Executive Summary

ALCOHOL and CRIME in WYOMING

Wyoming Association of Sheriffs and Chiefs of Police
INTRODUCTION

The Wyoming Association of Sheriffs and Chiefs of Police has been collecting substance-related data from all persons booked into every county detention facilities in Wyoming since 2005.

To date, information has been collected from a total of 186,102 persons who were arrested and subsequently detained in a detention facility in Wyoming.

The Wyoming Association of Sheriffs and Chiefs of Police publish the results and analysis of the data-collection efforts each year in three separate reports.

The main report provides statewide statistics and averages, along with comparisons of county statistics in specific categories. An accompanying supplemental report provides county, community and local law enforcement agency specific statistics. This Executive Summary provides selected statistics, information and highlights from the main report.

These reports can be accessed online on the following websites: http://wascop.com and http://jandaconsulting.com

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Executive Summary highlights a few of the significant findings contained in the main report. It focuses on issues that are of obvious concern or which may be of greater interest to the general public.

However, a careful review of other relevant findings and statistics contained in the main body of this report is essential in order to gain a more complete perspective of the impact of alcohol on crime in Wyoming.
The profile of the average person taken to jail in Wyoming continues to be relatively consistent with previous years. About eight out of ten times it was a male (although females have increased incrementally in recent years, 23% this year), average age 36. 13.5% of the time it was an out-of-state visitor and 6.7% of the time it was an in-state visitor. Juvenile arrests resulting in detention in a detention facility accounted for less than 1% of the total custodial arrests (65 out of 15,881).

A review of the data collected from persons arrested and subsequently taken to jail indicates that Wyoming continues to be relatively safe from what is generally considered to be “serious” crime. The number of persons who are arrested for felonies are relatively low when compared to the number of persons arrested for minor crimes (misdemeanors). *Felony arrests accounted for 11.02% of the total arrests statewide.*

Although Wyoming is relatively “safe” from what is generally considered to be serious crime (felonies), the high percentage of alcohol-involved arrests, the inordinate number of arrests for public intoxication and driving under the influence, and the high levels of blood alcohol content for drivers arrested for being impaired represent real and significant threats to public safety.

The information collected from a total of 15,881 persons who were arrested and subsequently detained in a county detention facility in Wyoming during 2016 confirms what law enforcement officers who patrol the streets and highways and who respond to calls for service in Wyoming already know from experience – alcohol is the contributing factor most often present in situations that result in someone going to jail.
Alcohol and Crime in Wyoming - 2016

SUMMARY OF SUBSTANCE-INVOLVED ARREST STATISTICS FOR 2016:

- Alcohol was involved in 57.01% of all custodial arrests.
- Methamphetamine was involved in 8.48% of the 15,881 reported arrests.
- Marijuana was involved in 12.22% of all custodial arrests.
- Drugs were involved in 20.33% of the reported arrests.
- Arrests for public intoxication accounted for 12.86% of all arrests.
- The average blood alcohol content for persons arrested for public intoxication was 0.2317.
- Driving under the influence arrests accounted for 26.70% of all arrests.
The average reported blood alcohol content for DUI arrests statewide was 0.1591.¹

50% of persons arrested for DUI had a reported BAC level above 0.16 and 11% had a BAC of 0.24 or greater.

The average reported BAC for 562 persons who were arrested for DUI after being involved in a traffic crash was 0.1975.

The age group with the highest percentage of DUI arrests was age 21-25, followed by age 26-30 and 31-35.

---

¹ In Wyoming, a person driving with a blood alcohol content of 0.08 is legally presumed to be impaired.
To grasp the significance of the blood alcohol content statistics, it should be noted that a physically fit male who weighs 180 pounds would have to consume at least seven drinks in one hour to achieve a BAC of 0.15 – a female weighing 120 pounds would have to consume five drinks in one hour.

Please refer to the Alcohol Impairment Educational Guides for males and females in the Attachments Section of the main report for information about the level of impairment for other body weights and drinks consumed.

**EMERGING TRENDS**

**EMERGING TRENDS IN THE TYPE OF SUBSTANCE INVOLVED IN CRIME:**
Alcohol and/or other drugs were involved in 75% of the 15,881 custodial arrests in 2016.

Although alcohol-involved arrests continue to be the drug most often present in situations that result in someone going to jail, changing trends in the types of substance involvement in crime in Wyoming have recently emerged.

During the last seven years in which data is available for a calendar year period (2010-2016), the number and percentage of alcohol-involved arrests have decreased - while the number and percentage of other drug-involved arrests have increased.

The number of alcohol-involved arrests have decreased each year since 2010. Alcohol-involved arrests in 2016 were 4,545 fewer in number (a 33% decrease) than in 2010.

The number of other drug-involved arrests has increased each year since 2010 (except for one year). Drug-involved arrests were 1,437 more in number (an 80% increase) than in 2010. The number of
meth-involved arrests has increased each year since 2010 and has more than doubled during the last three years. There were 1,346 meth-involved arrests in 2016 (311 more than in 2015).

The Association began collecting marijuana-involved arrest data in March of 2014 to assess the impact on public safety in Wyoming from Colorado’s legalization of marijuana. Data collected thus far indicates an increase in the number and percentage of marijuana-involved arrests in 2016 – 12.22% for 2016 compared to 9.5% in 2015.

**TRENDS IN ARRESTS FOR IMPAIRED DRIVING:** The statistics for persons arrested for driving while impaired mirrors the recent trends for all substance-involved arrests. The percentage and number of persons arrested for driving impaired has decreased during each of the last seven years while the percentage for other drug-involvement for impaired driving arrests has increased.

And, the average blood alcohol content for persons arrested for impaired driving during the last seven years remains at double the presumptive level for impairment – while the average blood alcohol content for persons arrested for public intoxication remains at almost three times the presumptive level.

![DUI Arrests as a Percentage of All Arrests by County](image)

(Line indicates statewide percentage - 26.70%)
Alcohol and Crime in Wyoming - 2016

Substance-Involved Arrests: Number of Total Arrests

Alcohol Involved
- 2012: 13,213
- 2013: 12,638
- 2014: 11,143
- 2015: 9,470
- 2016: 9,054

Meth Involved
- 2012: 444
- 2013: 643
- 2014: 823
- 2015: 1,035
- 2016: 1,346

Drug Involved
- 2012: 1,745
- 2013: 2,146
- 2014: 2,261
- 2015: 2,498
- 2016: 3,229

Public Intoxication
- 2012: 4,601
- 2013: 4,241
- 2014: 3,501
- 2015: 2,965
- 2016: 2,677

DUI
- 2012: 4,761
- 2013: 4,353
- 2014: 4,216
- 2015: 3,757
- 2016: 3,729
Driving Under the Influence Arrests: 2012 - 2016

Drug Involvement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Arrests</th>
<th>% of Total Arrests</th>
<th>Average BAC</th>
<th>Drugs Involved</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>4,761</td>
<td>32.89%</td>
<td>0.156</td>
<td>2012 9.47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>4,353</td>
<td>29.60%</td>
<td>0.1556</td>
<td>2013 10.84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>4,216</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>0.1556</td>
<td>2014 11.43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>3,757</td>
<td>26.27%</td>
<td>0.1574</td>
<td>2015 13.49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>3,729</td>
<td>23.46%</td>
<td>0.1591</td>
<td>2016 16.55%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Drug Involvement:

- DUI Arrests
- Traffic Crashes

Alcohol and Crime in Wyoming: 2012-2016
PUBLIC CONCERNS

The statistics contained in this report identify significant public safety issues which merit further discussion, analysis and action by local law enforcement, citizens and state/community leaders.

The high percentage of alcohol involved arrests, the inordinate number of arrests for public intoxication and DUI and the high levels of BAC recorded for these individuals for public intoxication appear to validate the concerns about alcohol abuse expressed by Wyoming residents in the most recent statewide public opinion survey².

Some excerpts from the survey that involved 4,798 Wyoming residents:

- 79.7% view alcohol abuse by Wyoming adults as a serious or somewhat serious problem.
- When Wyoming residents were asked whether they would support a state law that would prohibit selling or serving alcohol to someone who is obviously intoxicated:
  - 64.3% strongly supported such a law
  - 17.9% somewhat supported such a law
- 84.5% of Wyoming residents believe that drinking and driving in their community is a serious or somewhat serious problem.

SIGNIFICANT STATISTICS AND FINDINGS

Listed below are a few of the noteworthy statewide averages and county specific alcohol-related statistics and findings from the Data/Statistics section of this report.

Alcohol was a factor in 57% of the custodial arrests in Wyoming.
- Counties with significantly higher statistics:
  - Teton – 89.03%
  - Sheridan – 73.46%
  - Fremont – 67.23%

² Wyoming Alcohol Use Issues Survey, Wyoming Survey & Analysis Center, November 2012
Alcohol and Crime in Wyoming - 2016

- Methamphetamine was involved in 8.48% of the arrests statewide.
  - Counties with significantly higher statistics:
    - Lincoln – 17.27%
    - Weston – 15.58%
    - Uinta – 14.05%

- “Other” drugs were involved in 20.33% of the reported arrests statewide.
  - Counties with significantly higher statistics:
    - Platte – 40.34%
    - Carbon – 39.04%
    - Lincoln – 34.89%

- Marijuana was involved in 12.22% of the arrests statewide.
  - Counties with significantly higher statistics:
    - Platte – 33.61%
    - Carbon – 26.58%
    - Converse – 22.09%

- Arrests for Public Intoxication accounted for 12.86% of all arrests statewide. (The statewide average does not include 729 persons who were admitted into the VOA Detox Center for public intoxication)
  - Counties with significantly higher statistics:
    - Fremont – 27.54%
    - Teton – 25.35%
    - Laramie – 21.74%

- The average blood alcohol content for all persons arrested for public intoxication was 0.2317.
  - Counties with significantly higher statistics:
    - Goshen – 0.3090
    - Carbon – 0.2891
    - Sheridan – 0.2483

- Driving under the influence (DUI) arrests accounted for 23.46% of all arrests statewide.
  - Counties with significantly higher statistics:
    - Teton – 48.73%
    - Campbell – 45.30%
    - Big Horn – 43.93%  Sheridan – 43.85%

- 16.55% of the arrests for DUI involved drugs.
  - Counties with significantly higher statistics:
    - Carbon – 33.33%
    - Big Horn – 21.91%
    - Lincoln – 24.10%

- 50% of persons arrested for DUI had an average blood alcohol content above 0.16.
The analysis of the data collected by the Wyoming Association of Sheriffs and Chiefs of Police and the printing of this report was made possible through the assistance of grant funds received from the Wyoming Department of Transportation – Highway Safety Program. The project was managed by Johnson and Associates of Douglas, Wyoming. This report was authored by Ernest L. Johnson, Director of Services.