

Farmers Insurance Study Ranks The Most Secure Large Cities in the U.S. Bethesda, Md., Grand Rapids, Mich., and Pittsburgh, Pa., Top All Large Metropolitan Areas

LOS ANGELES, June 26, 2013 /PRNewswire/ -- Farmers Insurance Group of Companies® annually ranks hundreds of U.S. communities based on safety and security. In this year's large city category of the "Most Secure Places to Live in the U.S." study, Farmers has rated Bethesda, Md., Grand Rapids, Mich., and Pittsburgh, Pa., as the most secure large metropolitan areas (population of 500,000 or greater).

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The study of large metropolitan areas, compiled by researchers at Sperling's BestPlaces, took into consideration a number of criteria, including economic stability, crime statistics, extreme weather, risk of natural disasters, housing depreciation, foreclosures, air quality, environmental hazards, life expectancy, motor vehicle fatalities, and employment numbers.

Farmers Insurance, which has a corporate mantra of focusing on helping to make its customers smarter when it comes to insurance decisions, also has a long history of helping to make safer and more secure the communities in which it does business.

"Farmers Insurance is celebrating its 85th anniversary this year, and since our founding, we have been committed to improving the communities in which customers, agents and employees live and work," said Mark Toohey, Head of Media Relations for Farmers Insurance. "We congratulate the residents of the Bethesda, Grand Rapids and Pittsburgh, along with all large metropolitan areas named in the top 20 rankings. They are fortunate to have dedicated local government, law enforcement, fire, medical and education leaders who work hard and have earned the Farmers Insurance most secure large city recognition."

"Our most secure large metropolitan areas are islands of security in our challenging times," said Bert Sperling, president of Sperling's BestPlaces. "Some have a stable economy due to their local colleges and seats of government, and some may be fortunate that their locale is not prone to hurricanes, tornadoes or earthquakes. Although each metropolitan area is different, they all possess a desirable combination of factors (jobs, low crime rates, housing, climate, health, reduced levels of natural disasters) that make these some of the best places to live in the United States."

This is the seventh consecutive year that the Bethesda area has earned the top 20 rating among large metropolitan areas in the annual Farmers Insurance study, and it has actually been among the top 10 each year since 2007. Some of the key factors that helped the historical Maryland area earn its No. 1 spot in the 2012 study included its low unemployment and low personal crime rates, while its long life expectancy rate contributed to its top rating.

Grand Rapids made the Farmers Insurance top 20 for the first time, while this is the sixth consecutive year that Pittsburgh has appeared in the annual Farmers rankings. It is the fifth straight year for the Austin–Round Rock, Texas, area, which came in fourth this year, up from No. 10 in 2011. Grand Rapids and Austin are two cities in which Farmers Insurance has a significant employee presence.

Here are the Farmers Insurance Group's top 20 most secure large metropolitan areas for 2012:

Large Metro Areas (500,000 or more residents)

1. Bethesda–Gaithersburg–Frederick, Md.
2. Grand Rapids–Wyoming, Mich.
3. Pittsburgh, Pa.
4. Austin–Round Rock, Texas
5. Cambridge–Newton–Framingham, Mass.
6. Omaha, Neb.–Council Bluffs, Iowa
7. San Jose–Sunnyvale–Santa Clara, Calif.
8. San Francisco–San Mateo–Redwood City, Calif.
9. Portland–Beaverton, Ore.–Vancouver, Wash.
10. Dallas–Plano–Irving, Texas
11. Boise City–Nampa, Idaho
12. Madison, Wis.
13. Minneapolis–St. Paul–Bloomington, Minn.
14. Raleigh–Cary, N.C.
15. Portland–South Portland–Biddeford, Maine
16. Essex County, Mass.
17. El Paso, Texas
18. Honolulu, Hawaii

- 19.Santa Ana–Anaheim–Irvine, Calif.
20.Des Moines–West Des Moines, Iowa

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