

# Crime increases, but at a lower rate

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3,240 or a 1.7 percent increase over 1985's total of 3,186. Arrests for serious crime also increased 13.8 percent, from 427 arrests in 1985 to 488 last year.

The total value of property taken during the commission of serious crimes increased more than 30 percent, from \$4.9 million in 1985 to \$5.3 million last year. Property recovered from serious crimes in 1986 totaled \$3.2 million compared to \$2.4 million the previous year.

Significant increases in serious crime occurred in auto thefts, aggravated assaults and criminal sexual conduct, according to the department's annual crime statistics report.

Despite the slight overall increase in serious crime, the number of burglaries and larcenies — a major increase in 1985 — decreased. Robberies increased by only two incidents in 1986. No murders were committed last year.

**AUTO THEFTS** took the lead in increased serious crime with a 30.8 percent jump of 450 incidents compared to 344 in 1985.

"It's clear the auto theft problem is moving west," Dwyer said. "We are observing the increase by the fact that we are bordered by the cities that are number one and two — Detroit and Southfield — in the state."

"The majority of vehicles are being stolen from shopping centers or apartment complexes," Dwyer continued. "We are experiencing organized groups of three to four people stealing three to four cars at a time from apartments."

General Motors Corp. products dominate the list of stolen cars though Dwyer is uncertain which specific type is the most stolen.

Auto theft, Dwyer said, "is a sophisticated operation," with the purpose of stealing for profitable parts. Most auto theft operations involve youths 16-19 years old who are paid \$150-\$200 for each car stolen. The youths are told which cars — or parts — are needed. The stolen cars are delivered to a middleman who sells the cars to chop shops.

Though state law now requires auto parts to be engraved by the auto manufacturer with serial numbers, stolen auto parts is a big and profitable business. But it's expected to take a significant drop with insurance companies, in particular the American Automobile Association (AAA), now requiring that only new parts be used to rebuild stolen autos recovered from chop shops.

"THIS IS going to reduce chop shop's outlets," Dwyer said, adding that repair shops will not be able to install used — often stolen — parts.

Increases in auto thefts were matched by an increase in arrests. In 1986, police arrested 73 people in connection with auto theft compared to 36 in 1985.

Criminal sexual assaults increased from nine in 1985 to 12 last year. Arrests increased by only one from five in 1985 to six last year.

But 85 percent of the reported criminal sexual conduct incidents — including those listed under the less serious part II crimes — were committed by victims' relatives or acquaintances, Dwyer said.

"That matches the nationwide statistics," he added.

Aggravated assaults increased to 107 from 81 the previous year. Arson also increased to 26 from 21 in 1985. Arrests in both categories, however, showed a decrease. Arrests for assault dropped to 50 from 58 in 1985. Arson arrests decreased from nine in 1985 to eight last year.

The city's major crime problems — larcenies and burglaries — in 1985 took a dip in 1986. In 1985, larcenies totaled 1,826 and in 1986, 1,756 for a 3.9 percent decrease.

**BURGLARIES** HAD a smaller decrease with 841 incidents in 1986 compared to 857 the previous year. Of the three burglary categories — garage, dwelling and business — the only increase occurred in garage burglaries, Dwyer said.

Garage burglaries increased to 181 from 177 in 1985. Dwelling burglaries dropped slightly to 471 from 484 and business from 196 in 1985 to 189 last year.

Though burglaries decreased, the value of property stolen increased to \$1.6 million from approximately \$924,000 in 1985. The value of property taken in larcenies, however, dropped 12.5 percent or from \$1.1 million in 1985 to approximately \$1 million last year.

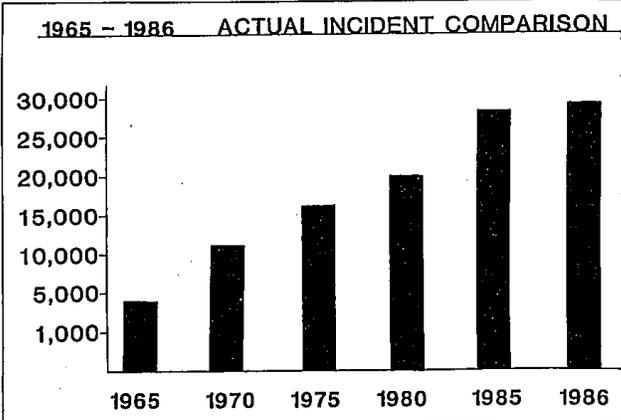
Despite only two more robberies in 1986 over 1985, value of property stolen increased dramatically, in part due to the armed robbery of \$73,000 from Michigan National Bank on Orchard Lake Road, north of 12 Mile. Total value of property stolen in robberies in 1986 totaled \$273,181 from \$41,837 the previous year.

The decreases in burglaries and larcenies were accompanied by increased arrests. Burglary arrests increased from 58 in 1985 to 87 last year. Larceny arrests totaled 243 in 1986, up from 223 in 1985.

**DWYER ATTRIBUTES** the slowdown in increased crime in 1986 to several factors. A reorganization plan was fully established in 1986, offering greater efficiency and productivity.

The department's reorganization enabled the reassignment of officers to trouble spots as well as greater concentration on certain crimes, such as auto thefts, Dwyer said.

The slowdown can also be attributed to the addition of six new officers



This chart compares the rise in reported incidents to the Farmington Hills Police Department over a 21-year period.

and three cadets, who were able to use sworn officers to perform station duties such as writing reports and processing prisoners, Dwyer said.

## Liquor checks increase numbers

By Joanne Maliszewski  
staff writer

Beefed-up enforcement of state and local liquor laws played a large part in an increase in less-serious crimes in Farmington Hills in 1986.

"The increase in part II crimes, in part, was self-inflicted," Police Chief William Dwyer said. "If we hadn't take such strong enforcement,

(statistics) wouldn't be so high."

Less serious (part II) crimes — assault and battery, vandalism, liquor laws and weapons violations, for example — went up in 1986 to 4,996 incidents from 4,021 in 1985, Dwyer said.

But the increased incidents were accompanied by a similar boost in arrests. Arrests totaled 1,401 in 1986 compared to 1,102 — a 27.1 percent increase, Dwyer said.

The greatest increase in the less serious crime category came in liquor law violations — the result of a Farmington Hills police crackdown on liquor-licensed establishments.

In 1985, liquor law violations totaled 68. In 1986, after an undercover operation in which many of the city's major restaurants and bars were cited, police chalked up a total 219 violations — a 222.1 percent increase over the previous year.

**POLICE CRACKDOWNS** on liquor law violations also showed success in traffic statistics for 1986.

*'I don't see any increase in (use of) firearms other than in the area of robbery.'*

— William Dwyer,  
police chief

Traffic violations last year went up by 5.7 percent and drunk driving arrests by 7.9 percent, Dwyer said.

In 1986, Farmington Hills had three fatal traffic accidents — the lowest number of fatalities in seven years. Personal traffic injury accidents decreased slightly to 711 from 729 in 1985. Property damage accidents also dropped to 1,502 from 1,545 in 1985.

Other notable statistical changes in the less serious crime category include an increase in weapons charges from 15 in 1985 to 36 last year. Despite the rise, Dwyer said only one charged involved a gun.

"I don't see any increase in firearms other than in the area of robbery."

Assault and battery increased from 382 in 1985 to 387 in 1986. Vandalism went up slightly from 1,035 in 1985 to 1,044 last year. But vandalism to motor vehicles jumped significantly from 63 in 1985 to 168 in 1986.

Part III offenses — juvenile complaints, traffic offenses and other miscellaneous items such as assistance calls — decreased slightly from 20,990 in 1985 to 20,707 last year.

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