

Cost of Crime

During 1996, losses estimated at nearly \$500 million were attributed to robberies. The value of property stolen averaged \$929 per robbery, up from \$873 in 1995. Average dollar losses in 1996 ranged from \$487 taken during robberies of gas or service stations to \$4,207 per bank robbery. (*Federal Bureau of Investigation, (released September 28, 1997). Crime in the United States, Uniform Crime Reports, 1996, p. 27. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice.*)

The dollar value of property stolen in connection with property crimes in 1996 was estimated at over \$15 billion. The average loss per offense in 1996 was \$1,274, slightly more than the 1995 figure of \$1,251. (*Ibid., p. 36*)

In 1996, larceny-theft offenses accounted for 67 percent of all property crime. Burglary accounted for 21 percent and motor vehicle theft for 12 percent. (*Ibid., p. 36*)

Based on information from 11,250 law enforcement agencies, nearly 77,000 arson offenses were reported in 1996. The average dollar loss of property damaged due to reported arsons was \$10,280. (*Ibid., p. 36*)

Violent crime (including drunk driving and arson) accounts for \$426 billion annually, and property crime accounts for \$24 billion. (*Miller, T. R., Cohen, M. A., & Wiersema, B. (1996, February). Victim Costs and Consequences: A New Look. Washington, DC: National Institute of Justice, U.S. Department of Justice.*)

Overall, rape has the highest annual victim costs at \$127 billion per year (excluding child sex abuse), followed by assault at \$93 billion, murder (excluding arson and drunk driving) at \$61 billion, and child abuse at

\$56 billion. (*Ibid.*)

Personal crime is estimated to cost \$105 billion annually in medical costs, lost earnings and public program costs related to victim assistance. When pain, suffering, and the reduced quality of life are assessed, the costs of personal crime increases to an estimated \$450 billion annually. Violent crime results in lost wages equivalent to one percent of American earnings. (*Ibid.*)

As much as 10 to 20 percent of mental health care expenditures in the United States may be attributable to crime, primarily for victims treated as a result of their victimization. These estimates do not include any treatment for perpetrators of violence. (*Ibid.*)

Four out of five gunshot victims are on public assistance or uninsured, costing taxpayers an estimated 4.5 billion dollars a year. (*U.S. News and World Report, July 1, 1996.*)

Violent crime causes three percent of U.S. medical spending and 14 percent of injury-related medical spending. (*Ibid.*)

Insurers pay \$45 billion annually due to crime - roughly \$265 per American adult. The U.S. government pays \$8 billion annually for restorative and emergency services to victims, plus perhaps one-fourth of the \$11 billion in health insurance payments. (*Ibid.*)

Note: OVC makes no representation concerning the accuracy of data from non-Department of Justice sources.