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### Garage and Auto Burglaries Nudge 2001 Village Crime Stats Above 2000 Levels

An increase in garage and auto burglaries in the fall nudged 2001 overall Village crime statistics up by 7.5 percent over 2000, but totals remained the third lowest for the decade, according to data just released by the Oak Park Police Department.

“This increase is no reason for concern among residents,” said Oak Park Police Chief Rick Tanksley. “The data clearly show that residents are safe in their homes and cars, and on the streets. The data do suggest, however, that residents need to take greater care in securing their garages and not leave personal items in plain view in their vehicles.”

Village police officers investigated 185 more crimes in 2001 than in 2000 – 143 of which were garage burglaries. Police also investigated 16 more robberies in 2001 than in the previous year and 32 more thefts, crimes police officials say are most often related to drug users on the lookout for an easy target.

From January through August 2001, Tanksley said the Village actually was on track to post a lower crime rate than the previous year – until the sudden increase in garage and auto burglaries occurred.

Noting that the increase likely was related in part to the unusually warm fall weather, Chief Tanksley said adjacent suburbs, such as Berwyn, experienced a similar increase in garage burglaries during the same period. He also said his department has begun stressing the importance of garage security through regular community meetings hosted by resident beat officers, and is offering free inspections and tips to foil would be thieves.

While burglaries were up in 2001 over 2000, so were burglary arrests, the statistics show. Eighty-seven arrests for burglary were made in 2001, compared to 67 in 2000. Arrests for drug-related crimes also were up in 2001 over the previous year, as 74 more people were charged, mostly for possession of drug paraphernalia, including hypodermic syringes.

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2001 Crime Statistics

Tanksley said a direct correlation can be drawn between drug arrests, burglaries and thefts. Interviews with individuals charged with these crimes of opportunity typically revealed the perpetrator's intent to steal to support a drug habit.

"We often pick up individuals just cruising the alleys looking for an open garage door," Tanksley said. "Leaving a garage door open or cell phones and laptop computers visible in unattended vehicles are open invitations to criminals."

Oak Park did experience one murder in 2001, compared to none the previous year. The murder was a gang-related crime that spilled over into the Village from the City of Chicago, and a quick arrest was made. The Village also had eight arson incidents in 2001, compared to two in 2002, with swift arrests for each incident.

In the other violent crime categories, sexual assault dropped from six incidents in 2000, to two in 2001, and incidents of aggravated assault/battery dropped to 16 from 19 in the same period.

Motor vehicle theft also was down significantly in 2001 as compared to the previous year. Some 215 vehicles were reported stolen in 2000, compared to 183 in 2001.

Village Manager Carl Swenson praised Chief Tanksley and his officers' efforts, as well as the vigilance of residents who reported suspicious behavior in their neighborhoods.

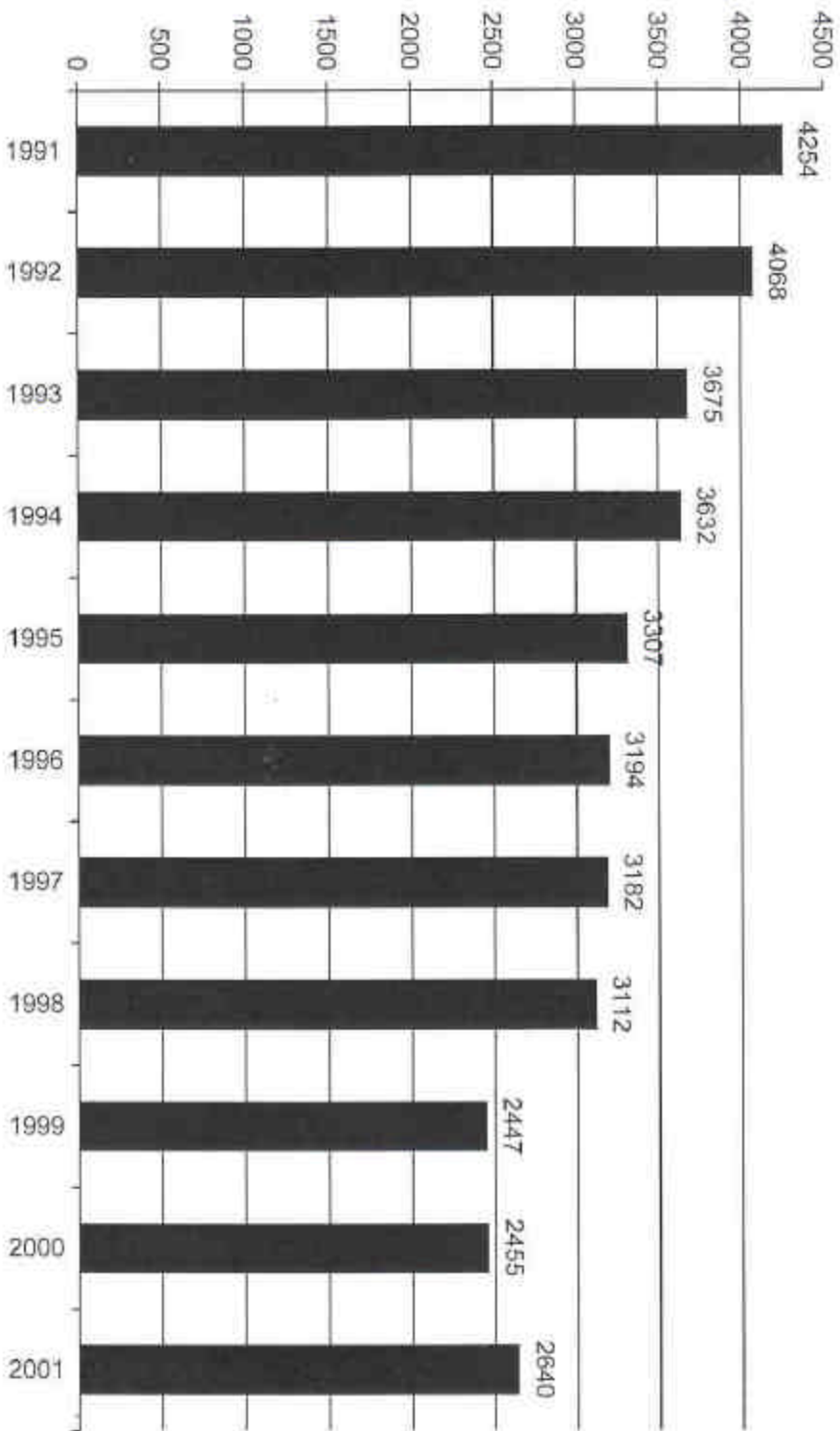
"An important component of our community policing approach is encouraging residents to take the initiative and alert police to suspicious activity in their neighborhoods," Swenson said. "Our officers cannot be everywhere all the time. They rely on residents to alert them when suspicious activity is observed."

Chief Tanksley echoed Swenson's call for community involvement in helping police monitor their neighborhoods, pointing out that the quick action of a resident can often lead to a quick arrest.

"Residents should never hesitate to call when they see something out of the ordinary," Tanksley said. "I know some people are concerned about inconveniencing an officer with what may be a small matter. When faced with such a situation, I want residents to know that their call will never be an inconvenience. We depend on residents' help and urge them to call."

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### CRIME INDEX, 1991-2001



# Crime Index / Crime Rate Comparison - 2001/2000

Report Date: 2/8/02

OAK PARK

## Crime Index Offenses/Crime Rates 2001/2000

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Year	Population	Rate per 100,000	Total Crime Index	Murder	Criminal Sexual Assault	Robbery	Agmt Assault/Battery	Burglary	Theft	Motor Vehicle Theft	Arson
2001	52,524	5,026.3	2,640	1	2	156	16	580	1,694	183	8
2000	52,524	4,674.1	2,455	0	6	140	19	411	1,662	215	2
Percent Change	0.0%	7.5%	7.5%	N/C	-66.7%	11.4%	-15.8%	41.1%	1.9%	-14.9%	300.0%

## Crime Index/Arrest Rates 2001/2000

Year	Population	Rate per 100,000	Total Arrest Index	Murder	Criminal Sexual Assault	Robbery	Agmt Assault/Battery	Burglary	Theft	Motor Vehicle Theft	Arson
2001	52,524	991.9	521	1	2	55	12	87	350	7	7
2000	52,524	951.9	500	0	4	68	17	61	341	9	0
Percent Change	0.0%	4.2%	4.2%	N/C	-50.0%	-19.1%	-23.4%	42.6%	2.6%	-22.2%	N/C

## Drug Crime Arrest Rate Comparison 2001/2000

Year	Population	Rate per 100,000	Total Drug Arrests	Controlled Substances Ad	Hypodermic Syringes/Needle Ad	Drug Paraphernalia Ad
2001	52,524	369.4	194	42	15	54
2000	52,524	276.5	120	40	24	37
Percent Change	0.0%	61.7%	61.7%	5.0%	-37.5%	184.2%

1-ONE OR MORE MONTHS MISSING 2-AGENCY IN NON-COMPLIANCE 3-REPORTED THRU OTHER AGENCY 4-PARTIAL YEAR REPORTING  
 The I-UCR Program personnel MUST receive your adjustments and late data by FEBRUARY 22, 2002. Please contact the I-UCR Program staff at 217/785-2326 for assistance in correcting your totals or further clarification about this matter.  
 N/C = Not able to calculate