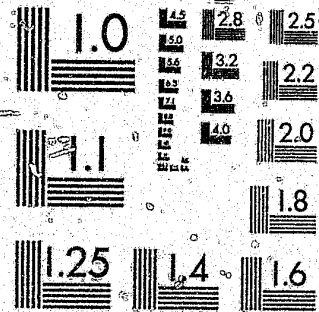


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PORTLAND POLICE BUREAU
COMMUNITY AFFAIRS DIVISION
CRIME PREVENTION UNIT

1980 Evaluation of the Home Security Program

Supplemental Report

May 1981

B. R. Baker
Chief of Police

Charles Jordan
Commissioner of Public Safety

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Written and Compiled by
Steve Beadie

1980 Evaluation of the Home Security Program
Supplemental Report

Summary of Findings

- Of 260 homes site-hardened during the last 6 months of 1978, only 3 households reported one or more forced entry burglaries 2 years (13-24 months) after site-hardening.
- A reduction of 70% in the burglary rate was found between the pre site-hardening 12 month period and the 13-24 month post site-hardening period. A previous evaluation also found a 70% reduction in the burglary rate between pre and post site-hardening 12 month periods.
- An analysis of the methods of entry used in the reported burglaries during the 13-24 month follow-up period revealed that the majority of entries were a result of the homeowner not complying with recommended site-hardening techniques.

Introduction

The Home Security Program is a site-hardening project which provides free locks and security hardware installation to low-income homeowners in Housing and Community Development (HCD) designated neighborhoods. Elderly people are the program's primary beneficiaries. An average site-hardening job consists of installing two double cylinder deadbolt locks, pinning four windows, and placing wire screens on four windows. In addition, recommendations are made to the homeowner as to proper outside lighting and landscaping in order to reduce the number of windows and doors which are hidden from normal view.

Purpose

Previous evaluations^{1,2} of the Home Security Program have investigated whether this crime prevention program was affecting the burglary rate 1-12 months after the homes were site-hardened. These studies found a 66-70% decrease in the number of reported forced entry burglaries up to 1 year prior to the site-hardening date and up to 1

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year after the site-hardening date. Of interest to the Home Security Program is what happens to the burglary rate up to 2 years after site-hardening. The purpose of this Supplemental Report is to assess the burglary rates for homes 13-24 months after having been site-hardened.

Evaluation Procedures

Columbia Region Information Sharing System (CRISS) records of reported forced entry burglaries were checked for 260 homes site-hardened during July-December 1978. The time period investigated was 2 years (13-24 months) after the site-hardening date. The 1980 Home Security Program Evaluation² had previously investigated the time periods: 1) 3 years (25-36 months) prior to site-hardening date; 2) 2 years (13-24 months) prior to site-hardening date; 3) 1 year (1-12 months) prior to site-hardening date; and 4) 1 year (1-12 months) after site-hardening date.

Results and Discussion

Results revealed that only 3 households out of 260 homes reported one or more forced entry burglaries (a total of 6 burglary incidents) 13-24 months after site-hardening. In addition, none of these 3 households had reported forced entry burglaries occurring in the first year after site-hardening. Two of the households had reported burglaries prior to being site-hardened in 1978, however.

Table 1 contains the number of reported burglaries for all 260 homes up to 1, 2 and 3 years prior to site-hardening and up to 1 and 2 years following site-hardening.

Table 1
Comparison of Reported Burglary Rates
Before and After Site-Hardening

Time Period: Up to	Number of homes with one or more forced burglaries	Number of homes not burglarized
3 years (25-36 months) prior to site-hardening date	7	253
2 years (13-24 months) prior to site-hardening date	8	252
1 year (1-12 months) prior to site-hardening date	10	250
1 year (1-12 months) following site-hardening date	3	257
2 years (13-24 months) following site-hardening date	3	257

These data show that the reported forced entry burglary rate up to 2 years after site-hardening remained essentially the same as the rate for the time period up to 1 year after site-hardening. As a reference, the 1980 City-wide residential burglary rate increased approximately 14% over the 1979 rate.

As seen in Table 1, there was a decrease from 10 to 3 in the number of reported burglaries up to 1 year prior to the site-hardening and up to 1 year after the site-hardening date. This 70% decrease was found to exist up to 2 years after site-hardening. The observed decrease in the burglary rate is probably not due to chance³.

As stated in the 1980 Home Security Program Evaluation², this burglary rate decrease must be viewed in the context of two factors. The first factor is that many households request locks shortly after being victimized, thus the reported rate of burglary for this self-selected group could be artificially high preceding the installation of the locks. For example, a previous study found that 56.5% of the households reporting crimes did so four months or less before the site-hardening¹. A second factor of consideration is that studies^{4,5} have indicated that in most cases the reporting rate for burglaries increases after participation in crime prevention activities.

With respect to the first factor however, data analysis (see Table 1) revealed that the number of reported forced entry burglaries up to 1 and 2 years after the site-hardening date was also less than the number of reported burglaries up to 2 and 3 years prior to the site-hardening date. Related to the second factor, the reported rate of burglary following the lock installation could be more accurate than those reported rates found prior to the site-hardening. It should be noted that studies⁶ have consistently found that approximately 50% of residential burglaries are not reported. However, recent information⁵ suggests that citizens who participate in crime prevention activities by installing locks or other security devices report approximately 97% of forced entry burglaries to the police. The above analysis therefore suggests that the reported burglary rates up to 2 and 3 years prior to site-hardening could be much higher than the 7 or 8 reported, while the rate following site-hardening is probably a more accurate reporting level.

An analysis of the methods of entry used in the reported forced entry burglaries in the 13-24 month time period following site-hardening revealed:

- One entry (1 burglary incident) was made by forcing the door and breaking the door jamb.
- A second entry (1 burglary incident) was via forcing the door. Subsequent analysis indicated that the homeowner elected however not to have installed a deadbolt lock on this door, although a Residential Security Survey⁷ recommended that such a lock be installed.
- A third method of entry (3 burglary incidents) was by breaking a basement window. Subsequent information revealed that the homeowner elected not to have wire screens installed over the window in contrast to the Residential Security Survey recommendations. Entry in a fourth burglary incident at this same address may have been made possible by the homeowner not locking the deadbolt lock.

The above analysis indicates that the majority of entries were a result of the homeowner not complying with recommendations made in the Residential Security Survey. One method of entry was due to failure in the site-hardening materials installed. This home was site-hardened in 1978. Since that time more effective site-hardening materials are now used in the Home Security Program to prevent the door jambs from being broken.

In summary, a review of reported forced entry burglaries indicates that the site-hardening program is having a positive effect on decreasing the burglary rates for the homes participating in the Home Security Program. Of importance, this positive effect was found up to 1 and 2 years following site-hardening.

REFERENCES

1 Evaluation of the Home Security Program, Portland Police Bureau, Crime Prevention Unit, Portland, Oregon, 1979.

2 Beedle, S. and Stangier, J. Evaluation of the Portland Police Bureau's Home Security Program. The Bellringer: A Periodic Review of Criminal Justice Evaluation, 1980 (20), 9-11.

3 z-score = 2.18, p is less than .05.

4 Evaluation of the City of Portland's Crime Prevention Bureau Program, Office of Justice Programs, Portland, Oregon, 1977.

5 An Evaluation of Crime Prevention in the City of Portland: Draft Report, Office of Justice Planning and Evaluation, Portland, Oregon, 1981.

6 For Example:

City of Portland Police Bureau Crime Prevention Victimization Survey, Applied Social Research, Inc., Portland, Oregon, 1980.

Sourcebook of Criminal Justice Statistics, U.S. Department of Justice, Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, Washington, D.C., 1979.

7 The Residential Security Survey Program is a free service offered by the Portland Police Bureau's Crime Prevention Division. In this program a representative of the Police Bureau "surveys" a home or apartment to determine security risks, and then makes recommendations (e.g., install better locking devices on doors and windows, strengthen door frames, improve outside lighting) to improve security on the dwelling.

Data Retrieval Operator for this project: Delores Gleich

END