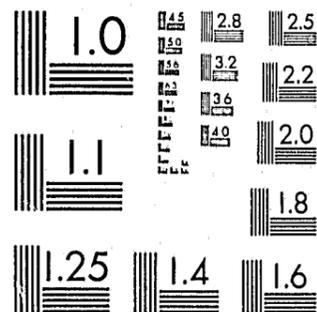


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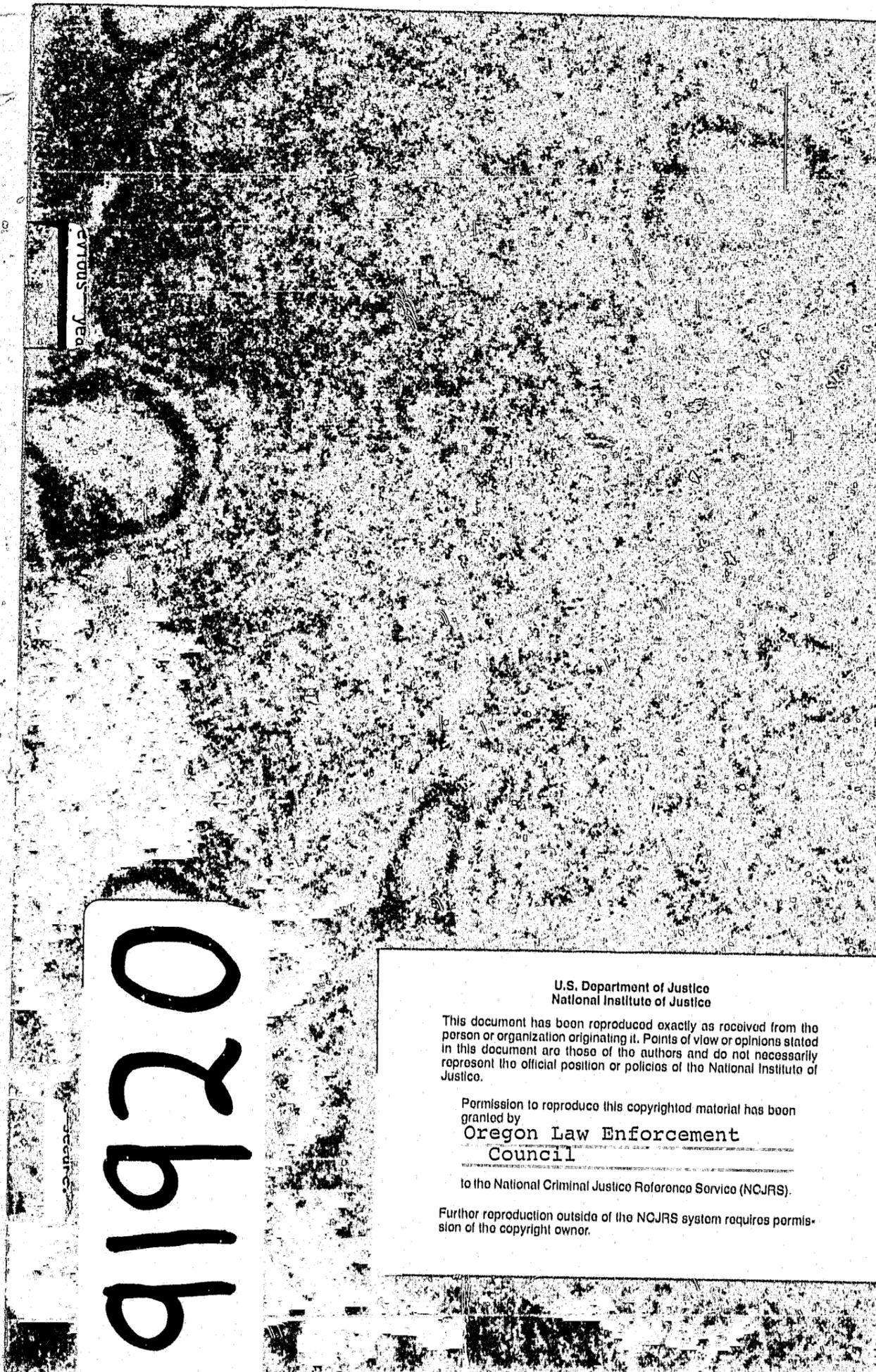
MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART
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OREGON SERIOUS **CRIME** SURVEY PART 2

Do Oregonians Use Crime Prevention Techniques? JANUARY 1982

INTRODUCTION

This bulletin is about citizens' use of crime prevention techniques. The information came from a random sample survey of approximately 1,000 Oregonians, conducted by the Oregon Law Enforcement Council (OLEC) annually since 1978. The survey form contains questions on three topics: citizens' experiences as victims of crime, their use of crime prevention techniques; and, their perception of crime and opinions about current criminal justice issues. The results of the survey are published in three bulletins corresponding to each topic area.

As in previous years, survey questionnaires were mailed to a random sample of 1,500 citizens drawn from the Oregon drivers' license files. This year, 1,061 completed questionnaires were returned--representing 70.7 percent of the total sample and 80.5 percent of the surveys which reached the individuals to which they were mailed (i.e., excluding those returned as non-forwardable by the post office). This is an exceptionally high rate of return for a mail-out survey.

What Are Crime Prevention Programs?

In the mid-sixties and early seventies, law enforcement agencies began to put more emphasis on preventing, rather than reacting to, crime. The theory underlying most crime prevention programs is that many crimes are crimes of opportunity and can be prevented if more citizens observed basic precautions. Although

these precautions are nothing new, the concept of a police or citizen program devoted specifically to crime prevention is relatively recent.

Target hardening, or making potential targets of crime more difficult to victimize, is the goal of most prevention programs. This is done by encouraging such practices as making unoccupied residences appear occupied, reducing the number of hiding places near a residence, and making sure all door and window locks are effective, operable, and in use. Other activities include sponsoring neighborhood awareness meetings and making tools available to mark valuable property with identification numbers.

In Oregon, crime prevention programs were first started in the larger metropolitan areas, particularly Portland and Multnomah County. At present, such programs are operating in most parts of the state and the majority were initially funded by the OLEC.

For more information on crime prevention in your community, contact your local police department, sheriff's office or crime prevention bureau. In addition, the Board on Police Standards and Training (BPST) is responsible for statewide coordination of crime prevention programs and information through the Oregon Crime Watch Program, Room 404, Executive House, 325 13th Street N.E., Salem, OR 97310. Contact person is Hugh Wilkinson, 378-3674.

Overview of the Survey Questions

In this survey people were asked about locking the house, garage and car; using anti-burglary stickers and alarm systems; and engraving valuable property. A question on the use of firearms was included to determine which population groups are most likely to own guns and for what purposes. Although firearms are not a recommended crime prevention measure, it may still be that people are responding to crime by arming themselves. For the 1981 Survey two questions were added. One asks how people have heard about prevention programs. The second asked whether the respondent had taken any specific action to make his/her property more secure.

The reader should understand that these questions apply only to residential crime prevention programs. Since this survey does not include places of business, no questions about commercial crime prevention were included. Some jurisdictions, such as the City of Eugene, have emphasized commercial crime prevention more than others. This emphasis will not be reflected in this survey.

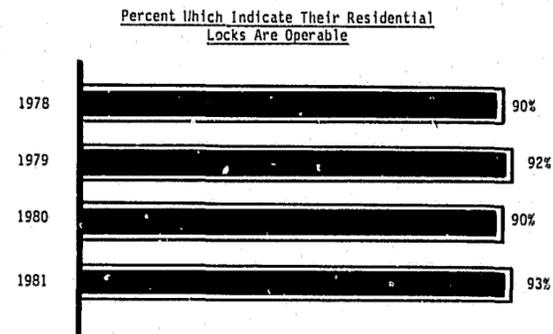
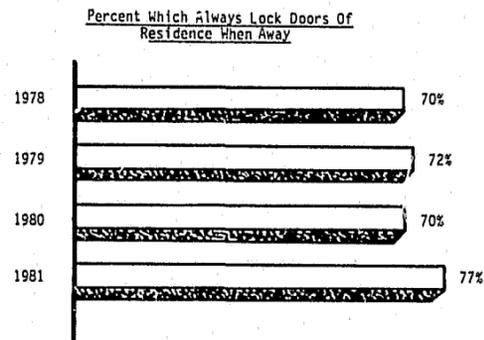
Since most of these questions were included in each year's survey, a comparison over time will show whether any progress has been made in getting people to use security measures. The information in this report may also be useful in streamlining the efforts of crime prevention officers by helping them judge which prevention measures are not working, define groups least likely to use preventive measures, and zero in on highly-victimised groups that could be protecting themselves better.

Most of the responses to questions are tabulated by geographic location of the respondent. It should be noted that these are estimates subject to sampling error. Furthermore,

This report contains no data tables or copies of the survey form. Such information is available upon request by calling or

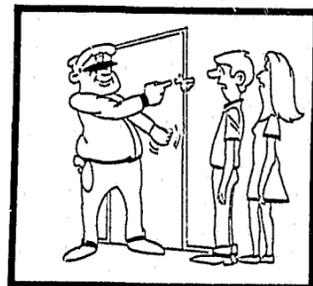


PREVENTING BURGLARIES

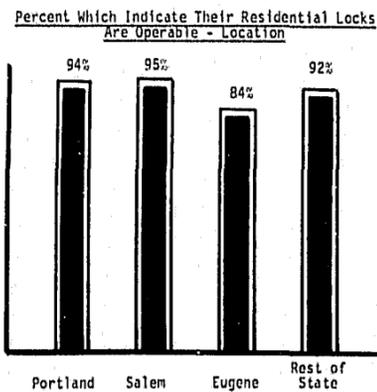
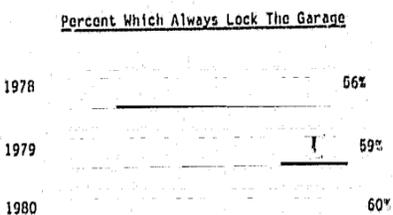
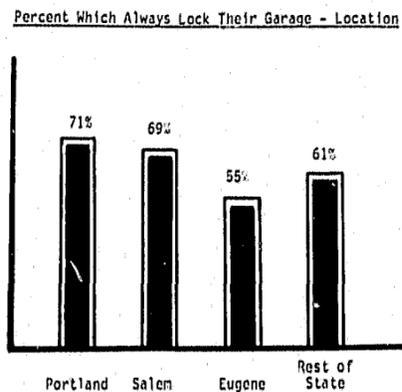
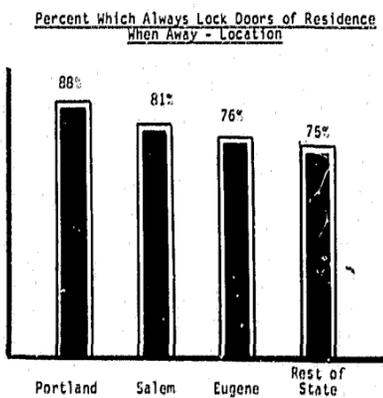


Locking The House

In 1980 burglaries comprised more than one-fourth of all Index Crime and most of these (65%) occurred at private residences. 2 Of these residential burglaries, 35% were accomplished by simply entering through an unlocked door or window. In the results shown for 1981, notice that about 77 percent of those surveyed said they always lock their houses when leaving; but only 63 percent of the respondents with garages always lock their garages. Eight percent are unable to secure their residences because of inoperable locks. The 1981 survey results showed an increase in the use of these security measures, particularly since 1978. Statistical tests revealed that the increased practice of locking the house and garage were significant.



Residents of Portland and Salem were more likely to practice all three of these security measures than residents of Eugene or the rest of the state.

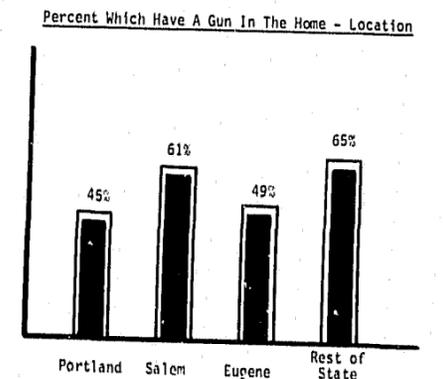
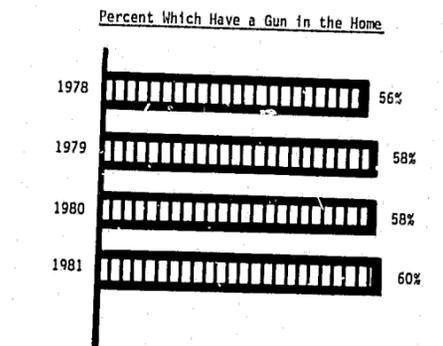
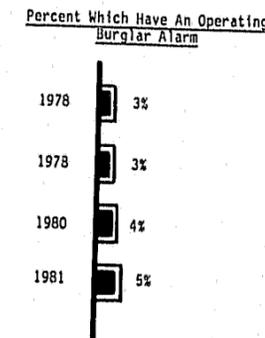
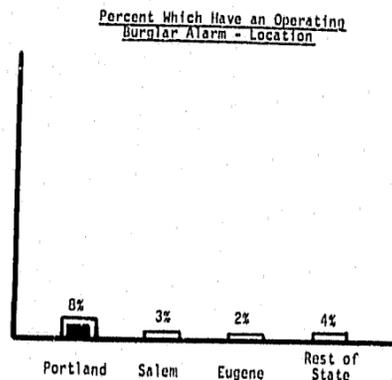
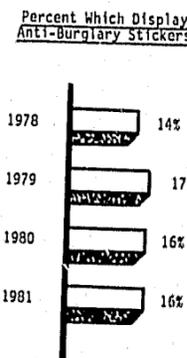
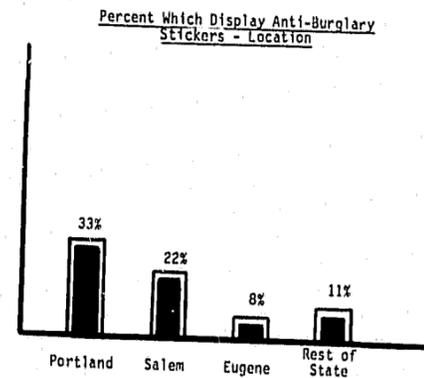


Anti-Burglary Decals and Alarms

Anti-burglary stickers are normally distributed by police departments, particularly in conjunction with property engraving campaigns. These decals, when placed on windows or doors, are designed to discourage burglary by warning potential intruders that valuables have been engraved with identifying numbers and can be traced if stolen.

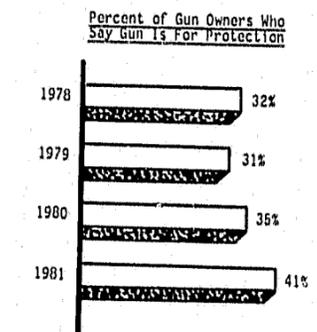
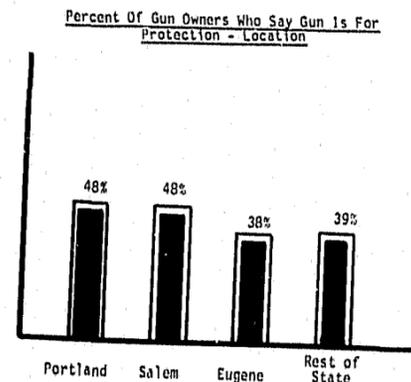
Anti-burglary stickers and alarm systems are used by relatively few Oregonians; only 16 percent in 1981 had decals, and only 5 percent had operable alarms. Of the respondents whose residences were burglarized, 5 percent decided to use stickers afterward. There was only a small increase from 1978 and 1981 for both of these questions. Neither change was statistically significant.

There was substantial variation in the use of decals by geographic location. Portland residents far exceeded other areas in use of these items. Thirty-three percent of Portland residents used them compared to 22 percent for Salem, 8 percent for Eugene, and 11 percent for the rest of the state. Portland residents also make greater use



Firearms

In recent years there has been a good deal of concern about firearms. In the wake of assassination attempts proposals for gun control have been initiated. Many are concerned that the public is responding to the problem of crime by purchasing firearms. While there was a statistically significant increase in gun ownership between the years 1978 and 1981, the increase was only 4%. This suggests that there has not been a large increase in gun ownership. However, the data does suggest that there is a substantial increase in those who keep a gun for protection. In 1978, 32 percent of the gun owners said their gun was for protection against crime. In 1981, 41 percent said it was for protection. People in Portland and Eugene were less likely to own a gun than those living in Salem or the rest of the state. However, the gun owners in Portland and Salem were more likely to have it for protection.



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1Murder, forcible rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny, motor vehicle theft, and arson



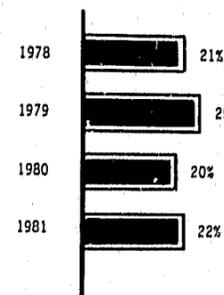
Property Engraving

Engraving valuable property with an identifying number, such as a driver's license number, not only increases the chance of its return if stolen, but may be a deterrent to thieves if engraved property is more difficult to sell. This technique is especially helpful when large amounts of stolen property are recovered, as in the arrest of a fencing operation. Twenty-two percent of those surveyed in 1981 said they had engraved their property. Little change in this percentage was evident over the four-year period.

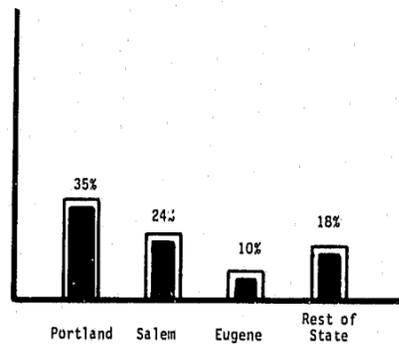
Of those respondents who were victims of a burglary or theft in the 1981 survey, only 13 percent had marked their property prior to being victimized. Another 10 percent engraved their remaining property after the burglary or theft.

As with other measures, engraving of property varied substantially by geographic location of residents. Portland had the largest percentage (35%) followed by Salem (24%), the rest of the state (18%) and Eugene (10%).

Percent Of Respondents Who Have Engraved Valuable Property



Percent Of Respondents Who Have Engraved Valuable Property - Location



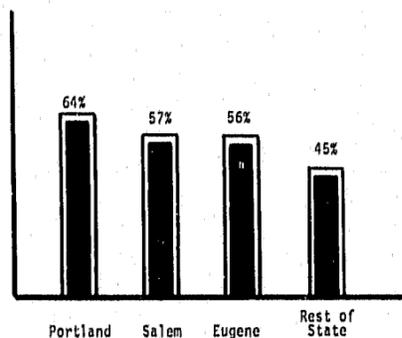
Locking the Car

In 1980, 28 percent of all Index Crime involved theft of automobiles or articles on or in automobiles.¹ Failure to lock vehicles, either at home or away from home, is often to blame--both for auto theft and for larceny which involves stealing articles from vehicles. Of Oregonians who park a vehicle near their residence, half in 1981 said they always lock it. When parking away from home, 70 percent of the 1981 survey respondents said they always lock their vehicles.

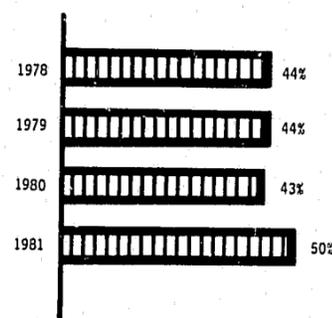
There was a statistically significant increase from 1978 in the percentage who said they always lock their car when parked at home. Forty-four percent did so in 1978 compared with 50 percent in 1981. The small increase in those locking their car away from home was not statistically significant.

Residents of Portland were more likely to always lock their car both at home and away from home.

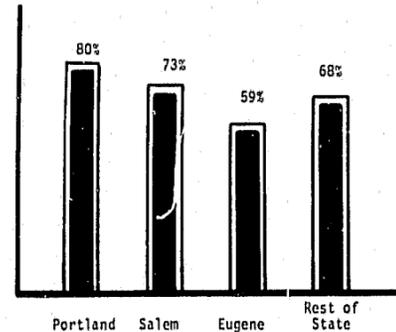
Percent Which Always Lock The Car When Parked At Home - Location



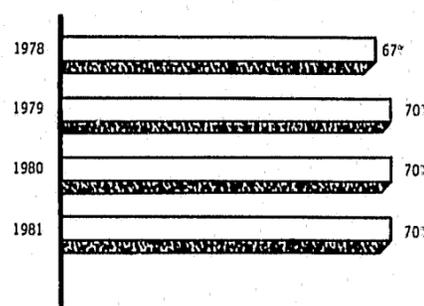
Percent Which Always Lock The Car When Parked At Home



Percent Which Always Lock The Car When Parked Away From Home - Location



Percent Which Always Lock Their Cars When Parked Away From Home



We would like to express our appreciation to the Volunteers from the Salem Chapter of the American Association of Retired

Awareness of Crime Prevention Programs

In order to assist crime prevention programs determine the best method of providing information, a question was added to the 1981 survey which asked if respondents had received information about crime prevention programs from various sources. In examining these results the reader should understand that this question only deals with awareness, it does not address the question of how effective the method of providing information was in getting citizens to use crime prevention measures.

Of the methods of providing information, television seemed to reach the most people (69%) followed by newspaper (49%), and radio (43%). Pamphlets (32%), word of mouth (27%), and displays (17%) were moderately successful in reaching people. Other methods only reached a few residents. Residents of Portland and Salem were more likely to have obtained information through radio, block meetings and pamphlets. Residents of both those areas generally tended to be higher on all methods suggesting the existence of more active prevention programs in those areas than elsewhere.

Recent Security Actions

In order to determine whether people are actually making use of crime prevention information, a question was added asking people if they had taken any specific actions to secure their homes or property in the past year. Of the survey respondents, 52 percent said they contacted a neighbor about watching each others' homes, 36 percent had improved locks, 22 percent had improved lighting, 13 percent had improved visibility and 13 percent had engraved their property. A smaller percentage had placed warning decals (8%), installed burglar alarms (3%), or taken other security measures (4%). Significantly more residents of Portland improved locks, placed warning decals and engraved property.

Variation in Responses by Groups

In examining the responses of different groups, it is apparent that each of these crime prevention activities increases among older people and among those living in urban areas, especially Portland and Salem. It is reasonable to expect those in urban areas to make greater use of crime prevention techniques. First, prevention programs are

more prevalent and have been operating longer in urban areas, particularly in Portland. Second, victimization occurs at a higher rate in urban areas. In most cases the oldest age group (65 and over) is the group most likely to use a given crime prevention measure. In the previous year's survey the youngest age group was the least likely to use crime prevention measures. This pattern was not as strong in this year's survey.

Some interesting differences in age groups were found regarding the method of obtaining crime prevention information. Though television was an effective source of information for all age groups, older people (especially 65 and over) were more likely to be reached than young people. Those 50 and over were much more likely to obtain information from a newspaper. Radio was most effective with young people, who also more often got information through word of mouth, from a law enforcement agency or displays but rarely through a block or public meeting.

SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

* This year's survey suggests citizens' are increasing their use of most crime prevention measures. Larger numbers of citizens are locking their doors, garages, and cars. Of particular significance is the fact that a majority of respondents have taken some action in the past year to secure their homes. Over half had contacted a neighbor about watching one another's homes. Thirty-six percent had improved locks and 22% had improved lighting. This suggests that crime prevention programs are having some impact on citizen's habits. It may also indicate that an increasing fear of victimization has motivated individuals to take preventive action.

* There were some areas where no improvement was revealed. Particularly, there was no significant increase in the number of people marking their valuable property, displaying anti-burglary stickers or locking the car away from home. It is possible that citizens may not consider property marking or decals to be effective in preventing crime. While marking property might not deter criminals it vastly improves the police's ability to return property. Perhaps greater public education is

home, the percentage which do so is high. Seventy percent always lock it and 19% usually do so. There simply may not be much room for improvement.

* Residents of Portland and Salem evidenced the greatest use of crime prevention measures suggesting the existence of active crime prevention programs in those areas. This is particularly true for the City of Portland, which was ahead of the rest of the state on virtually every measure and far ahead in some instances. To some degree residents of Portland may be reacting to crime rates which are much higher there than elsewhere.

However, Portland has had an active, aggressive crime prevention program whose efforts seem clearly evident here. Without this program it is unlikely that one-third of the residents would have marked their property or displayed anti-burglary decals or that such large percentages would have used the basic prevention measures.

* It does appear that an increasing number of citizens are viewing gun ownership as a means to protect themselves from crime. Sixty percent of the citizens surveyed in 1981 had increased their gun ownership over 1978, substantially more people consider one of the purposes of gun ownership to be protection against crime.

* As observed in previous years' surveys, those age 65 and over were more likely to use crime prevention measures than others.

* In terms of reaching people with crime prevention information, TV appears to be the most effective followed by newspaper and radio. Older citizens were more likely to be reached by television, newspaper or block meetings. These methods were somewhat less effective with young people. They were more likely to get crime prevention information from radio, "word of mouth," displays or from enforcement agencies.

¹ Respondents could check more

McGRUFF NEEDS YOU TO



TAKE A BITE OUT OF CRIME

The National Coalition For Crime Prevention and the National Advertising Council, Inc., created McGruff, the crime prevention dog, to alert the public on how to protect one's property and self from burglary, robbery and assault.

Oregon Crime Watch was created in Oregon to provide law enforcement agencies material and technical services to implement and operate crime prevention programs.

A wide variety of informational material for the public has been developed by these programs covering the following topics:

- * Neighborhood and Rural Watch Programs
- * Security Hardening for Residential and Business Buildings
- * Personal Safety
- * Senior Citizens Crime Prevention
- * Property Inventory and Identification
- * Rape and Assault Prevention
- * Block House and Parents Programs
- * Locks and Alarms
- * Motor Vehicle, Bicycle and Heavy Equipment Marking

Information and materials plus security surveys, technical services and training may be available from your city and county enforcement agencies. They alone cannot prevent crime. You need them and they need you.

Contact your local crime prevention officer at your enforcement agency to learn how you can protect yourself from crime.

Assistance and information is also available from the following state agencies:

Board on Police Standards and Training, Oregon Crime Watch Program - 378-3674
Oregon Law Enforcement Council - 378-4229

These agencies can be reached toll free through the state operator by calling 1-800-452-7813.

LAW ENFORCEMENT COUNCIL
STATE PLANNING AGENCY
2001 Front Street N.E.
SALEM, OREGON 97310

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END