

A COMPARISON STUDY OF RURAL AND
URBAN RESIDENTIAL BURGLARIES

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by

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ABSTRACT

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Residential burglaries have long been a problem for rural and urban law enforcement. They are the largest property crime issue facing local law enforcement today. The majority of law enforcement agencies in the United States are small with limited resources. The problem is greater in rural areas due to sparse population, residences' visibility from roadway, and distance between residences. It is imperative that these agencies make use of crime analysis to identify the time of day and day of the week that residential burglaries occur and apply their limited resources toward proactive operations. The purpose of this study is to identify the day of the week and time of day that residential burglaries occur in the agencies studied. This study can be generalized throughout all law enforcement agencies for better use of existing resources in their fight against crime.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Residential burglaries are one of the largest property crime issues facing law enforcement today. In 1998 alone, the Federal Bureau of Investigation identified 2,329,950 burglaries in the United States with those victimized accounting for 862.2 per 100,000 inhabitants. The Bureau of Justice Statistics and the Census Bureau through a National Crime Survey found that many burglaries go unreported to law enforcement (Baker, 2001). Burglaries represent more than 10% of all personal and property victimizations according to year 2000 data from the National Crime Victimization Survey. Burglary consequences have a trickle down effect on communities where some victims actually move to other areas to feel safer in their homes. Another factor involves the lack of confidence that citizens have in local law enforcement. This is evidenced by the national average of law enforcement clearing only one out of every ten burglaries (Taylor, 2003). Dealing with this problem is further complicated by the fact that the majority of law enforcement agencies throughout Texas and the United States are small agencies with limited resources. The problem is exacerbated in rural areas due to sparse population, distance between residences, residences that are not visible from the roadway, and lack of guardianship of the residence due to work and school. Effective crime prevention techniques as well as departmental crime analysis must exist to combat these property crimes.

The specific purpose of the study is to identify the day of the week and the time of the day that burglaries occur in the jurisdictions of the Hays County Sheriff's Office, the San Marcos Police Department, and the Kyle Police Department. All of these law enforcement entities are located within Hays County.

This study will benefit all law enforcement agencies, especially those with limited resources, in identifying the highest probability of when a burglary will occur based on the time of day and the day of the week. The methodology in this study can be expanded to also identify the patrol district, of the jurisdiction, with the highest number of burglaries. This valuable information will allow for better deployment of resources. Once the day of the week and the time of day with the greatest number of residential burglaries are identified, agencies with limited resources will be better able to allocate patrols to a specific day of the week and narrowed time of day, resulting in savings to these limited resources.

Comparison of rural and urban residential burglary pattern are significant. Local sheriff's offices and police departments can work more effectively when these trends are identified. If the trends are similar the agencies may even form a task force to concentrate on these specific days and times.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Burglary is an understudied aspect of crime and one of the most prevalent street crimes in the United States (Shover, 1991). Determining the time of day the residential burglary occurs and the day of the week the residential burglary occurs will give law enforcement administrators tools to better analyze the problem of residential burglaries. In turn they will be able to tactically implement a plan that specifically addresses residential burglary reduction based on the time of day and day of the week that the majority of residential burglaries occur. This information will also be a valuable tool for crime prevention teams when meeting with the public.

Residential burglary is defined in the Texas Penal Code as:

§ 30.01. DEFINITIONS. In this chapter:

- (1) "Habitation" means a structure or vehicle that is adapted for the overnight accommodation of persons, and includes:
 - (a) each separately secured or occupied portion of the structure or vehicle; and
 - (b) each structure appurtenant to or connected with the structure or vehicle.
- (2) "Building" means any enclosed structure intended for use or occupation as a habitation or for some purpose of trade, manufacture, ornament, or use.
- (3) "Vehicle" includes any device in, on, or by which any person or property is or may be propelled, moved, or drawn in the normal course of commerce or transportation, except such devices as are classified as "habitation".

Acts 1973, 63rd Leg., p. 883, ch. 399, § 1, eff. Jan. 1, 1974.

Amended by Acts 1993, 73rd Leg., ch. 900, § 1.01, eff. Sept. 1, 1994.

- (a) A person commits an offense if, without the effective consent of the owner, the person:
- (1) enters a habitation, or a building (or any portion of a building) not then open to the public, with intent to commit a felony, theft, or an assault; or
 - (2) remains concealed, with intent to commit a felony, theft, or an assault, in a building or habitation; or
 - (3) enters a building or habitation and commits or attempts to commit a felony, theft, or an assault.
- (b) For purposes of this section, "enter" means to intrude:
- (1) any part of the body; or
 - (2) any physical object connected with the body.
- (c) Except as provided in Subsection (d), an offense under this section is a:
- (1) state jail felony if committed in a building other than a habitation;
 - (2) second degree if committed in a habitation.
- (d) An offense under this section is a felony of the first degree if:
- (1) the premises are a habitation; and
 - (2) any party to the offense entered the habitation; with intent to commit a felony other than felony theft or committed or attempted to commit a felony other than felony theft.

Acts 1973, 63rd Leg., p. 883, ch. 399, § 1, eff. Jan. 1, 1974.

Amended by Acts 1993, 73rd Leg., ch. 900, § 1.01, eff. Sept. 1,

1994; Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 318, § 8, eff. Sept. 1, 1995;

Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 727, § 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1999.

For the purpose of this study the above act states that it is unlawful for a person to enter a residence without the owners permission and/or remain concealed with the intent to commit, attempt to commit, or commits a felony, theft or assault.

In this review it is important to understand how important crime analysis is to crime prevention. Traditional crime prevention is a vital tool against residential burglaries but needs to be complimented with proactive patrols directed by effective crime analysis data.

Burglary produces a great deal of fear in individual homeowners even when the

homeowners do not confront the burglars (Baker, 2001). Burglaries are one of the most violating of property crimes. Beyond the loss of property, there is something about a stranger being in your home; some homeowners have equated this with being violated. There are many factors associated with the burglary of a residence. Multiple burglaries in one area will give a negative feeling about the effectiveness of the local police department or sheriffs' office. There are psychological effects that are experienced by the victims such as; not feeling safe in their home, will the burglar return, etc. The loss of personal items, with no value to anyone other than the victims, causes emotional distress that is difficult to measure. According to Baker (2001) the arrest of burglars and return of personal property helps the victims deal with the psychological factors as well as restoring their confidence in the local law enforcement agency.

Residential burglaries are one of the major problems, as related to property crimes, in rural and urban law enforcement agencies. This crime affects millions of citizens throughout America. The crime of burglary is an important issue because of the frequency and economic impact on those least able to afford the personal and financial losses. In 1998, the financial cost of burglaries to Americans was estimated at 3.1 billion dollars. The average victim loss for residential burglaries was \$1,343 (Baker, 2001). Additional economic costs include law enforcement services, insurance company reimbursements and increase premiums, and costs relating to making the residence more secure such as additional locks and burglar alarms and other crime prevention techniques (Hicks & Sansfacon).

Piquero and Rengert (1999) report on an assessment of the decision making process of active residential burglars. In the report they indicate that burglars make

conscious decisions in preparation to commit burglaries by weighing the costs (arrest) and benefits as well recognizing factors that assist in determining which homes to burglarize. Offenders interviewed admitted to committing burglaries not only in the urban areas but also in the suburban areas. The authors list four factors that burglars consider before committing the crime: 1) the probability of success, 2) amount of money to be obtained if successful, 3) the probability of capture, 4) and the penalty if caught (Piquero & Rengert, 1999). Evidence shows that residential burglaries are largely a crime of opportunity. The act of burglary requires three elements: motivated offenders, suitable targets, and the absence of capable guardians. These three factors must be present simultaneously for a burglary to occur (Malczewski & Poetz, 2004).

Burglars commit the crime of burglary for money or items that can be used as currency or converted to money. The decision to commit a burglary, among other factors, is the ease with which the burglary can be accomplished. Burglars often know their victims which include casual acquaintances, residents for whom they have provided a service for, or friend or relative of their close friends. Burglars either do not weigh the consequences of the crime or believe that there is little chance of being arrested. Statistics show that they are correct in the fact that there is little chance that they will be arrested. The national burglary clearance rates are around 13 percent (Boba & Santos, 2006).

Crime analysis is essential for law enforcement administrators to effectively plan and implement operations to combat residential burglaries. Crime analysis is defined as “a set of systematic, analytical processes directed at providing timely and pertinent information relative to crime patterns and trend correlations. The goal of crime analysis is

to assist law enforcement's administrative and operational personnel to plan and redirect limited resources. Crime analysis is an important crime prevention tool used to reduce criminal activity, assist in criminal investigations, and increase arrests. Operationally, the purpose of the crime analysis units within an agency is to "identify, assemble and disseminate information concerning crime incidents, criminal behaviors and characteristics, and patterns and trends to be used in administrative strategic and tactical planning" (Statistics Program, 1995, 1).

The tactical or enforcement functions of the crime analysis unit encompass four areas: Crime Series/Pattern Detection, Suspect-Crime Correlations, Target/Suspect Profiles, and Crime Potential Forecasts. Crime series consists of identifying crimes that are believed to be committed by the same person or group of persons. Crime pattern detection is the number of crimes that have some of the same characteristics but does not assign themselves to a given person or group. Crime series and crime pattern detection each have a different objective, crime series detection is to arrest, and crime pattern detection is to suppress. Suspect-crime correlations identify actors of known crimes by matching characteristics such as physical description, vehicle, or the manner, modus operandi, in which the crime was committed, with information from existing files. Target profiles, in the case of burglaries, would attempt to identify the given residences or communities that would be more susceptible to being burglarized. Suspect profiles are established in the same manner as suspect crime correlations. With these profiles administration will be better equipped to make informed tactical, operational and deployment decisions. This is extremely important for smaller agencies with limited resources. Crime potential forecast analyzes data to determine where a crime will occur.

The forecasts are based on historical analysis of cyclical, periodic, as well as information developed from the crime series/pattern detection analysis of crime (Statistics Program, 1995).

A crime prevention analysis tool that Baker (2001) discusses is Burglary Mapping. This is derived from crime mapping using the Geographic Information Systems (GIS). These data will allow law enforcement to target residential burglaries based on information developed through analysis. These maps can provide information including location, travel distance, and direction of residential burglaries. These maps can also indicate locations of prior burglaries which will allow law enforcement administrators to redirect patrols to high burglary areas.

Computer mapping has grown in use in law enforcement agencies over the last few years. In many agencies it is a tool which has resulted in crime analysis and problem solving. Early crime mapping consisted of maps with stick pins that represented certain crime locations over a specific time period. The applications of these maps are limited only by imagination. Examples of early map usage consisted of drug hot spots, burglary locations, recovered stolen vehicles, drug arrest in relation to school locations and many others. Each of these examples represents an exact analysis that the individual map was designed to address (Bynum, 2001). Law enforcement analysis tools are essential for administration to understand and study crime and risk factor trends. These analyses enable law enforcement administrators to develop strategies to respond to repeat victimization (Hicks & Sansfacon).

The following information on Geographic Profiling was taken from an article in the Texas Police Journal (Texas Police Association, 2007). The article outlined a serial

burglary case in the City of San Marcos and investigative techniques used in Geographic Profiling. Dr. Kim Rossmo, a research professor with the Department of Criminal Justice at Texas State University-San Marcos, was asked to assist with the case. Dr. Rossmo was formerly a Detective Inspector with the Vancouver Police Department in British Columbia and is a world renowned expert in the field of Geographic Profiling.

Geographic profiling is another investigative technique used to assist law enforcement to find and solve serial crimes. Geographic profiling has proved very helpful in serial burglary investigations. It assists in the prioritization of suspects and case information management. The locations where serial crimes occur are seldom random. They tend to have a degree of underlying spatial structure. Criminals have a tendency to commit crimes at locations where, in terms of profit and risk, can find suitable targets such as in the case of burglaries. The basis of geographic profiling is the link between crime site location information and the known habits of serial criminals in their selection of target victims and locations. The geographic profiling system produces a 2-Dimensional or 3-Dimensional map of the most likely location of the criminal's center of activity, which in most cases is the criminal's home. When linked with additional information concerning the crime, geographic profiling enhances the effectiveness of the investigation. It needs to be understood that geographic profiling does not solve crimes. It is a tool that complements other police methods. It is very helpful in managing the large amount of information that is gathered in major investigations (Texas Police Association, 2007).

Millie's (2005) study, *Reducing Burglary by Crackdown and Consolidation*, will assist law enforcement administrators in individual agencies to identify and concentrate on the problem burglary areas through police crackdowns. Through the years police

crackdowns have been an over used phrase to describe a shift in enforcement to areas where unacceptable behaviors were occurring. For the purpose of Andrew Millie's study (2005), police crackdowns were defined as activities involving a greater police presence in certain areas relating to a specific offense. The goal of this presence was to improve enforcement through increased law enforcement visibility thus having a greater deterrence. Most law enforcement agencies have limited resources and cannot afford to redirect their resources for a long period of time. Millie goes on to point out that "it is hoped that known recidivists who are at large will be incapacitated and, at the very least, that this will give respite from their offending" (Millie, 175).

Matthew Robinson explores preventing residential burglaries through a systems approach (Robinson, 2000). In his study he observes that too often crime prevention research is not applied into realistic crime prevention strategies or policy. In his paper he makes an effort to counter this trend. He takes crime prevention policy implications from four studies concerning residential burglary patterns and then moves from the residential burglary patterns to burglary prevention implications.

The first study examined by Robinson (2000) indicated that residences that are more visible are less likely to be burglarized. Residential burglars do not want to be observed when committing the crime.

The second study looked at the accessibility of the residence. Accessibility refers to the ease of entry to the residence and the availability of site protection. Residences that are more accessible to burglars are at a greater risk of residential burglary.

The third study examined non-occupancy of the home to determine if there was a relationship between non-occupancy and residential burglaries. Non-occupancy refers to

any indication to the residential burglar that no one is home. The study indicated that unoccupied residences are more likely to be burglarized. As mentioned earlier, generally burglars do not want to be confronted by an occupant of the residence.

The fourth study looks at lifestyles, routine activities and their relationship to residential burglars. Lifestyles describe what people do on a daily basis, such as work and school. Routine activities include repetitive activities such as working at home, other activities in the home, and activities conducted outside the home on a regular and scheduled basis. It was determined that residents that spent less time away from home were less likely to be burglarized (Robinson, 2000). This finding also bears out that the residential burglar does not want to be confronted by anyone who might be home.

The implications from the four studies provide essential information for developing a proper burglary/crime prevention strategy. The studies examined in this paper determined that there are several factors related to being victimized by residential burglars. The factors include visibility, accessibility, occupancy patterns, lifestyles, and the patterns established in routines (Robinson, 2000).

From a law enforcement perspective this information will be extremely helpful for law enforcement administrators in developing crime prevention strategies at the local level. Once the problem areas are identified by analysis, crime prevention along with increase patrols can reduce the burglaries or the opportunity of burglaries through proper crime prevention techniques. Some of these techniques include removing environmental barriers such as shrubbery that has grown up around windows and doors. This will increase the visibility of passerby's and neighbors and increase the chance that the residence will not be targeted by would be burglars because of the opportunity of being

observed. Through local law enforcement neighborhood crime prevention watch meetings, neighbors are more likely to become involved because of the stake that they have in their community. Visibility must be accompanied by the interaction of neighbors and community members to reduce the possibility of property crimes (Robinson, 2000). These goals are achieved by successful crime prevention programs such as neighborhood watch, block captains and the annual National Night Out event.

Robinson, (2000) concludes that some might say that the victims of residential burglars are not to blame for their victimization. In fact the burglars, with his or her motivation, are at fault. However, potential victims can reduce the chance of being burglarized by applying proven crime prevention techniques. Those who desire to reduce the opportunity of being victims of a burglar should focus on increasing visibility of the residence, reduce accessibility, be conscious of creating a routine, and work with local law enforcement to become a part of community crime prevention activities such as neighborhood watch.

Another tool in the prevention of crimes is the community policing approach. While not a crime analysis tool, community policing has been implemented and credited for identifying particular problems, such as residential burglaries and sexual assaults that exist in certain neighborhoods. Once identified, this allows local law enforcement administrators to develop strategic plans to combat this criminal activity. A detailed plan created to address a crime problem should focus on long term outcomes more than just having officers respond to calls for service. In other words, community policing changes the direction of policy from call response to overall problem resolution. Some of the key characteristics of community policing include improving the number of quality police

and citizens' contacts, defining police work, decentralization of police locations, such as numerous sub stations in neighborhoods, and probably most important focusing on emphasizing more proactive problem solving strategies (Statistics Program, 1997).

The purpose of this study is to assist smaller agencies, with limited resources, to identify what time of the day and what day of the week burglaries occur. This study can also be expanded to the identification of the patrol district that has the largest occurrences of burglaries. Once identified, that district can be analyzed to determine the day of the week and time of the day that the majority of burglaries occur. This study can be generalized throughout law enforcement regardless of the size of the law enforcement jurisdiction. The Central Texas area was used to test the effectiveness of the study as well as its proximity to Texas State. The literature reviewed examines the importance of crime analysis tools and how they relate to effective crime prevention.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Research Question

What time of the day and what day of the week do residential burglaries occur in Hays County, the City of San Marcos, and the City of Kyle?

Methodology

Meetings were held with the Sheriff of Hays County, Chief of Police of San Marcos and Chief of Police of Kyle. Each of the administrators agreed to furnish needed data to complete this study. The data used for this study were derived from the record departments of the Hays County Sheriff's Office, the San Marcos Police Department, and the Kyle Police Department. All of these police entities are located in Hays County, Texas. The data represent the entire populations of residential burglary reports taken during 2006. There were 146 usable reports from the Hays County Sheriff's Office, 132 usable reports from the San Marcos Police Department, and 30 usable reports from the Kyle Police Department. The data were entered into the statistical database SPSS 14.0 for analysis. The variables included the time of day the burglary occurred and the day of week that the burglary occurred. The day of the week consisted of Sunday through Saturday and the time of day was separated into time increments. The time increments were 6 p.m.-7:59 a.m., 8 a.m.-9:59 a.m., 10 a.m.-11:59 a.m., 2 p.m.-3:59 p.m.

and 4 p.m.-5:59 p.m. Time increments were analyzed using cross tabulations. The time of day was analyzed using descriptive frequencies. The Hays County Sheriff's Office and the San Marcos Police Department were more closely related demographically than the Kyle Police Department. Sworn officers, in the demographic table below, are defined as peace officers licensed by the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement Officers Standards and Education (TCLEOSE), patrol officers are those peace officers who respond to calls and patrol supervisors are peace officers that supervise the patrol shifts.

Table 1. Demographics of Agencies Furnishing Residential Burglary Data

Agency	Hays County Sheriff's Office	San Marcos Police Department	Kyle Police Department
Sworn Officers	119	82	19
Patrol Officers	90	44	12
Patrol Supervisors	8	7	3
Population of Jurisdiction	52,242	49,083	29,000

Limitations of Presented Research

As a general rule there is not guardianship of a residence when burglaries occur. Because of this, in most cases, it is difficult to determine the actual time the burglary occurs. It is much easier to establish the day of the week because most residents are usually at work or school when the burglary occurs and can determine when they left the residence and when they returned. The exception to this is residents who take vacations or long weekends away from home. When they return and find the home burglarized it is difficult to establish the exact day the burglary occurred. Most officers will be diligent in determining the time of day and day of week through interviews with the victims and

neighbors. Most time can be narrowed from the last person to leave the residence and the first to return through these interviews. However, if officers do not take the time to interview neighbors, victims, and anyone else who might have observed unusual activity at the residence, limitations are placed on the accuracy of the data.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS AND RESULTS

Descriptive frequencies were used to determine the day of the week and cross tabulations were used to determine the time of day that burglaries occurred. These analyses were performed in the SPSS 14.0 statistical software program.

Tuesday produced the greatest number of burglaries for both the Hays County Sheriff's Office (23.3%) and the San Marcos Police Department (16.7%). After Tuesday, the results varied with the Sheriff's Office reporting an almost equal number of burglaries per day throughout the week. After Tuesday, the results for the San Marcos Police Department also reported an almost equal number of burglaries per day throughout the rest of the week. During the week the Kyle Police Department recorded their largest number burglaries on Monday (30%). The Kyle Police Department indicated no consistency in number of burglaries analyzed as it related to day of week burglaries occurred. The Hays County Sheriff's Office and the San Marcos Police Department results were very similar with the exception of Saturday and Sundays. Saturday and Sunday are normally days with fewer residential burglaries because of homeowners being home. The San Marcos Police Department indicated a higher rate of residential burglaries on Saturday and Sunday than did the Hays County Sheriff's Office. The Kyle Police Department was split with a smaller amount of burglaries on Sunday and a greater number on Saturday.

Table 2. Day of the Week Frequency of Residential Burglaries

Day of Week	Hays County Sheriff's Office		San Marcos Police Department		Kyle Police Department	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Sunday	13	8.9	21	15.9	1	3.3
Monday	25	17.1	21	15.9	9	30.0
Tuesday	34	23.3	22	16.7	2	6.7
Wednesday	24	16.4	17	12.9	6	20.0
Thursday	21	14.4	21	15.9	1	3.3
Friday	22	15.1	18	13.6	7	23.3
Saturday	7	4.8	12	9.1	4	13.3
Totals	146	100.0	132	100.0	30	100.0

The Hays County Sheriff's Office, the Kyle Police Department and the San Marcos Police Department all reported that the majority of their residential burglaries occurred between the hours of 8 a.m. and 5:59 p.m., 72.6%, 70%, and 53% respectively. Between the hours of 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. the Hays County Sheriff's Office and the San Marcos Police Department had the largest number of residential burglaries occur between 12 noon and 2 p.m., 15.8% and 12.9% respectively. Between the hours and 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. the Kyle Police Department had the largest number of residential burglaries occur between the hours of 10 a.m. and 11:59 a.m. (26.7%). The San Marcos Police Department had an unusually high number of residential burglaries occur between 6 p.m. and 7:59 a.m. (47%) compared with to 27.4% for the Sheriff's Office and 30% for the Kyle Police. As the demographics indicate, the Kyle Police Department is a much smaller department and jurisdiction than the Hays County Sheriff's Office or the San Marcos Police Department. This could explain the differences with the some of the findings from the data analyzed.

Table 3. Time Increments When Residential Burglaries Occur

Time of Day	Hays County Sheriff's Office		San Marcos Police Department		Kyle Police Department	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
6 pm-7:59 am	40	27.4	62	47.0	9	30.0
8 am-9:59 am	20	13.7	13	9.8	3	10.0
10 am-11:59 am	21	14.4	14	10.6	8	26.7
12 noon-1:59 pm	23	15.8	17	12.9	3	10.0
2 pm-3:59 pm	15	10.3	12	9.1	6	20.0
4 pm-5:59 pm	27	18.5	14	10.6	1	3.3
Totals	146	100.0	132	100.0	30	100.0

In summary, of the data analyzed, all three agencies indicated that the majority of burglaries occur Monday through Friday. Based on the review of literature, this is probably due to the lack of guardianship of the residence due to work school and other routine activities that take the residents away from home during the week. As a general rule people are home during the weekends. The majority of residential burglaries occur between the hours of 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. in all three agencies studied.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In conclusion, it has been established in the review of literature that residential burglaries are one of the largest property crime issues facing local law enforcement today. In 1998 the FBI identified approximately 2.3 million burglaries in the United States. From those burglaries 862 out of 100,000 citizens were affected (Baker, 2001). Further complicating the problem is the fact that the majority of law enforcement agencies throughout the United States are small and operate with limited resources. Analyzing burglary data will allow smaller agencies to identify the time of the day and day of the week when burglaries occur thus saving their limited resources.

This paper studied all residential burglaries for the year 2006 from the Hays County Sheriff's Office, the San Marcos Police Department, and the Kyle Police Department as a way of addressing the research question: What time of the day and what day of the week do residential burglaries occur in Hays County, the City of San Marcos, and the City of Kyle? A total of 308 residential burglaries were studied, 146 from the Hays County Sheriff's Office, 132 from the San Marcos Police Department, and 30 from the Kyle Police Department. The data were examined and analyzed to determine the time of day and the day of the week that these residential burglaries occurred. It was thought that the majority of residential burglaries occur between the hour of 8 am and 4 pm Monday through Friday. This assumption is confirmed in a study done by Matthew

Robinson (Robinson, 2000) to determine if there was a relationship between non-occupancy of a residence and residential burglaries. Non-occupancy refers to indication to the residential burglar that no one is home also referred to as the absence of capable guardians (Malczewski & Poetz, 2004). The study indicated that unoccupied residences are more likely to be burglarized. Simply put, burglars do not want to be confronted by homeowners.

Crime analysis is an important and essential tool for law enforcement to plan and implement tactical plans to address residential burglaries. Crime analysis is defined “as a set of systematic, analytical processes directed at providing timely and pertinent information relative to crime patterns and trend correlations” (Statistics Program, 1995, 1). The majority of law enforcement agencies throughout the United States is small and has limited budgets. Crime analysis is a very important tool for these agencies to use in reducing criminal activity, assisting in criminal investigations, increasing arrests and stretching budgets.

Recommendations based on findings of this research for the Hays County Sheriff’s Office would include increased patrols on Tuesdays (23% of residential burglaries occur on Tuesdays) between the hours of 8 a.m. and 2 p.m. This is the day of the week and time span in which the majority of residential burglaries occur. It would also be recommended that during the remainder of the days of the week, particular attention be placed on the hours of 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. for residential patrol deployment. Recommendations for the San Marcos Police Department would also include increased patrols on Tuesdays between the hours of 8 a.m. and 2 p.m. Tuesday is the day of the week that the majority of residential burglaries occur in San Marcos. The Kyle Police

Department should increase their residential patrols on Mondays (30% of burglaries occur) between the hours of 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. Additionally, it would be recommended that the study be expanded to include all of the patrol districts of the agencies and the type of property taken during burglaries. The patrol district studies would allow agencies to identify the district with the greatest number of burglaries. These districts would be further analyzed to identify the time of day and day of the week that the residential burglaries occur. With this micro-examination even more resources could be conserved by narrowing the scope of the tactical operation.

Ultimately, it is extremely important that law enforcement administrators train their officers to be diligent in determining, to the best of their ability, the approximate time the burglary occurred and not reporting the occurrence as the time that the report was taken.

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