jefferson County since 2003, a trend mirrored nationwide. About two-thirds of property crime in Jefferson County is "opportunity" crime, or unforced break-ins.



County Jail

The county jail was built to hold about 1,300 inmates in maximum, medium and minimum security zones. The direct-supervision design of the jail allows staff members to supervise large numbers of inmates effectively.

Staff and volunteers provide a variety of services and programs for stability and enrichment, while an in-house medical staff ensures the health and safety of inmates. In 2011, the average daily population of the county jail was 1211, its lowest mark since 2004.



AVERAGE DAILY JAIL POPULATION*

2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
1153	1334	1480	1420	1397	1406	1311	1211

*Includes alternative sentencing programs



Emergency Preparedness

The sheriff of Jefferson County serves as the county's fire marshal. It's a little-known fact: wildfire management and prevention are his responsibility. In March, the Indian Gulch Fire and several smaller fires broke out in Jefferson County. The sheriff's Emergency Management office managed the multi-agency responses to these wildfires.

Emergency Management also works with the community on prevention, education and preparedness. Visit jeffco.us/ready for tips on fire mitigation, the 72-hour emergency kit and other ways to be prepared.

Follow the Sheriff's Office on Twitter at @jeffcosherriffo



The image shows a screenshot of the Twitter profile for the Jefferson County Sheriff's Office (@jeffcosherriffo). The profile header includes the name "Jeffcosherriffo", the handle "@jeffcosherriffo", and a bio: "Official Twitter site. Serving its communities with honesty, dignity and respect since 1859. Please use 911, not Twitter, to report a crime or emergency." The location is listed as "Golden, Colorado" and the website as "http://www.jeffcosherriffo.com". The profile shows 50 tweets, 54 following, and 450 followers. A "Follow" button is visible. Below the header, there is a "Stay in touch with Jeffcosherriffo" section with a "Join Twitter today" link and a sign-up form with fields for "Full name", "Email", and "Password", and a "Sign up" button. To the right of the sign-up form is a "Tweets" section with a list of recent tweets. The first tweet is dated 13 Feb and says "Good news. Both victims from the assault at Columbine HS have been released from the hospital with minor hand injuries." The second tweet is dated 13 Feb and says "14 yo female student was arrested after assaulting two other students with a hammer at Columbine HS; victims taken to hospital". The third tweet is dated 10:43 AM - 7 Feb 12 and says "The US Forest Service will be burning slash piles today along FS Roads 550 & 543 in the Wellington Lake area. Good day for it!". The fourth tweet is dated 1 Feb and says "The US Forest Service will be burning slash piles today along FSRs 550 and 549, Buffalo Creek/Bailey area." The fifth tweet is dated 31 Jan and says "Great news! Jeffco's Citizens' Academy starts in April and apps. are being accepted now! Come visit us at...".



2011 Headlines

Storage unit burglaries solved

In early 2011, a marked increase in storage unit burglaries metro-wide prompted Sheriff's Office commanders to assign extra patrols of storage unit facilities. On February 22, at about 1:30 a.m., deputies arrested two men for suspicion of burglary at the Mini-U-Storage facility at 7322 S. Carr Street. The suspects have been linked to more than 100 storage unit burglaries in unincorporated Jefferson County, Lakewood, Arvada, Littleton and Douglas County.



Indian Gulch fire burns near Golden

On Sunday morning, March 20, fire was reported north of Golden between Clear Creek Canyon and Golden Gate Canyon. By that afternoon the fire had spread to 150 acres and was not contained. An e911 call to evacuate went to residents in the area.

The Sheriff's Office opened its emergency operations center. A Type 3 incident management team (IMT) convened to manage the multi-agency response. Later, a Type 1 federal IMT would be called in. Helicopters and SEAT planes were brought in for the fight, as well as firefighters and support staff from more than 60 government and nonprofit organizations.



The fire burned for a week, spreading to 1,500 acres. It approached Golden Gate Canyon Road on the north and reached south to Highway 6. Road closures were necessary throughout the week. Wind speeds and gusts were extreme.



The Sheriff's Office led public relations efforts throughout the fire. The Sheriff's Office emergency blog gave frequent, short updates on fire activity and road closures.

Investigators believe the fire was human-caused, but the exact source could not be identified. The area is traveled by transients, as well as hikers and suspected illegal hunters. At this time no suspect has been identified.

Smaller fires force scramble

On March 21, while the Indian Gulch Fire was burning near Golden, two more fires broke out in unincorporated Jefferson County, sending police and fire resources in several directions.

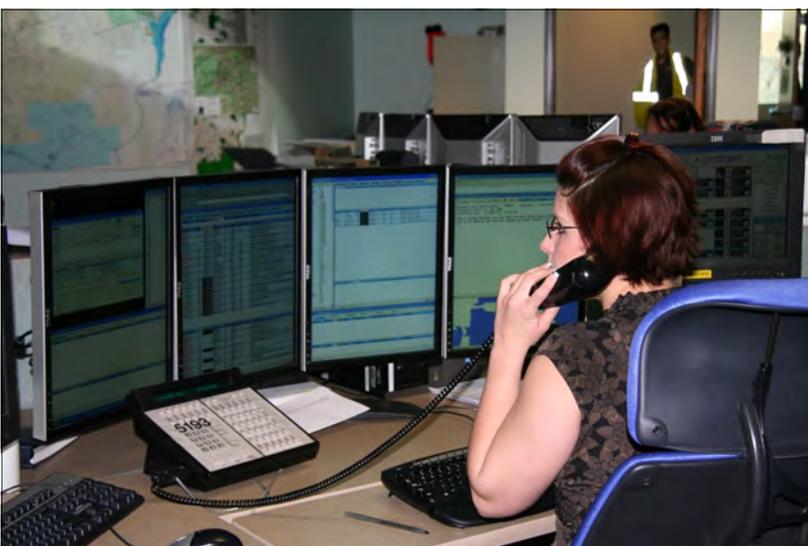
On Soda Creek Drive near I-70, a fast-moving wildfire forced evacuations. Five to ten acres burned on the hillside. In Pine, a grass fire burned three shacks. No evacuations were necessary and no homes were damaged.



Dispatchers manage Edgewater shooting

On April 5, gunfire erupted at 20th and Marshal streets in Edgewater. At the Jeffco dispatch center, dispatchers began to get calls. Their team fielded communications from the Edgewater police officer on scene, as well as 911 calls reporting the gunfire. The Edgewater officer reported that he was taking fire and needed backup.

Law enforcement officers from several different agencies responded to help the Edgewater officer. The communications center sent out three e911 launches to the neighborhood, organized resources from outside agencies, called out SWAT and called in more dispatchers.



For 40 minutes, reports of shots fired and officers being pinned down continued. When the dust had cleared, all the officers were safe and the shooter was in custody.

Man attempts bombing at Southwest Plaza

On April 20, deputies and security guards evacuated the Southwest Plaza Mall in south Jefferson County following the discovery of a crude bomb and a fire in a service hallway. Deputies swept the mall and found no other devices. The FBI and the ATF joined the investigation into the incident, which took on a heightened profile due to speculation that the bomber had deliberately chosen a mall near Columbine High School on the anniversary of the Columbine shootings.

The Sheriff's Office mobilized its incident command bus, bomb squad, K-9s, investigators and public information officers. Bomb techs rendered the device safe and removed it from the premises. The FBI took the lead on the investigation.

Evidence at the scene, security video from the mall, security video from an RTD bus, and tips from the public led investigators to identify the suspect as Earl Albert Moore, 65, a man who had just completed a prison sentence for bank robbery.

Within a few days, a woman in Boulder recognized Moore in a grocery store, and Boulder police arrested him without incident. He pled guilty to a single federal charge of arson of a building using a destructive device.



Earl Albert Moore



Coffee with a cop

“Coffee with a Cop” events continue throughout the county, allowing citizens the opportunity to ask precinct captains questions about law enforcement and crime trends.

The Golden and Wheat Ridge police departments joined our north precinct events to provide a more complete picture of crime in neighborhoods near jurisdictional boundaries.



Drug takeback days

In April and October, the Jefferson County Sheriff's joined law enforcement agencies nationwide to remove potentially dangerous controlled substances from our nation's medicine cabinets.

The DEA's National Prescription Take-Back Day provided an opportunity for the public to surrender expired, unwanted, or unused medications for destruction. Citizens turned in over 1,000 pounds of medicines, which were destroyed.

Gunman's arrest prompts collaboration

On July 7, at about 2 p.m., a report of a man with a gun outside The Edge Ice Arena at 6623 S. Ward St. prompted a lockdown and search of the building. The suspect had threatened his estranged wife, who ran inside and hid. After an extensive area search and an e911 call to area homes, the man was located and arrested in Lakewood. Following the event, Sheriff's Office staff began working more closely with Foothills Parks & Recreation staff, conducting emergency training exercises at Foothills facilities.

Animal Control seizes rabbits

On July 21, Jefferson County Animal Control Officers responded to a home on W. 75th Avenue following a tip about animal abuse involving rabbits. The tip came through a new Crime Stoppers program for reporting suspected animal cruelty and abuse cases.

After officers and veterinarians completed an inspection of about 200 rabbits and the conditions they were being kept in, they determined that the rabbits needed to be seized for their welfare.

Debe Bell, the rabbits' owner, relinquished ownership of each animal on-site, and the rabbits were transported to the Jefferson County Fairgrounds for further evaluation and care by Foothills Animal Shelter. Since that time, the rabbits have been adopted. Bell later alleged publicly that Sheriff's Office officials seized the rabbits without cause and without a search warrant.

A jury found Bell guilty of 35 counts of animal cruelty.



Denver resident Amy Ahonen goes missing

In July, the Colorado State Patrol learned that an empty vehicle it had tagged at a pullout on Highway 6 belonged to missing Denver resident Amy Ahonen. They returned to the vehicle to find that it had not been disturbed, that the car was unlocked and that Ahonen's purse and personal effects were inside. At the time, Clear Creek was running very high and was extremely dangerous.

Over the course of several weeks, searchers from the Golden Fire Department, the Alpine Rescue Team, the Sheriff's Office and the Denver Police Department searched on foot and by air for any signs of Ahonen, finding none. The case remains a Denver missing person case.



Fallen climber rescued

On August 9, deputies were dispatched to Maxwell Falls on a report of a fallen climber. A 17-year-old fell more than 25 feet while climbing rocks, and suffered a head injury.

Medical personnel and deputies carried him out, and he was transported to a hospital via helicopter.

Fatal motorcycle accidents

In July and August, three motorcyclists died as a result of crashes on Jefferson County roadways. On July 24th a 65-year-old man failed to negotiate a sweeping right turn on Highway 285 at Parmalee Gulch Road and crashed. He was airlifted and died later. He was not wearing a helmet.



In August, four deputies were conducting a vehicle search on eastbound I-70 near Genesee when a crash occurred above them on the westbound side. A motorcyclist with a rider had lost control and ejected the rider (his wife), who died instantly upon hitting a guardrail. The deputies rushed across the highway to render aid and direct traffic. A second motorcyclist failed to recognize traffic slowing for the accident, and he crashed into the back of an SUV, also hitting a guardrail and dying instantly. Both decedents were wearing helmets.



The Traffic Unit continues to conduct traffic enforcement on highways, as well as high-accident areas throughout the county. Highway 285 continues to be a focus area for district deputies due to a recent history of wrong-way drivers on that road.



No poop fairy

Dog owners are expected to pick up their dogs' poop in our neighborhoods and local parks. Many do so diligently — toting around plastic baggies on their daily walks. Others don't, leading to a buildup of dog waste. Because of the sheer number of pets in suburban communities, this hardy dog waste accumulates.

In 2011, some youth sports leagues were forced to cancel events due to dog waste on their fields. Animal Control has struggled to enforce county ordinances against so many stealth offenders. Animal Control officers hit on the crux of the problem: A lot of dog owners think that the poop “just goes away.”



Together with a small group of citizens and our local park districts, the Sheriff's Office created a campaign. It's called, ***There is no poop fairy: Please clean up after your dog.*** Throughout the summer, with a special emphasis in July, the campaign appeared across Jefferson County.



Signs, displays, and volunteers wearing blue “poop fairy” T-shirts greeted patrons of local parks, to educate them on why it's important to keep parks, trails, and sports fields free from dog poop.

Investigators solve murder of man left on Lookout Mountain

On August 17, a cyclist who had stopped to rest on Lookout Mountain Road saw a man's body over the guardrail. It showed obvious signs of trauma and had apparently been dumped there recently.

Investigators and crime lab techs arrived and began their work on the case. Within a few days, they had identified the victim, his home, his associates, and the scene of the murder.

The victim, Richard Limon, a 69-year-old Denver resident, was stabbed to death. Investigators arrested two adults and one juvenile for the murder; a fourth suspect was at large at the time of this printing.



**Murder Victim
Richard Limon**

Deputies prepare for USA Pro Challenge

On the last weekend in August the first ever USA Pro Cycling Challenge raced through Jefferson County. Thousands of people descended on the Golden area for the race, which featured 2011 Tour de France winner Cadel Evans and other international cycling greats.

The Lariat Loop on Lookout Mountain was the site of one of the “King of the Mountain” race points, and was teeming with race fans. The Sheriff’s Office worked with race promoters and local agencies for months leading up to the race to ensure event coverage, traffic flow and spectator safety.

At the same time as the USA Pro was cruising through Golden, the Rocky Mountain Air Show was taking place at Rocky Mountain Metropolitan Airport. Sheriff’s Office resources were put to the test as thousands of spectators descended on the north Jefferson county area.



New tool for dealing with distressed properties

In September, the BCC approved a new county ordinance. The Sheriff's Office proposed the ordinance in an effort to see that banks and other owners of foreclosed or vacant and hazardous properties take responsibility for security of the properties, thus mitigating health and safety hazards and quality-of-life impacts on the surrounding neighborhoods.

The ordinance requires the owners of foreclosed or vacant and hazardous properties to register with the Jeffco Planning and Zoning department, and provide emergency contact information. The registry will help Sheriff's Office personnel reach the owners of distressed properties upon discovery of graffiti, trespassers, squatters, structural problems, and other hazards.

Sheriff's safety fair

An estimated 20,000 people attended the 2011 Summerset Festival at Clement Park, and many of them took the time to visit the Sheriff's Safety Fair there.

This free annual event is in its 6th year, and features booths by Sheriff's Office special units and partner nonprofit and government agencies.

All booths provide specific safety information and giveaways to citizens, from free "The Club" tools to prevent auto theft (Metro Auto Theft Task Force) to wilderness safety tips (Alpine Rescue Team).

Citizens may ask questions of our experts in school safety, identity theft, crime prevention, victim advocacy and emergency preparedness. We ensure that our event is educational and enjoyable, with no selling of any products or services.



OMG: operation mountain guardian

In September, the Sheriff's Office participated — along with dozens of other metro area emergency services agencies — in Operation Mountain Guardian (OMG). OMG was a large-scale terrorism response training exercise that involved simulated attacks at four metro area sites. From our agency, the Jefferson County Regional SWAT Team, the Bomb Squad, members of the Incident Management Team, dispatchers and a public information officer were involved in the event.

Identity thefts in multiple jurisdictions

In the fall, two JCSO investigators started to realize that some of their cases appeared to be connected. Home Depot had several cases of forgery, with video surveillance, linked to a single woman. The woman's husband was in the Jefferson County Jail, and his recorded visits with her were studied by investigators, leading them to search her vehicle and two storage units. She was arrested in October. By November more than 250 forged checks had been identified.

Grant approved to help struggling inmates



In October, the Board of County Commissioners approved a \$107,100 grant from the Colorado Department of Human Services Office of Behavioral Health. The grant will be used by the Sheriff's Office to provide jail-based treatment for inmates with substance use disorders (SUD) and co-occurring SUD and mental illnesses. The overall goal is to reduce the chance of an inmate's return to jail, and in some cases reduce incarceration time.

Agency re-accredited



The Sheriff's Office was re-accredited in November after auditors from the American Correctional Association (ACA) inspected the Jefferson County Jail and reviewed procedures there. The Sheriff's Office is accredited through ACA and other national associations, providing independent evaluations of the agency and ensuring we exercise best practices in jail management.

Sexually violent predator returns to community

The Sheriff's Office hosted a community meeting on November 2 regarding sexually violent predator Larry I. Finell. Finell was released from prison on November 9th after serving a two year sentence for a parole violation, and is free to live wherever he pleases. The Sheriff's Office hosts public meetings and sends out other communications to educate the public whenever sexually violent predators are released to live in the community. Finell was the only sexually violent predator living in Jefferson County as of this printing.

South precinct makes its move

In November, the Sheriff's Office south precinct in the Ken Caryl area moved from its location on Shaffer Parkway to 11139 Bradford Road -- just around the corner. The new south office houses the Sheriff's Office precinct and the Jefferson County Clerk & Recorder's south Jefferson County motor vehicle office.

The move fits two county government service providers into one south Jefferson County site - providing a more convenient setup for citizens while saving on rental costs.

Grand jury indicts three in 2003 DeWild murder

In December, a grand jury indicted the victim's ex-husband and two others in the 2003 death of 30-year-old Heather DeWild. In September 2003 the decomposed body of Heather DeWild was found in a shallow grave beside westbound Highway 6 in unincorporated Jefferson County.

In 2011 a multi-jurisdictional team of investigators, including a JCSO homicide investigator, had renewed the investigation into the case, leading to the arrests.



Suicide prevention measures working

According to the US Department of Justice, suicide is the single leading cause of unnatural deaths in local jails. Following a number of inmate suicides in recent years, the Jefferson County Jail reviewed and revamped several of its procedures involving suicidal or mentally ill inmates.

Today, jail staff takes more care to identify, evaluate and monitor suicidal inmates. From 2009 through the end of 2011, there were no suicides in the jail.

Man convicted for sex assaults on sons

Crimes Against Children staff investigated an aggravated incest case in which a south Jefferson County man sexually assaulted his two elementary-school age sons over several years. In December, a jury found the man guilty of aggravated incest.

Christmas crusade

In December, about 400 children from Jefferson County received holiday gifts from deputies via the KYGO Christmas Crusade for Children.

Through the program, deputies nominate needy children for whom KYGO listeners donate gifts. Deputies then deliver the gifts on or before Christmas day.

