

GUN VIOLENCE AND BACKGROUND CHECKS IN OREGON

Support for the Second Amendment goes hand-in-hand with keeping guns away from criminals and other dangerous people. But loopholes in the law make it easy for dangerous people in Oregon to get guns, resulting in needless violence—from deadly domestic abuse to suicide and school shootings. Research shows that common-sense public safety laws reduce gun violence and save lives. This fact sheet brings together the findings of Everytown’s original investigations and analyses of relevant law enforcement and public health data to illuminate trends in gun violence and crime in Oregon.

THE TOLL OF GUN VIOLENCE

In the last decade of available data, 567 Oregon residents were murdered with guns, and an additional 3,440 died in firearm suicides or accidents.¹ More than half (54%) of suicides in the state were committed with guns.²

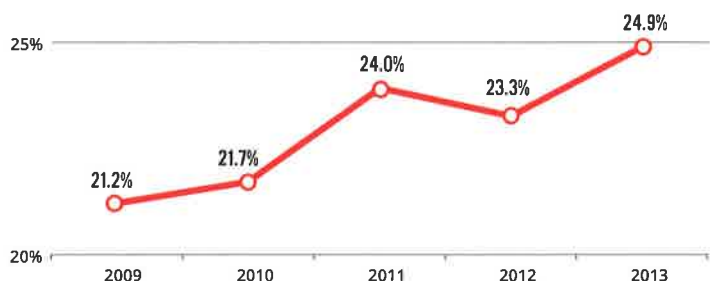
Dangerous people who never should have had a gun in the first place commit a significant share of gun violence. **More than half of Oregon law enforcement officers who were shot to death between 1980 and 2014 were killed by individuals who were prohibited from possessing firearms.**³

A large number of Oregon guns wind up in the wrong hands, making Oregon a source of crime guns recovered in other states in the region. Between 2006-13, **4,232** guns originally purchased in Oregon were recovered by law enforcement from crime scenes in other states.⁴

The share of Oregon crime guns that were likely trafficked has jumped between 2009 and 2013. A gun is considered to have been trafficked if it has a short “time-to-crime,” meaning it was recovered by law enforcement at a crime scene less than two years after its original sale by a licensed dealer. By 2013, **nearly 1 in 4 guns recovered from Oregon crime scenes had a short time-to-crime.**⁵

**BY 2013, NEARLY
1 IN 4 GUNS
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SHARE OF CRIME GUNS RECOVERED IN OREGON WITH SHORT TIME-TO-CRIME



Source: Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives

PREVENTING GUN VIOLENCE

For 20 years, federal law has required licensed gun dealers to conduct a background check for every firearm purchase.

According to data obtained from the FBI, the background check system **blocked 3,982 gun sales to prohibited people in Oregon in 2013**, including felons, domestic abusers, and other dangerous people. Since 2007, the system has successfully blocked more than 31,000 gun sales to those prohibited from possessing guns.⁶

LOOPHOLES IN GUN LAWS UNDERMINE PUBLIC SAFETY

Background checks are the only systemic way to keep guns out the hands of criminals. But with the exception of gun shows, Oregon does not require background checks on gun sales between unlicensed parties – even for sales between strangers who connect online.

This loophole in the background check system is especially dangerous considering the vast, virtual gun show that now exists on the internet. Dozens of websites—like Armslist.com, the self-described Craigslist for guns—each host tens of thousands of ads for unlicensed gun sales and provide a forum for strangers to connect and arrange offline gun transfers, just like Craigslist does for furniture sales and concert tickets. In less than two years, the online market experienced an almost sevenfold increase in the number of guns available, no background check required.⁷ And a national investigation conducted by Everytown in 2013 showed that 1 in 30 would-be gun buyers participating in this market (3.3 percent) had prohibiting criminal records.⁸


Data from just four websites where Oregonians buy and sell guns suggest that unlicensed sellers in the state post **more than 25,000 gun ads a year**.

This dwarfs the number of unlicensed sales conducted at gun shows: unlicensed sellers in the state post more gun ads online each week than they sell at gun shows in a full year.

ARMSLIST
FIREARMS MARKETPLACE

**FOR SALE: GLOCK 27
.40 CAL**

Price: \$300
Seller: Private Party
Listed On: Monday, February 9, 2014
Location: Portland, Oregon, US



Contact Seller

Illustration of online ad offering a gun in an unlicensed sale

EACH YEAR IN OREGON, UNLICENSED SELLERS POST MORE THAN

25,000

**gun
ads**



BACKGROUND CHECKS SAVE LIVES

Expanding and strengthening the background check system is a proven way to prevent gun violence. In states that require a background check for all handgun sales, there are:

46% FEWER
women shot to death
by intimate partners⁹

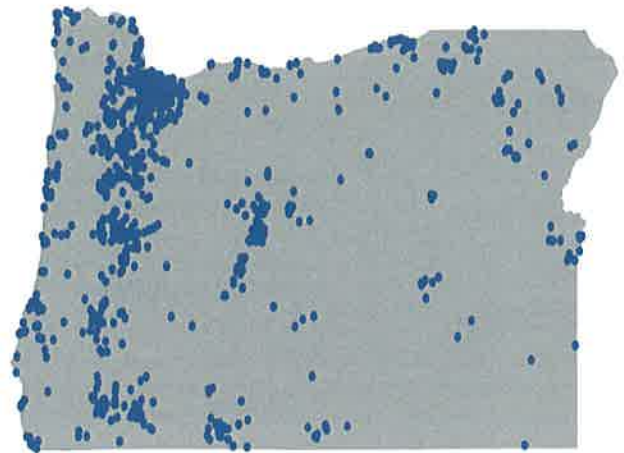
48% FEWER
law enforcement
shot to death with
handguns,¹⁰ and

48% LESS
gun trafficking¹¹

STRENGTHENING BACKGROUND CHECKS IN OREGON

The Oregon legislature should pass legislation to require criminal background checks for every gun sale and transfer in Oregon, with reasonable exceptions for family transfers, hunting, and self-defense. This would expand the existing system to make sure that everyone buying a gun in Oregon passes a criminal background check, no matter where they get the gun and no matter who sells it to them.

Meeting at a licensed gun dealer to complete a background check is easy. There are 1,471 federally licensed gun dealers in Oregon authorized to conduct background checks — more than 4 times the number of post offices — and 94.6% percent of Oregon residents live within 10 miles of one of them.¹²



LICENSED GUN DEALERS IN OREGON

IN OREGON, THERE ARE

1,471 LICENSED GUN DEALERS

– MORE THAN 4 TIMES THE
NUMBER OF POST OFFICES



81% of Oregon residents¹³ — as well as 74 percent of NRA members¹⁴ and 55 percent of licensed gun dealers¹⁵ — support requiring criminal background checks for all gun sales.





EVERYTOWN FOR GUN SAFETY is a movement of Americans fighting for common-sense policies that will reduce gun violence and save lives. Everytown is the largest gun violence prevention organization in the country with more than 2.5 million supporters including moms, mayors, survivors, and everyday Americans who are fighting for reforms that respect the Second Amendment and protect people. At the core of Everytown are **Mayors Against Illegal Guns**, a bipartisan coalition of mayors determined to reduce gun violence in their cities, and **Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America**, a grassroots movement of American mothers founded on the day after Newtown. Learn more at www.everytown.org and follow us @everytown.

NOTES

1. Centers for Disease Control, "WISQARS" (Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System)," available at <http://1.usa.gov/VTdKK9> (last accessed September 2014).
2. *Ibid.*
3. Everytown for Gun Safety Support Fund, "Oregon Law Enforcement Deaths and Illegal Guns," March 26 2015, available at: <http://every.tw/1BzKjQi>.
4. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF) trace data, available at: <http://1.usa.gov/1stn8HY>.
5. *Ibid.*
6. Everytown for Gun Safety analysis of FBI data, February 12, 2014.
7. Mayors Against Illegal Guns, *Felon Seeks Firearm, No Strings Attached*, September 2013, available at <http://every.tw/1p1Zc77>.
8. *Ibid.*
9. Everytown for Gun Safety, *State Background Check Requirements and Rates of Domestic Violence Homicide*, January 2015, available at <http://every.tw/1Aj9HZj>.
10. Everytown for Gun Safety, *State Background Check Requirements and Rates of Firearm Homicide Against Law Enforcement*, January 2015, available at <http://every.tw/1Aj9CVz>.
11. Daniel Webster, Jon Vernick, & Maria Bulzacchelli, "Effects of State-Level Firearm Seller Accountability Policies on Firearm Trafficking," *Journal of Urban Health* (July 2009). To gauge gun trafficking, the authors measured the ratio of likely trafficked guns recovered from crime scenes to the total of guns recovered. A "likely trafficked gun" was defined as having been recovered at a crime scene and not in the possession of its original purchaser within one year of its last legal sale.
12. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, available at <http://1.usa.gov/1zTVB6A>. Data is for FFLs with a type 1 or type 2 license.
13. *The Oregonian*, February 1, 2013, available at: <http://bit.ly/1JAe3pk>.
14. Luntz Global, *Gun Owners Poll for Mayors Against Illegal Guns*, July 2012, available at <http://every.tw/luntz>.
15. Garen J. Wintemute, Support for a comprehensive background check requirement and expanded denial criteria for Firearm Transfers: Findings from the Firearms Licensee Survey, 91(2) *J Urban Health*, (April 2014).