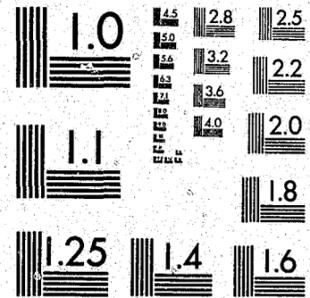


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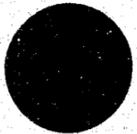
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OREGON  
LAW ENFORCEMENT  
COUNCIL



# OREGON SERIOUS CRIME SURVEY 1980 UPDATE

## Citizens' Opinions about Criminal Justice and Their Use of Crime Prevention Techniques

SEPTEMBER, 1980

### INTRODUCTION

This bulletin contains information on Oregonians' perceptions and opinions about criminal justice issues, and citizens' use of crime prevention techniques.

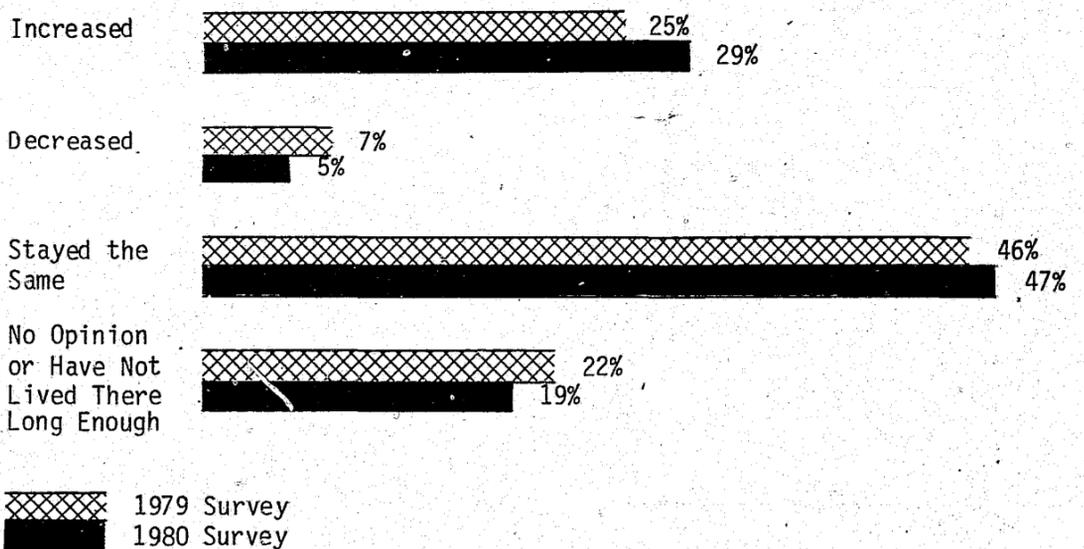
It is designed to serve as an update to two reports published in January and March, 1980: "What do Citizens Think About Crime and the Criminal Justice System?" and "Do Oregonians Use Crime Prevention Techniques?" Those reports were based on the results of the second annual Oregon Serious Crime Survey, conducted in March and April of 1979. This bulletin presents findings from the third annual Serious Crime Survey which was initiated in March of 1980. Detailed analyses will be presented only for those survey items for which responses changed significantly from the previous year's survey and for questions not previously included. Readers wishing more complete information about specific items are referred to the reports cited above.

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, 1,096 completed questionnaires were returned--representing 73.1 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.

### Perception of Crime

In the 1979 Survey it was observed that people had a fairly accurate picture of crime in Oregon. The largest percentage of respondents said crime in their neighborhood remained about the same; most did not expect to be a victim in the coming year; and, those that expected to be a victim thought it would involve a property crime such as burglary, theft or vandalism. This is a realistic picture of crime since crime has remained fairly stable over the past five years, increasing slightly in 1979.

Perception of How Neighborhood Crime Changed from Previous Year



The vast majority of crimes are property related such as burglary, larceny and vandalism. The chances of being a victim of a serious violent crime are rare, although about half the households can expect victimization of a minor crime such as vandalism or a minor theft.

In the 1980 Survey, results were very similar to those in the previous two years. However, there was a statistically significant increase in the numbers of respondents who thought crime in their neighborhood had increased.

As the illustration shows, 29 percent of the respondents thought crime had increased, whereas in 1979 only 25 percent thought it had increased.

There were no significant changes in the number of people who expected to be victimized or in the crimes for which people expected victimization. As observed in last year's survey, those 50 and older were less likely to expect victimization. This is an accurate perception as the older one is the less likely he or she is to be a victim of crime. It is also true that females and those living in rural areas are less likely to be victimized. However, these groups do not seem to perceive the difference.

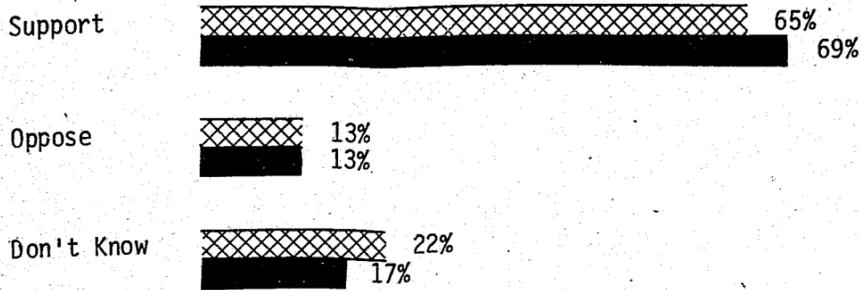
### Treatment of Juvenile Offenders

In the past two years two questions about the treatment of juvenile offenders have been included. The first asked about how noncriminal status offenders should be treated. As in previous years, most thought they should be held in nonsecure facilities or released with court supervision rather than being detained in a jail or detention facility. The only variation in this response was that males were more likely than females to favor the use of jails and detention facilities.

The second question concerned whether citizens would support a greater use of their tax dollar for programs designed to prevent juvenile offenders from becoming adult criminals. There was a statistically significant change in the response this year. Support for greater use of the tax dollar increased from 65 to 69 percent. Thirteen percent remained opposed. An analysis of the data by group showed that women were less likely to oppose this use of the tax dollar.

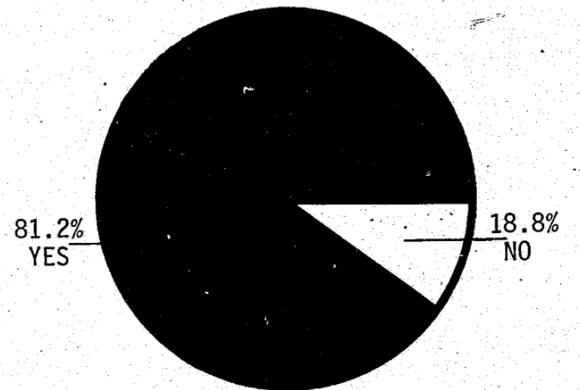
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Do Citizens Support Greater Use of Taxes for Juvenile Programs?



1979 Survey  
 1980 Survey

Should a Juvenile Criminal Record Be Used in Sentencing an Adult Offender?

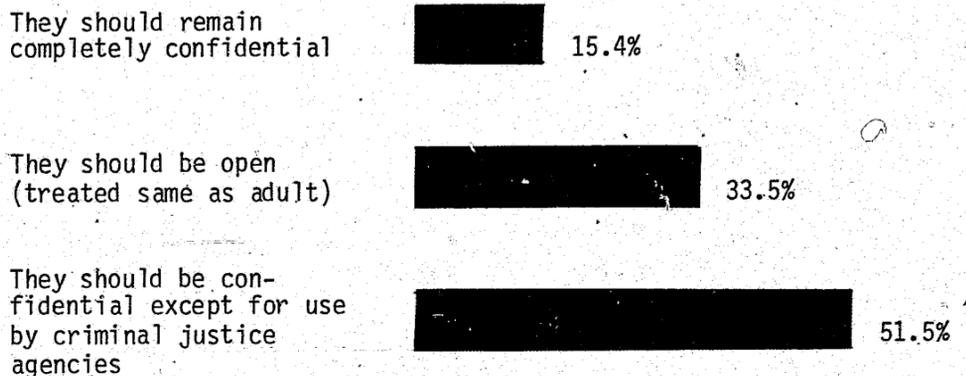


Use of Juvenile Criminal Records

Under current Oregon law, criminal records of juveniles are confidential, whereas the original arrest and conviction records of adults are open to the public. While criminal justice agencies may use juvenile records they must be stored separately from adult records and cannot be included in a central state repository. This limits the usefulness of criminal records for such things as suspect identification, sentencing, and correctional program placement. Additionally, if a juvenile is arrested and treated informally by the court (i.e. charges are founded, but formal court processing is considered unnecessary), the record shall be expunged within two years. Formal court records may be expunged if a child has not had further referrals for two years. This expungement process limits the system's ability to consider a juvenile criminal record for sentencing when the offender becomes an adult.

Survey respondents were asked two questions about juvenile records. The first question asked whether the records should be confidential or open to the public. The second concerned whether the sentencing of an adult offender should consider the person's juvenile criminal record.

Confidentiality of Juvenile Criminal Records



In examining the results of the two questions, it seems that there is public support for some degree of confidentiality for juvenile records but not to the extent that such records cannot be used by criminal justice agencies or for sentencing adult offenders. The largest percentage of respondents thought juvenile records should be confidential except for use by criminal justice agencies. There was little support for total confidentiality.

On the second question, the vast majority of respondents (81 percent) thought that juvenile records should be used when sentencing an adult offender. This suggests that citizens are willing to let juveniles have a second chance as adults in most areas except when they commit another crime. This may mean that the current law which allows expunction (destruction) of juvenile criminal records may not have much public support because it means these records cannot be used for sentencing an adult.

Analysis of group data indicates that the age group 15-19 is much more likely to think juvenile records should be confidential and they should not be used for adult sentencing. Males were more likely than females to say juvenile records should be treated the same as adult and to favor this use in sentencing an adult.

Sentencing Disparity

There was no change on the question relating to sentencing disparity. When asked how likely it would be that two offenders with the same criminal history would get the same sentence, about 26 percent said there would be a 50/50 chance of getting the same sentence. About one-fourth said they would be likely to get the same sentence and one-fourth said it would be unlikely. Over 20 percent of the respondents indicated that they "have no idea" as to the likelihood of similar offenders receiving similar sentences.

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Functions Most Important to Retain  
if Police Budgets are Cut

	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Score*</u>
Violent Crime Investigation	1	Scored over 1800
Emergency Response	2)	
Hard Drug Investigation	3)	Scored 600-900
Property Crime Investigation	4)	
Community Patrols	5)	
Traffic Enforcement	6)	
Crime Analysis	7)	Scored 150-350
Crime Prevention	8)	
Investigate Minor Violent Crime	9)	
Equipment Purchase	10)	
Investigate Victimless Crime	11)	Scored less than 100
Complaint Response	12)	
Crowd Control	12) tie	
Investigate Minor Property Crime	13)	

Functions to be Reduced First  
if Police Budgets are Cut

	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Score*</u>
Complaint Response	1)	
Crowd Control	2)	Scored 1000 or more
Investigate Victimless Crime	3)	
Crime Prevention	4)	
Equipment Purchase	5)	Scored 200-450
Crime Analysis	6)	
Investigate Minor Property Crime	7)	
Traffic Enforcement	8)	Scored 100-200
Investigate Minor Violent Crime	9)	
Community Patrols	10)	
Hard Drug Investigation	11)	
Emergency Response	12)	Scored less than 100
Violent Crime Investigation	13)	
Property Crime Investigation	14)	

\*The score was developed by allowing 3 points for a function marked number 1, 2 points for a function marked number 2, and 1 point for one marked 3. A composite score was compiled by adding all respondents' scores.

Corrections Programs

A question on community corrections programs has been included in each year's survey. The question asks whether respondents would be willing to have a community corrections program in their community for different types of adult or juvenile offenders. In previous years the results have indicated substantial support for community corrections programs involving juvenile or adult first time offenders convicted of a violent or property crime. Citizens apparently do not favor such programs for repeat offenders of any kind or for first time offenders convicted of a violent sex offense.

The results from the 1980 Survey do not alter this pattern; however, there were a few statistically significant changes. What appears to have happened is a shift from some of those in the "undecided" category to the opposition side for three categories of offenders. For juvenile first offenders convicted of violent sex crimes, opposition increased from 51 percent in 1978 to 52 percent in 1979 and to 55 percent in 1980. For first time juvenile property offenders, opposition went from 19 percent in 1978 to 16 percent in 1979 and to 21 percent in 1980. For adult property repeat offenders opposition went from 81 percent in 1978 to 85 percent in 1979 and to 86 percent in 1980.

Analysis of group data suggests that women and young people (age 15-19) are more supportive of community corrections programs.

In the 1979 Survey a question on the purpose of correctional institutions was added. In the 1980 Survey significant changes in the responses were observed. The percent which felt protection of society was the number one function rose from 59 to 64 percent. Those feeling that rehabilitation was the most important function fell from 29 to 25 percent. Analysis of group data showed that men were more likely than women to feel "punishment" was the most important function, whereas women were somewhat more likely to say rehabilitation was the most important function.

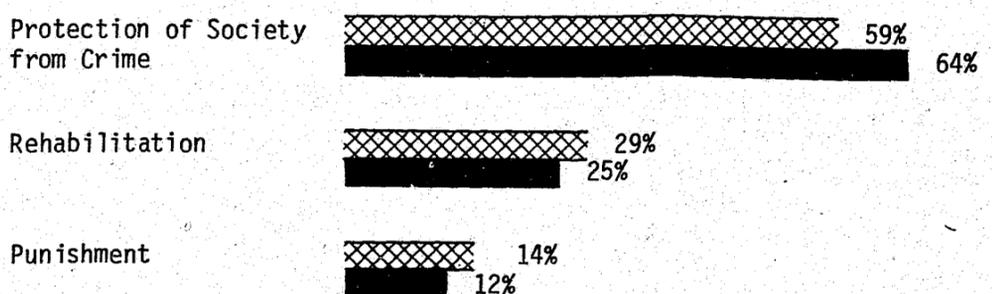
Budget Cuts for Police

In the 1979 Survey a new question was added concerning the functions most important to retain and those that should be reduced if police budgets are cut. The results in 1980 were very similar to those in the previous year. As to functions most important to retain, there was a high degree of agreement that the investigation of serious violent crime is the most important function to retain. This function was rated two times as high as any other. Emergency response, hard drug investigations, and investigations of serious property crimes were considered the next most important functions. As the illustration shows, these scored in the 600-900 range. A third grouping of functions consisted of community patrols, traffic enforcement, crime analysis and crime prevention. These scored from 150-300.

Functions considered least important to retain were investigation of minor violent crime, equipment purchases, investigation of victimless crimes, complaint response, crowd control and investigation of minor property crime.

When respondents were asked which functions should be reduced first, the results were similar. There was substantial agreement that response to complaints, crowd control and investigation of victimless crime should be reduced first. The next group of functions received a much lower score (200-450). They were crime prevention, equipment purchase and crime analysis. The remaining functions all scored below 200.

What is the Most Important Purpose  
of Correctional Institutions?



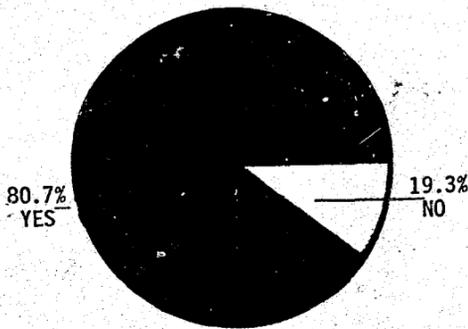
This report contains no data tables, results of statistical tests, or copies of the survey form. Such information is available upon request by calling or writing the Oregon Law Enforcement Council, 2001 Front Street N.E., Salem, Oregon 97310, (503) 378-4229.

 1979 Survey  
 1980 Survey

Capital Punishment

In 1979, capital punishment was reinstated in Oregon. At the present time, the death sentence can be invoked for conviction on the crime of murder. In this state murder consists of four situations: intentional murder which is committed not under extreme emotional disturbance; death resulting from the commission of another specific crime (arson, burglary, escape, kidnapping, rape, sodomy or robbery); placing or discharging a bomb; or air piracy. A question was included on the survey to determine whether citizens support the use of the death penalty for premeditated murder only, all murders, or all murders plus other serious crimes.

Support for Death Penalty



The results indicate a high degree of support for the death penalty. Only 19 percent said they do not support the death penalty in any circumstance. Of those in support, 51 percent wish to see it used only for premeditated murder. Fourteen percent indicated that it should be a penalty for all murders and 35 percent would support it for all murders, plus other serious crimes such as rape or kidnapping. In examining the remarks some respondents wrote on the questionnaire, there was an indication that some people support the death penalty for some murders and some other crimes, such as murders and other crimes which involve mutilation. Since this choice was not included on the questionnaire, it is not known what percentage favor the death sentence for this situation. In the next year's survey the question will be modified to make that determination.

Some differences on this question were revealed for males and females and for geographic location of the respondent. Women were more likely to say they do not support the death penalty in any situation, whereas men were more likely to say the death penalty should be used for all murders and other serious crimes. Respondents living in Portland and Salem were less likely to support the death penalty, while those in Medford/Central Point were more likely to support it. Respondents in Medford/Central Point and Salem were more likely to say the death penalty should be used for all murders and other serious crimes.

Crimes for Which Death Penalty Should be Used

Premeditated Murder Only	51.1%
All Murders	14.4%
All Murders, plus other serious crimes (e.g. rape, kidnapping)	34.5%

Diversion

A question asking for people's opinion on the use of diversion for adult or juvenile property or violent offenders revealed little change from previous years. Most do not support diversion except for juvenile property offenders. A small but significant shift was observed from those who were undecided to those opposed to use of diversion for adults accused of a violent crime. The analysis of group data showed that older people are more inclined to oppose diversion programs.

Community Problems

For each year's survey respondents have been asked to rate the seriousness of 14 community problems. The ranking of these problems for all three surveys is shown below.

For all three years cost of living, property taxes, alcohol and drug abuse remained the top four community problems. However, the problem of unemployment increased in rank from 9 in 1979 to number 5 in 1980. Violent crime dropped from 5 to 10 and land use/zoning problems rose from 12 to 8.

An analysis of the group data provides some interesting results, particularly regarding location of the respondent. Below is a table showing the rank order of neighborhood problems by city. While all areas agree that "cost of living" is the number one problem, there are variations on some of the others. For example, Eugene rates violent crime as the number two problem. Other areas rated it much lower. Salem and Portland rated property crime much higher than did other areas. Medford/Central Point rated pollution and land use issues higher than other localities. They also rated unemployment as the third highest problem.

Analysis by other groupings shows that women rate alcohol abuse, poverty, and unemployment higher than men do. Young people rate pollution and drug and alcohol abuse higher, and property and white collar crime somewhat lower.

Since alcohol and drug abuse were rated among the top four problems, a question was added to the 1979 Survey to determine specifically what people saw as the nature of drug and alcohol problems.

Rank Order of Community Problems

1978	1979	1980
1. Property Tax	Cost of Living	Cost of Living
2. Drug/Alcohol Abuse	Alcohol Abuse	Property Tax
3. Cost of Living	Property Tax	Alcohol Abuse
4. Juvenile Delinquency	Drug Abuse	Drug Abuse
5. Property Crime	Violent Crime	Unemployment
6. Land Use/Zoning	Juvenile Delinquency	Juvenile Delinquency
7. Quality of Education	Property Crime	Property Crime
8. Unemployment	Quality of Education	Land Use/Zoning
9. Environment	Unemployment	Education
10. Violent Crime	Environment	Violent Crime
11. Poverty	Poverty	Pollution
12. White Collar Crime	Land Use/Zoning	Poverty
13. Domestic Violence	White Collar Crime	White Collar Crime
14. Race Relations	Domestic Violence	Domestic Violence

Ranking of Community Problems by City - 1980

	Portland	Salem	Eugene	Medford/Cnt. Pt.	Rest of State
1. Cost of Living	1	1	1	1	1
2. Quality of Education	7	7	10	11	9
3. Domestic Violence	14	14	14	14	12
4. Juvenile Delinquency	6	8	7	9	6
5. Pollution	10	13	9	5	11
6. Drug Abuse	5	6	6	8	4
7. Alcohol Abuse	4	4	3	6	3
8. Poverty	12	11	13	13	10
9. Property Crime	3	2	8	7	8
10. Property Tax	2	4	2	2	2
11. Unemployment	8	9	5	3	5
12. Violent Crime	9	5	2	10	10
13. Land Use/Zoning Issue	11	10	11	4	7
14. White Collar Crime	12	12	12	12	13

Ranking of Alcohol and Drug Problems

	Alcohol		Drug	
	80 Rank	79 Rank	80 Rank	79 Rank
Health Problems	3	3	3	2
Family Problems	2	2	5	4
Absenteeism	6	6	6	6
Accidents Under Influence	1	1	4	5
Crimes Under Influence	4	4	2	3
Crimes Committed to Support	5	5	1	1
Other	7	7	7	7

In 1979, respondents rated "accidents caused while under the influence" as the most serious alcohol problem. Family and health problems were rated second and third, respectively. The results from the 1980 Survey were identical.

For drug problems, people viewed "crimes committed to support addiction" as the most serious drug problem. Health problems were ranked second, crimes committed under the influence were third, and family problems were fourth. In 1980, some significant shifts were observed, suggesting people are more prone to view drug problems in terms of their impact on society rather than the effects on the individual. Crimes committed while under the influence moved from third to second, while health problems dropped from second to third. Accidents caused while under the influence rose from fifth to fourth, while family problems dropped from fourth to fifth.

Use of Crime Prevention Techniques

The survey has included a series of questions relating to how frequently citizens lock their homes, garages and cars; engrave their valuable property; use anti-burglary decals; maintain locks in operable condition; have burglar alarms; and, keep a firearm in the home. A separate update bulletin is not being produced on this series of questions primarily because there were no new questions nor major changes in the results for 1980.

A summary of the results show that a majority of citizens make use of the basic crime prevention measures such as locking the house, having operable locks, and locking the garage. However, less than a majority use anti-burglary decals, mark their valuable property or lock their car when it is parked near the home. These represent areas where improvement is needed.

The results also indicate that the age group 15-29 might be considered a target group for focus by crime prevention programs. That group experiences the highest rate of victimization and is the least likely to use most prevention techniques. As in last year's survey, about half of the respondents reported owning a firearm; however, few view it as a device for protection against crime and most own it for recreational purposes.

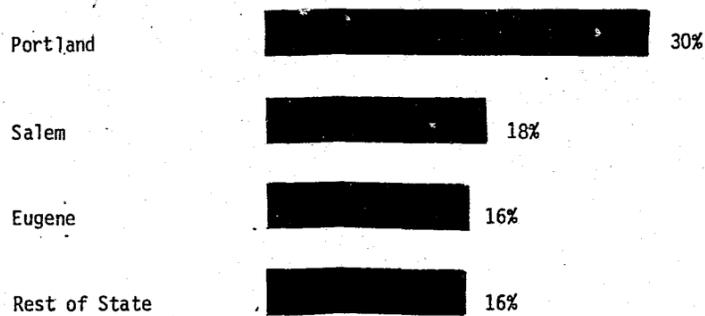
Some interesting results regarding the geographic location of the respondent were uncovered this year. The results suggest that some areas are making more progress in certain aspects of crime prevention than others. As the illustrations show, Portland, Salem and Eugene evidence more use of home security than areas in the rest of the state. Residents outside these three cities were less likely to lock their doors when away from home or lock their cars when parked at or away from home. This difference could be attributed to the fact that crime prevention programs have operated for longer periods of time in Portland, Salem and Eugene.

The City of Portland appears to be ahead of other areas in the use of anti-burglary stickers and property engraving. About 30 percent of the respondents reported making use of these techniques. Significantly fewer respondents in other areas of the state report using these techniques. More people in Portland also reported having a burglar alarm.

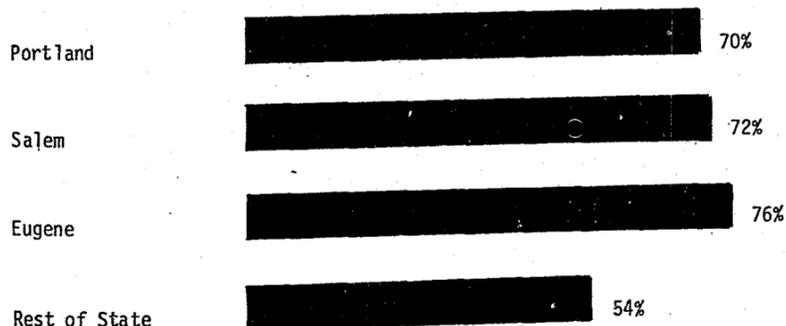
Percent Which Always Lock Doors of Residence When Away



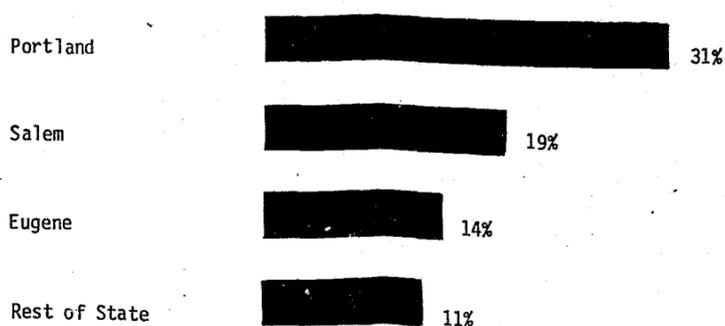
Percent of Respondents Who Have Engraved Valuable Property



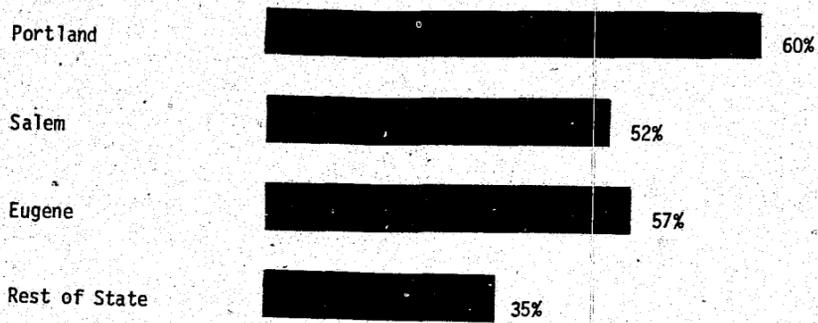
Percent Which Always Lock Their Garage



Percent Which Display Anti-Burglary Stickers



Percent Which Always Lock the Car When  
Parked at Home



Percent Which Always Lock the Car When  
Parked Away From Home



For more detailed information about the use of crime prevention techniques, the reader is referred to the 1979 results published in the bulletin entitled, "Survey of Serious Crime, Part 2, Do Citizens Use Crime Prevention Techniques?" Since there were no major changes in 1980, these results can be considered still valid.

**UP-COMING REPORTS**

1. Analysis of Crime in Oregon - 1979, available September, 1980 - cost, \$5.00.
2. What Happens After Arrest in Oregon, available in October, 1980.

For information or copies of these reports contact:

Pamela Erickson Gervais, Oregon Law Enforcement Council, 2001 Front Street N.E., Salem, OR 97310. Phone: (503) 378-8056.

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