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Alcohol-Related Arrests in Wisconsin 1983-1987

Wisconsin Statistical Analysis Center

INTRODUCTION

This publication summarizes data on alcohol-related arrests in Wisconsin available through the State Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) program.

For purposes of this report, alcohol-related arrests include driving under the influence and liquor law violations. Driving under the influence is defined as the driving or operating of any vehicle or common carrier while drunk or under the influence of liquor or narcotics. Liquor law violations include open container violations, furnishing alcohol to a minor, possession of alcohol by a minor, and other local ordinance violations related to alcoholic beverages.

In the past five years there have been an estimated 312,818 alcohol-related arrests in Wisconsin. In 1987, alcohol-related arrests accounted for 22.5% of all arrests made in the state.

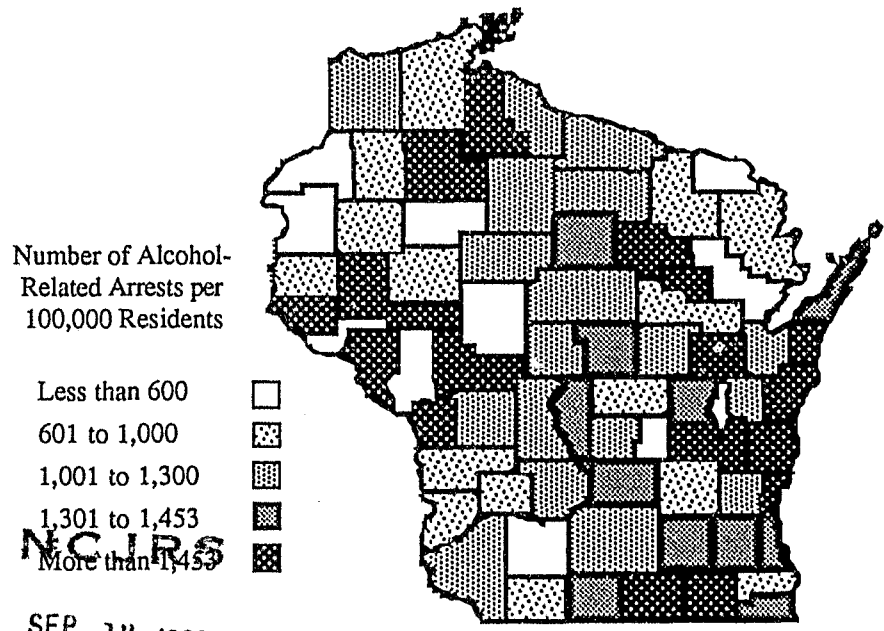
The information presented in this publication has been obtained from Crime and Arrests in Wisconsin, published annually by the Office of Justice Assistance. Because these annual publications contain aggregate data, the type of information that can be presented in this publication is, consequently, limited. Only aggregate data can be presented because the original, incident-based data are not available. Also, in those cases in which persons are arrested on multiple charges, only the "most serious" arrest is counted for UCR purposes. Therefore, data in this report do not reflect all alcohol-related arrests. In addition, it should be noted that the arrest figures presented are estimates based on approximately ninety-eight percent of the actual number of reported arrests.

ARREST RATES

The map of Wisconsin at right categorizes counties according to their 1987 alcohol-related arrest rate. The arrest rate is the number of estimated arrests per 100,000 residents. Arrest rates are used to control the effect of differing sizes of law enforcement service areas, permitting the examination of arrests on equal population bases.

Alcohol-related arrest rates vary widely throughout the state. In general, the Fox Valley / Lake Michigan area, west central Wisconsin, and southern border counties exhibited the highest alcohol-related arrest rates. Generally, counties within the same category had similar rates; relative / wider gaps separated the categories.

1987 Wisconsin Counties' Alcohol-Related Arrest Rates



Number of Alcohol-Related Arrests per 100,000 Residents

- Less than 600
- 601 to 1,000
- 1,001 to 1,300
- 1,301 to 1,453
- More than 1,453

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Statewide Alcohol-Related Arrest Rate: 1,453 per 100,000

ACQUISITIONS

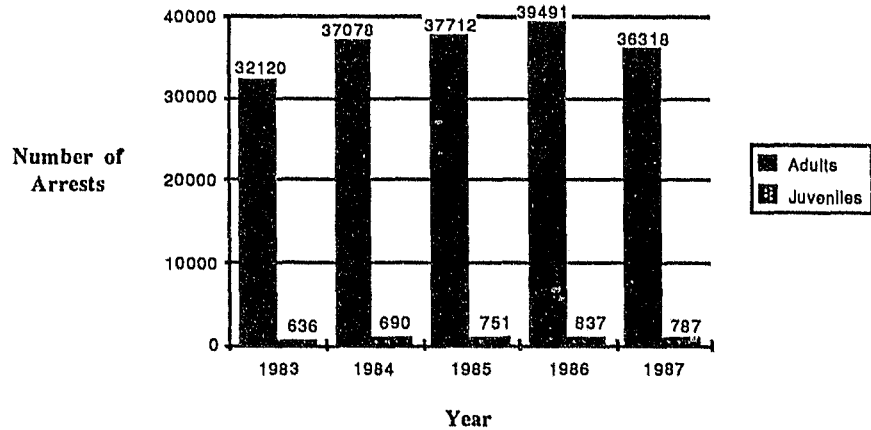
Office of Justice Assistance Ted Meekma, Executive Director	Tommy G. Thompson Governor
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NUMBER OF ARRESTS

Driving Under the Influence

Graph 1 shows the number of adults and juveniles arrested in Wisconsin for driving under the influence over the past five years. The vast majority of those arrested were adults. The relatively small number of juvenile arrests was largely due to the fact that there were far fewer juveniles "at risk," that is, of legal driving age. After a steady increase from 1983, both the number of adults and juveniles arrested for driving under the influence decreased in 1987. Note, however, that a decrease in arrests does not necessarily imply a decrease in actual offenses.

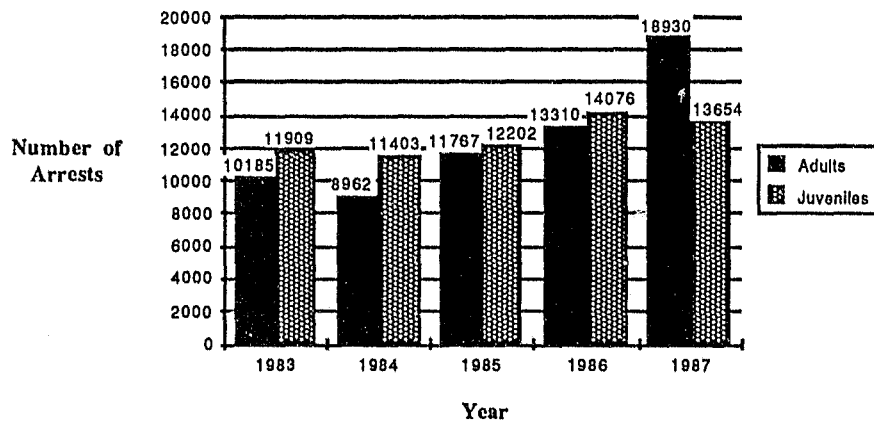
Graph 1: Driving Under the Influence Arrests



Liquor Law Violations

Graph 2 shows the number of arrests for liquor law violations. During the five year period, the number of adults arrested for liquor law violations increased eighty-six percent while the number of juveniles arrested increased fifteen percent. The large increase in adult arrests in 1987 was most likely due to the 1986 change in the drinking age from 19 to 21, which increased the number of adults susceptible to being underage consumers. The drinking age also went up in 1984, from 18 to 19, although the number of adults arrested for liquor law violations actually decreased that year. The expected increase is probably reflected in the 1985 statistics.

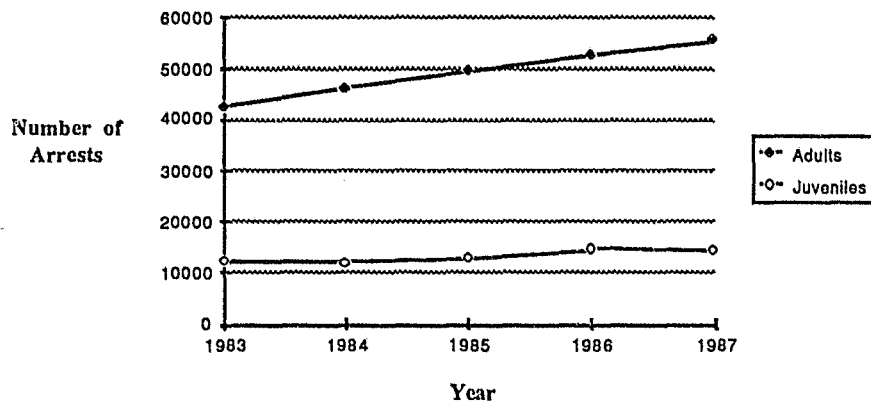
Graph 2: Liquor Law Violation Arrests



Total Alcohol-Related Arrests

Graph 3 shows the total number of persons arrested from 1983 through 1987 for both driving under the influence and liquor law violations. The number of adult alcohol-related arrests increased steadily from 1983 through 1987. In 1987 the adult arrest figure of 55,248 was thirty-one percent greater than the 42,305 adult arrests in 1983. In contrast, the number of juvenile arrests changed less dramatically, increasing by fifteen percent from 12,545 in 1983 to 14,441 in 1987.

Graph 3: Total Alcohol-Related Arrests

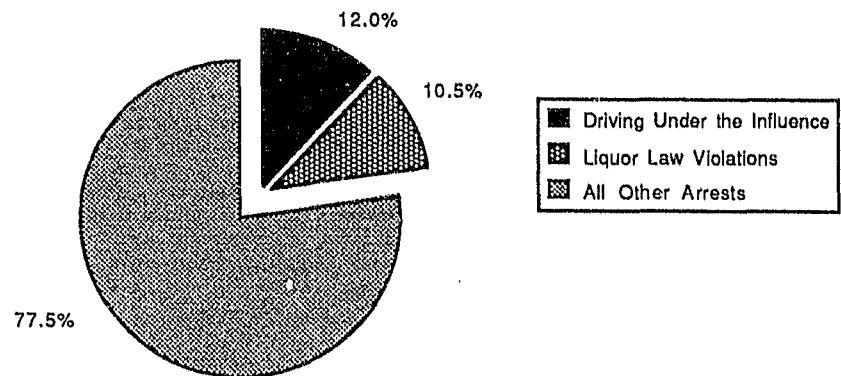


Distribution of Arrests

1987 Arrests

Graph 4 compares the proportion of total alcohol-related arrests in 1987 to the total number of arrests in the state. Arrests for driving under the influence and for liquor law violations accounted for 22.5% of all arrests made in Wisconsin in 1987.

Graph 4: Distribution of Wisconsin's Arrests in 1987



Comparison: 1983 - 1987

Table 1 presents the estimated number of alcohol-related arrests in Wisconsin from 1983 through 1987. From 1983 to 1987 the total number of arrests for driving under the influence increased thirteen percent, with most of the increase attributable to adult arrests. Liquor law violations increased forty-seven percent over the five year period with the majority of the increase again attributable to adults. While juvenile arrests for liquor law violations increased fifteen percent from 1983 to 1987, the number of adult arrests increased eighty-six percent. Total alcohol-related arrests increased steadily over the five years. The total number of alcohol-related arrests in Wisconsin increased twenty-seven percent during the five year period, from 54,850 in 1983 to 69,689 in 1987.

Table 1: Alcohol-Related Arrests by Arrest Type and Offender Age

Arrest Type	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	Percent Change 1983-1987
<u>Driving Under The Influence</u>	32,756	37,768	38,463	40,328	37,105	+13.3%
Adults	32,120	37,078	37,712	39,491	36,318	+13.1%
Juveniles	636	690	751	837	787	+23.7%
<u>Liquor Law Violations</u>	22,094	20,365	23,969	27,386	32,584	+47.5%
Adults	10,185	8,962	11,767	13,310	18,930	+85.9%
Juveniles	11,909	11,403	12,202	14,076	13,654	+14.7%
<u>Total Alcohol- Related Arrests</u>	54,850	58,133	62,432	67,714	69,689	+27.1%

Conclusion

Alcohol-related arrests in Wisconsin have risen steadily over the past five years. These arrests made up twenty-two percent of all arrests made in Wisconsin from 1983 through 1987. While the estimated number of alcohol-related arrests rose annually during that period, so did the total number of all arrests. Consequently, the proportion of total arrests made for alcohol-related offenses has remained relatively stable, fluctuating between twenty-one and twenty-three percent. While most arrests for driving under the influence were adult arrests, arrests for liquor law violations were more evenly distributed among adults and juveniles. The information presented in this publication shows that either alcohol-related incidents, enforcement activities, or both, have increased over the past five years.

Office of Justice Assistance
Wisconsin Statistical Analysis Center
30 West Mifflin Street, #330
Madison, Wisconsin 53702

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