



Crime in California

2002

CRIMES

"It shall be the duty of the department to give adequate interpretation of the statistics and so to present the information that it may be of value in guiding the policies of the Legislature and of those in charge of the apprehension, prosecution, and treatment of the criminals and delinquents, or concerned with the prevention of crime and delinquency..."

Section 13012. Contents of annual report
California Penal Code

More 

Links to:

[Preface](#) [Crimes](#) [Arrests](#)
[Dispositions](#) [Adult Corrections](#)
[Expenditures & Personnel](#)
[Other Databases](#) [Data Tables](#)
[Appendix](#)

WHAT IS A CRIME?

A crime is an act specifically prohibited by law, or failure to perform an act specifically required by law, for which punishment is prescribed (15 P.C.).

HOW ARE CRIMES COUNTED?

The **Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program** was inaugurated in 1930 and is administered on the national level by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). It provides criminal statistics for use in law enforcement administration, operation, and management. In California, this program is administered by the Department of Justice (DOJ).

As part of the UCR Program, law enforcement agencies throughout the state report summary information to the DOJ on "selected" crimes. Reported crimes are classified by UCR definitions designed to eliminate differences among the various states' penal code definitions of crimes.

The crimes, selected because of seriousness, frequency of occurrence, and the likelihood of being reported to the police, are homicide, forcible rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny-theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson. These eight offenses are known as Part I crimes. Except for larceny-theft, UCR does not count misdemeanors and infractions.

The California Crime Index (CCI) comprises homicide, forcible rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, and motor vehicle theft. When a 1983 California law raised the lower limit of felony theft from \$200 to over \$400, the DOJ dropped theft (\$200 and over) from its measure of crime. Law enforcement agencies began submitting arson crime data in 1979; 1980 was the first year of complete reporting. To maintain long-term felony trend data in the CCI, the DOJ excluded larceny-theft and arson. As indicated in the box on page 3, we are considering inclusion of theft over \$400 and arson.

The UCR Program accounts for Part I crimes only; however, some Part I crimes go undetected and therefore unreported. This, along with the hierarchy rule, accounts for a certain amount of underreporting in the system. Most crimes occur singly as opposed to more than one crime being committed within the same incident. The hierarchy rule assigns a value to each crime and requires that only the single most serious offense be reported. For example, if a person were to enter a bar, rob eight patrons, and kill the bartender, only the homicide would be reported. Arson is the exception. Since arson frequently occurs in conjunction with other crimes, it is felt that valuable information could be lost using the hierarchy rule. Therefore, arson is counted along with the other most serious offense.

WHAT IS A RATE?

A rate describes the number of events that occur within a given population. Crime rates and clearance rates are used in this section. Formulas for calculating both can be found in the Appendix.

WHAT IS THE VALUE OF THE UCR PROGRAM?

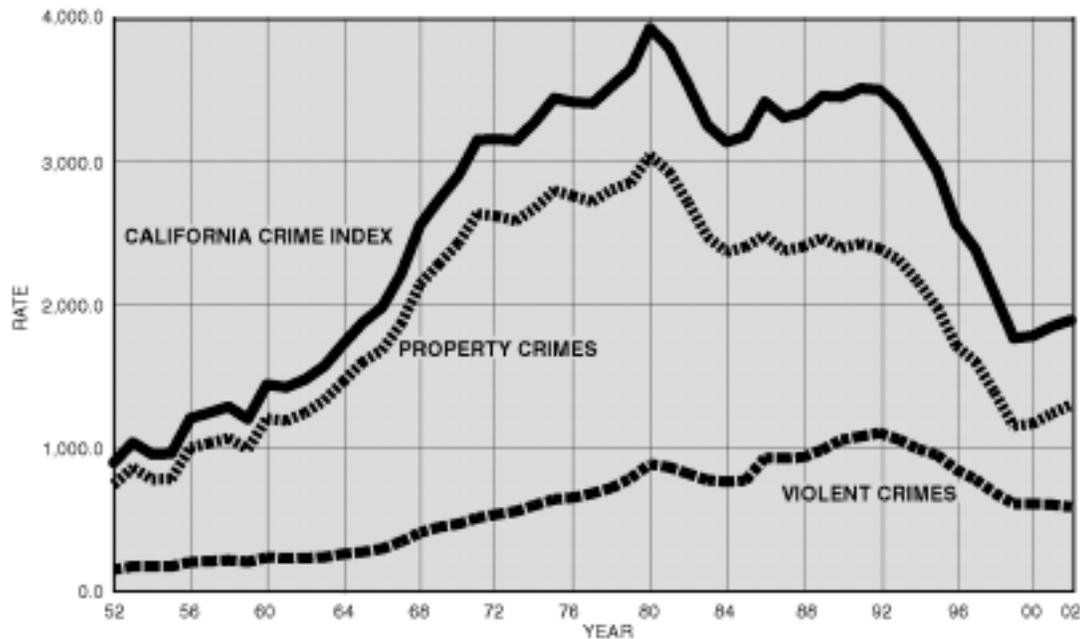
Since its inception in 1930, UCR has become a nationwide program. All California law enforcement agencies participate. Quality control surveys conducted by the DOJ staff have shown a high level of compliance with UCR reporting standards. The number of participants and the amount and quality of data collected under the stringent rules of the system make UCR a valuable program. In California, because of the high quality of its law enforcement agencies and their close cooperation with the DOJ, UCR data are, and have been for many years, an extremely good *indicator* of the extent of, and fluctuation in, crimes reported to law enforcement.

CRIME TRENDS, 1952-2002

CALIFORNIA CRIME INDEX, 1952-2002

By Category

Rate per 100,000 Population



Source: Table 1.

Data depicting crime in California have been published continuously for 50 years. The first *Crime in California* publication was issued in 1953 and reported data for the 1952 calendar year.

Comparing 1952 to 2002:

- The California Crime Index (CCI) rate increased 110.5 percent (from 898.1 to 1,890.1).
- The violent crime rate increased 284.8 percent (from 153.1 to 589.2).
- The property crime rate increased 74.6 percent (from 745.0 to 1,300.9).

The CCI rate increased almost continuously from 1952 through its peak year of 1980. Since then, the rate was in a general decline through 1999. In 1999, the CCI rate dropped to a 34-year low of 1,763.3 per 100,000 population. The 2002 rate of 1,890.1 marked the third consecutive annual increase since the 1999 low.

The violent crime rate reached its highest level in 1992 (1,103.9). In 1952, reported violent crime accounted for 17.0 percent of the CCI. In 2002, reported violent crime accounted for 31.2 percent.

The property crime rate, like the CCI, peaked in 1980. In 1952, reported property crime accounted for 83.0 percent of the CCI. In 2002, reported property crime accounted for 68.8 percent.

Since 1952, there have been changes in laws and data collection procedures. For instance, in 1986 legislation was enacted which required reporting domestic violence as criminal conduct. As a result, the aggravated assault rate increased over 35 percent in one year. These types of changes should be considered when comparing data.

The California Department of Justice is contemplating the addition of theft (\$400 and over) and arson to the California Crime Index (CCI) beginning with *Crime in California, 2003*. Data for arson are available since 1980 and theft (\$400 and over) data have been collected since 1983.

These changes would result in a more representative presentation of crime in California as indicated by the California Crime Index. They would also bring California and FBI crime indexes more in alignment.

These changes were planned to begin with *Crime in California, 2002*, but the necessary population data for prior years were not available. The population data will be available in time for inclusion in *Crime in California, 2003*.

Questions or comments should be referred to the Criminal Justice Statistics Center at: P.O. Box 903427, Sacramento, CA 94203-4270 or CJSC@doj.ca.gov

California Crime Index

California Crime Index (CCI) - homicide, forcible rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, and motor vehicle theft.

Comparing 1997 to 2002:

- Reported California Crime Index offenses decreased 20.6 percent in rate.

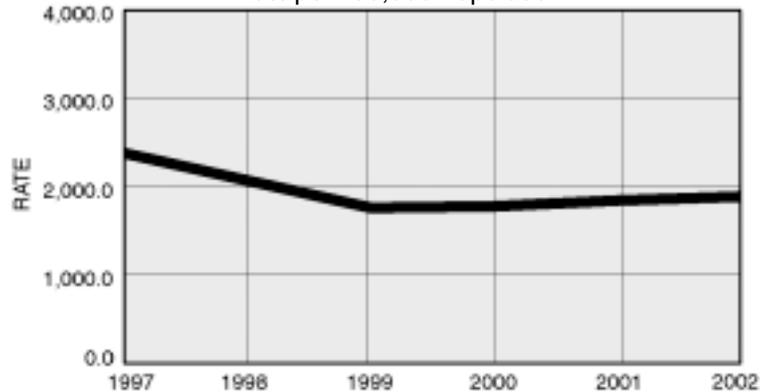
From 2001 to 2002:

- The California Crime Index rate increased 2.4 percent.

In 2002, of 667,213 California Crime Index offenses reported:

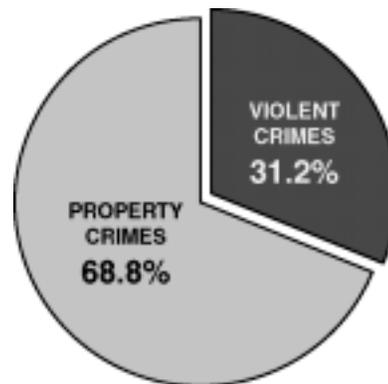
- Violent crimes accounted for 31.2 percent (207,988).
- Property crimes accounted for 68.8 percent (459,225).

CALIFORNIA CRIME INDEX, 1997-2002
Rate per 100,000 Population



Source: Table 2.

CALIFORNIA CRIME INDEX, 2002
By Category



Source: Table 3.

The CCI rate increased for the third consecutive year in 2002. The rate increase was seen in five of the six major offenses (see Table 2).

Violent Crimes

Violent Crimes - homicide, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault.

Comparing 1997 to 2002:

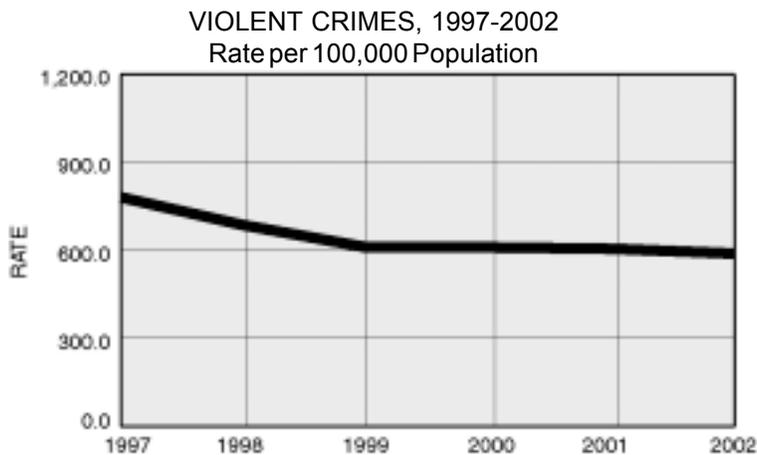
- The rate of reported violent crimes decreased 24.6 percent.

From 2001 to 2002:

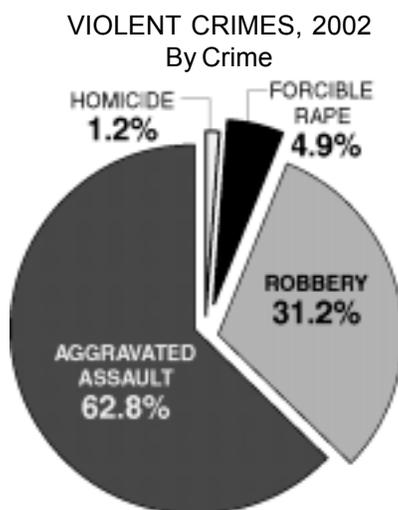
- The violent crime rate decreased 2.7 percent.

In 2002, of 207,988 violent crimes reported:

- Homicide accounted for 1.2 percent (2,392).
- Forcible rape accounted for 4.9 percent (10,176).
- Robbery accounted for 31.2 percent (64,805).
- Aggravated assault accounted for 62.8 percent (130,615).



Source: Table 2.



Source: Table 3.

Note: Percentages do not add to 100.0 because of rounding.

The violent crime rate continued its ten-year decline, decreasing 2.7 percent from 2001 to 2002 (see Table 1).

Homicide

Homicide - The willful (nonnegligent) killing of one human being by another. Murder and nonnegligent manslaughter comprise this category.

Comparing 1997 to 2002:

- The rate of reported homicides decreased 12.8 percent.

From 2001 to 2002:

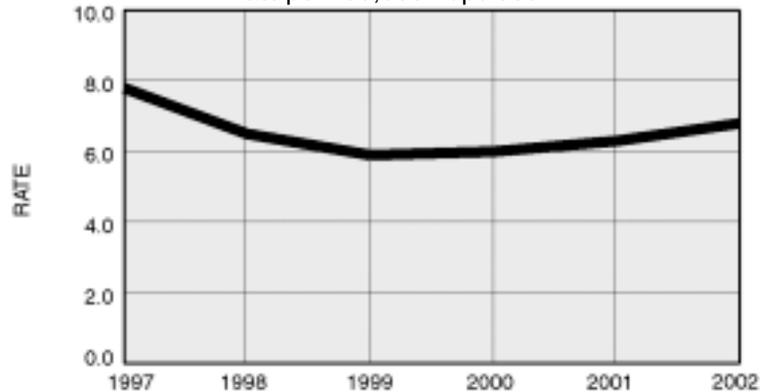
- The homicide rate increased 7.9 percent.

In 2002, of 2,392 homicides reported, the type of weapon was known in 2,364 cases (98.8 percent). Of these:

- Firearms accounted for 73.4 percent (1,735).
- Knives or cutting instruments accounted for 11.6 percent (274).
- Blunt objects (clubs, etc.) accounted for 4.9 percent (116).
- Personal weapons (hands, feet, etc.) accounted for 5.0 percent (118).
- Other weapons accounted for 5.1 percent (121).

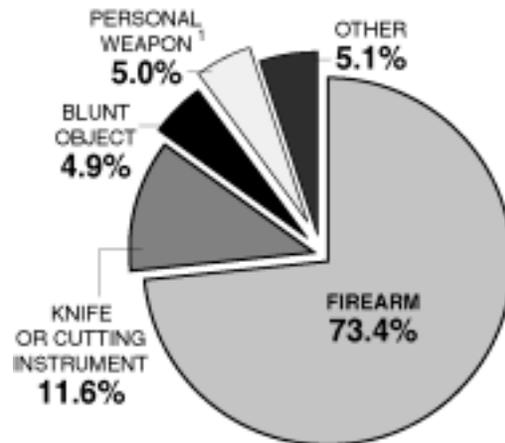
Homicides increased in number and rate for the third consecutive year in 2002.

HOMICIDE CRIMES, 1997-2002
Rate per 100,000 Population



Source: Table 2.

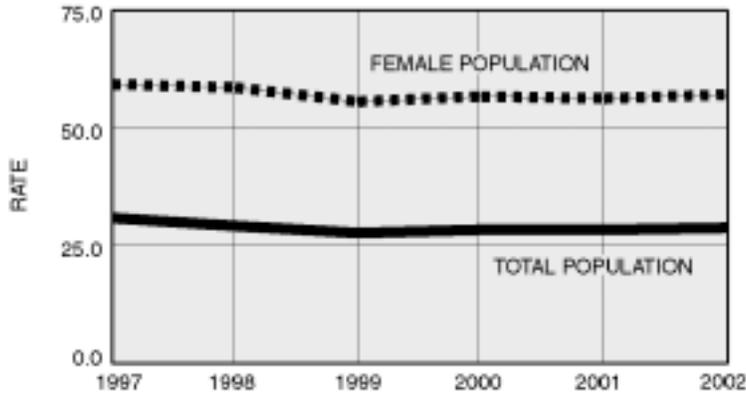
HOMICIDE CRIMES, 2002
By Type of Weapon Used



Source: Table 4.

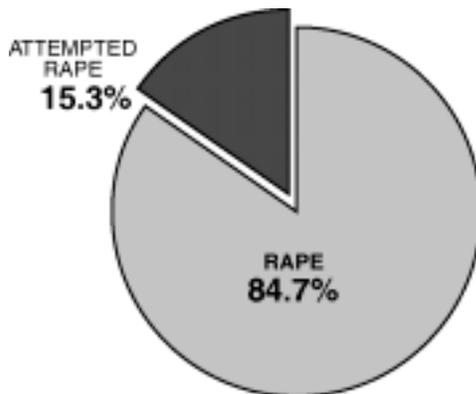
¹Personal weapons include hands, feet, etc.

FORCIBLE RAPE CRIMES, 1997-2002
Rate per 100,000 Total and Female Populations



Sources: Tables 2 and 5.

FORCIBLE RAPE CRIMES, 2002
By Type of Rape



Source: Table 5.

Forcible Rape

Forcible Rape - *The carnal knowledge of a female forcibly and against her will. Assaults or attempts to commit rape by force or threat of force are included.*

The UCR definition of forcible rape states that only females can be victims; therefore, a forcible rape crime rate based exclusively on the female population is included. **The following discussion is based on the rate of occurrence for both female population and total population** (see Tables 2 and 5).

Comparing 1997 to 2002:

- The rate of reported forcible rapes (female population) decreased 3.7 percent.
- The rate of reported forcible rapes (total population) decreased 6.8 percent.

From 2001 to 2002:

- The forcible rape rate (total population) increased 1.4 percent.

In 2002, of 10,176 forcible rapes reported:

- Rape accounted for 84.7 percent (8,620).
- Attempted rape accounted for 15.3 percent (1,556).

In 2002, the forcible rape rate for females and for the total population increased 1.4 percent

Robbery

Robbery - The taking or attempting to take anything of value from the care, custody, or control of a person or persons by force or threat of force or violence and/or by putting the victim in fear.

Comparing 1997 to 2002:

- The rate of reported robberies decreased 25.7 percent.

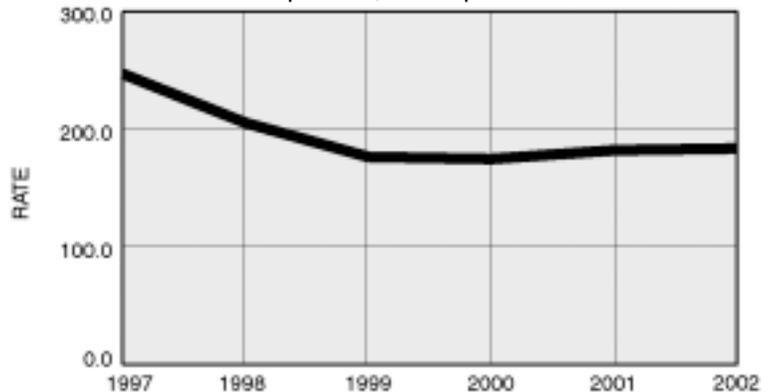
From 2001 to 2002:

- The robbery rate increased 0.8 percent.

In 2002, of 64,805 robberies reported:

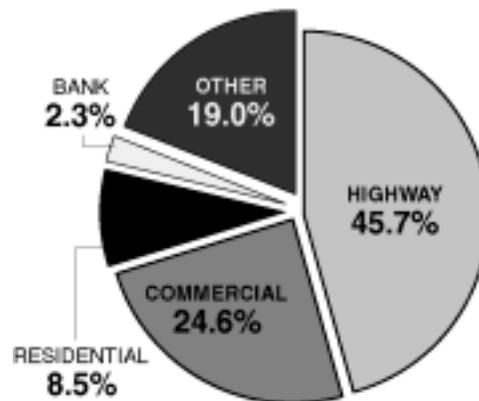
- Highway robbery (streets, parks, parking lots, etc.) accounted for 45.7 percent (29,603).
- Commercial robbery accounted for 24.6 percent (15,916).
- Residential robbery accounted for 8.5 percent (5,489).
- Bank robbery accounted for 2.3 percent (1,502).
- Robberies that occurred in other locations (churches, schools, trains, etc.) accounted for 19.0 percent (12,295).

ROBBERY CRIMES, 1997-2002
Rate per 100,000 Population



Source: Table 2.

ROBBERY CRIMES, 2002
By Location

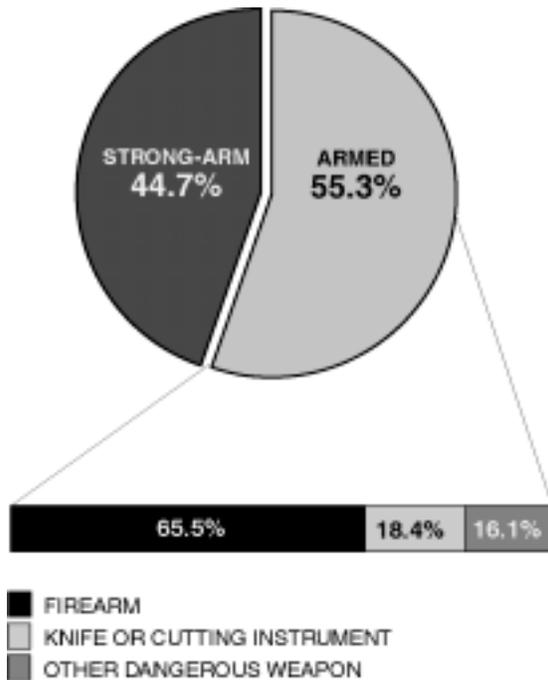


Source: Table 6.

Note: Percentages do not add to 100.0 because of rounding.

The 2002 robbery rate increased for the second consecutive year.

ROBBERY CRIMES, 2002
By Type of Robbery and Type of Weapon if Armed



Source: Table 6.

Robbery (continued)

In 2002, of all robberies reported:

- Armed robbery accounted for 55.3 percent (35,812).
- Strong-arm robbery accounted for 44.7 percent (28,993).

Of the 35,812 armed robberies reported:

- Firearms were involved in 65.5 percent (23,444).
- Knives or cutting instruments were involved in 18.4 percent (6,599).
- Other dangerous weapons were involved in 16.1 percent (5,769).

In 2002, over half of all robberies involved the use of a weapon. Over six out of ten times that weapon was a firearm.

Aggravated Assault

Aggravated Assault - *The unlawful attack or attempted attack by one person upon another for the purpose of inflicting severe or aggravated bodily injury. This type of assault is usually accompanied by the use of a weapon or by means likely to produce death or great bodily harm.*

Comparing 1997 to 2002:

- The rate of reported aggravated assaults decreased 25.3 percent.

From 2001 to 2002:

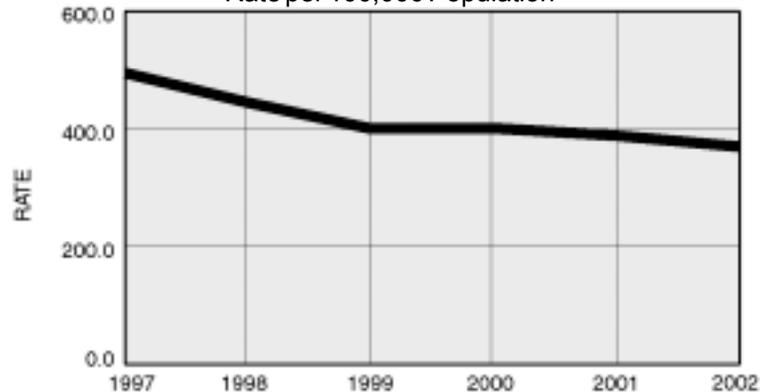
- The aggravated assault rate decreased 4.8 percent.

In 2002, of 130,615 aggravated assaults reported:

- Firearms were involved in 17.5 percent (22,916).
- Knives or cutting instruments were involved in 13.8 percent (17,983).
- Other dangerous weapons were involved in 32.8 percent (42,845).
- Personal weapons were involved in 35.9 percent (46,871).

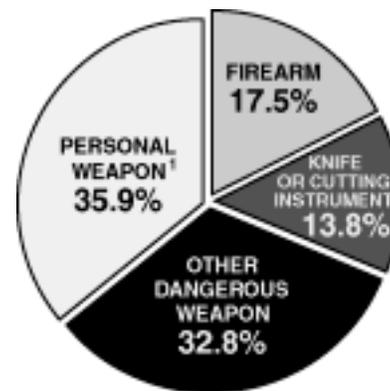
The 2002 aggravated assault rate decreased for the second consecutive year (down 4.8 percent). This continued a trend that began in 1986 when the volume of aggravated assault offenses was influenced by a law change requiring domestic violence be reported as criminal conduct.

AGGRAVATED ASSAULT CRIMES, 1997-2002
Rate per 100,000 Population



Source: Table 2.

AGGRAVATED ASSAULT CRIMES, 2002
By Type of Weapon Used



Source: Table 7.

¹Personal weapons include hands, feet, etc.

Property Crimes

Property Crimes - burglary and motor vehicle theft.

Comparing 1997 to 2002:

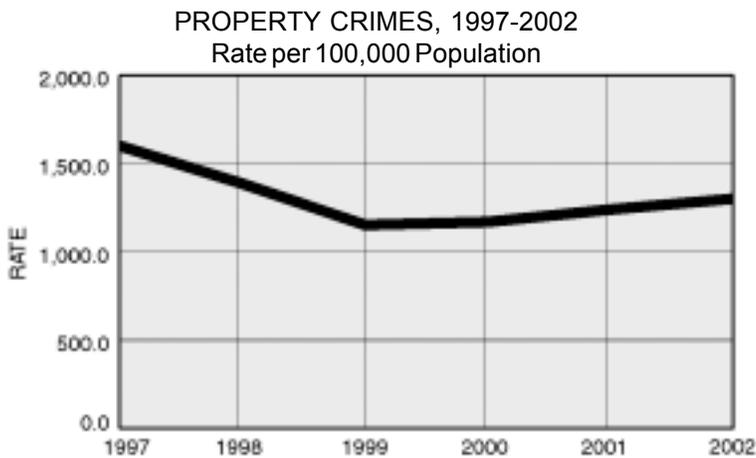
- The rate of reported property crimes decreased 18.7 percent.

From 2001 to 2002:

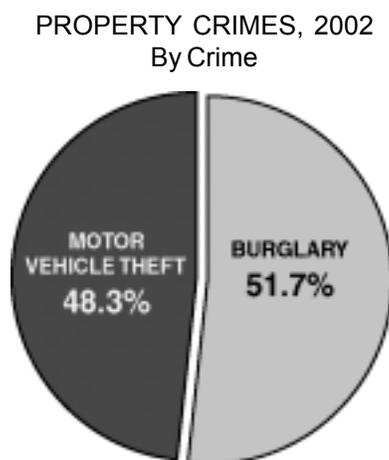
- The property crime rate increased 4.9 percent.

In 2002, of 459,225 property crimes reported:

- Burglary accounted for 51.7 percent (237,445).
- Motor vehicle theft accounted for 48.3 percent (221,780).



Source: Table 2.



Source: Table 3.

The property crime rate increased for the third consecutive year in 2002.

Burglary

Burglary - The unlawful entry of a structure to commit a felony or a theft. Attempted burglary is included.

Comparing 1997 to 2002:

- The rate of reported burglaries decreased 25.8 percent.

From 2001 to 2002:

- The burglary rate increased 1.7 percent.

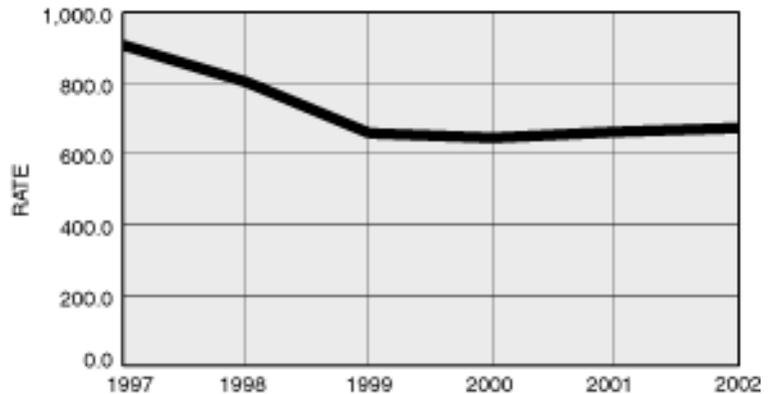
In 2002, of 237,445 burglaries and attempted burglaries reported:

- Burglary accounted for 93.3 percent (221,589).
- Attempted burglary accounted for 6.7 percent (15,856).

Of the 221,589 burglaries that occurred:

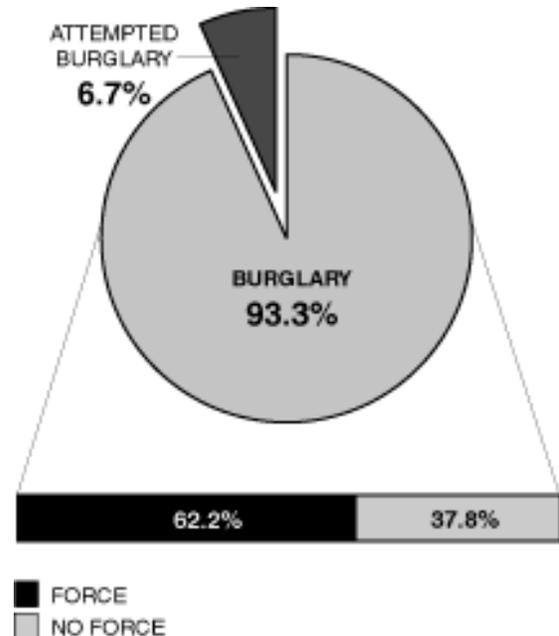
- Structures entered by force accounted for 62.2 percent (137,782).
- Structures entered without force accounted for 37.8 percent (83,807).

BURGLARY CRIMES, 1997-2002
Rate per 100,000 Population



Source: Table 2.

BURGLARY CRIMES, 2002
By Type of Burglary and Type of Entry

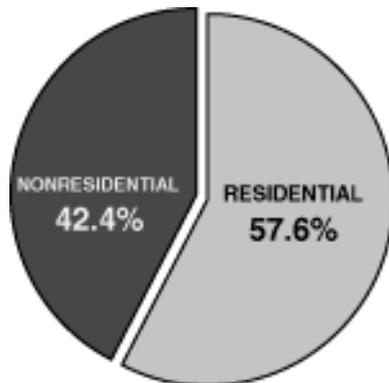


Source: Table 8.

In 2002, burglaries increased in rate and number for the second consecutive year.

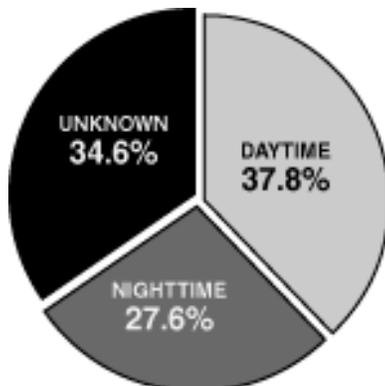
Burglary (continued)

BURGLARY CRIMES, 2002
By Location



Source: Table 8.

BURGLARY CRIMES, 2002
By Time of Day



Source: Table 8.

In 2002, of all burglaries reported:

- Residential burglary accounted for 57.6 percent (136,742).
- Nonresidential burglary accounted for 42.4 percent (100,703). Included in this category are commercial establishments, public buildings, etc.
- Daytime burglary accounted for 37.8 percent (89,708).
- Nighttime burglary accounted for 27.6 percent (65,613).
- Burglaries that occurred during an unknown hour accounted for 34.6 percent (82,124).

Motor Vehicle Theft

Motor Vehicle Theft - *The theft or attempted theft of a motor vehicle.*

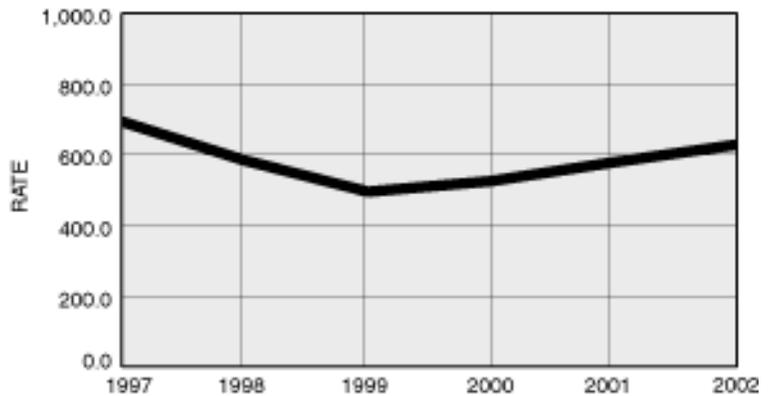
Comparing 1997 to 2002:

- The rate of reported motor vehicle thefts decreased 9.4 percent.

From 2001 to 2002:

- The motor vehicle theft rate increased 8.6 percent.

MOTOR VEHICLE THEFT CRIMES, 1997-2002
Rate per 100,000 Population

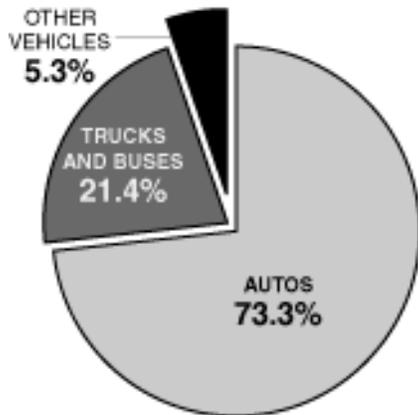


Source: Table 2.

In 2002, motor vehicle theft increased in rate and number for the third consecutive year.

Motor Vehicle Theft (continued)

MOTOR VEHICLE THEFT CRIMES, 2002
By Type of Vehicle



Source: Table 9.

In 2002, of 221,780 motor vehicle thefts reported:

- Autos accounted for 73.3 percent (162,478).
- Trucks and buses accounted for 21.4 percent (47,550). Included in this category are pickup trucks, vans, and motor homes.
- Other vehicles accounted for 5.3 percent (11,752). Included in this category are motorcycles, snowmobiles, motor scooters, and trail bikes.

Larceny-Theft

Larceny-Theft - *The unlawful taking, carrying, leading, or riding away of property from the possession or constructive possession of another (except embezzlement, fraud, forgery, and worthless checks).*

Comparing 1997 to 2002:

- The rate of total reported larceny-thefts decreased 15.1 percent.

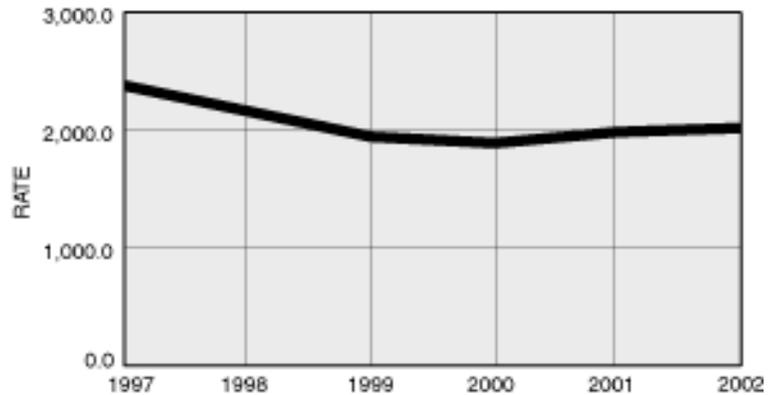
From 2001 to 2002:

- The total larceny-theft rate increased 1.7 percent.

In 2002, of 712,419 larceny-thefts reported:

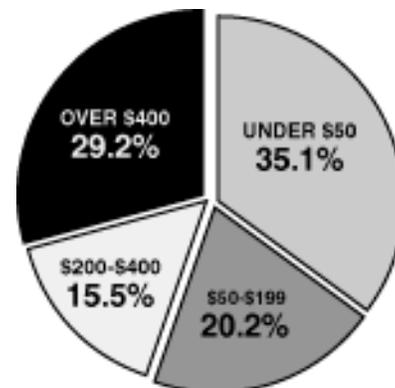
- Thefts under \$50 in value accounted for 35.1 percent (250,147).
- Thefts \$50 to \$199 in value accounted for 20.2 percent (143,798).
- Thefts \$200 to \$400 in value accounted for 15.5 percent (110,107).
- Thefts over \$400 in value accounted for 29.2 percent (208,367).

LARCENY-THEFT CRIMES, 1997-2002
Rate per 100,000 Population



Source: Table 2.

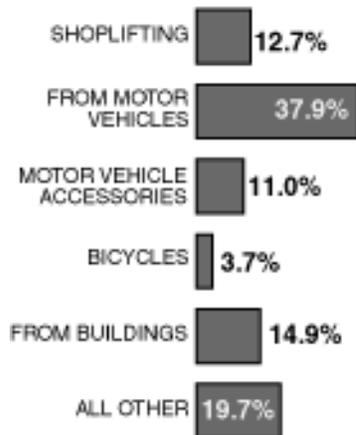
LARCENY-THEFT CRIMES, 2002
By Value Category of Loss



Source: Table 11.

In 2002, larceny-thefts increased in rate and number for the second consecutive year.

LARCENY-THEFT CRIMES, 2002
By Type of Larceny-Theft



Source: Table 11.
Note: Percentages do not add to 100.0 because of rounding.

Larceny-Theft (continued)

In 2002, of 712,419 larceny-thefts reported:

- Shoplifting accounted for 12.7 percent (90,597).
- Thefts from motor vehicles accounted for 37.9 percent (270,230).
- Thefts of motor vehicle accessories accounted for 11.0 percent (78,528).
- Thefts of bicycles accounted for 3.7 percent (26,474).
- Thefts from buildings accounted for 14.9 percent (106,359).
- All other types of larceny-thefts accounted for 19.7 percent (140,231).

In 2002, nearly half (48.9 percent) of all larceny-theft crimes involved theft from motor vehicles and theft of motor vehicle accessories.

Value of Stolen and Recovered Property

As part of the UCR Program, law enforcement agencies submit monthly reports showing the estimated dollar value of property stolen and property recovered. In these reports, the type of property is categorized in a uniform manner. However, agencies do not report these data consistently and frequently vary in their methods of estimating the dollar value of stolen property. Furthermore, property stolen and property recovered in any given time period are not necessarily the same property. For these reasons, dollar values of such property must be viewed as rough estimates.

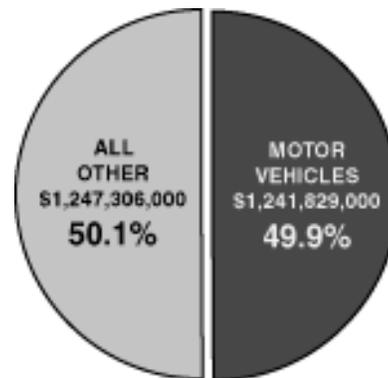
From 2001 to 2002:

- There was a 9.4 percent increase in the dollar value of all stolen property.
- There was an 8.1 percent increase in the dollar value of motor vehicles stolen.
- There was a 10.7 percent increase in the dollar value of all other stolen property.

In 2002, of the total dollar value (\$2,489,135,000) of all property reported stolen:

- Motor vehicles accounted for \$1,241,829,000 (49.9 percent).
- All other property accounted for \$1,247,306,000 (50.1 percent).

VALUE OF STOLEN PROPERTY, 2002
By Type

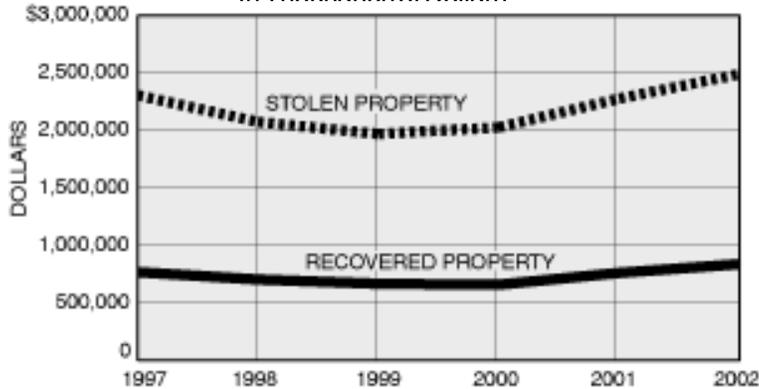


Source: Table 12.

Note: Dollar values are rounded to the nearest thousand.

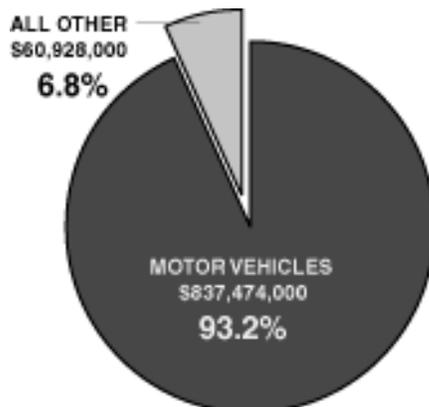
Value of Stolen and Recovered Property (continued)

VALUE OF STOLEN AND RECOVERED PROPERTY, 1997-2002
In Thousands of Dollars



Source: Table 12.

VALUE OF RECOVERED PROPERTY, 2002
By Type



Source: Table 12.

Note: Dollar values are rounded to the nearest thousand.

From 2001 to 2002:

- There was an 8.9 percent increase in the dollar value of all recovered property.
- There was a 10.0 percent increase in the dollar value of motor vehicles recovered.
- There was a 3.9 percent decrease in the dollar value of all other recovered property.

In 2002, of the total dollar value (\$898,402,000) of property reported recovered:

- Motor vehicles accounted for \$837,474,000 (93.2 percent).
- All other property accounted for \$60,928,000 (6.8 percent).

In 2002, the total value of all stolen property increased for the third consecutive year.

Arson

Arson - Any willful or malicious burning or attempt to burn, with or without intent to defraud, a dwelling house, public building, motor vehicle or aircraft, or the personal property of another, etc.

Comparing 1997 to 2002:

- The rate of reported arsons decreased 17.6 percent.

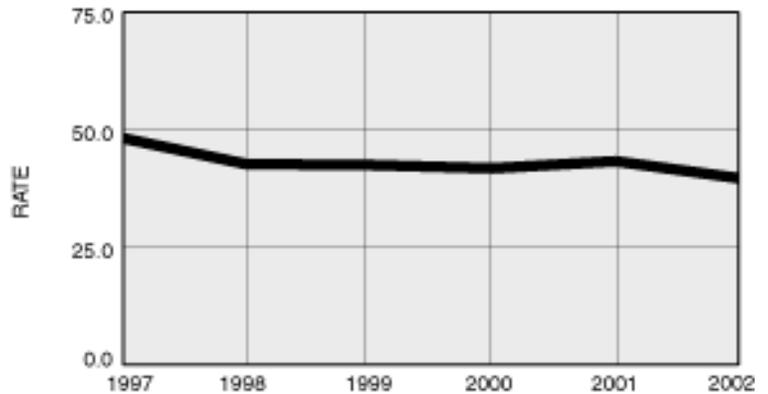
From 2001 to 2002:

- The arson rate decreased 8.3 percent.

In 2002, of 14,007 arsons reported:

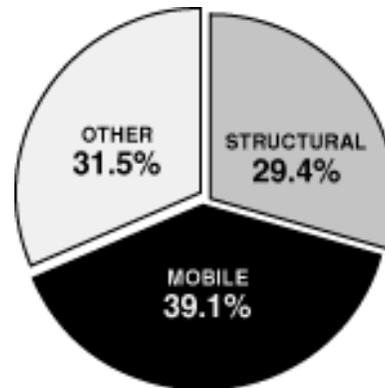
- Structural properties were targeted in 29.4 percent (4,119) of the offenses.
- Mobile properties were targeted in 39.1 percent (5,473) of the offenses.
- Other properties were targeted in 31.5 percent (4,415) of the offenses. Included in this category are crops, timber, fences, signs, etc.

ARSON CRIMES, 1997-2002
Rate per 100,000 Population



Source: Table 2.

ARSON CRIMES, 2002
By Type of Property Targeted

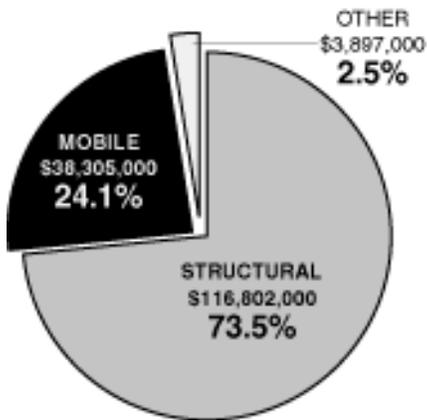


Source: Table 14.

Note: Property type is determined by the point of origin of a fire.

From 2001 to 2002, arsons decreased in rate and number.

ARSON CRIMES, 2002
By Value of Property Damage



Source: Table 14.

Notes: Property type is determined by the point of origin of a fire.
Dollar values are rounded to the nearest thousand.
Percentages do not add to 100.0 because of rounding.

Arson (continued)

In 2002, the total estimated value of all property damaged was \$159,004,000. The value of damage resulting from arsons directed at:

- Structural properties accounted for \$116,802,000 (73.5 percent).
- Mobile properties accounted for \$38,305,000 (24.1 percent).
- Other properties accounted for \$3,897,000 (2.5 percent).

Clearances

Crimes can be cleared by arrests or "exceptional means." An offense is cleared or "solved" for crime reporting purposes when at least one person is arrested, charged with the commission of the crime, and turned over to the court for prosecution or referred to juvenile authorities. In certain situations a clearance may be counted by "exceptional means" when the police definitely know the identity of the offender, have enough information to support an arrest, and know the location of the offender but for some reason cannot take the offender into custody.

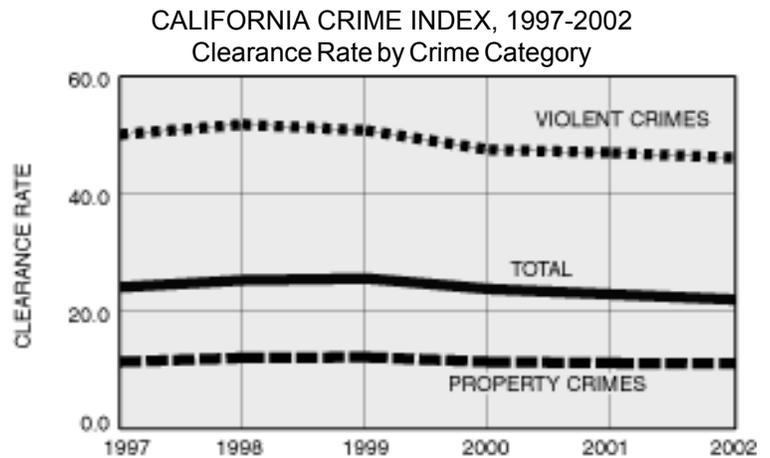
A clearance rate is the percentage obtained when the number of clearances reported are divided by the number of crimes reported.

Comparing 1997 to 2002:

- The clearance rate for California Crime Index offenses decreased from 24.1 to 22.0 percent.
- The violent crime clearance rate decreased from 50.1 to 46.1 percent.
- The property crime clearance rate decreased from 11.4 to 11.1 percent.

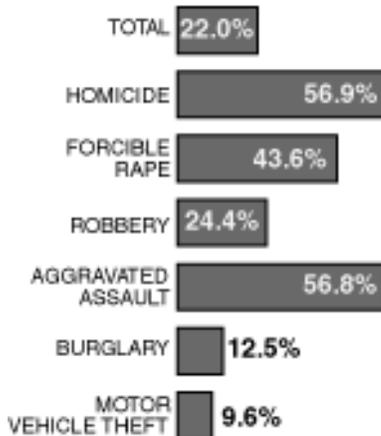
From 2001 to 2002:

- The clearance rate for California Crime Index offenses decreased from 22.9 to 22.0 percent.
- The violent crime clearance rate decreased from 47.0 to 46.1 percent.
- The property crime clearance rate decreased from 11.2 to 11.1 percent.



Source: Table 15.

CALIFORNIA CRIME INDEX, 2002
Clearance Rate by Crime



Source: Table 15.

Clearances (continued)

In 2002,

- The clearance rate for total California Crime Index offenses was 22.0 percent.
- Homicide had the highest clearance rate (56.9 percent), up 14.7 percent from 2001.
- Motor vehicle theft had the lowest clearance rate (9.6 percent).

The homicide clearance rate increased 14.7 percent from 2001 to 2002.

More 
(To Arrests)