

CRIME TRENDS

2000 - 2007
Village Green
Los Angeles, CA

September 2007
Neighborhood Watch
Safety Committee

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SUMMARY

Based on data from the Los Angeles Police Department, for the period January 1, 2000, to April, 2007 (Reporting Period), Village Green has experienced, on average, 37 crime incidents per year. Although the types of crimes vary, the most frequently occurring crimes were burglary from vehicles, stolen vehicles, and burglary from units. The most common property stolen was cash, but stereo and computer equipment were also commonly stolen. Crimes most commonly occurred inside the units, in a parking lot or driveway, or on the street or sidewalk. During the Reporting Period, the south side of Village Green experienced slightly more crime than the north. Crime incidents were fairly consistent throughout the year and throughout the week with the greatest number occurring around noon and between 5:00-8:00 in the evening. Although three quarters of the suspects were male, a quarter were female.

One of the most effective ways to reduce crime at Village Green is by participating in Neighborhood Watch. Participation simply involves getting to know your neighbors and reporting any suspicious criminal activity. If you would like to participate, please contact your court's Neighborhood Watch Captain or members of Village Green's Safety Committee (p. 9).

PURPOSE

Crime is often an important factor in influencing a person's decision to buy or remain in a community. Although the reported crime incidents at Village Green are published in the monthly newsletter, the Safety Committee thought that it would be worthwhile to conduct an analysis of reported crimes that have occurred at the Green since the year 2000 in order to obtain a broader perspective. The primary questions the committee wanted to answer were how many, what types, where, and when did the crime incidents occur, and who were the suspects. The intent was for the results to better enable Village Green's residents to more effectively deter crime through participating in the Neighborhood Watch and to share the findings with management and the security company, Platt Securities.

DATA

The data was obtained in April 2007 from the Los Angeles Police Department's (LAPD) Operations Statistical and Research Department in the Information Technology Division. The crime data are from January, 2000 to April, 2007. LAPD divides the city of Los Angeles into reporting districts in order to conduct analyses. Village Green is within reporting district 343 which also includes the area on La Brea Avenue from Coliseum to Rodeo Road. For this report, Village Green was defined as the area within Rodeo Road, Sycamore, Coliseum, and Hauser Blvd. The shopping district focused primarily along La Brea was analyzed separately at the end of this report (p.6). Data were also obtained for the reporting districts adjacent to Village Green in order to serve as a comparison. These reporting districts are 321 (north of VG), 361 (east of VG), and 341 (south and west of VG). Please refer to the map on p.16 for the exact boundaries. The household demographics used in the report were obtained from ESRI, Inc., a geospatial data provider. ESRI's 2007 demographic projections are based on the 2000 Census of Population and Housing. With 95% confidence, most results are within +/- 5%.

AUTHORS

Amy Noble and Chris Jones volunteered their time to obtain and analyze the crime data and write this report. Although they both are researchers, neither of them have experience in law enforcement. Therefore, the report focuses mainly on an analysis of the data that was available rather than making specific recommendations for action. If you have any comments or questions about this report, please address them to the Safety Committee.

FINDINGS

Number of Crimes

During the Reporting Period, Village Green experienced, on average, 37 crime incidents per year (p. 10). Considering that there are 629 units and approximately 900 residents at Village Green, we can infer that about 6% of households or 4% of the community's residents have been victims of crime each year.

To compare Village Green's crime rate during the Reporting Period to the city of Los Angeles, we conducted a detailed analysis of one of the most common crimes at Village Green, stolen vehicles.¹ In Los Angeles in 2006, approximately 6.5 motor vehicles were stolen per 1,000 people², whereas at Village Green there were 3.2 vehicles stolen per 1,000 people (p.10). This is approximately half the rate of Los Angeles but not as low as in places like Irvine, one of the safest cities in Southern California, where there were only 1.3 vehicles stolen per 1,000 people.³

To compare Village Green's crime rate during the Reporting Period to the surrounding neighborhoods, we determined the number of stolen vehicles in the adjacent reporting districts for 2006. The area to the north of Village Green is bounded by Rodeo, La Cienega, Jefferson, and La Brea. The area to the east of Village Green is bounded by the Jim Gilliam Recreation Center, La Brea, Rodeo, and Nicolet Ave. and to the south and west is bounded by Stoker, La Cienega, Coliseum, and La Brea. Please refer to the map (p.16) for the exact boundaries of the reporting districts. Since LAPD's reporting districts are typically equivalent to the U.S. Census tracts⁴, we were able to obtain the total population per reporting district in order to estimate the stolen vehicles per capita.⁵

According to the data, in 2006, Village Green experienced fewer stolen vehicles per 1,000 people than the city of Los Angeles but slightly more than the neighborhood to the south and west of Village Green (p.10). The neighborhood to the east of Village Green experienced three times the number of stolen vehicles as Village Green, adjusted for population size.

Although the number of crime incidents was fairly consistent at Village Green during the Reporting Period, the community experienced a significant drop in 2006 when there were

¹ A specific type of crime was analyzed instead of all crimes since LAPD and the FBI Uniform Crime Report use different types of crimes and definitions to determine the total number of crimes.

² FBI Uniform Crime Report for 2006, www.fbi.gov/ucr.

³ Ibid.

⁴ In some cases, when there is a clearly defined community within a census tract, LAPD will define a separate reporting district within a census tract. This is the case with Village Green which falls within census tract 0603723600 which also includes the area south of Village Green or reporting district 341.

⁵ ESRI, Inc.

25 crime incidents (p.10). It is unknown whether this decrease will continue to be a trend. To assess whether crime is declining city-wide, we referred to the FBI's Uniform Crime Report for Los Angeles. Although crime slightly increased city-wide in 2001 the crime rate per capita steadily dropped during the Reporting Period.

Types of Crimes and Property Stolen

Although the types of crimes at Village Green vary, the most frequently occurring crimes during the Reporting Period were burglary from vehicles, stolen vehicles, and burglary from units (p.11).⁶ Burglary is defined in LAPD's codebook⁷ as "entry of a structure with intent to commit a theft or a felony." The most common crimes at Village Green during the Reporting Period were consistent with the most common crimes in the city of Los Angeles with the exception that personal theft occurs less frequently at the Green.⁸ The most common property stolen at Village Green was cash (p.11). Stereo and computer equipment were also commonly stolen.

Although the great majority of the crimes at the Green involved property (burglary, stolen property, theft, or vandalism), incidents where residents were verbally or physically accosted did occur. During the Reporting Period, LAPD reported 14 cases of robbery defined as, "taking property of another by means of force or fear", and 13 cases of battery (misdemeanors) defined as "unlawful use of force or violence on another".⁹ There were no reported cases of rape, kidnapping, or arson. One incident of each of the following occurred: assault with a deadly weapon, spouse beating/assault, abused child (physical), purse snatch, forged or stolen documents, and threatening phone call/letter.

Crime Location

Crimes most commonly occurred inside the units (43%), in a parking lot or driveway (22%), or on the street or sidewalk (21%) (p.12). Crimes that occurred inside a garage (7%) or a vehicle (2%) were not very common. During the Reporting Period, there were only two reported incidents that occurred in the laundry rooms and only one reported case at a bus stop. Criminals' point of entry into a unit was almost evenly divided between windows and doors (p.12).

Since Village Green is a large property, we divided the community into four quadrants in order to determine if there were areas of the Green where crime incidents were more

⁶ Traffic reports and incidents of recovered vehicles were not included in this analysis.

⁷ LAPD provided a codebook along with the data titled, "Consolidated Crime Analysis Database (CCAD), Data Entry Codes, 2007."

⁸ Los Angeles Police Department, "Crimes Year to Date". Since 2003, the order of the top most common crimes has been the following: Burglary/Theft from Vehicles, Personal/Other Theft, Auto Theft, and then Burglary.

⁹ Definitions are from LAPD's "Consolidated Crime Analysis Database (CCAD), Data Entry Codes, 2007."

prevalent. The quadrants are as follows: southeast (courts 1-5), southwest (courts 6-10), northwest (courts 10-14)¹⁰, northeast (courts 15-17, plus the East and West Circles). Since the quadrants do not have an equal number of units, we calculated the percentage of crime incidents on a per unit basis¹¹. During the Reporting Period, the northeast quadrant experienced the lowest percentage of crime incidents per unit (22%), whereas the southern quadrants experienced the highest (p.13). The courts with the highest percentage of crime incidents per unit included Courts 1 and 3, whereas the lowest were in courts 15, 16, and 18.

When Crimes Occurred

We found that crimes during the Reporting Period were fairly consistent throughout the year (p.13). The greatest number of crimes occurred in the month of Sept. (11%) whereas the least were in March (5%) and November (5%). Yet, when we analyzed specific types of crimes that occurred in each season there was a higher percentage of stolen vehicles in the winter (13% above average) and an increase in burglaries of units in the summer (13% above average).

Crimes were fairly consistent across days of the week with a very slight increase on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays (p.14). The data shows that burglaries of units were about twice as more common during the week days than the weekend days, whereas robberies and batteries were only slightly more common during the week.

In addition, crime most often occurred between noon and 1:00pm and between 5:00 and 8:00pm in the evenings (p.14). A high percentage of the burglaries to units occurred in the mornings between 6:00-9:00am. In addition, the most common crimes involving vehicles (burglary, stolen, and theft) occurred more frequently in the evenings after 5:00pm.

¹⁰ Court 10 is split between the southwest quadrant and the northwest quadrant. So, the even numbered units in Court 10 belong to the southwest quadrant and the odd numbered units belong to the northwest quadrant.

¹¹ The number of units in each quadrant is as follows: southeast (192), southwest (151), northwest (154), and northeast (132).

Profile of Suspect and Victim

Although, according to the data, three quarters of the suspects in reported crimes at the Green were male, almost a quarter were female (p.15). The majority of the crimes committed by females were battery (misdemeanors [29%]), involved threats (verbal threats [24%], lewd calls/letter [17%]) or involved a family member (spouse beating [12%] and domestic violence [12%]). The percentage of male and female victims is representative of Village Green's population.

LA BREA SHOPPING CENTER

The Safety Committee thought that it would be valuable to conduct an additional analysis of the La Brea shopping area just to the east of Village Green since it is very convenient to Village Green's residents. The following analysis includes the shops on La Brea from Coliseum to Jefferson (from the Chevron at the intersection of La Brea and Coliseum to the Price Self Storage at the intersection of La Brea and Jefferson) and the shops along Rodeo (from the KFC in the west to Big Lots in the east).

Number and Types of Crimes

During the Reporting Period, the La Brea shopping area experienced 259 crime incidents per year on average. Although the stores vary dramatically in size, with approximately 45 stores, we approximated 6 incidents per store per year. The peak number of annual crimes occurred in 2002 (313) but that rate steadily declined to 2006 (204). The most frequently occurring crimes at the La Brea shopping area were shoplifting (270 cases), petty theft (253 cases), and robbery (168 cases)¹². Domestic violence was the fourth most common crime (163 cases) and frequently took place on the street, in a market, or in a parking lot. Similar to Village Green, vehicles were commonly stolen in the La Brea shopping area at about 20 per year, on average.

More serious crimes involving personal harm or causing excessive fear have occurred at the La Brea / Rodeo commercial district. Approximately 7% of the crimes (126 cases) during the Reporting Period involved battery (misdemeanors), and there were 86 cases of assault with a deadly weapon, which most commonly occurred in the street, parking lot, or sidewalk. There were three cases of kidnappings. In those cases where a weapon was used, the most common, by far, was when a suspect used their hands, feet or bodily force, called "strong-arm" (51%).

During the Reporting Period, according to the data, there were 24 cases when handguns were known to have been used to commit a crime in the La Brea shopping area. The

¹² Shoplifting and petty theft are defined as stealing property worth \$400 and under.

incidents involved both smaller guns, such as semi-automatic pistols (15) and revolvers (8), and larger guns, such as a shotgun (1) and an automatic weapon/sub-machine gun (1). Interestingly, there were quite a number of cases where the criminal simulated a gun (9). Other weapons such as knife (7), mace/pepper spray (5), and bow and arrow (2) were also used.

Crime Location and Occurrence

Many of the crimes in the La Brea commercial district occurred outside the stores in a parking lot (20%), the street (18%), or sidewalk (3%). Among the stores that most commonly experienced crime, the markets were the most common targets (19%), followed by drug stores (6%), restaurants/fast food (4%), gas stations (2%), department stores (2%), and banks (1%). During the Reporting Period, there were 10 crime incidents at a bus stop and 2 incidents at an Automated Teller Machine.

Profile of Suspect and Victim

According to the data, approximately three quarters of the suspects in the La Brea shopping area were male (73%) and approximately one quarter (27%) were female. Yet, more males (59%) and fewer females (41%) were victims of crimes than the population at Village Green.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

The economic, physical, and psychological toll of being a victim of crime can be devastating. Based on the results of this report, the following are several simple steps that we can take to reduce the crime at Village Green.

1. Participate in Neighborhood Watch.
It's easy, it's free, and it helps build community. Participating in Neighborhood Watch simply means that you agree to report any suspicious criminal activity and that your neighbors will do the same for you. Village Green has Neighborhood Watch Captains for each court (p.9) who hold potlucks where you can sign up and get to know your neighbors. Platt Securities and LAPD greatly support our community in preventing crimes, but we can be even more effective at deterring crime ourselves.
2. Watch out for suspicious activity and report it to LAPD, Platt, and the potential victim (p.9). The more information they are given to file in a report, the more we will be able to take action from it. Please don't personally try to apprehend someone committing a crime or investigate criminal activity. We don't want to put anyone in danger.
3. Read and implement prevention techniques in the packet, "How to Secure Your Home", prepared by the Safety Committee and available from the office and online at www.villagegreenla.net/committees/safety.html.
4. It is clear that we need to be alert of suspects that might be breaking into a neighbor's unit (through both windows and doors) but we also need to be aware of crimes that impact vehicles. Watch out for suspicious activity on the streets and sidewalks that surround the property, in the parking areas, and driveways.
5. Be alert, particularly during times when crimes have historically (i.e, during the Reporting Period) occurred more frequently, around noon and 5-8pm in the evenings.

If you are interested in getting more involved in helping to protect Village Green, please come to a Safety Committee meeting (the meeting dates, time and location are posted at villagegreenla.net) or contact the Chair, Denise Brady, at denise@villagegreennw.com. We would greatly appreciate your input and involvement.

SAFETY INFORMATION

LAPD: (213) 485-2582 or 9-1-1

Platt Securities: 1 (800) 986-3868

Safety Committee: meets at the Clubhouse on the 3rd Sat. of each month at 10:00am

Denise Brady, Chair

Nat Hutton, Board Liaison

Neighborhood Watch Court Captains

Our Neighborhood Watch Captains hold court potlucks so that neighbors can get to know one another. They also manage a court contact list so that neighbors can get in touch with one another if they witness suspicious criminal activity. Please support your captains! Please contact the Safety Committee to get in touch with your court captain.

LAPD

Officer Boris Washington, Lead Officer

Southwest Station:

1546 W. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.

Los Angeles, CA 90062

(213)485-2582

(213) 485-1015 TDD TTY

Southwest Substation:

Balwin Hills Crenshaw Plaza

3650 W. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.

Los Angeles, CA 90008

Mon-Fri 9:00am – 9:00pm

Sat 9:00am – 6:00pm

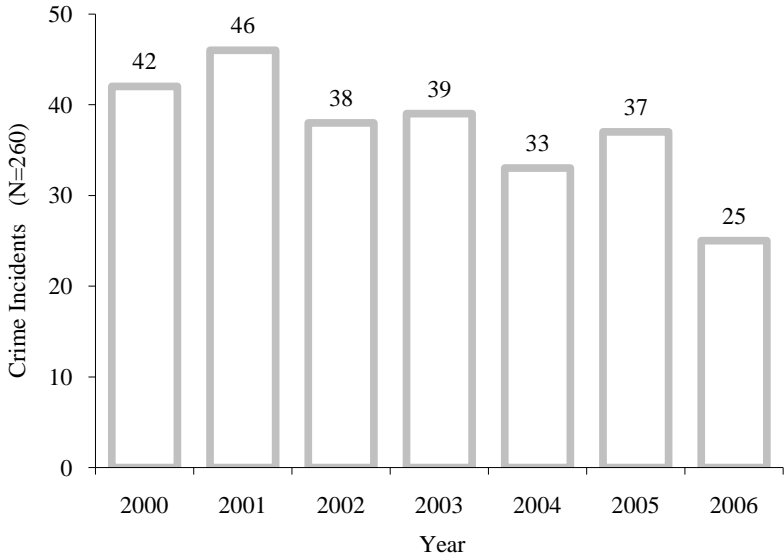
(213) 847-1276

If you are looking for information about a recent crime, LAPD provides an online map of documented crimes committed during the past seven days at <http://www.lapdcrimemaps.org>.

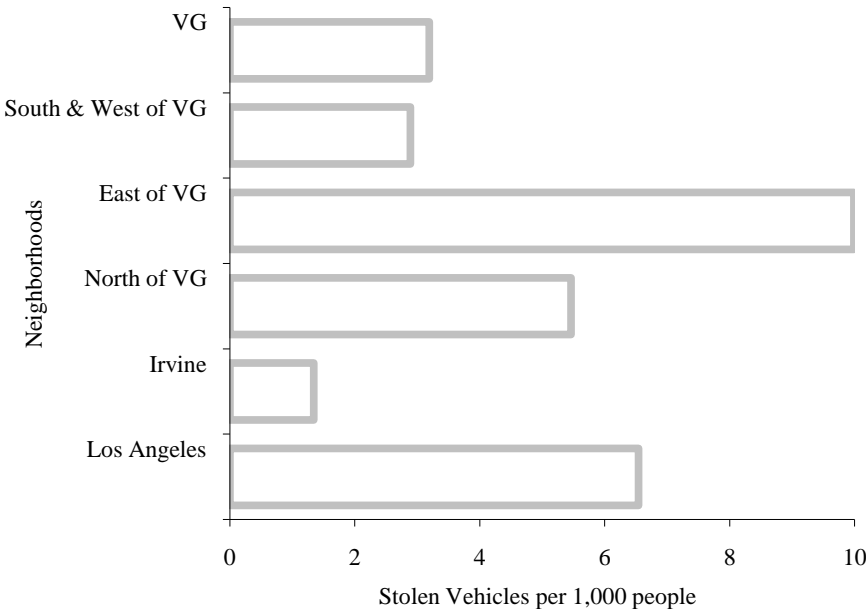
LAPD also provides online crime statistics for the Southwest area for the past three months as well as crimes documented year to date and the percentage change for the past two years at <http://www.lapdonline.org/assets/pdf/sowprof.pdf>.

Number of Crimes

On average, 37 crime incidents occurred per year.
 There was a significant drop in crime incidents in 2006.

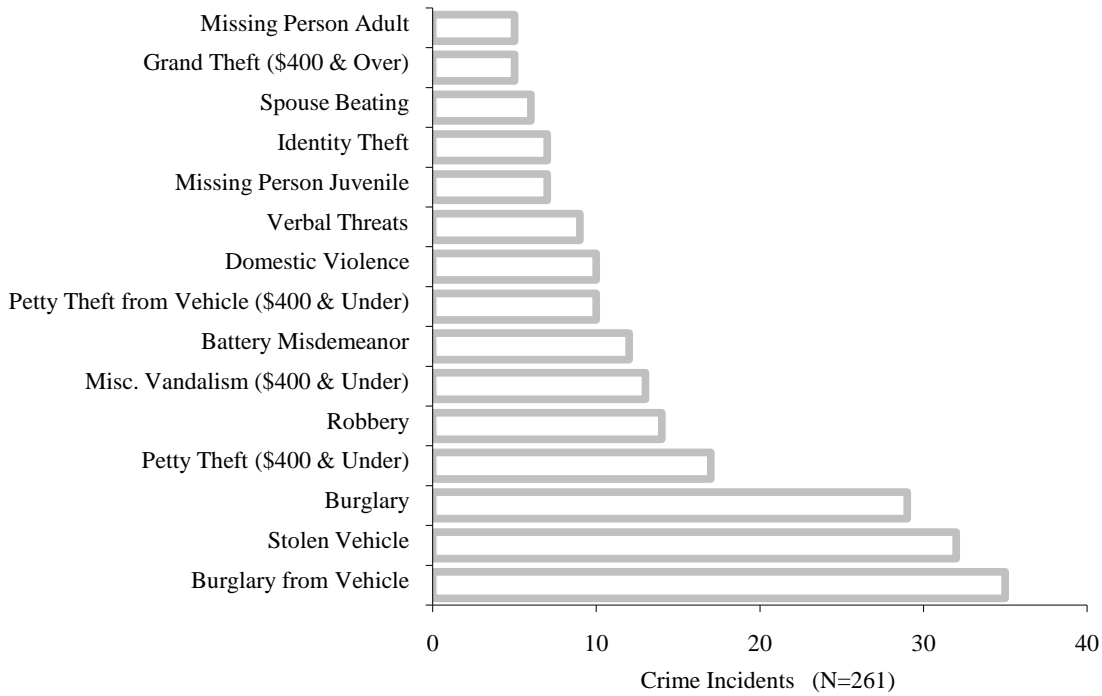


Village Green experienced fewer stolen vehicles than Los Angeles in 2006 but slightly more than the neighborhood to the south and west.

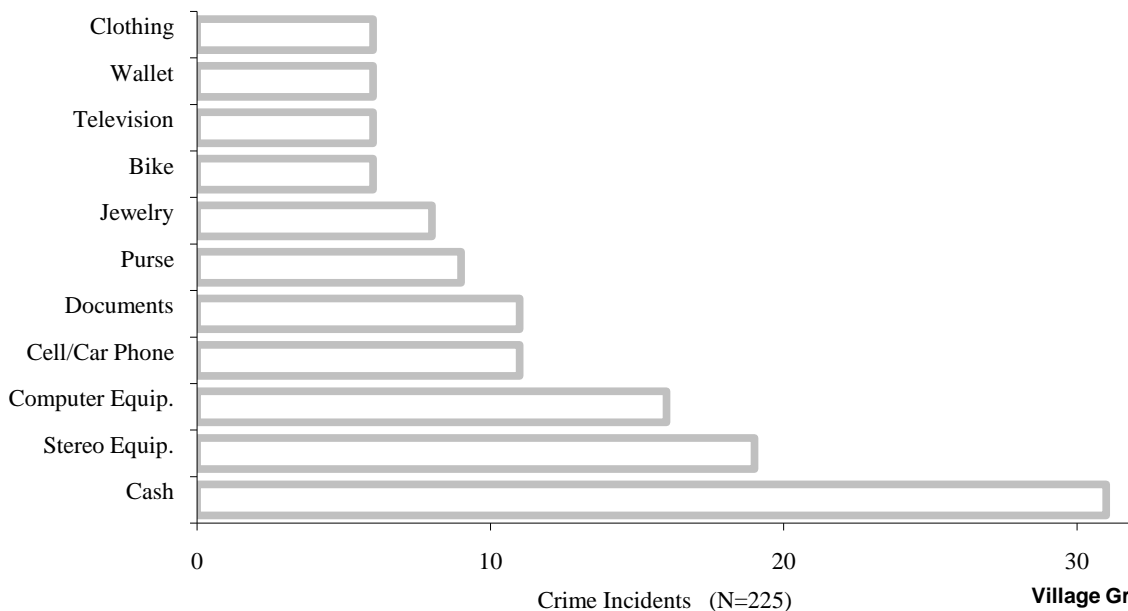


Types of Crime and Property Stolen

Although the types of crimes varied, the most frequently occurring crimes were burglary from vehicles, stolen vehicles, and burglary from units.

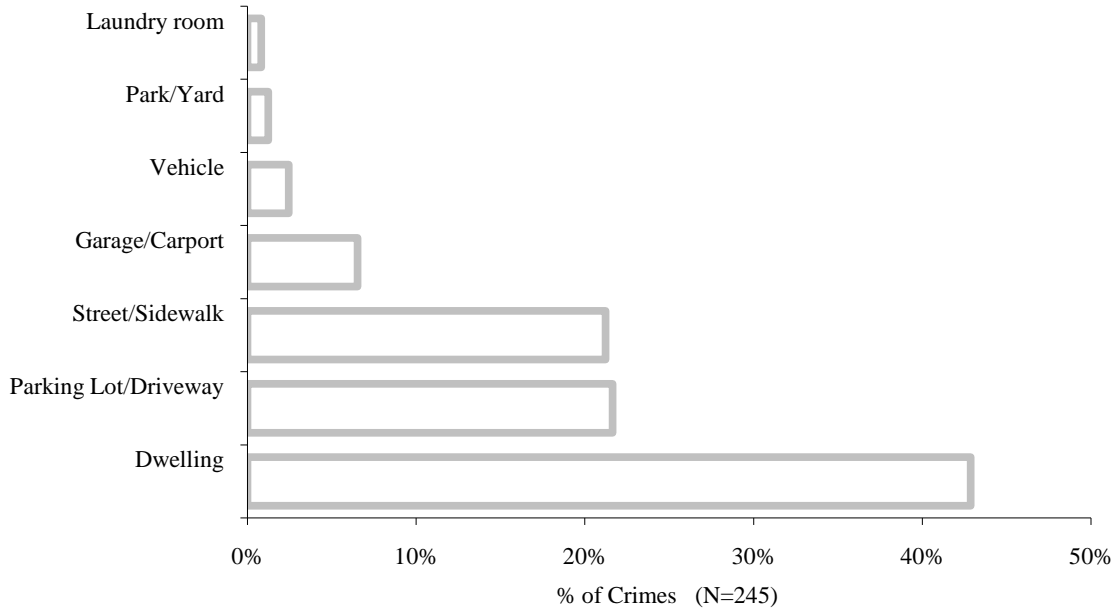


Not surprisingly, the most common property stolen was cash. Stereo and computer equipment were also commonly stolen.

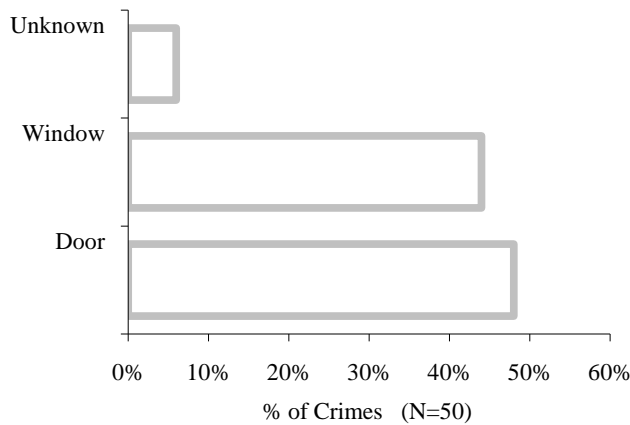


Crime Location

Crimes most commonly occurred inside units, in a parking lot or driveway, or on the street or sidewalk.

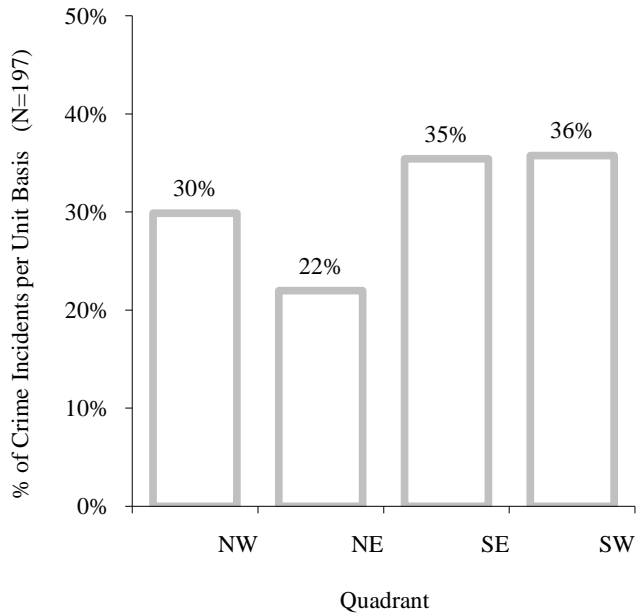


Criminals' point of entry to a unit was evenly divided between windows and doors.

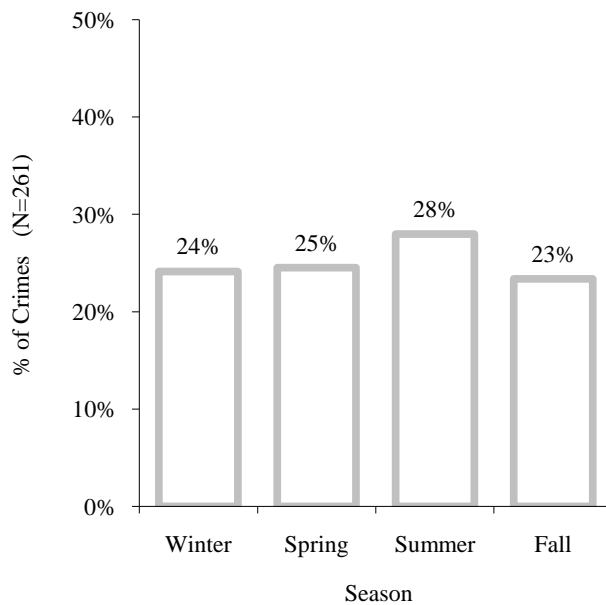


Crime Location / When Crimes Occurred

The southern quadrants at Village Green experienced slightly more crime.

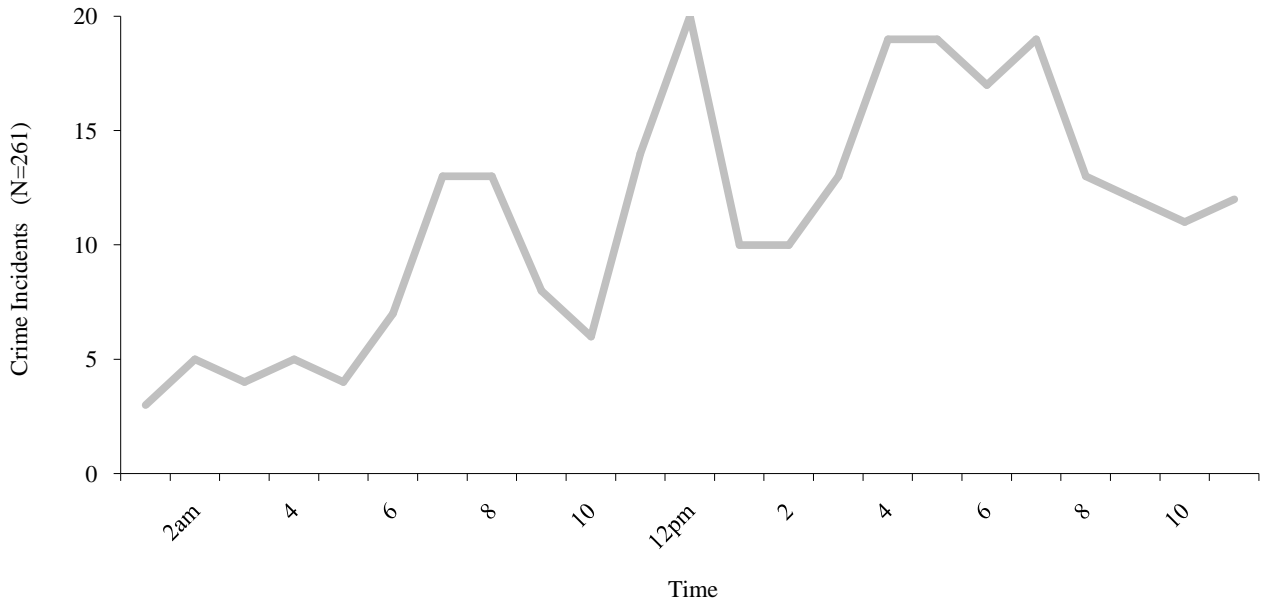


Crime incidents were fairly consistent throughout the year.

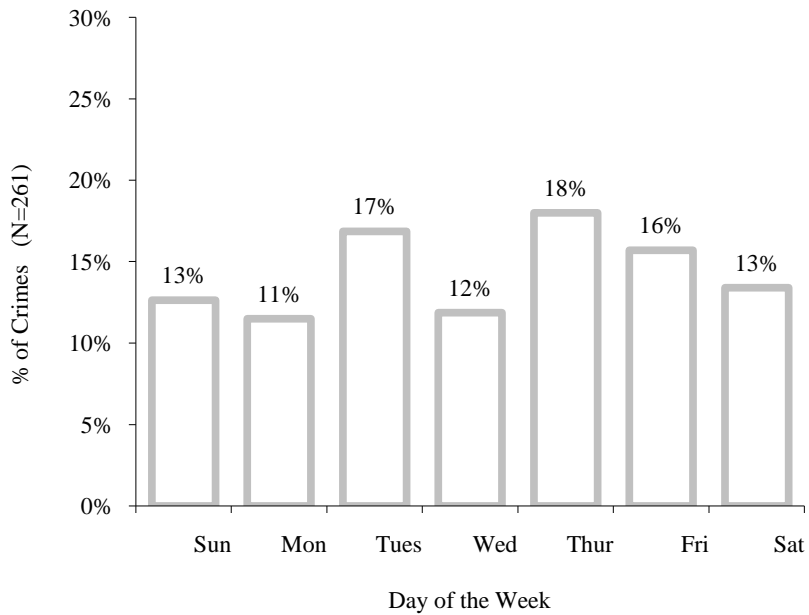


When Crimes Occurred

The greatest number of crimes occurred between noon and 1:00pm and between 5:00 and 8:00pm in the evening.

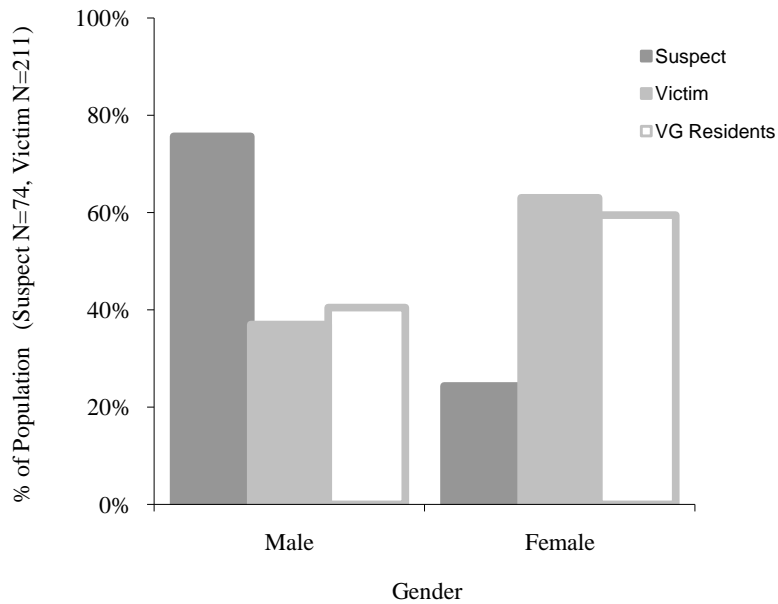


The number of crimes were fairly consistent throughout the week.



Profile of Suspects and Victims

Although three quarters of the suspects were male, a quarter were female.
The gender of the victims is representative of Village Green's residents.



Note: The population statistics for Village Green residents are from ESRI, Inc., a company that conducts demographic projections. ESRI's 2007 forecasts are based on the 2000 Census of Population and Housing.

