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VICTIMIZATION RATES AND PROBABILITIES IN THE PORTLAND METROPOLITAN AREA

PRELIMINARY REPORT

by

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January 8, 1975

Funding for this Report and Research was provided by Grant No. 74-NI-99-0016-G from the Oregon Law Enforcement Council, and the National Institute of Law Enforcement in Criminal Justice, Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, Department of Justice, Washington, D.C. Points of view or opinions stated in this document are those of the author, and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the Department of Justice.

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Interviewing for the 1974 survey was conducted by Bardsley and Haslacher, Portland, Oregon. The data analysis is done at the Oregon Research Institute Computeing Center, Eugene, Oregon.

PREFACE

This is the fourth in a series of reports from the 1974 Portland victimization survey of more than 3950 households in the metropolitan area. Other reports scheduled for immediate release are:

"Crime and Victimization in Portland: A Preliminary Analysis of Trends, 1971-1974."

"Methodological Approaches for Measuring Short-Term Victimization Trends."

"The 1974 Portland Victimization Survey: Report on Procedures."

Additional reports and documents are in preparation and scheduled for release by March or April, 1974.

The major purpose of this report is to describe the victimization patterns within selected areas of the city of Portland. Very little analysis is undertaken in this document because there is no baseline data on victimization within the areas selected. Rather, the 1974 victimization data are to be used as baseline information for future analysis.

VICTIMIZATION PATTERNS IN METROPOLITAN PORTLAND

INTRODUCTION

One of the major purposes of the 1974 victimization survey is to provide information on the distribution of selected crimes within certain geographical areas of the city. Victimization information differs from official police department crime data primarily in that the former includes all incidents (reported and unreported) whereas the latter includes only those incidents which the citizens report to the police, or which the police discover in some other way. Thus, victimization data can provide a very useful supplement to official statistics in that it represents more of the total crime than do the official police statistics. Of equal importance, however, is that the distribution of crimes known to the police may not be quite the same as the distribution of crimes which are not reported to the police. If so, the planning and resource allocations may be based on somewhat inadequate information about the "real" crime rates.

This report compares the victimization rates for several selected sections in the Portland metropolitan area. Although a victimization survey was conducted in 1972, that information cannot be used as baseline data to assess the change in victimization within the various areas because the LEAA-sponsored 1972 survey did not include a coding of the location of the crime or a coding for the location of the victim. Thus, a study of the change in victimization patterns within the areas must be postponed until followup victimization data (which includes a coding of the location of the crime) are collected in 1975 and 1976. (An analysis of change in victimization for the entire city of Portland has been prepared; see "Crime and Victimization in Portland: A Preliminary Analysis of Trends, 1971-1974.")

The data presented in this report were obtained from a randomly selected sample of more than 3950 households. Interviewing was conducted during the spring and summer of 1974. The respondents were asked to recall crimes committed against them during the 12-month period of May 1973 through April 1974. Detailed information on the sample design, questionnaire, quality control procedures, and other pertinent information about the survey is contained in "The 1974 Portland Victimization Survey: A Report on Procedures." Incidents which occurred outside the correct time frame were excluded from all analyses.

AREAS SELECTED FOR SPECIAL ANALYSIS

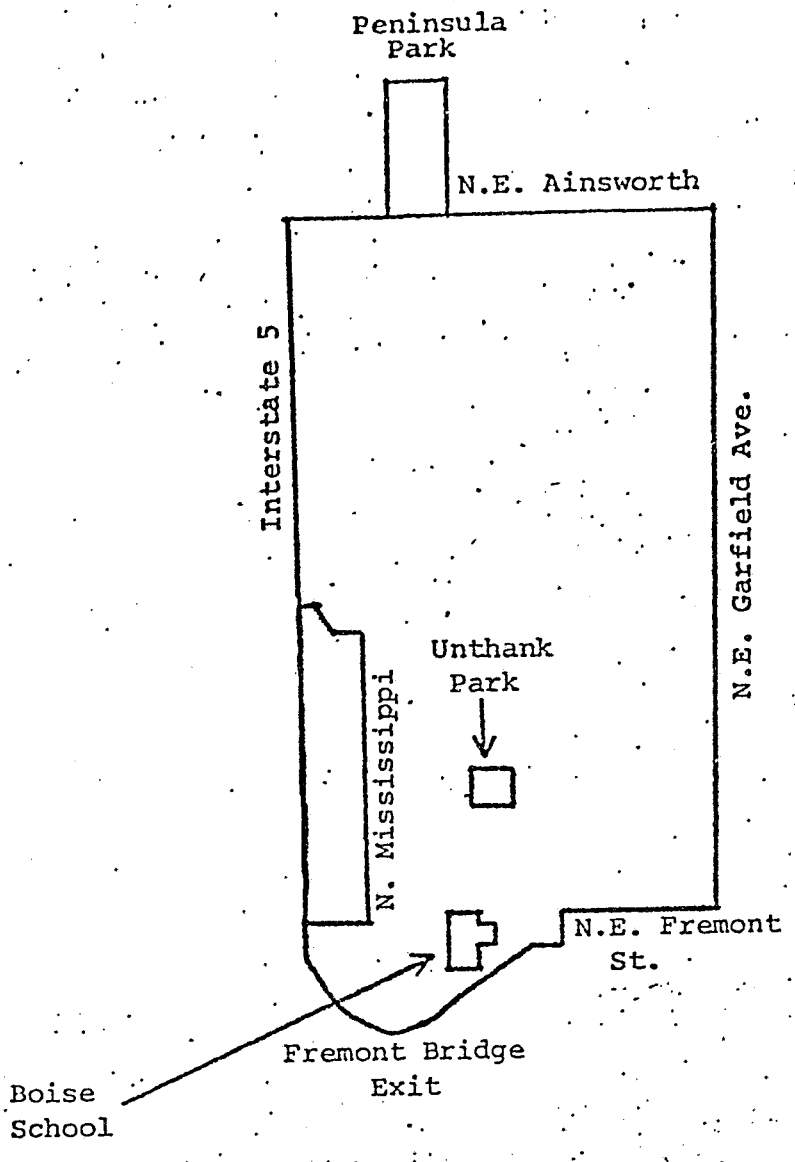
Three areas within the city of Portland were selected for special analysis in this preliminary report:

1. Street Lighting Area. A section of northeast Portland (see map, next page) was selected because of a special program begun in late 1972 to add additional outdoor lighting to the streets, alleys and parks in the area. The area lies mainly in four census tracts (34.01, 34.02, 24.01, and 24.02), but its boundaries are not contiguous with the tracts. This is a high-crime section of the city. The 1970 census indicates that about 43% of the population in the area is black. 42% of the 311 interviews in the area were with black respondents.

2. Crime Prevention Bureau Area. The Portland Crime Prevention Bureau anti-burglary program is a city-wide effort, but major efforts were made to concentrate activities in two high-burglary areas of the city: census tracts 36.02 and 19. Census tract 36.02 is in the northern portion of the city above Killingsworth Avenue and between 15th and 33rd Avenues. Tract 19 is south of the Banfield freeway between 3rd and 44th Avenues. The southern boundary is just below Laurelhurst Park on Stark Street. In addition to households selected from these two areas, the Crime Prevention Bureau randomly selected 100 addresses from its list of past participants, and 87 of these households were included in the sample.

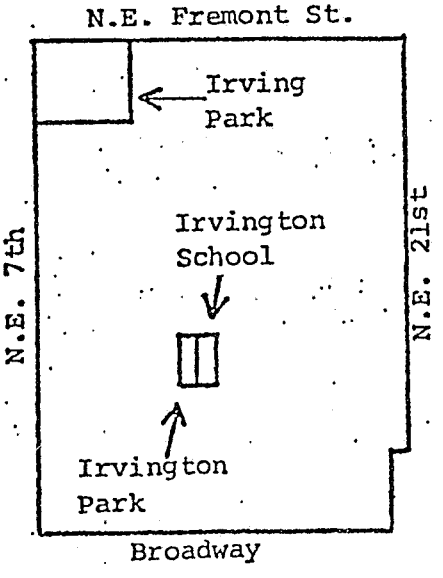
3. Northeast Portland, excluding the experimental areas. Many persons believe that special area-based crime prevention programs such as street lighting or high-intensity anti-burglary programs may displace crime from the experimental area into nearby adjacent sections of the city. The rationale for this belief is that burglars and other offenders prefer not to expose themselves to unnecessary risk and, if an area becomes more risky due to crime prevention programs, the offenders will turn their efforts to nearby sections of the city.

(In order to determine whether displacement has occurred, more information is required than what was available as this report neared completion. Most importantly, followup victimization data are needed for 1975 and 1976. However, when official crime data are available for these areas and trend patterns can be established, it may be possible to undertake some preliminary testing of displacement propositions.)



Boise Humboldt Area

- Streets
- Alleys
- Peninsula Park
- Unthank Park
- Boise School



Irvington Area

- Streets
- Irvington School
- Irvington Park
- Irving Park

The area selected from which to collect baseline and other data for future studies of displacement is adjacent to the street lighting program area. It is bounded on the south by the Banfield Freeway between the river and 33rd Avenue. The area boundary continues north on 33rd to Fremont, jogs west to 24th, continues north to Killingsworth, and then jogs west again to 15th. From the intersection of Killingsworth, and 15, the boundary extends north to the railroad tracks. The western boundary begins at the railroad tracks in north Portland and extends south along Delaware to N. Portland Avenue, jogs west to Burrage, and continues south to the river. (Census tracts in the area are: 22.01, 22.02, 23.01, 23.02, 25.01, 25.02, 32, 33.01, 33.02, 36.01, 37.01, 38.01, 38.02, 38.03, 35.01, and 35.02). This area of northeast Portland is also a high-crime section of the city, and similar in characteristics to the street lighting area except that a smaller proportion of the population is black.

In combination, the street lighting area, part of the crime prevention bureau area, and the adjacent area constitute the bulk of northeast Portland.

We oversampled in each of the above areas to insure that enough interviews would be available for reliable description of victimization rates and other characteristics.

4. Portland City, excluding the above areas. More than 1000 interviews were taken in the remaining portions of the city of Portland.

Outside the city limits of Portland, but within the metropolitan area, approximately 200 interviews were taken in each of six incorporated cities: Oregon City, Gresham, Hillsboro, Lake Oswego, Beaverton, and Milwaukee. Approximately the same number were taken in the unincorporated areas of Washington County and Clackamus County. More than 300 interviews were completed from the unincorporated areas of Multnomah County.

VICTIMIZATION RATES

Metropolitan Portland

The data in Table 1 are the victimization rates for the city of Portland, the surrounding metropolitan area (excluding Vancouver, Washington), and the total metropolitan area (also excluding Vancouver).

Victimization rates for robbery, assault,and burglary are significantly higher within the city than in the suburban areas (significance level = .05). Although the number of rapes per 1000 is greater within the city, the difference is not statistically significant, nor are the differences in the number of larcenies (theft without force).

These rates are based on the number of incidents which occurred within each area, regardless of whether the victim lived in the area. This method of counting incidents is basically the same as the method used by police departments.

Although the victimization rates reported in Table 1 are relatively comparable to official police statistics, it should be remembered that the official rate includes incidents against persons living outside of the entire metropolitan area, whereas the rates in Table 1 include incidents committed against residents of the area and other persons in the metropolitan area. Very few tourists or other visitors were included in the survey.

In the right hand column of the table are the number of incidents reported by Portland area residents which occurred outside of the metropolitan area.

Discussion

One of the major concerns of residents living in the areas outside the city limits of Portland is that the federal Impact program within the city will shift the crime outward into the adjacent areas. The data in Table 1 do not reveal whether crime is being displaced into the areas surrounding the city, but it is apparent that robbery, assaults, and burglaries in the outlying areas are not yet as frequent as within the city.

There were a total of 11 rapes reported by the 3950 respondents with about half of them occurring in the city and about half outside the city limits. Three of the incidents involved multiple victimizations. These figures (and the others used to calculate the rates in Table 1) do not include any victimizations reported by respondents as occurring against other adult members of the household. The latter incidents were excluded

Table 1

VICTIMIZATION RATES IN PORTLAND AND THE METROPOLITAN AREA[1]

	Portland City	Suburban Areas	Total SMSA	Incidents in SMSA, location unknown	Incidents against residents outside of SMSA
	Rate per 1000	Rate per 1000	Rate per 1000	Rate per 1000	Rate per 1000
Rape	3.57	2.24	2.82	-	-
Robbery	8.84	1.56	4.9	-	.44
Assault	51.1	24.4	36.7	.04	5.1
Burglary	131	69	99	.45	3.49
Larceny	208	192	204	5	4
Weighted No. persons	2227	2627	4854	4854	4854
Weighted No. Households	1909	2041	3950	3950	3950

[1]Rates are based on the number of incidents against respondents in the survey and the number of incidents against children 12-15 for the personal crimes and for larcenies. Rates for burglary are based on the number of households. The location of an incident was determined by where it occurred, not the the residence of the victim. These rates, therefore, are not comparable to the 1972 LEAA victimization survey.

because respondents apparently are not able to recall incidents against other adults as precisely as those against themselves.

VICTIMIZATION RATES WITHIN THE CITY

The victimization rates for each crime within each of the selected areas of Portland city are shown in Table 2. The control number in the upper portion of the table represents the weighted number of households included in the sample from each area. The actual (unweighted) number of interviews in each area is given in the footnote to the table.

Two particularly marked variations in victimization patterns are apparent. The area of northeast Portland surrounding the street lighting project area has significantly higher rates of assaults and robbery than any other section of the city. This has been one of the high-crime sections of Portland city for many years. For burglaries, however, the street lighting area has far more than any other section of the city, as almost 43% of the households in the area were burglarized during the year. The burglary rate within the crime prevention bureau area is also high (278 per 1000).

These data should not be used to draw conclusions about the effectiveness of the street lighting program or the CPB program, however, because the crime rates in these areas were very high before the programs began. Whether the programs, when fully implemented and contined for some period of time, are able to reduce the crime rate will require followup data on victimizations.

Table 2

VICTIMIZATION RATES WITHIN THE CITY[1]

	Street lighting area	Crime Prevention Bureau area	Northeast Portland	Remainder of city	CPB list of participants	Incidents in city, exact location unknown
	Rate per 1000	Rate per 1000	Rate per 1000	Rate per 1000	Rate per 1000	Rate per 1000
Rape	-	-	(1.65)	(4.13)	-	
Robbery	16.2	-	24.9	7.06	-	
Assault	17.8	(1.37)	118.8	37.3	-	(1.48)
Burglary	429	278	140	116	(33.8)	
Larceny	304	134	252	202	94.4	(1.14)
Weighted no. persons	87	51	212	1839	37	.2227
Weighted no. households	66	41	173	1597	31	1909
Actual no. interviews	320	116	430	1024	87	

[1] Rates are based on the number of incidents against respondents in the survey and the number of incidents against children 12-15 for the personal crimes and for larcenies. Rates for burglary are based on the number of households. The location of an incident was determined by where it occurred, not the residence of the victim. These rates, therefore, are not comparable to the 1972 LEAA victimization survey.

VICTIMIZATION RATES IN SUBURBAN CITIES

Victimization rates for six cities in the metropolitan area are shown in Table 3.

The assault rate in Oregon City and Milwaukee is quite high in comparison with the other four cities, and is higher than the rate for Portland.

Hillsboro has the highest burglary rate (83.4 per 1000), but this is considerably lower than for the city of Portland

Table 3

VICTIMIZATION RATES IN SUBURBAN CITIES[1]

	Oregon City	Milwaukee	Gresham	Hillsboro	Lake Oswego	Beaverton
	Rate per 1000	Rate per 1000	Rate per 1000	Rate per 1000	Rate per 1000	Rate per 1000
Rape	-	-	(3.46)	-	-	(2.53)
Robbery	-	-	(3.89)	-	-	-
Assault	85.4	78.4	15.85	32.4	5.4	22.26
Burglary	50	41.8	63.7	83.4	61.4	46.4
Larceny	230	81.4	238	137	145	107
Weighted no. Persons	43	81	49	78	86	112
Weighted no. households	35	67	39	62	61	85
Actual no. interviews	209	193	205	212	194	219

[1] Rates are based on the number of incidents against respondents in the survey and the number of incidents against children 12-15 for the personal crimes and for larcenies. Rates for burglary are based on the number of households. The location of an incident was determined by where it occurred, not the residence of the victim. These rates, therefore, are not comparable to the 1972 LEAA victimization survey.

VICTIMIZATION RATES IN METROPOLITAN AREA COUNTIES

Victimization rates for the unincorporated areas of the three metropolitan counties are shown in Table 4.

Multnomah County has a considerably higher burglary rate than Clackamas or Washington County. The number of burglaries per 1000 in Multnomah County is about the same as the number per 1000 in the city of Portland when the northeast sections are excluded from the latter (116 in the city, 113 in Multnomah County).

Rates of assault and robbery are lower in the counties than within the city, and generally not as high as in the six suburban cities.

Discussion

As noted previously, not much analysis can be conducted on the pattern of victimization, victimization reduction, or victimization displacement until the official crime statistics for each area are collected, and until followup victimization and reporting information is collected. Once all of the necessary information is available, it should be possible to determine how the various Impact programs have reduced and/or displaced crime from one area within the city to another, and how the crime for the entire city has been reduced and/or shifted into the outlying areas.

Table 4

VICTIMIZATION RATES IN METROPOLITAN AREA COUNTIES[1]

	Multnomah County Rate per 1000	Clackamus County Rate per 1000	Washington County Rate per 1000
Rape	(3.27)	(4.10)	-
Robbery	(3.77)	(1.10)	-
Assault	10.3	22.6	(3.39)
Burglary	113	46.7	32.4
Larceny	220	209	115
Weighted no. Persons	847	649	682
Weighted no. households	675	512	504
Actual no. interviews	304	206	224

[1] Rates are based on the number of incidents against respondents in the survey and the number of incidents against children 12-15 for the personal crimes and for larcenies. Rates for burglary are based on the number of households. The location of an incident was determined by where it occurred, not the residence of the victim. These rates, therfore, are not comparable to the 1972 LEAA victimization survey.

THE PROBABILITY OF VICTIMIZATION

A Methodological Note

Victimization rates such as those reported thus far in this report for rapes, robberies, and assaults cannot be converted to show the percentage of persons in an area who are victimized, nor can they be used to indicate the probability that someone will be (or was) the victim of a rape, robbery, or assault.

To compute the probability of victimization in a specific area, one needs to know two things: (1) How many people are in the area on an average day or month, and (2) how many incidents of each type of crime were committed within the area on an average day or month. If the number of persons is known, and the number of criminal incidents is known, then it is quite easy to calculate the percentage of the populace who were victimized, and this percentage can be converted into a probability victimization rate.

The rates used in the first parts of this report (and official police rates as well) are all based on the assumption that the number of persons in the area is equal to the number of persons whose residence is in the area. This, of course, is not an accurate assumption, since some areas have many commuters, shoppers, and other visitors. The crime rate and victimization rates for the city of Portland are computed by counting all of the incidents that occurred against residents, commuters, shoppers, and other visitors. The rate is computed as a percentage of the residents, however, excluding all of the other persons.

There are two methods which could be used to calculate the actual probability of victimization. One would be to count the average number of persons within the area on an average day during the year and to count the total number of incidents which occurred within the area. Using this method, all victims of crimes are included in the base population from which the rate is calculated. Unfortunately, no information is available about the average number of persons in an area on an average day.

A second method for computing a probability victimization rate is to count all the residents of an area as the base population and to count only the incidents committed against residents of the area which were committed within that area. Although this is a less desirable procedure than the first alternative, it will produce a victimization probability rate for residents being victimized within their own section of the metro-

politan area. This method has been used to calculate the probability victimization rates in the subsequent analysis.

Probability of Victimization: Metropolitan Portland

The information in Table 5 is more directly interpretable as the probability of being the victim of a rape, robbery, or assault. To compute the rate in Portland city, only the incidents committed against residents that occurred within the city limits are counted. Thus, the figures per 1000 indicate the probability that a resident of Portland will be the victim of one of these crimes within the city. Although the probability rates are lower than victimization rates computed in other ways, it is not especially encouraging to learn that only 38, rather than 51, persons per 1000 will be the victim of an assault within the city, or that only 20, rather than 24, will be an assault victim in the suburban areas. A rate of 38 per 1000 translates to 3.8% of the population, and this is a considerable number of persons.

The probability of being robbed is considerably greater within the city than in the suburban areas, but even then the probability of being robbed within the city is considerably lower than the probability of being assaulted.

The probability victimization rates shown in Table 5 are not comparable to official police statistics or the 1972 survey, but the probability rates are a more accurate assessment of the risk of being victimized. Information in the last four columns of the table shows the proportion of households within each area and the proportion of the crimes within each area. A comparative risk factor has been computed, and is shown in the last two columns.

If the risk factor for an area is one (1.0), it means that the chance of being victimized for that area is the same as the chance in an average part of the entire area. A comparative risk factor of 2.2 for robberies in the city means that a person is 2.2 times as apt to be robbed within the city as within the metropolitan area as a whole, and about 7 times as apt to be robbed in the city as in the suburbs. The suburban areas are safer than the city for all crimes with the possible exception of rape, and the number of rape incidents is so small that the difference is almost certainly due to sampling variation.

Probability of Victimization: Areal Analysis

The probability of victimization for the selected geographic areas is shown in Table 6. The areas are arranged so that the safest ones (Washington County and Lake Oswego) are listed first, and the riskiest area (northeast Portland) is ranked last.

All of the suburban areas are comparatively safe, and the city areas more risky. The street lighting section of northeast Portland, however, has a probability victimization rate for rape, robbery, and assault (combined) of 20 per 1000, which is not much higher than the suburban sections. The northeast section of Portland, excluding the street lighting part, has the highest probability victimization rate for the three crimes combined (75 per 1000), and the highest probability of assault alone (47 per 1000).

Although the northeast section is the riskiest area, the chance of being victimized there is not as great as the usual procedures for calculating crime rates might suggest. This section of Portland certainly has far more persons in the area during an average day than the number of residents. Lloyd center, the Emanual hospital, a long section of Union Avenue, and some of Killingsworth Avenue are included in this section of the city. When the base population is comparable to the incident population, the assault rate is 47 out of a thousand, rather than 118.

The high assault rates for Oregon City and Milwaukee shown in Table 6 (87 and 78 per 1000 respectively) are at least partly an artifact of there being more persons in those cities on an average day than indicated by the resident population. The assault probabilities are 15.5 per 1000 in Oregon City and 17 per 1000 in Milwaukee.

It would be interesting to know the victimization rate for persons who work or shop in another section of the metropolitan area, but since no information is available about how many commuters and other visitors are within any of these areas, the probability victimization rate for them cannot be calculated.

Victimization Probability: Burglary

The number of burglaries committed in an area, as a percentage of the households, is interpretable as the probability that a household will be burglarized. Residences and houses do not commute or visit in other sections of the city, and there is no problem with the base population being incomparable to the victimization population.

Table 5

VICTIMIZATION PROBABILITY RATE AND COMPARATIVE RISK FACTOR[1]

	Portland City Residents	Suburban Residents	Percent of incidents: Portland	Percent of incidents: Suburbs	Risk Factor	
	Rate per 1000	Rate per 1000	%	%	City Residents	Suburban Residents
Rape	.9	1.16	38%	62%	.8	1.2
Robbery	8.3	1.3	84	16	2.2	.31
Assault	38	20	61	39	1.3	.75
Weighted No.	2227	2627	(48)	(52)		

[1]These rates are based on incidents committed within an area against a resident of the area, and are not comparable to official police data or the 1972 LEAA victimization survey.

Table 6

VICTIMIZATION PROBABILITY RATE AND RISK:

AREAL ANALYSIS OF RAPE, ROBBERY, ASSAULT[1]

	Rape, robbery Assault Rate per 1000	Assault Rate per 1000	Percent of incidents (Combined) %	Percent of Population %	Risk Factor: Rape, robbery Assault
Safer than Average					
Wash. County	3.2	3.2	2.2%	13%	.14
Lake Oswego	3.6	3.6	.25	1.5	.16
Multn. Cty.	13	10	8.8	17	.5
Oregon City	15.5	15.5	.5	1	.5
Milwaukee	17	17	1.1	1.6	.7
Beaverton	18	15	1.6	2	.8
Gresham	19	12	.8	1	.8
Street Lighting	20	16	1.3	1.5	.9
Average					
Clackamus Cty.	26	22	14.4	13	1
Hillsboro	26	26	1.6	1.5	1
Riskier than Average					
City of Portland	37	30	55	40	1.4
N.E. Portland	75	47	13	4.3	3

[1]These rates are based on incidents committed within an area against a resident of the area, and are not comparable to official police data or the 1972 LEAA victimization survey.

In Table 7 the areas are arranged in accordance with the probability for burglaries and the comparative risk factor is shown. Washington County is the safest area, with 32 burglaries per 1000 households. Hillsboro has the highest burglary rate of all the suburban areas.

Within the city, the street lighting area has an exceptionally high burglary rate, as about 43% of the households in that area were burglarized during the one-year period.

Almost 30% of the households in the CPB high emphasis area were burglarized during the year. Again, this cannot be used as an evaluation of the CPB program because the burglary rate in the area was quite high before the program began. The test of effectiveness must begin with determining whether the burglary rate has been reduced, and not whether a previously high crime area has been transformed into one of the safest areas. It is unfortunate that no victimization or reporting data for 1972 is available for areas within the city, since the analysis of victimization trends (and evaluation of the special programs) would be facilitated if such data were available.

Table 7

AREAL DISTRIBUTION OF RISK: BURGLARIES[1]

	Probability victimization rate per 1000	Risk Factor
Safest Areas		
Washington County	32	.3
Milwaukee	42	.3
Oregon City	50	.4
Beaverton	46	.5
Clackamus County	47	.5
Lake Oswego	61	.7
Gresham	63	.7
Average Safety		
Hillsboro	83	.9
Multnomah County	113	1.1
Portland city, excluding N.E.	116	1.2
Riskier Areas		
Northest Portland	140	1.4
Crime Prevention Bureau	278	2.8
Street Lighting Area	429	4.7

[1]These rates are based on incidents committed within an area against a resident of the area, and are not comparable to official police data or the 1972 LEAA victimization survey.

END

7 [illegible]