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2007 crime index dips 2 percent

Crime in Oak Park fell by 2 percent in 2007 as compared to 2006, according to data released Monday, a decline officials attributed to active citizen participation and a willingness to report suspicious activity.

"The 2007 crime statistics invite Oak Parkers to not only celebrate and praise the hard working men and women of our Police Department, but to compliment themselves as well," said Village Manager Tom Barwin. "Oak Park's focus on policing at the neighborhood level has created an effective crime-fighting partnership that is reflected in the data."

Crime was down in virtually all categories, including violent crimes such as criminal sexual assault, battery and robbery.

Theft and burglary continued to represent the vast majority of crimes committed in the Village. The 343 burglaries and 1,389 thefts investigated in 2007 represented nearly 90 percent of the all crimes, a trend that has remained virtually unchanged for many years in Oak Park, with garages as burglars' most frequent targets. However, burglaries were down 2 percent in 2007 compared to 2006.

Juvenile crime was down 2 percent in 2007 as well, according to the statistics compiled by the Police Department. And like the Village-wide statistics, theft was the largest single category, representing more than half of the 124 juvenile-related criminal investigations conducted that year.

Arrests were up 11 percent in 2007 as compared to the previous year. Of the 286 arrests made in 2007, more than three quarters were for thefts and burglaries. Juvenile arrests were up in 2007 as well— 203 in 2007, compared to 170 in 2006.

"The data demonstrates just how safe it is to live in Oak Park, even though we are immediately adjacent to the nation's third largest city," Police Chief Rick C. Tanksley said. "The vast majority of the criminal activity in our community continues to be property crimes, such as bicycle thefts, items taken from vehicles and garage burglaries.

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Crime down in 2007
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"This is not to say that violent crimes don't occur in Oak Park, as evidenced by a shooting death and some unprovoked attacks upon our residents. These crimes just tend to be few and far between when placed in an overall statistical context. However, I know that a single violent crime can have far-reaching impact not only on the victim, but especially on the perception residents can have about their own safety. That's why we are vigilant in our efforts to prevent, investigate and solve violent crimes, no matter how small of a percentage of all crimes they may represent."

Oak Park's 2007 statistics include eight criminal sexual assaults – down from 13 in 2006 – and 113 robberies, down from 149 the previous year. Police also investigated one murder in 2007, a shooting police say was likely related to drug or gang activity in nearby Chicago. Three arsons were investigated in 2007, compared to two in 2006.

"Crimes such as sexual assault and robbery are among the most troubling and difficult to investigate," Tanksley said. "Sexual assaults often involve people who know each other, and robberies typically are crimes of opportunity, where victims are in the right place at the wrong time. I want residents to understand that while these crimes may occur in Oak Park, they are not frequent or widespread."

Thefts were up slightly in 2007, an increase police attributed primarily to thefts of license plates and items from motor vehicles. Thieves continued targeting popular sport utility vehicles to remove the catalytic converters from their exhaust systems to resell for the valuable metals they contain. Copper gutters at residences and buildings also were targeted by thieves for their resale value.

Continued emphasis on traffic enforcement in 2007 is evident in the data. Traffic stops were up about 7 percent, with citations up some 10 percent. More than 11,600 stops were made and 9,175 citations issued, compared to about 10,900 stops and 8,400 tickets issued in 2006.

Drug arrests of both of adults and juveniles were down significantly in 2007. Police say aggressive enforcement in past years has made Oak Park a less desirable stop over between the drug markets in Chicago and the western suburbs from which many of the customers come.

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(Editor: Detailed information follows)

OAK PARK POLICE DEPARTMENT

Illinois Uniform Crime Report Comparison

MONTH of December 2007

Operational Statistics

	December	December	% Monthly	2006	2007	% Annual
PART 1 Offenses	2006	2007	Change	Year To Date	Year To Date	Change
Murder	0	0	N/C	0	1	N/A
Criminal Sexual Assault	0	0	N/C	13	8	-38%
Robbery	13	2	-85%	149	113	-24%
Aggravated Assault/Battery	0	5	N/A	39	37	-5%
Burglary	24	32	33%	351	343	-2%
Theft	99	86	-13%	1365	1389	2%
Motor Vehicle Theft	3	9	200%	98	86	-12%
Arson	0	1	N/A	2	3	50%
Total	139	135	-3%	2017	1980	-2%
Part 1 Offense Arrests						
Murder	0	0	N/C	0	0	N/C
Criminal Sexual Assault	0	0	N/C	2	2	N/C
Robbery	5	0	-100%	38	38	0%
Aggravated Assault/Battery	2	3	50%	23	21	-9%
Burglary	1	4	300%	38	40	5%
Theft	12	12	0%	154	179	16%
Motor Vehicle Theft	0	0	N/C	2	5	150%
Arson	0	0	N/C	0	1	N/A
Total	20	19	-5%	257	286	11%
Traffic						
Accidents	211	216	2%	2190	2216	1%
Traffic Citations	772	652	-16%	8351	9175	10%
D.U.I. Arrests	14	14	N/C	196	161	-18%
Suspended Arrests	12	6	-50%	154	105	-32%
Total	1009	888	-12%	10891	11657	7%
Drug Arrest						
Viol of the Cannabis Act	7	2	-71%	62	58	-6%
Viol of Controlled Substance	6	5	-17%	65	53	-18%
Viol of Paraphernalia Act	0	1	N/C	28	25	-11%
Total	13	8	-38%	155	136	-12%
TOTAL CALLS FOR SERVICE	3124	2830	-9%	49102	39595	-19%

N/A * indicates calculation cannot be performed: unable to divide by zero. Although there was no activity in December 2006, there was activity in December 2007.

* Adjustment made to Motor Vehicle Theft / Theft / Robbery

011008 * Accident totals were adjusted

OAK PARK POLICE DEPARTMENT

Juvenile Statistics / Part 1 Offenses and Arrests

MONTH of December 2007

	December	December	% Monthly	2006	2007	% Annual
PART 1 Offenses	2006	2007	Change	Year To Date	Year To Date	Change
Murder	0	0	N/C	0	0	N/C
Criminal Sexual Assault	0	0	N/C	0	1	N/A
Robbery	3	0	-100%	39	38	-3%
Aggravated Assault/Battery	0	0	N/C	16	12	-25%
Burglary	0	0	N/C	13	10	-23%
Theft	0	0	N/C	56	63	13%
Motor Vehicle Theft	0	0	N/C	2	0	-100%
Arson	0	0	N/C	0	0	N/C
Total	3	0	-100%	126	124	-2%
Offense Arrests						
Murder	0	0	N/C	0	0	N/C
Criminal Sexual Assault	0	0	N/C	0	0	N/C
Robbery	3	0	-100%	39	37	-5%
Aggravated Assault/Battery	0	0	N/C	16	22	38%
Burglary	0	0	N/C	13	13	0%
Theft	0	1	N/A	56	75	34%
Motor Vehicle Theft	0	0	N/C	2	0	-100%
Arson	0	0	N/C	0	0	N/C
Crim Dam to State Supp Prop	0	0	N/C	1	1	N/C
All Other Criminal Offenses	3	0	-100%	30	41	37%
All Other Disorderly Conduct	2	0	-100%	13	14	8%
Total	8	1	-88%	170	203	19%
Drug Arrest						
Viol of the Cannabis Act	0	0	N/C	20	13	-35%
Viol of Controlled Substance	0	0	N/C	1	0	-100%
Viol of Paraphernalia Act	0	0	N/C	10	4	-60%
Total	0	0	N/C	31	17	-45%

N/A * indicates calculation cannot be performed: unable to divide by zero. Although there was no activity in December 2006, there was activity in December 2007.

Revisions made on 011108 for Year to Date of Part 1 Offenses for 2007

**THEFT COMPARISON
2006 - 2007**

UCR	Table Line #	Description	2006	2007	% Difference
710	46	Theft from Motor Vehicle	53	29	-45%
720	47	Theft Veh Parts & Access.	53	83	57%
730	42	Burglary Veh Parts & Access.	24	40	67%
740	38	Theft of St License Plate	15	38	153%
750	45	Theft St Veh Plate Sticker	27	28	4%
760	43	Burglary from M.V.	205	238	16%
810	48	Theft Over 300	232	216	-7%
815	60	Bicycle Theft	212	194	-8%
820	49	Theft Under 300	443	428	-3%
860	50	Theft - Retail	121	114	-6%
865	51	Theft - Delivery Container	0	0	N/C
870	52	Theft - Pocket Picking	2	0	-100%
880	53	Theft - Purse Snatch	6	8	33%
890	54	Theft - From Building	0	0	N/C
895	55	Theft from Coin-Op Machine	0	7	N/A
			1393	1423	2%