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The Criminal Justice Center at Minnesota Planning provides criminal and juvenile justice information, conducts research and maintains databases for policy development.

*Gun Points: 1996 Firearm Forfeitures in Minnesota* was prepared by LaLonnie Erickson with assistance from other members of the Criminal Justice Team at Minnesota Planning: Susan Roth and Ray Lewis; and student worker, Jeffrey Talberg.

Upon request, *Gun Points: 1996 Firearm Forfeitures in Minnesota* will be made available in an alternate format, such as Braille, large print or audio tape. For TTY, contact Minnesota Relay Service at 800-627-3529 and ask for Minnesota Planning.

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An electronic copy of *Gun Points: 1996 Firearm Forfeitures in Minnesota* and the 1996 Firearm Forfeiture data file is available on the Minnesota Planning web site: [www.mnplan.state.mn.us](http://www.mnplan.state.mn.us)

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# Gun Points

## Glossary

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Summary	1
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Forfeiting guns in Minnesota	1
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Weapon characteristics	3
------------------------	---

---

Circumstances surrounding forfeiture	5
--------------------------------------	---

---

Mandating firearms information	6
--------------------------------	---

---

Options for better data	7
-------------------------	---

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Firearm forfeiture report form	
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# Glossary

Below are generally accepted definitions for terms in this report.

**Action:** mechanism by which a round of ammunition is loaded into the firing chamber of a gun. Actions may be manual such as a bolt, lever, pump or revolver; semi-automatic; or automatic.

**Automatic:** weapons that continuously fire ammunition as long as the trigger is depressed. Also known as a machine gun, an automatic is illegal to own unless manufactured prior to 1986.

**BB gun:** device that fires a metal pellet measuring .18 of an inch or less in diameter.

**Caliber or gauge:** numeric description of the diameter of a firearm barrel as well as the size of ammunition. Caliber most often refers to handguns and rifles, while gauge pertains to shotguns. Higher calibers and lower gauges indicate more powerful firearms.

**Firearm:** designates any device which is designed to or may be readily converted to expel any type of projectile. Types of firearms are handguns, rifles, shotguns, machine guns, homemade guns, and air, BB or pellet guns.

**Forfeiture:** law enforcement gain legal rights to a firearm. Minnesota has three processes for forfeiting guns: judicial action, summary and administrative.

**Handgun:** a firearm that can be held and fired with one hand. Revolvers, pistols and Saturday Night Specials are types of handguns.

**Metropolitan area:** includes the seven Minnesota counties of Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Scott and Washington.

**Reckless discharge:** firing of a gun in a dangerous manner such as within city limits.

**Retained:** describes forfeited firearms that are kept for law enforcement purposes such as training or use in the line of duty.

**Rifle:** gun with a barrel length of 16 inches, usually fired from the shoulder. Rifles have grooves cut into the inside of the barrel causing the bullet to spin when discharged, increasing firing accuracy.

**Saturday Night Special:** inexpensive, low caliber, short-barreled handgun that fits in the palm of the hand. Because of their low quality and inaccuracy, these weapons have no sporting purpose.

**Sawed-off:** rifles with a barrel length altered to shorter than 16 inches or shotguns altered to less than 18 inches.

**Seizure:** official confiscation of a firearm by law enforcement. Seizure is the first step in the forfeiture process.

**Semi-automatic:** describes firearms that will fire one shot of ammunition per trigger pull.

**Silencer:** any instrument, attachment, weapon or appliance used to silence or muffle the firing of a gun.

**Shotgun:** firearm with a barrel length of 18 inches, discharged with both hands from the shoulder. Shotguns have a smooth barrel and fire cartridges containing multiple metal pellets or slugs.

**Trigger activator:** a manual or power driven firearm attachment designed to increase the rate at which the trigger may be pulled and thereby increasing the rate of ammunition fire to that of an automatic weapon.

**Weapon:** refers to only firearms in this report.

# Summary

Crime is the most common reason for law enforcement to forfeit — gain legal rights to — firearms in Minnesota. Forty-five percent of all firearms forfeited in 1996 were involved in such criminal activities as drug violations, assault or robbery. The Criminal Justice Center at Minnesota Planning responds to a legislative mandate for information to facilitate policy decisions regarding the use of guns in crime in *Gun Points: 1996 Firearm Forfeitures in Minnesota*.

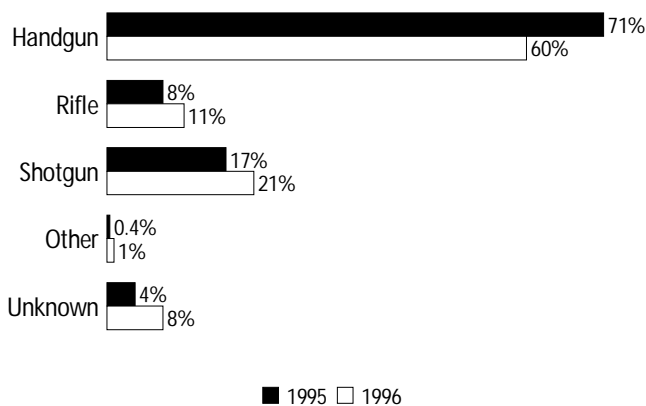
Firearm forfeiture data is collected each year by the Minnesota State Auditor’s Office from law enforcement across the state. Agencies complete monthly reporting forms, recording details about each firearm forfeited. Specific information presented in *Gun Points* includes state and regional data on firearm characteristics, reason for forfeiture and final disposition.

Significant findings in 1996 include:

- Minnesota law enforcement agencies reported forfeiture of 1,810 firearms in 1996, a 57 percent increase from 1995.
- Ninety-two percent of all firearms forfeited throughout the state occurred in Hennepin and Ramsey counties.

## A shrinking share of handguns destroyed

Percent of firearms destroyed



Rifles and shotguns destroyed increased from 1995 to 1996.

Note: Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding. Other types of firearms include air, pellet or BB guns, and homemade weapons.

Source: Minnesota State Auditor’s Office, Firearm Forfeiture Data

- A majority of forfeited firearms were destroyed — 82 percent — while 17 percent were retained for law enforcement purposes.

- Six out of 10 forfeitures were handguns, 31 percent involved shotguns and rifles.

- More than one-third of firearms forfeited for criminal activity were involved in drug-related crimes.

The Criminal Justice Center suggests several strategies in *Gun Points* to improve the quality and amount of firearms-related data available to legislators. Options focus on requiring law enforcement to use revised firearm forfeiture reporting forms and obtaining firearms-related information from other data sources. They also explore the feasibility of using a computerized system to collect weapons data and conducting a pilot project to trace guns.

# Forfeiting guns in Minnesota

Firearms forfeited to Minnesota law enforcement must go through a statutorily designated process. Police departments are legally able to take firearms through two different means: seizure and forfeiture.

Seizure occurs when a police officer takes possession of a firearm. In some cases, the ensuing court process may be bypassed if the weapon was obtained through a lawful search or arrest. When a firearm is abandoned or stolen, the discovering law enforcement agency makes every attempt to find the legal owner. Guns that are seized and subsequently returned to owners are not considered forfeited.

Forfeiture differs from seizure in that the owner loses all rights to the gun. The weapon is contraband and becomes the legal property of the state. A few days to several years may elapse between the time a seizure takes place and results in forfeiture.

Three legal processes can result in a firearm forfeiture:

- Judicial action occurs when a formal complaint is filed against a firearm, detailing the reasons it should be forfeited.



- Summary forfeiture gives the state legal possession of firearms owned by an individual convicted of a controlled substance crime or other statutorily designated offense.

- Administrative forfeiture focuses on guns seized in connection with controlled substances. In this process firearm owners are notified that their weapon was seized and of their right to a judicial review. If a review is not requested, any rights to the firearm are lost and it is automatically forfeited.

Across Minnesota, 19 counties reported forfeiting a total of 1,810 firearms in 1996 compared to 1,151 in 1995. A majority of guns were either destroyed or retained for law enforcement use in both years. Eight out of 10 forfeited guns in 1996 were destroyed, in most cases by being melted down. Seventeen percent were retained by law enforcement and issued to officers or used for training.

Occasionally, law enforcement agencies determine that a firearm should not be destroyed or retained for departmental use; some are sent to the Minnesota Historical Society, sold at auctions or turned over to insurance companies.

The metropolitan area leads the state in destroying and retaining weapons. Similar to 1995 findings, 96 percent of forfeitures were destroyed within this area — more than half in Hennepin County alone. Likewise, 78 percent of state forfeitures were retained in Hennepin County, representing a 13 percent increase from 1995. Metropolitan counties combined to account for 89 percent of retentions compared to 78 percent in 1995. Law enforcement agencies retained a smaller share of their

forfeitures within the metropolitan area than in other counties, 16 percent compared to 35 percent. In 1995, counties outside the metropolitan area retained over half of their forfeitures.

## Weapon characteristics

Police officers are required by law to document their jurisdiction’s firearm forfeitures and send the information to the State Auditor each month. The reporting form used by law enforcement asks for gun type, caliber, action, make, model, serial number, and legal and altered status.

Six out of ten firearms forfeited during 1996 in Minnesota were handguns. Other types forfeited were shotguns and rifles, at 19 and 12 percent, respectively. Forfeited handguns decreased by 8 percent between 1995 and 1996, while the proportion of shotguns and rifles rose slightly.

Metropolitan statistics are similar to the state’s: 62 percent of forfeitures were handguns compared to about half outside the metropolitan area, where rifles accounted for a higher proportion of forfeitures. A greater percentage of shotguns were forfeited within the metropolitan area, contrary to 1995 findings.

Law enforcement in the metropolitan area destroy more than three-fourths of all handguns, rifles and shotguns forfeited. Outside the metropolitan region, agencies retained more than twice as many of each type of firearm: 44 percent of handguns, 43 percent of rifles and 25 percent of shotguns.

Other findings regarding weapon characteristics show that:

**CALIBER.** Almost half of state forfeitures are .22 caliber, 12 gauge and .38 caliber, resembling 1995 data. “Caliber” refers to the diameter of the barrel of a firearm or bullet, while “gauge” is used to describe shotguns in the same manner. Higher calibers and lower gauges indicate more powerful weapons.

Breakdowns of the caliber and gauges show some regional differences. The metropolitan area mirrored state rankings. Outside the metropolitan area, .357 caliber was among the top three and comprised a larger share of forfeitures than those in metropolitan counties.

### Most forfeitures occur in metropolitan area

Percent of all firearm forfeitures

	1995	1996
Hennepin County	50%	59%
Ramsey County	38	33
Metropolitan area	94	95
Other 80 counties	6	5

Hennepin and Ramsey counties combined comprised the largest share of forfeitures in the metropolitan area in both 1995 and 1996.

Note: The metropolitan area includes Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Scott and Washington counties.

Source: Minnesota State Auditor’s Office, Firearm Forfeiture Data

**ACTION.** Information regarding the action — the mechanism that loads ammunition into the weapon firing chamber — was missing for 40 percent of all forfeitures, half from Ramsey County reports and 42 percent from Hennepin County. This percentage is much higher than in 1995 when 18 percent of action data was unknown.

Available data shows that almost half of forfeitures were semi-automatic and one-third were revolver, the two most common in 1995 as well. Other types of actions include automatic, bolt, double barrel, lever and pump. Only one fully automatic weapon was forfeited in 1996 compared to four in 1995.

Semi-automatic weapon forfeitures in Hennepin County increased to 60 percent in 1996, twice as many as Ramsey County. Percentages the year before were evenly distributed between the two counties: 43 and 44 percent, respectively. Comparable to 1995, 80 percent of semi-automatic weapons were handguns. Half of semi-automatic weapons forfeited were 9 millimeter and .22 caliber.

**MAKE.** Statewide, each firearm make accounts for only 9 percent or less of all forfeitures. Handgun forfeitures had a greater variety of makes than rifles and shotguns with 18 percent reported as Smith & Wesson, Ruger and Colt.

Nearly half of all rifle forfeitures were Marlin, Winchester and Remington makes. Shotgun data shows that 38 percent were Remington, Winchester and Mossberg. Firearm make information was not recorded for 1995.

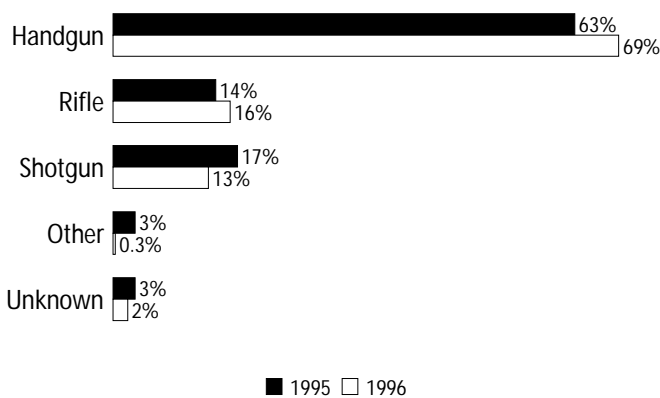
**LEGALITY.** Only 9 percent of forfeitures in 1996 were illegal or illegally altered in some way. Illegal weapons include Saturday Night Specials and machine guns. Examples of unlawful firearms alteration are adding silencers or trigger activators, sawing off the barrel, using machine gun conversion kits and removing or altering the serial number.

Three counties in the metropolitan area — Hennepin, Ramsey and Anoka — forfeited 96 percent of illegal weapons; three-fourths of these occurred in Hennepin County. St. Louis was the only county outside the metropolitan area to report illegal forfeitures.

Nearly all illegal firearm forfeitures in 1996 were altered in some way, most commonly by removing the serial number. All of the unlawful handguns were altered by removal of their serial number as well as 60 percent of rifles. Seventy percent of shotguns were altered by sawing off the barrel. Data for 1995 was incomplete and therefore, is not provided in this report.

### Most firearms retained are handguns

Percent of firearms retained



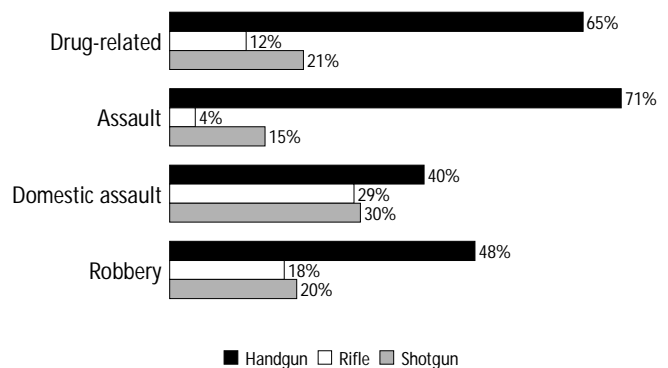
Shotguns decreased to 13 percent of firearms kept by police departments in 1996.

Note: Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding. Other types of firearms include air, pellet or BB guns, and homemade weapons.

Source: Minnesota State Auditor's Office, Firearm Forfeiture Data

### Six out of 10 domestic assault forfeitures are rifles or shotguns

Percent within each forfeiture category



Handguns were the most common forfeiture for all types of criminal activity.

Note: Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding because this graph does not display "other" and "unknown" firearm categories.

Source: Minnesota State Auditor's Office, 1996 Firearm Forfeiture Data

# Circumstances surrounding forfeiture

Firearms are forfeited as the result of six main circumstances: abandoned or found, criminal activity, illegal possession, reckless discharge, search warrant or suicide. Almost half the state firearm forfeitures in 1995 and 1996 were involved in criminal activity. Eighteen percent were forfeited for illegal possession either because the individual was a felon or minor, or the weapon was unlicensed.

Weapons recorded as abandoned or found — 17 percent — were either recovered by law enforcement or citizens who turned them over to police. Abandoned or found firearms may have been used to commit a crime, although in most cases this is impossible to determine. Forfeitures for both illegal possession and abandonment declined from 1995.

Ninety-two percent of criminal forfeitures were in the metropolitan area, with Hennepin and Ramsey counties accounting for 65 and 23 percent, respectively. Proportionally, counties outside the metropolitan area forfeited a larger share of their guns for criminal activity, rising to 70 percent in 1996. By comparison, metropolitan area forfeitures of this type remained stable at 44 percent. Three times as many guns in metropolitan counties were forfeited for illegal possession. Last year, these forfeitures were similar across the state. In addition, a higher portion of weapons were forfeited for reckless discharge outside the metropolitan area. All firearms forfeited due to search

warrant and most suicide forfeitures were in metropolitan counties.

Throughout the state, more than one-third of criminal forfeitures were for drug-related crimes, followed by assault and domestic assault at one-quarter. Other types of criminal activity such as robbery, theft, terroristic threats, disorderly conduct and traffic violations represented 36 percent. Homicide accounted for only 1 percent of guns forfeited.

Twenty-five guns were recovered through gun turn-in programs. More firearms may have been obtained through these types of programs, but only one county documented this information on forfeiture reporting forms. Analysis by type of criminal activity was not completed in 1995.

Twice as many drug-related forfeitures occurred in the metropolitan area: 39 percent compared to 17 percent elsewhere in the state. Nine points below metropolitan figures, 17 percent of forfeitures in other counties were for assault and domestic assault. Two-thirds of all forfeitures occurring outside the metropolitan area — and 36 percent within it — were for other types of criminal activities.

Fourteen percent of abandoned guns were illegal compared to 9 percent forfeited for criminal activity and 7 percent for illegal possession. Abandoned and found weapons also had the largest percentage of missing serial numbers.

Almost three out of 10 forfeitures for robbery were illegal weapons, followed by guns forfeited for domestic abuse and drug crimes at 9 and 8 percent, respectively. Forfeited

## Low-power handguns and rifles most common

Percent within firearm type

Handguns	Shotguns	Rifles
.22 caliber 21%	12 gauge 63%	.22 caliber 59%
.38 caliber 17	20 gauge 15	30-30 caliber 10
.25 caliber 15	16 gauge 7	30-06 caliber 6
9 millimeter 13	.410 gauge 6	.223 caliber 4
.357 caliber 8	.41 gauge 3	7.62 millimeter 4
Other 24	Other 1	Other 11
Unknown 2	Unknown 4	Unknown 6

Six out of ten shotguns forfeited in 1996 were 12 gauge.

Note: Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Source: Minnesota State Auditor's Office, 1996 Firearm Forfeiture Data

## Five out of ten handguns and rifles are semi-automatic action

Percent within each type of firearm

Handguns	Rifles	Shotguns
Semi-automatic 51%	Semi-automatic 50%	Pump 45%
Revolver 48	Bolt action 25	Semi-automatic 24
Single shot 1	Lever 20	Bolt action 17
Other 1	Pump 5	Other 14

Pump was the most common action type for shotguns in 1996.

Note: These percentages do not include firearms for which the action was unknown. Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Source: Minnesota State Auditor's Office, 1996 Firearm Forfeiture Data



weapons used to commit robbery also had the largest percentage of missing serial numbers. One illegal weapon was forfeited for theft and burglary; no homicide-related firearms were illegal.

## Mandating firearms information

Information available to lawmakers regarding the use of firearms in the commission of crime is limited. To facilitate informed policy decisions, the 1994 Minnesota Legislature issued mandates to three state agencies to collect and report annual firearms-related data. By agency, the directive focused on:

- **Minnesota Sentencing Guidelines Commission:** criminal complaints and prosecutions involving a firearm regarding whether the case was charged or dismissed; the defendant was convicted of the offense or a lesser offense; and whether the mandatory minimum sentence was imposed and executed or waived by the prosecutor or court.

- **Minnesota State Auditor’s Office:** firearm forfeiture information from law enforcement agencies including the make, model and serial number.

- **Criminal Justice Center at Minnesota Planning:** the number of people arrested, charged, convicted and sentenced for violations of each firearm-related law as well as the make, model and serial number of each gun involved, and a breakdown by county of crimes committed.

The Minnesota Sentencing Guidelines Commission and the Minnesota State Auditor’s Office were both able to meet their mandate requirements, providing information requested by the Legislature. The Criminal Justice Center encountered significant difficulties in fulfilling its directive to track firearm offenders and weapons through the criminal justice system.

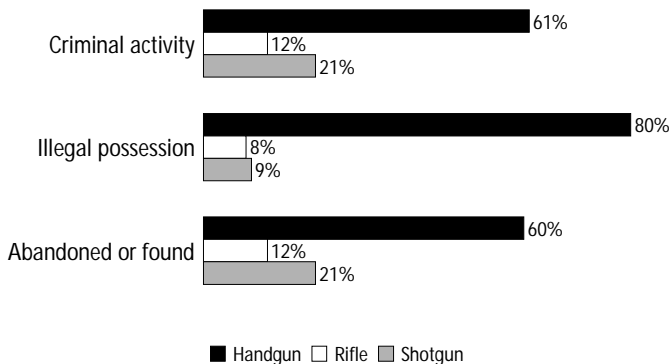
## State lacks system to track offenders and weapons

Minnesota does not have a way to track firearms and offenders through the entire justice system from the time of arrest through court activity to sentencing. Information on weapons used to commit crime is recorded by law enforcement officers at the time of arrest, documented on paper and kept in police files. In some cases, police do not recover the weapon used by the offender.

A centralized database linking weapon and offender data does not exist for law enforcement agencies throughout the state. Retrieving this data would require following a

### Rifles minimal in each category of forfeiture

Percent within each forfeiture category



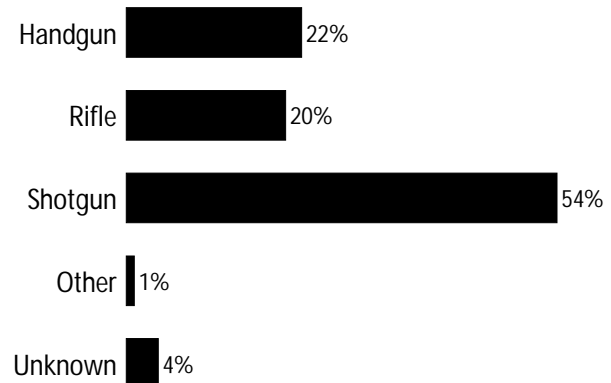
Eight out of ten illegal possession forfeitures were handguns in 1996.

Note: Percentages may not add to 100 because this graph does not display “other” and “unknown” firearm categories.

Source: Minnesota State Auditor’s Office, 1996 Firearm Forfeiture Data

### Shotguns account for half of illegal gun forfeitures

Percent of illegal firearms



Unlike most other forfeiture findings, fewer handguns were illegal.

Note: Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding. Other types of firearms include air, pellet or BB guns, and homemade weapons.

Source: Minnesota State Auditor’s Office, 1996 Firearm Forfeiture Data

complicated and lengthy paper trail, examining individual paper records at each police department. In addition, Minnesota has approximately 100 statutes relating to firearm use and possession that regulate everything from purchases and sales, possession, storage and transportation, hunting and sport use to imposing criminal penalties. Related data is not collected or readily available, or is limited in scope.

The Criminal Justice Center worked with legislators to determine what information should be provided annually, including data on firearms used to commit crime. The State Auditor was asked to collect state and county forfeiture data for each firearm: the make, model and serial number; reason for forfeiture; and final disposition. It was agreed that the Criminal Justice Center would complete an independent analysis of the State Auditor's data to extract more in-depth statistical information.

The Auditor's data file does not contain information regarding offenders or state laws affecting firearm use and possession, however, it is the most complete and readily

available data on firearms. Using the data file, the Criminal Justice Center adds detail on the type, caliber, action, make, model and legal and altered status of each forfeited weapon.

## Options for better data

Four suggestions to improve the quality and amount of firearms-related data necessary for making informed policy decisions are summarized below. No one option fully satisfies the 1994 Legislative mandate, but each accomplishes in some way the goal of gaining better data related to guns.

### Require revised firearm forfeiture reporting form

A significant portion of information on forfeited firearms has been missing since 1995. The current forfeiture reporting form asks for the date of weapon seizure and

### Criminal activity forfeitures center in Hennepin and Ramsey counties

Number of firearm forfeitures by type of criminal activity

	Drug related	Burglary	Theft	Robbery	Assault	Homicide	Other criminal	County total
Anoka	4	1	0	1	0	0	4	10
Cass	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Clay	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Dakota	6	0	0	0	1	0	0	7
Dodge	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	3
Hennepin	242	21	20	26	124	1	102	536
Lac Qui Parle	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	6
Le Sueur	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Mower	0	0	0	0	0	0	15	15
Olmsted	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	6
Ramsey	26	5	7	15	69	6	61	189
Saint Louis	8	1	0	2	10	1	9	31
Scott	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Traverse	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Washington	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Bureau of Criminal Apprehension	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	11
State Total	302	28	27	44	206	8	207	822

Note: Only counties with firearm forfeitures for criminal activity in 1996 are listed in this table.

Source: Minnesota State Auditor's Office, 1996 Firearm Forfeiture Data

forfeiture; make, model and serial number; final disposition; and reason for forfeiture. The form is not always completely filled out, however, and agencies may use different terminology or documentation techniques. In addition, the form does not ask for gun type, caliber, action, and legal or altered status — information that may or may not be noted by reporting agencies.

In 1995, the Criminal Justice Center and the Minnesota State Auditor's Office revised the firearm forfeiture reporting form to ensure uniform and consistent reporting, and to collect more detailed information. Only nine police departments recorded their forfeitures on the new form in 1996; 21 did not. More widespread use would reduce the percentage of "unknown" information.

## Use alternative data sources

Forfeiture data is the only readily available source of detailed information on gun attributes. Other types of firearms-related sources are the Uniform Crime Report, Supplementary Homicide Report and Computerized Criminal History Record data.

- Uniform crime reports include limited weapon information for a few offenses and only pertain to those offenses that are known or reported to police. When available, law enforcement agencies document weapon use for murder, robbery and aggravated assault. This dataset does not maintain information on offenders.

- Supplementary homicide report data only pertains to one offense (homicide). It contains detailed information regarding each homicide occurring in a particular year. Victim and offender demographic data is recorded as well as weapon type, victim-offender relationship and the circumstances surrounding the incident. This dataset does not contain court, conviction or sentencing information.

- The state's computerized criminal history file contains information for all offense types but is limited to felony, and only certain gross misdemeanor and misdemeanor level cases. Offender demographics, weapon type, arrest, court, conviction and sentencing data is documented.

These datasets do not contain gun attributes such as caliber, action, make, model or serial number, or information on state laws affecting firearm use and possession. They cannot be used together to provide a

complete picture of firearms-related crime; however, each offers a distinct dimension for focused analysis.

## Computerize firearm data

One of the main obstacles to fulfilling the Criminal Justice Center's legislative directive was the lack of a statewide computer system that links detailed firearm data to offenders and tracks the information through the criminal justice system. The Minnesota Sentencing Guidelines Commission also found it difficult to provide the data requested by lawmakers for similar reasons.

A task force could assess the feasibility of establishing an electronic system to input firearm data at the time of arrest. Current barriers include lack of technology, resource constraints, utility and overall cost for full implementation, equipment and training.

## Conduct a pilot project to track guns

The Boston Gun Project recently studied the relationship of juvenile crime and use of firearms. Working with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms gun tracing dataset, the study tracked the origin and ownership of firearms recovered by law enforcement.

The complete database created for the project included detailed gun attribute information; date and state where the gun was first sold; location of the gun seizure; and additional demographics, where available, pertaining to the individual from whom the gun was taken. In addition, the project gained information through interviews with youth on probation, and analyzed homicide and other social data.

Currently, at least one Minnesota community is in the early stages of conducting a project that incorporates some elements from the Boston study. With funding, a more extensive pilot project could analyze seized firearms using the Bureau's tracing data, providing the groundwork for a more uniform statewide approach.

Focusing on seizures would capture information on all firearms that pass through law enforcement hands and their relationship to crime; demographic and other data could be added to enhance the database. Ultimately, the project would provide Minnesota with detailed characteristics of offenders who use guns.

# Firearm Forfeiture Report

Month and year \_\_\_\_\_

Name of jurisdiction \_\_\_\_\_

County of jurisdiction \_\_\_\_\_

Date of seizure	Date forfeiture completed	Make	Model	Serial number	Type	Action	Legality	Altered	Activity	Status
__/__/__	__/__/__	_____	_____	_____	1. Handgun	1. Single shot	1. Legal	1. Yes	1. Criminal (explain)	1. Destroyed
__/__/__	__/__/__	_____	_____	_____	2. Rifle	2. Double barrel	2. Illegal (explain)	2. No	2. Reckless discharge	2. Retained (explain)
__/__/__	__/__/__	_____	_____	_____	3. Shotgun	3. Revolver			3. Illegal possession	3. Other (explain)
__/__/__	__/__/__	_____	_____	_____	4. Air, BB or pellet	4. Bolt action			4. Abandoned or found	
__/__/__	__/__/__	_____	_____	_____	5. Replica	5. Lever			5. Suicide	
__/__/__	__/__/__	_____	_____	_____	6. Other (explain)	6. Pump			6. Search warrant	
__/__/__	__/__/__	_____	_____	_____	9. Unknown	7. Semi-automatic			7. Other (explain)	
__/__/__	__/__/__	_____	_____	_____		8. Automatic			9. Unknown	
__/__/__	__/__/__	_____	_____	_____		9. Other (explain)				
__/__/__	__/__/__	_____	_____	_____		10. Unknown				

List additional information or explanations with corresponding category here.

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I certify that the information reported above is accurate and complete to the best of my knowledge.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the chief law enforcement officer

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Phone number

**Please return completed forms to:**

Office of the State Auditor  
525 Park St., Suite 400  
St. Paul, MN 55103

# Instructions for reporting firearm forfeitures

In 1994 the Minnesota Legislature mandated the State Auditor's Office to collect firearm forfeiture data from Minnesota law enforcement agencies. The State Auditor's Office aggregates forfeiture data by jurisdiction and sends computer files to the Criminal Justice Center at Minnesota Planning for analysis. This information is used by policy makers for firearm legislation.

IF NO FIREARM IS FORFEITED, DO NOT RETURN A FORM TO THE STATE AUDITOR'S OFFICE. The firearm forfeiture reporting form should be used as a master copy by your agency. Each month make a copy of this form, record all firearm forfeitures completed in that month and return the form(s) to the State Auditor's Office by the 20th day of the following month. For example, a listing of forfeitures completed in January is due by February 20th.

**NOTE.** For the purpose of this report, a firearm is forfeited if:

- + Destroyed
- + Retained for law enforcement purposes
- + The agency, in accordance with the law, finds good reason not to destroy the firearm.

**Firearms returned to the lawful owner and not retained or forfeited should not be reported.**

Problems or questions about these instructions or the reporting form should be directed to either:

John Jernberg Office of the State Auditor 525 Park Street Suite 400 St. Paul, MN 55103 (612) 297-3678	LaLonnie Erickson Criminal Justice Center 300 Centennial Building 658 Cedar St. St. Paul, MN 55155 (612) 296-4852
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Information retained by the Office of the State Auditor and the Criminal Justice Center is public information and will be released upon request.

<b>Name of jurisdiction</b>	Enter the official title of the reporting agency.	<b>Caliber or gauge</b>	Firearm caliber or gauge or "unknown." <i>Example: .38</i>
<b>County of jurisdiction</b>	Indicate the county in which the reporting agency is located.	<b>Legality</b>	"1" if the firearm is legal in Minnesota or "2" if the firearm is illegal in Minnesota with a brief explanation. <i>Examples of illegal firearms: Machine guns, sawed-off shotguns, Saturday Night Specials</i>
<b>FOR EACH FIREARM FORFEITED ENTER:</b>			
<b>Date of seizure</b>	Date the firearm was first seized.	<b>Altered</b>	"1" if the firearm was altered with a brief explanation of how it was altered. Enter "2" if the firearm was not altered. <i>Examples of altered firearms: Sawed-off, silencers, serial number alteration</i>
<b>Date forfeiture completed</b>	Date the firearm was officially destroyed or retained by the appropriate agency for official use or the agency lawfully determined "good reason" not to destroy the firearm.	<b>Activity</b>	Activity that caused the forfeiture: 1. Criminal (supply a brief explanation) 2. Reckless discharge 3. Illegal possession 4. Abandoned or found 5. Suicide 6. Search warrant 7. Other (supply a brief explanation) 9. Unknown
<b>Make</b>	Make or "unknown." <i>Example: Smith &amp; Wesson</i>	<b>Status</b>	Action taken with the firearm: 1. Destroyed 2. Retained (supply a brief explanation) 3. Other (supply a brief explanation)
<b>Model</b>	Firearm model or "unknown." <i>Example: Model 36</i>		
<b>Serial number</b>	Firearm serial number, "removed," "none" or "unknown."		
<b>Type</b>	Number that corresponds to the firearm type: 1. Handgun 2. Rifle 3. Shotgun 4. Air, BB or pellet 5. Replica of a firearm 6. Other (supply a brief explanation) 9. Unknown		
<b>Action</b>	Number that corresponds to the firearm action: 1. Single shot 2. Double barrel 3. Revolver 4. Bolt action 5. Lever 6. Pumps 7. Semi-automatic 8. Automatic 9. Other (supply a brief explanation) 10. Unknown		