

11,101 FATAL AND 467,300 NONFATAL FIREARM VICTIMIZATIONS OCCURRED IN 2011

WASHINGTON – Firearm-related homicides declined 39 percent and nonfatal firearm crimes declined 69 percent from 1993 to 2011, the Justice Department’s Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) announced today. Firearm-related homicides dropped from 18,253 homicides in 1993 to 11,101 in 2011, and nonfatal firearm crimes dropped from 1.5 million victimizations in 1993 to 467,300 in 2011.

For both fatal and nonfatal firearm victimizations, the majority of the decline occurred during the 10-year period from 1993 to 2002. The number of firearm homicides declined from 1993 to 1999, rose through 2006 and then declined through 2011. Nonfatal firearm violence declined from 1993 through 2004 before fluctuating in the mid- to late 2000s.

In 2011, about 70 percent of all homicides and eight percent of all nonfatal violent victimizations (rape, sexual assault, robbery and aggravated assault) were committed with a firearm, mainly a handgun. A handgun was used in about 7 in 10 firearm homicides and about 9 in 10 nonfatal firearm violent crimes in 2011. In the same year, about 26 percent of robberies and 31 percent of aggravated assaults involved a firearm, such as handguns, shotguns or rifles.

In 2007-11, about one percent of victims in all nonfatal violent crimes reported using a firearm to defend themselves during the incident. A small number of property crime victims also used a firearm in self-defense—about 0.1 percent of all property victimizations.

The majority of nonfatal firearm violence occurred in or around the victim’s home (42 percent) or in an open area, on the street, or while on public transportation (23 percent). Less than one percent of all nonfatal firearm violence occurred in schools.

From 1993 to 2010, males, blacks and persons ages 18 to 24 were most likely to be victims of firearm-related homicide. In 2011, the rate of nonfatal firearm violent for males (1.9 per 1,000) was not significantly different than the rate for females (1.6 per 1,000). Non-Hispanic blacks (2.8 per 1,000) and Hispanics (2.2 per 1,000) had higher rates of nonfatal firearm violence than non-Hispanic whites (1.4 per 1,000). Persons ages 18 to 24 had the highest rates of nonfatal firearm violence (5.2 per 1,000).

In 2004 (the most recent year of data available), among state prison inmates who possessed a gun at the time of the offense, fewer than two percent bought their firearm at a flea market or gun show. About 10 percent of state prison inmates said they purchased it from a retail store or pawnshop, 37 percent obtained it from family or friends, and another 40 percent obtained it from an illegal source.

Findings in this report on nonfatal firearm violence are based on data from the BJS National Crime Victimization Survey. Findings on firearm homicide are based on data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Web-based Injury

Statistics Query and Reporting System.

Additional information on firearm violence in this report comes from the School-Associated Violent Deaths Surveillance Study, the FBI's Supplemental Homicide Reports, the Consumer Product Safety Commission's National Electronic Injury Surveillance System All Injury Program, the Survey of Inmates in State Correctional Facilities, and the Survey of Inmates in Federal Correctional Facilities.

The report, *Firearm Violence, 1993–2011* (NCJ 241730), was written by BJS statisticians Michael Planty and Jennifer Truman. The report, related documents and additional information about the Bureau of Justice Statistics' statistical publications and programs can be found on the BJS website at <http://www.bjs.gov/>.

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