

2013 crime rate second lowest since 1972

Oak Park's 2013 crime rate was the second lowest in the last 41 years, according to data compiled by the Police Department under the state's Uniform Crime Reporting Index.

Police investigated 1,798 crimes in 2013, down 9 percent from the 1,967 crimes reported in 2012 and far below Oak Park's crime rates in the 1980s and 1990s that often were nearly double last year's rate.

Acknowledging that Oak Park data likely reflects the overall decline in crime nationally, Police Chief Rick C. Tanksley said he firmly believes that the combination of an engaged citizenry and professional, dedicated officers set Oak Park apart from other communities and has played a significant role in the declining local crime rate.

In addition, he said, the use of crime data analysis to identify and strategically address emerging trends has led to quick Police response times to calls for service and solving crimes at rates above the national average.

Burglaries and thefts continued to represent the vast majority of all crimes committed in Oak Park in 2013. These two categories alone comprised nearly 90 percent of all 2013 crimes, with garages as burglars' most frequent targets, Police say.

The 85 robberies reported in 2013 — down from the 99 reported in 2012 — were the lowest number of robberies since 1972, the earliest year for which comparable data are available.

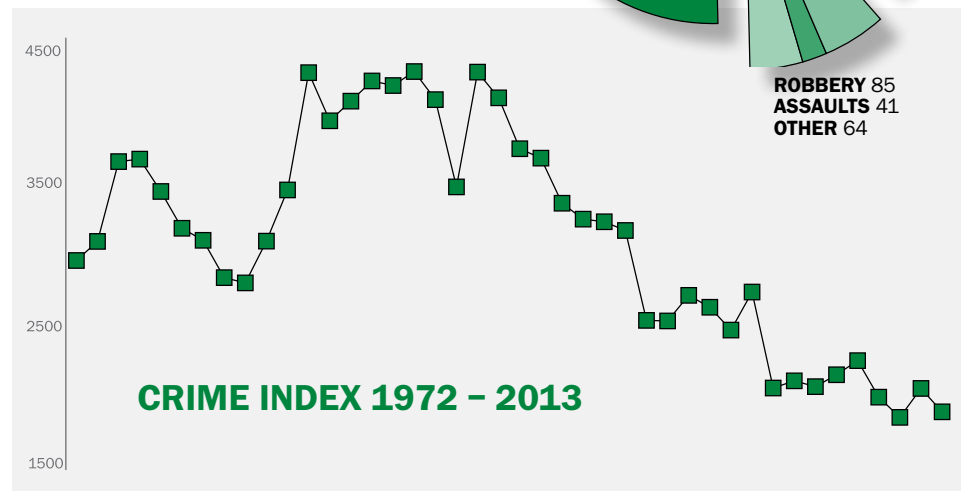
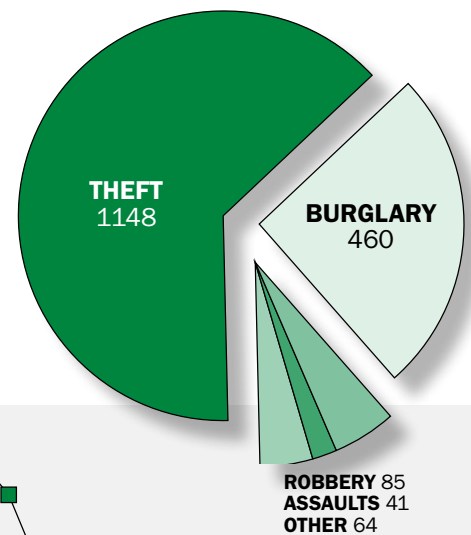
Arrests were down in 2013, according to the data, likely reflecting the decline in the overall crime rate. Police made 224 arrests in 2013 compared to 296 in 2012. Nearly three quarters of the arrests were for burglaries, thefts and assaults.

Here's a brief summary of crime in Oak Park during 2013:

- **Thefts**, typically crimes of opportunity, remained the single largest category of crimes reported in Oak Park. Some 1,148 thefts were reported in 2013, compared to 1,341 in 2012, a decrease of 14 percent.
- **Burglary** continued to be the second largest single crime category, with 460 cases reported in 2013, compared to 426 in 2012. In more than a third of the residential burglaries and nearly two-thirds of the garage burglaries entry was via an unlocked door or window.
- **Robberies**, a crime police say often affects the public's perception of safety, continued a downward trend evident over the past several years. Police investigated 85 robberies in 2013, compared to 99 in 2012, 107 in 2011 and 133 in 2010.
- No **homicides** occurred in 2013.
- Five **criminal sexual assaults** were reported in 2013, the same as in 2012. In all five cases the offender was known to the victim.
- **Aggravated assault/battery** cases were unchanged in 2013 from 2012, with 36. In the majority of these cases, offenders knew their victims.

- Five **arsons** were reported in 2013, up from three in 2012. In four of the five cases the affected party refused to cooperate. An arrest was made in the fifth incident.
 - Police responded to 33,155 **calls for service** in 2013, compared to 33,521 in 2012. The average response time in 2013 was three minutes and 39 seconds for high priority calls; four minutes and 42 seconds for medium-priority calls such as accidents with no injuries; and six minutes and 20 seconds for low-priority calls
- For more information on Oak Park's community policing programs, visit www.oak-park.us/police.

CRIMES REPORTED 2013



2013 by the numbers: A closer look at municipal service delivery

With only 4.5 square miles and 52,000 residents, many would say Oak Park is a small town. But the municipal services that make our community such a great place to live, work and do business are anything but small.

Oak Park has more than 100 miles of Village-owned streets, nearly 20,000 parkway trees, 7,000 lighting fixtures, 105 miles of water mains and some 4,000 public parking spaces.

Services are delivered by a workforce of about 350 full-time workers who bring a wide range of formal education, experience and expertise to their jobs.

Though employees are assigned to different departments, and the jobs performed vary, all have the common mission of serving the many needs of the residents of Oak Park. So how did they do in 2013? Here's a snapshot of some of the activities from the year just ended...



33,155
calls for Police Service — average response time of three minutes and 39 seconds to 10,848 high-priority calls

14,760
citizen contacts for fire and safety public education

6,016
fire, alarm and emergency medical service calls answered — average response time of four minutes and 53 seconds



14,168,205
gallons of water saved with grant-funded low-flow toilet rebates and water saver kits distributed

21,166
construction and property inspections performed

6,984
building permits issued

4,055
major building plans reviewed

40
requests for changes to historic properties reviewed



\$273,693
saved by diverting 42 percent of all refuse collected from landfills

144,852
pounds of electronics collected for recycling from 1,992 participants

5,581
tons of recyclables collected

2,534
pounds of used clothing and paper collected for recycling from 648 households

1,162
tons of yard waste composted

532
tons of garbage hauled away



20,058
service requests answered by the Public Works Department

14,900
repairs made in-house to Village vehicles and equipment

10.5
miles of streets micro-paved

3.5
miles of streets paved

1.5
miles of streets completely rebuilt

7
miles of sewer main cleaned and video inspected

1.06
miles of water mains installed



\$320,491
in public health grants received

3,368
properties given West Nile Virus and rodent education pamphlets

1,241
health inspections performed, including restaurants, swimming pools and child, adult and long-term care facilities

397
health complaints investigated, including for smoking, noise and animal issues

285
home visits by public health nurses



\$5,295,455
in sales taxes generated by local businesses (January – November)

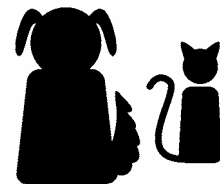
1,725
business licenses issued, including for 101 new businesses



3,792
trees trimmed

654
trees removed

453
trees planted



3,000
animal licenses issued

337
animals impounded

73
wildlife traps loaned — 48 wildlife captured



1,061,589
Village website page views by 248,219 unique visitors. Most popular pages are related to parking.

63,000
views of 200 original VOP-TV videos on Village YouTube channel

4,004
Village Facebook fans

3,716
Technology support requests from municipal workers

2,479
Village Twitter feed followers

1,635
e-news list serve subscribers

605
requests for information processed under the Illinois Freedom of Information Act



\$1,756,189
federal and county grants distributed to help low- and moderate-income residents and the homeless.

4,472
local ordinance and parking citations administratively adjudicated at Village Hall

718
community relations issues addressed, including tenant/landlord disputes and neighbor conflicts

529
block party packets distributed

370
multi-family dwelling licenses issued

Earth Fest seeking sponsors

Sponsors are now being sought for the Village's fifth annual celebration of green living — Earth Fest — scheduled for Sat., April 26, in the LEED® Gold-certified Public Works Center, 201 South Blvd. Sponsors not only receive special recognition in event promotional materials, they also help move the community forward toward the important goal of living sustainably. Earth Fest celebrates green living by encouraging and educating people on how to live more sustainably to support a healthier planet. This year's event will again feature booths for recycling eyeglasses, sun glasses, hearing aids, rechargeable batteries, cell phones and old blue jeans. Sponsors earn the opportunity to not only educate but also to engage and empower people to make healthier choices for themselves, their families and the planet. Sponsorships range from \$125 to \$1,000. A sponsorship form is posted at www.oak-park.us/earthfest. For more information, call 708.358.5778 or email sustainability@oak-park.us.

Block party application cycle begins

Applications for block parties are now being accepted. Some weekends fill quickly so events should be planned early to ensure preferred dates. Block party information and an application packet are posted online at www.oak-park.us. Call 708.358.5700 for details. Residents also can join a block party information mailing list by sending an email to clerk@oak-park.us — be sure to include your name, telephone and the block you represent.

Planning a block party? Know the rules

- **Use a north-south block.** Due to public safety and traffic considerations, block parties are not allowed on east-west streets.
- **Make sure emergency vehicles can get through if needed.** Tables, chairs or other items should not project more than six feet from the curb. And don't park cars, stretch wires, ropes, nets, lights, banners or other items across the street.
- **Supervise children at all times.** Even though the street may be closed, accidents can happen.
- **Do not plan a party for an alley.** Alleys provide important access for utility companies and other services.
- **Keep sidewalks clear.** Sidewalks are public ways that may not be obstructed even during a block party.
- **If alcohol is present, keep it on private property.** Alcohol may not be sold.

Citizen volunteers always needed

When it comes to citizen involvement in the process of making public policy, few communities can match the opportunities offered in Oak Park, where volunteers serve on nearly 20 separate advisory boards, commissions and committees. As part-time lawmakers, the Village president and trustees rely on the boards and commissions to do much of the investigative work associated with particular issues. These citizen volunteers conduct in-depth studies, evaluate research and hold meetings that create the public record so critical to Village Board actions. A varied group of volunteers is sought to represent the Village's diversity, and renters as well as homeowners are encouraged to apply. For more information on volunteering, visit www.oak-park.us/volunteer, call 708.358.5670 or email clerk@oak-park.us.

First-time homebuyer seminars set

Individuals interested in learning more about buying a home and securing a mortgage are invited to attend free seminars offered at 7 p.m., on the fourth Tuesday of every month in Village Hall, 123 Madison St. For more information, call the West Cook Homeownership Center at 708.771.5801.

Voter registration deadline nears

Oak Parkers planning to vote in the March 18 general primary election — including many 17-year-olds — have until Tues., Feb. 18 to register. Voter registration is offered from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday at Village Hall, 123 Madison St. Voter registration also is available at Oak Park Township, 105 S. Oak Park Ave. Voter registration requires two types of identification, at least one with the current address. A driver's license or picture ID is preferred, along with an additional item such as a lease or utility bill. For the first time in Illinois, Illinoisans born on or before Nov. 4, 1996 can register and vote in the March 18 primary because they will turn 18 by the Nov. 4 General election. The upcoming primary will include office of Illinois Governor. Visit cookcountyclerk.com to learn more about voting at 17, verify voter registration, identify polling places and review candidates on your ballot.

Recycle that old carpet



In an effort to provide a green disposal solution, the Village has teamed up with Indianapolis-based Heritage Recycling LLC to provide curb-side collection and recycling of used carpet and padding. The pilot program launched last year is similar to the yard and bulk waste sticker programs currently offered. Stickers cost \$2 each and can be purchased at the Cashier's Office

in Village Hall, 123 Madison St. Carpet and padding must be cut or folded into rolls no larger than four feet long and not exceeding 50 pounds each. The rolls must be free of tape, tack strips, nails, knife blades, wet glue and debris, and placed in a dry location such as on or under a porch or in a garage. Pickup is scheduled by calling the telephone number or visiting the web site listed on the sticker. Each roll requires three stickers. The discarded carpet and pad are recycled and turned into new products or used as a fuel source. For more information about this and other recycling opportunities, call 708.358.5700 or publicworks@oak-park.us.

Park District News

Fox Park plan review – The Park District of Oak Park will conduct a community meeting at 7 p.m., Tues., Feb. 18 to review the current master plan for Fox Park and to collect input regarding updates to this plan. The meeting will be held at Fox Center, 640 S. Oak Park Ave. Visit www.pdop.org to review the current site plan or for more details.

Summer camp open house – Learn what day camps will be available this summer from the Park District of Oak Park at *Campapalooza*, a summer camp open house scheduled for 2 to 4 p.m., Sun., Feb. 16 at Longfellow Center, 610 S. Ridgeland Ave. The event will feature information on traditional day camps, sports camps, half-day programs, specialty camps and early childhood programs. For more details visit www.pdop.org/camps.

Down payment assistance offered

The West Cook County Housing Collaborative is making homeownership more affordable with \$10,000 in down payment assistance for select updated and rehabbed homes. Financing and the supply of homes is limited. Call 708.771.5801 to set up an application appointment. An application form also is available at www.westcookhomeownership.org.






Clip and Save

Who to Call

Dial Direct (area code 708)

Village Hall	oak-park.us
TTY	711
Adjudication	358.5479
Building and Property Standards	358.5430
Schedule an inspection	option 1
Review status check	option 2
Report property condition	option 3
Speak with an inspector	option 4
Community Planning	358.5420
Historic Preservation	358.5417
Zoning	358.5449
Business Services	358.5648
Housing	358.5410
Community Relations	358.5405
Graffiti Hotline	358.5429
Neighborhood Programs	358.5405
Finance	358.5460
Utility Billing Inquiries	358.5478
Fire (nonemergency)	358.5600
Human Resources	358.5650
Job Hotline	358.5650
Police (nonemergency)	386.3800
Crime Tip Hotline	434.1636
Public Health	358.5480
Animal Control	358.5680
Public Works	358.5700
Parking	358.7275
Day Parking Passes	option 3
Extended Pass	option 4
Night Parking Pass	option 2
Parking Permits	option 5
Snow Hotline	option 1
Vehicle Stickers	option 5
Village Board	358.5784
Village Clerk	358.5670
Village Manager's Office	358.5770
EMERGENCIES	911
Park District	www.pdop.org
Administration	725.2017
Customer Service	725.2000
Building & Grounds	725.2050
Business Operations	725.2015
Public Library	www.oppl.org
Main Library	383.8200
Maze Branch	386.4751
Dole Branch	386.9032
School District 97	www.op97.org
Administration	524.3000
School District 200	www.oprfhs.org
Administration	434.3107
Township	www.oakparktownship.org
Senior Services	383.8060
Youth Services	445.2727
General Assistance	383.8005
Assessor Services	383.8005

Stay connected...

-  oak-park.us
-  facebook.com/vopnews
-  twitter.com/vopnews
-  pinterest.com/oakparkil
-  youtube.com/vopnews

Nominations sought for public health awards

Nominations now are being accepted for an annual award that honors those who made exceptional contributions to improving the health of Oak Parkers during 2013. The nomination deadline is 5 p.m., Fri., March 21. The Oak Park Department of Public Health will honor those individuals and organizations with the William Fitzsimmons Award during 2014 Public Health Week, April 7-13. A nomination form is posted at www.oak-park.us. Forms also are available at Village Hall, 123 Madison St. Completed forms should be mailed to or dropped off at the Oak Park Department of Public Health, Village Hall, 123 Madison St., Oak Park, IL 60302, Attn: Public Health Awards. Nominations also may be sent via email to health@oak-park.us. Nominations submitted via email should include responses to all fields listed in the original nomination form. The Fitzsimmons Award is named for local physician and humanitarian William Fitzsimmons who served as the Health Department's medical consultant from 1976 to 1992. For more information on the awards program, call 708.358.5480 or email health@oak-park.us.



Pet owners required to pick up

Dog owners are required to pick up and dispose of dog waste. Owners walking their dogs must carry a bag or other suitable means to pick up dog waste. Dogs also are required to be on a leash no longer than eight feet. Call 708.358.5680 to register a complaint about an animal, such as noise, excrement, cruelty or off leash.

Plan for parking when it snows

Residents who rely on on-street parking are urged to monitor local forecasts and plan accordingly when snow is predicted. The Village has specific rules that govern parking when it snows — rules that are enforced seven days a week, including holidays — to ensure streets can be properly plowed. When a snow emergency is declared by the Public Works Department, all parking is prohibited on the main streets posted as snow routes. Parking on other streets is restricted to one side from 8 a.m. until 10 p.m. in residential areas and from midnight to 8 a.m. in designated commercial districts, the side determined by the odd/even date. To find out if snow-related parking restrictions are in effect, call 708.358.SNOW (7669) for a recorded message. Cable television subscribers can tune into VOP-TV, broadcast on Comcast channel 6 and AT&T channel 99. The snow emergency parking rules and a list of frequently asked questions also are posted at www.oak-park.us/snow.

Sidewalk shoveling required...Property owners who shovel their sidewalks are doing more than making it safer for pedestrians of all ages, they are complying with the law. Village ordinance requires snow and ice to be removed from the public sidewalk within 24 hours following any snow, sleet or freezing rain. Being a good neighbor is important, too, so property owners are urged to assist those who may need help clearing a sidewalk. For more information call 708.358.5700 or email publicworks@oakpark.us.



Warming centers available...Anyone needing relief from the cold can visit a local warming center, including Village Hall, 123 Madison St. West Suburban Medical Center, 3 Erie Court, is open from 5:30 a.m. – 8:30 p.m., and Rush Oak Park Hospital, 520 S. Maple Ave. from 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m. Both hospitals are open seven days a week and hours may be extended when weather conditions warrant. Village Hall is open from 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. To find out if the warming center is open after hours, call West Suburban Hospital at 708.383.6200, Rush Oak Park Hospital at 708.660.2211 or Village Hall at 708.383.6400. Oak Park Township is open to persons with disabilities and seniors — call 708.383.8005 for details. If transportation is needed, call the Oak Park Police Department's non-emergency number 708.386.3800.

One Earth Film Festival returns

This year's One Earth Film Festival will feature 30 environmental documentaries including *GMO OMG*, *More Than Honey*, *Harmony*, *Jens Jensen: The Living Green* and *Revolution*. Now in its third year, the festival, set for March 7 – 9, will bring



screen environmental films at multiple locations around Chicago and the near west suburbs of Oak Park, River Forest and Forest Park. Confirmed screening venues include University of Illinois at Chicago, Roosevelt University, Triton College, Dominican University, Oak Park Public Library, River Forest Public Library, Lake Theatre, The Nineteenth Century Club, First United Church, Holly Court Terrace and The Brown Cow Ice Cream Parlor. The Festival is a production of Green Community Connections, a grass-roots organization devoted to creating a sustainable future in the Chicago metropolitan area.

To learn more about the film festival visit www.greencommunityconnections.org.



Village of Oak Park
Village President Anan Abu-Taleb
Trustees
 Peter Barber
 Glenn Brewer
 Adam Salzman
 Ray Johnson
 Bob Tucker
Village Clerk Teresa Powell
Village Manager Cara Pavlicek

Residential Customer Local
 Oak Park, Illinois

Postal Carrier
 Pre-Sort

Permit No. 26
 Oak Park, IL
PAID
 U.S. Postage
 Standard
 Presort



Village of Oak Park
 Village Hall
 123 Madison Street
 Oak Park, Illinois 60302-4272



February at the Conservatory

The Oak Park Conservatory, 615 Garfield St., offers a wide range of programs for kids, families and avid gardeners. The Conservatory is open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday and 2 to 4 p.m. Monday. Here are a few of the upcoming events and activities:



Happy bird day celebration...Join a happy bird day open-house celebration with George, the Conservatory's resident yellow-headed Amazon parrot from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Sun., March 2. The free family event will include educational activities such as exploring a tropical rain forest and other eco-climates. Call 708.725.2400 or visit www.fopcon.org for details.

Advanced gardening...The Oak Park Conservatory, 615 Garfield St., offers a variety of winter workshops approved for continuing education credit by University of Illinois Extension-Cook County Master Gardeners. Classes include terrarium construction, advanced terrarium building, worm composting,

vegetable gardening, seed starting and beekeeping. Visit www.pdop.org for more information.

Counting birds...Examine the roles birds play in the environment from 10 a.m. to noon every Saturday in February as the Conservatory is transformed into an aviary.

Build a succulent garden...Learn about cacti and succulents, see how simple they are to grow and nurture and create a garden to take home. The class is scheduled for 9:30 to 11:30 a.m., Mon., Feb. 17. Fee is \$26 for residents and \$39 for non-residents. Register for classes at www.oakparkconservatory.org

Toddler exploration...Parents with toddlers are invited to explore the wonders of nature from 10:30 to 11:15 a.m., Fri., Feb. 21. Space is limited to 15 children and their caregivers. Call 708.725.2400 for more details.

Second Sunday tour...Azaleas, cyclamens and cinnarias will be featured at this month's docent-led tour from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m., Sun. Feb. 9. Tickets are \$5 for adults, \$3 for seniors and \$2 for children. To reserve a space, call 708.725.2461.

Carbon monoxide detectors save lives

An investment of about \$30 for a detector can be the difference in life and death when it comes to deadly carbon monoxide, an odorless and tasteless gas that can leak into one's home from a malfunctioning gas appliance, such as a furnace or water heater. Because it is impossible to see, taste or smell the toxic fumes, CO can kill before you are aware it is in your home. That's why state law requires homeowners and landlords to install carbon monoxide detectors within 15 feet of every room used for sleeping. Alarms can be battery powered, plug-in with battery backup or wired into the AC power line with a secondary battery backup. The alarm can be combined with a smoke detector if the unit complies with established standards and the alarm differentiates the hazard. The property owner must supply and install all required alarms. Landlords must ensure that alarms are operable on the date a lease is initiated. While tenants are responsible for testing and maintaining the alarm after the lease commences, landlords must provide written instructions. Carbon monoxide detectors are not substitutes for smoke detectors, fire officials caution, so both devices are essential. For more information, call 708.445.3300 or email fire@oak-park.us.