

Crime rate continued downward trend through 2015

Oak Park's crime rate continued to decline in 2015, an overall trend that has been underway with only a few exceptions for several decades, according to data compiled by the Police Department under the state's *Uniform Crime Reporting Index*.

Police investigated 1,568 crimes in 2015, down 6 percent from the 1,665 crimes reported in 2014 and far below Oak Park's crime rates in the 1980s and early 1990s that often were nearly double last year's rate.

Police Chief Rick C. Tanksley credited the combination of an engaged citizenry and professional, dedicated officers with playing a significant role in the continued decline in the 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 2015. These two categories alone comprised nearly 90 percent of all 2015 crimes, with garages as burglars' most frequent targets, Police say.

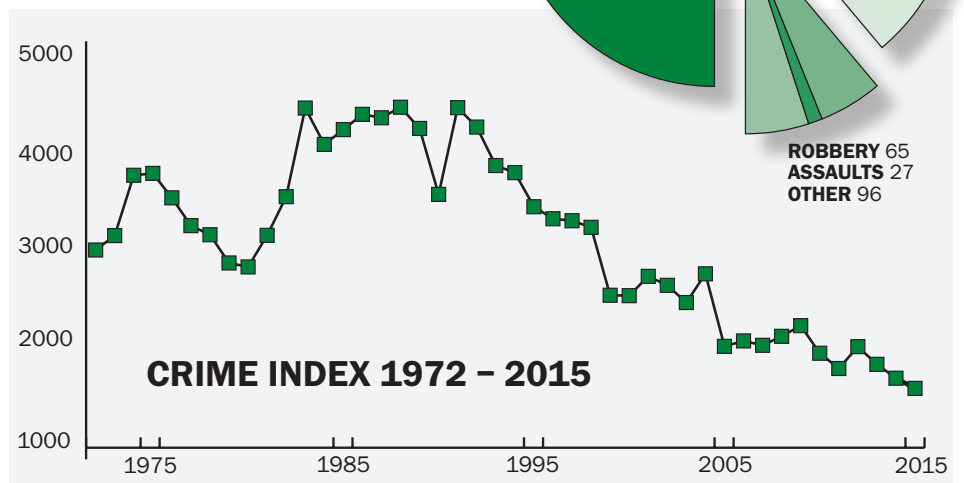
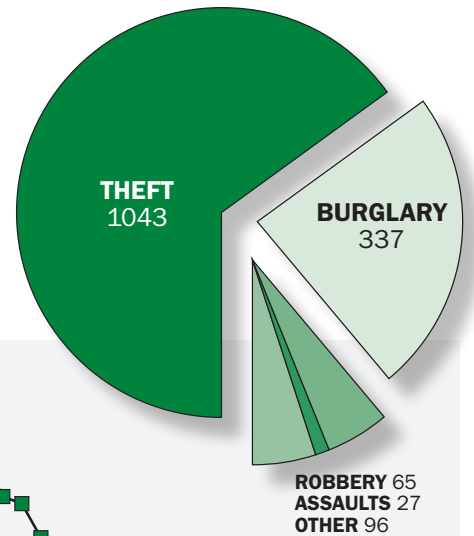
The 65 robberies reported in 2015 – down from the 83 reported in 2014 – were the lowest number of robberies since 1972, the earliest year for which comparable data are available.

Increases occurred in three of the eight crime categories compiled under the standardized reporting index. The 21 assault/battery reports in 2015 compared to 15 in 2014; six criminal sexual assaults in 2015 compared to five in 2014; and 92 motor vehicle thefts in 2015 compared to 75 in 2014.

Mini vans have become an increasingly favorite target of car

See the
Crime Data Summary
inside this issue

CRIMES REPORTED



Don't hesitate to call 911

Oak Park Police rely on residents taking an active role. If you see unusual activity, suspicious people or vehicles in your neighborhood, don't hesitate to call 911 immediately. For more information visit www.oak-park.us/police.

thieves over the past few years, police say.

Police made 164 arrests in 2015 compared to 155 in 2014. Nearly 80 percent of the arrests were for burglaries and thefts.

Battling the perception of crime even as the rate declines is among the biggest challenges police face,

according to Chief Tanksley. He said that's why the Oak Park Police Department continually strives to help residents feel safe by providing them the information they need to play a vital role in local crime-fighting initiatives.

For more information on Oak Park's community policing programs, visit www.oak-park.us/police.

2015 By the Numbers: A 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,

104 miles of water mains, 110 miles of sewer 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.

From a highly trained and motivated police force focused on neighborhoods to firefighter-paramedics who routinely

eclipse national emergency response times, Oak Park's public safety programs rival those of much larger communities.

The Village's public works programs are the core of municipal services. They pump the water, maintain the streets, plow the snow, keep the traffic signals operating, trim the trees and keep a fleet of nearly 250 traditional, hybrid, compressed natural gas and bio-diesel fueled vehicles

running smoothly.

One of only a handful certified by the state, the Health Department keeps our restaurants clean, pets licensed, childcare facilities safe and the community prepared for emergencies.

Other municipal services nurture business investment, foster diversity, plan for future development, manage thousands of parking spaces and protect

the historic housing stock, one of Oak Park's most valuable assets.

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 2015? Here's snapshot of some of their activities from the year just ended...



PROTECTING THE PUBLIC

- 34,529** calls for Police Service
- 5,849** citizen contacts for fire and safety public education, including CPR classes
- 4,788** fire, alarm and emergency medical service calls
- 3,046** tons of salt spread during 25 separate snow events
- 5,620** trees trimmed, 799 removed and 545 planted
- 1,003** health inspections performed
- 552** health complaints investigated
- 16** fire hydrants repaired and five replaced



SERVING THE COMMUNITY

- \$1,677,679** in federal and county grants distributed to help low- and moderate-income residents and the homeless
- 23,339** service requests answered by the Public Works Department
- 7,941** local ordinance and parking citations administratively adjudicated at Village Hall
- 2,862** animals licensed
- 3,500** hours contributed by 145 volunteers on 19 advisory boards, committees and commissions
- 2,032** community relations issues addressed, including tenant/landlord disputes and neighbor conflicts
- 743** rental dwelling licenses issued
- 680** requests processed under the Illinois Freedom of Information Act
- 462** graffiti hits removed
- 440** block party packet requests processed
- 427** animals rescued
- 63** meetings of the Village Board and its committees — more than 550 issues of public policy deliberated
- 49** nuisance wildlife traps loaned



IMPROVING THE VILLAGE

- 25,280** feet of curbs painted
- 5,000** potholes patched with 230 tons of asphalt
- 1,378** feet of new sewer main installed
- 1,408** sidewalk squares replaced
- 1,024** street lamps replaced
- 686** street signs replaced
- 623** feet of new water mains installed
- 279** ADA ramps upgraded
- 25** alley segments reconstructed
- 3.72** miles of sewer mains cleaned and video inspected — 36 tons of sediment removed
- 4.61** miles of streets micro-paved
- 4.6** miles of streets rebuilt and resurfaced
- 1.5** miles of new dedicated bicycle lanes and 3.38 miles of new shared bike lanes installed



SUSTAINING THE ENVIRONMENT

- 10,875,000** gallons of water saved with grant-funded low-flow toilet rebates and water saver kits distributed
- \$252,707** in disposal fees saved by diverting 44 percent of all residential waste from landfills
- 129,713** pounds of electronics collected for recycling from 2,827 participants
- 22,508** pounds of used paint, clothing and paper collected from 881 households for recycling
- 10,286** tons of garbage hauled away
- 4,944** tons of household recyclables collected
- 1,596** tons of yard waste and food scraps composted, including from the 965 households and 18 institutions participating in a food scrap collection program



GROWING THE TAX BASE

- \$5,422,281** sales taxes generated by local businesses (January –November)
- 11,513** property and construction inspections performed
- 6,744** building-related permits issued
- 6,016** construction plans reviewed
- 1,255** business licenses issued, including for 86 new businesses
- 73** historic preservation property renovation requests reviewed



COMMUNICATING INFORMATION

- 1,437,791** website page views. Most popular pages related to parking, online services, Police, recycling and the Farmers' Market
- 125,281** minutes of original VOP-TV programming viewed on Village YouTube channel, representing 74,245 views.
- 5,765** Village Facebook fans
- 4,273** Village Twitter feed followers
- 2,527** enews list serve subscribers

2015 Crime Data Summary

- **Thefts**, typically crimes of opportunity, remained the single largest category of crimes reported in Oak Park. Some 1,043 thefts were reported in 2015, compared to 1,088 in 2014, a 4-percent decrease.
- **Burglary** continued to be the second largest single crime category, with 337 cases reported in 2015, compared to 395 in 2014. In nearly half of the residential burglaries and nearly three-quarters 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 65 robberies in 2015, compared to 83 in 2014, 85 in 2013 and 99 in 2012.
- No **homicides** occurred in 2015. A homicide has not occurred in Oak Park since 2012.
- Six **criminal sexual assaults** were reported in 2015, compared to five in 2014. In five of the 2015 cases, the victim knew the offender. An evidence-based arrest was made in the sixth case.
- Twenty-one **aggravated assault/battery** cases were reported in 2015, compared to 15 in 2014. In many of these cases, victims knew their offenders. Other cases involved police officers, hospital emergency workers, traffic altercations and patrons on a train and at a gas station.
- Four **arsons** were reported in 2015, the same as in 2014. None were significant.
- Police responded to **34,529 calls for service** in 2015, compared to 32,651 in 2014.

Crime tips

Report suspicious activity anonymously to the Police Crime Tip Hot Line 708.434.1636 or online at www.oak-park.us/crimetip.

Block party application cycle begins

Applications for block parties are now being accepted. Some weekends fill quickly so plan early to ensure preferred dates. Block party information and an application packet are posted online at www.oak-park.us/forms. Call 708.358.5700 for details. If you are planning a block party, please follow these 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.

Early voting offered at Village Hall

Suburban Cook County residents can cast an early ballot for the March 15 Presidential Primary Election from Feb. 29 through March 14 at Village Hall, 123 Madison St. Early voting hours will be 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays and Saturdays, and 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Sundays. Village Hall also is a grace-period site for new registration. Grace-period registrants must cast their ballots at the time of registration. Valid photo identification is required to register and when not voting in your precinct. Valid forms of ID include a current driver's license, state-issued ID card, university/college ID or other government-issued ID with a photograph. All Illinois citizens who will be 18 by November 8, 2016, may register and vote in this primary election. For more information, including details on registering and requesting an absentee ballot online, visit www.cookcountyclerk.com/elections. Call 708.358.5670 or email clerk@oak-park.us for more local information.

Life-saving CPR/AED classes offered

The Oak Park Fire Department offers a variety of life-saving classes including CPR and training in how to use an automated external defibrillator, or AED. Classes are held from 6 to 10 p.m. at the Fire Department's certified American Heart Association community training center in the main station, 100 N. Euclid Ave. All courses are taught by an AHA-certified instructor. Classes are \$25 for Oak Park residents and \$50 for nonresidents, plus a \$12 textbook fee. The Healthcare provider course is \$40 for residents and \$60 for non-residents, plus a \$12 textbook fee if required. Payment must be made by check, money order or cash in exact amount. In-person registration is required. Class size is limited to eight students for infant/child classes and nine students for all other classes. The 2016 class schedule is posted online at www.oak-park.us/cpr. For more information, call 708.358.5605 or email cpr@oak-park.us.

One Earth Film Festival returns

This year's One Earth Film Festival will once again feature a wide range of documentaries intended to foster understanding of climate change, sustainability and the power of people to make a difference. Now in its fifth year, the festival, set for March 4 through 6, will screen films at multiple locations around Chicago and the near west suburbs of Oak Park, River Forest and Forest Park. Most films are free and open to the public. More information is posted at www.oneearthfilmfest.org.

Clip and Save

Who to Call

Dial Direct (area code 708)

Village Hall	oak-park.us
TTY	711
Adjudication	358.5479
Development Customer Services	358.5420
Business Services	358.5425
Neighborhood Services	358.5410
Housing	option 1
CDBG	option 2
Property complaints	option 3
Permits & Inspections	358.5430
Planning	358.5440
General questions	option 1
Historic Preservation	option 2
Zoning	option 3
Finance	358.5460
Utility Billing Inquiries	358.5478
Fire (nonemergency)	358.5600
Human Resources	358.5650
Job Hotline	358.5650
Mayor & Trustees	358.5784
Police (nonemergency)	386.3800
Crime Tip Hotline	434.1636
Public Health	358.5480
Animal Control	358.5680
Public Works	358.5700
Parking	358.7275
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	383.0700

Township	www.oakparktownship.org
Senior Services	383.8060
Youth Services	445.2727
General Assistance	383.8005
Assessor Services	383.8005
Mental Health Board	358.8855

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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 to ensure streets can be properly plowed. When snowfall exceeds two inches, 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 708.358.7669 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 are posted at www.oak-park.us/snow.



Sidewalk shoveling required... 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@oak-park.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. to 8:30 p.m., and Rush Oak Park Hospital, 520 S. Maple Ave., from 8:30 a.m. to 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. to 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 or Rush Oak Park Hospital at 708.660.2211. 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.

Multi-Family grant application deadline set

Owners of buildings with four or more rental units have until Feb. 29 to apply for grants of \$10,000 or \$1,000 per unit, whichever is less. Grants can be used for improvements to common areas, security or individual units. Funds must be expended within twelve months from the execution of the agreement, but funded buildings are eligible to re-apply for grants every 12 months. As in past years, grants must be matched two-to-one by the owner of the building. Application materials will be mailed to building owners or their agents, as well as be available at www.oak-park.us/housing. For more information, call 708.358.5410 or email housing@oak-park.us.

Park District News

Now hiring for summer positions... The Park District of Oak Park is now hiring for summer positions including lifeguards, camp counselors, parks maintenance and concessions. For more information and to apply visit www.pdop.org/jobs.

Free kids fest... The annual Kids Fest is set for 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Sun., March 6 at the Oak Park Conservatory, 615 Garfield St. In addition to celebrating the birthday of George, the Conservatory's resident double yellow-head Amazon parrot, the free event will include hands-on children's educational activities and an opportunity to explore the tropical rain forest and other eco-climates. Visit www.oakparkconservatory.org for more details.

Make way for tree pruning

Residents are urged to move their cars from the streets when temporary no-parking signs go up to allow private contractors to quickly and safely prune parkway trees as the winter trimming cycle continues through March. The areas scheduled for trimming this season are between the Eisenhower Expressway and Madison Street from East Avenue to Harlem Avenue, and between Madison Street and South Boulevard, from Austin Boulevard to Harlem Avenue. Crews follow the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) guidelines for tree care to address three key issues — tree health, resident safety and protecting property from damage. Dead or dying limbs are removed and canopies raised to allow for safe vehicle and pedestrian traffic and create appropriate clearances for adjacent structures and signs. While the pruning can seem excessive when no leaves are on the limbs, crews work to ensure that pruning is just right as foliage returns in the spring. With a program that aims to prune every tree on public property once every four years, plans must consider that the medium-aged trees that compose a sizeable share of those on Oak Park parkways can grow up to two feet each year — or eight feet between pruning cycles. The Village's pruning program has proven very successful in minimizing storm damage and reducing ongoing pruning requests. Village Forestry crews spot check progress of the private contractors. Residents are urged to call 708.358.5700 or email publicworks@oak-park.us with questions or concerns about the type or quality of work being performed by contractors. More information on the care of the nearly 19,000 trees on public property is posted at www.oak-park.us/trees.





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



OP/FYI

Mayor Anan Abu-Taleb

Trustees

Peter Barber
 Glenn Brewer
 Adam Salzman
 Colette Lueck
 Bob Tucker

Village Clerk Teresa Powell
 Village Manager Cara Pavlicek

Residential Customer Local
 Oak Park, Illinois

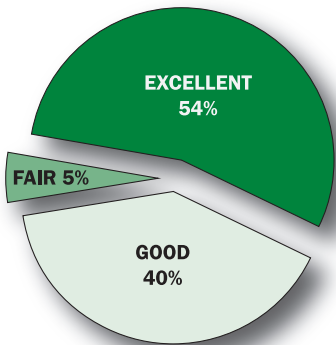
Postal Carrier
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PAID
 Permit No. 26
 Oak Park, IL

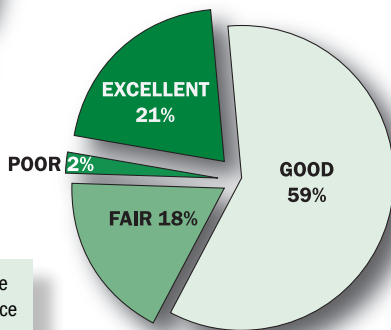
Community survey results are in

Results of the most recent community survey continued to demonstrate residents' satisfaction with life in Oak Park, albeit with room for improvement in certain aspects of municipal service delivery. The survey, which polled a statistically valid random sample of residents by mail in the fall, reported that Oak Parkers continue to enjoy a high quality of life and view the local economy and safety as their top priorities. This latest survey found that four in five residents rated quality of life in Oak Park and the community as a place to live as excellent or good, and said they would recommend Oak Park to others. Almost all residents gave excellent or good ratings to Oak Park as a place to raise children and to the community's overall appearance. Trends noted from previous community surveys included improved ratings for shopping and employment opportunities, and a rising favorability for land use, planning and zoning, and economic

development services. The survey noted key opportunities for improvement as well, including street repair, street cleaning, snow removal and overall customer service at Village Hall.



Quality of Life



Village Services

Four in five residents rated quality of life in Oak Park and the community as a place to live as excellent or good, and said they would recommend Oak Park to others

The National Research Center, Inc. (NRC), a social science research firm, conducted this latest survey. NRC also conducted surveys here in 2000, 2004, 2008, 2011 and 2013. Through its collaboration with the International City Managers Association, NRC has developed a national database of community surveys and survey questions, which allow the Village to compare many of the results with those from similar communities in Illinois and across the country. Officials say the purpose of the surveys is to help policy makers better understand priorities for government action and citizen opinions on quality of life and public services. Complete results of the current and past surveys are posted at www.oak-park.us/communitysurveys.

Earth Fest seeking sponsors, vendors

Sponsors and vendors are now being sought for the Village's annual celebration of green living — Earth Fest — scheduled for Sat., April 23, 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, sunglasses, hearing aids, rechargeable batteries and cell phones. Sponsors earn the opportunity to not only educate but also 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 708.358.5707 or email publicworks@oak-park.us.

