

Vermont Crime Analysis Using
National Incident Based Reporting System
(NIBRS) Data on Property Crime, 2015-2019



Submitted to:

Department of Public Safety

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Introduction

Property offenses refer to crimes in which the object is “to obtain money, property, or some other benefit” (NIBRS User Manual, p. 9).¹ Between 2015 and 2019, property offenses accounted for 70.88% of all crimes committed in Vermont. Given the prevalence of property offenses, criminal justice stakeholders and legislatures have a vested interest in monitoring trends related to these types of crime. The National Incident Based Reporting System (NIBRS) is a data source in which law enforcement record information about 26 property offenses. Annual reports will monitor Vermont’s NIBRS data for trends related to the number of incidents each year, types and number of offenses committed, victim and offender demographics, and arrestee information.

About NIBRS Data

Approximately 18,000 law enforcement agencies nationwide report data on known and reported crimes. Law enforcement agencies record administrative, offense, property, victim, offender, and arrestee information for about 28 offense categories that include 71 specific types of offenses (Group A offenses) as well as arrest data for 13 offenses categorized as “Group B.” Some examples of Group A offenses include arson, bribery, drug/narcotics violations, fraud, homicide, assault, and prostitution. Examples of Group B offenses include disorderly conduct, failure to appear, drunkenness, perjury, and liquor law violations. The user manual offers more detail on the type of information that is recorded in NIBRS and how the information is coded. It is important to remember that only crimes known to law enforcement are captured in NIBRS.

Property Crime Offenses

Between 2015 and 2019, there were 76,880 total property crime offenses which involved 12 different offense types (see Table 1). Below, Table 1 shows the number of offenses committed each year by the type of offense.

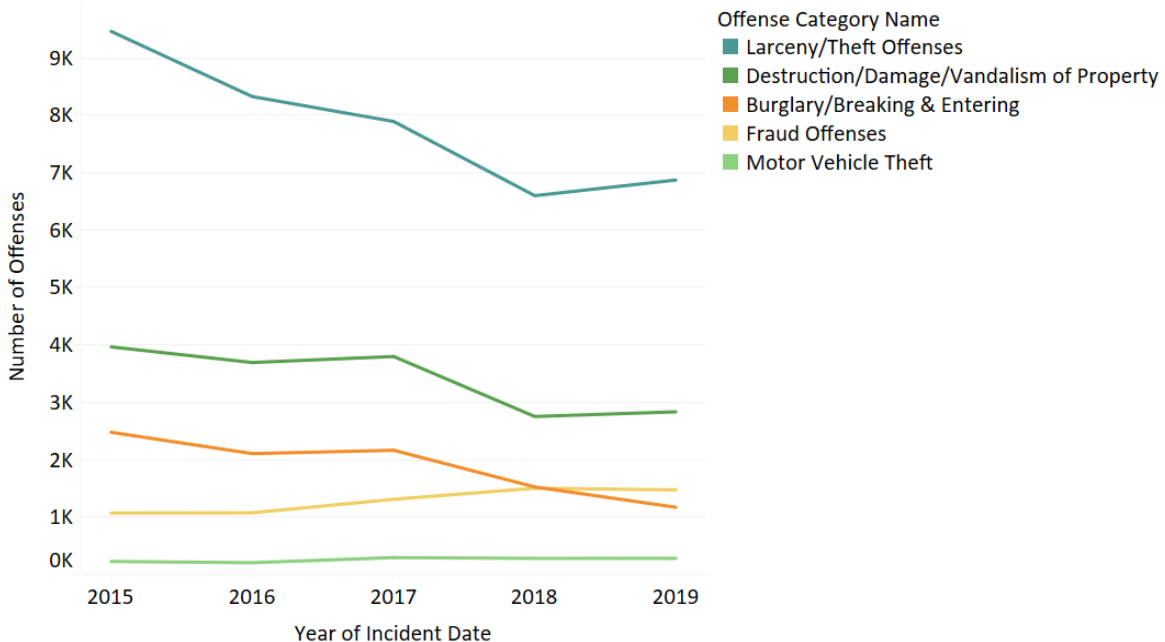
¹ [NIBRS User Manual](#)

Table 1. Property Crime Offenses by Year

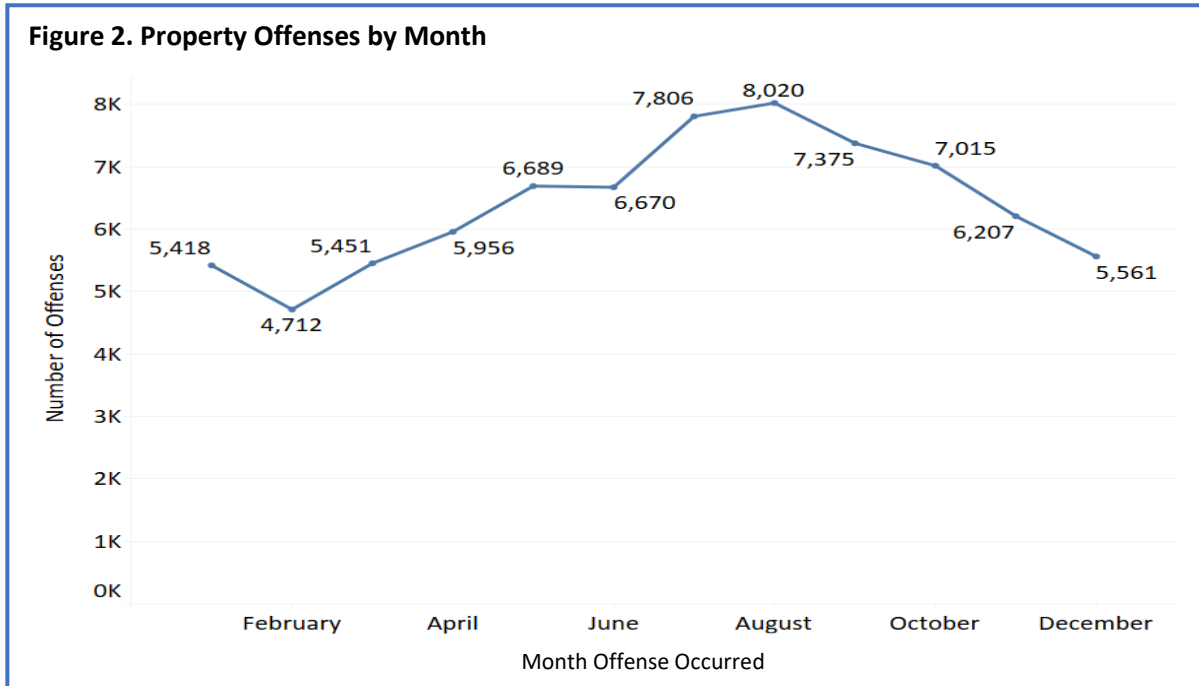
Offense Category Name	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Grand ..
Larceny/Theft Offenses	9,458	8,323	7,889	6,597	6,869	39,136
Destruction/Damage/Vandalism ..	3,963	3,691	3,796	2,751	2,833	17,034
Burglary/Breaking & Entering	2,476	2,105	2,163	1,524	1,170	9,438
Fraud Offenses	1,070	1,074	1,309	1,503	1,472	6,428
Motor Vehicle Theft	227	205	294	280	281	1,287
Stolen Property Offenses	238	260	249	188	161	1,096
Counterfeiting/Forgery	193	171	253	222	220	1,059
Robbery	180	114	122	85	71	572
Embezzlement	105	155	102	92	94	548
Arson	41	46	42	43	44	216
Extortion/Blackmail	7	10	15	11	20	63
Bribery	1	2				3
Grand Total	17,959	16,156	16,234	13,296	13,235	76,880

The top 5 types of offense –larceny/theft, destruction/damage/vandalism of property, burglary/breaking and entering, fraud, and motor vehicle theft – account for 95.37% (73,323) of all property crime offenses. Figure 1 illustrates the number of offenses recorded each year for the top 5 types of offense.

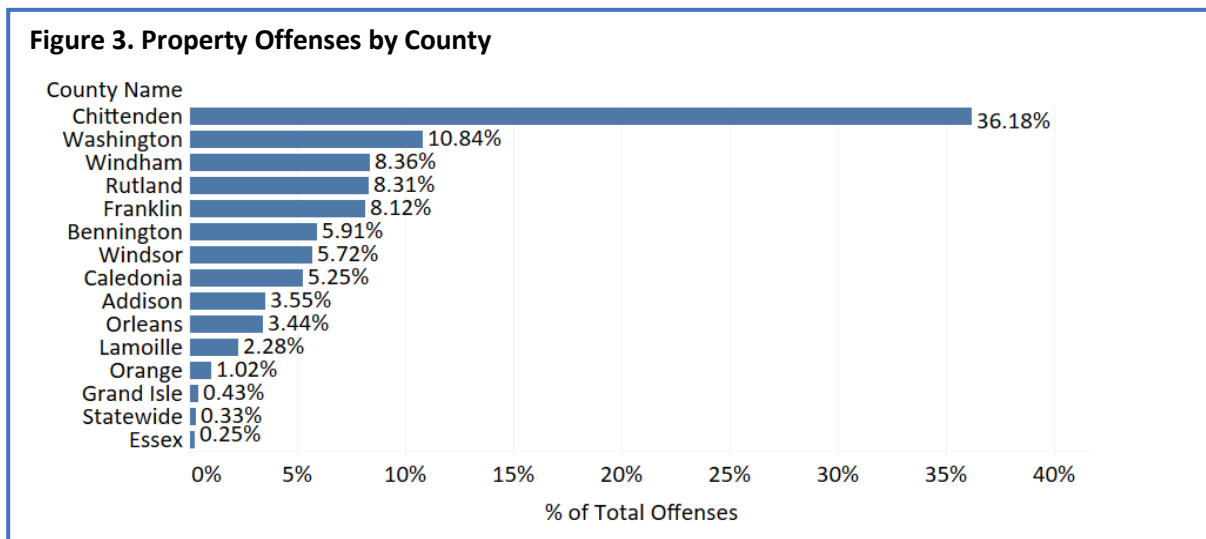
Figure 1. Property Crime Offenses by Year



During the 5 years analyzed, most property crime offenses occurred during August (8,020), with a similar high in July (7,806). The least number of offenses was reported in February (4,712) (see Figure 2).



Of the 76,880 total offenses, 27,813 (36.18%) occurred in Chittenden County and 8,333 (10.84%) in Washington. Next, Windham, Rutland, and Franklin counties each reported slightly more than 8% of total property crime offenses. Essex County reported the lowest percentage of offenses between 2015-2019 with 0.25% (189). Information for all counties can be found on Figure 3.



Given that approximately one-third of property crime incidents occur within Chittenden County, Figure 4 takes a closer look at the agencies responding to property crime offenses occurring in Chittenden County. The Burlington and South Burlington Police Departments (37.91% and 17.77%, respectively) responded to more than half of all incidents that occurred in Chittenden County.

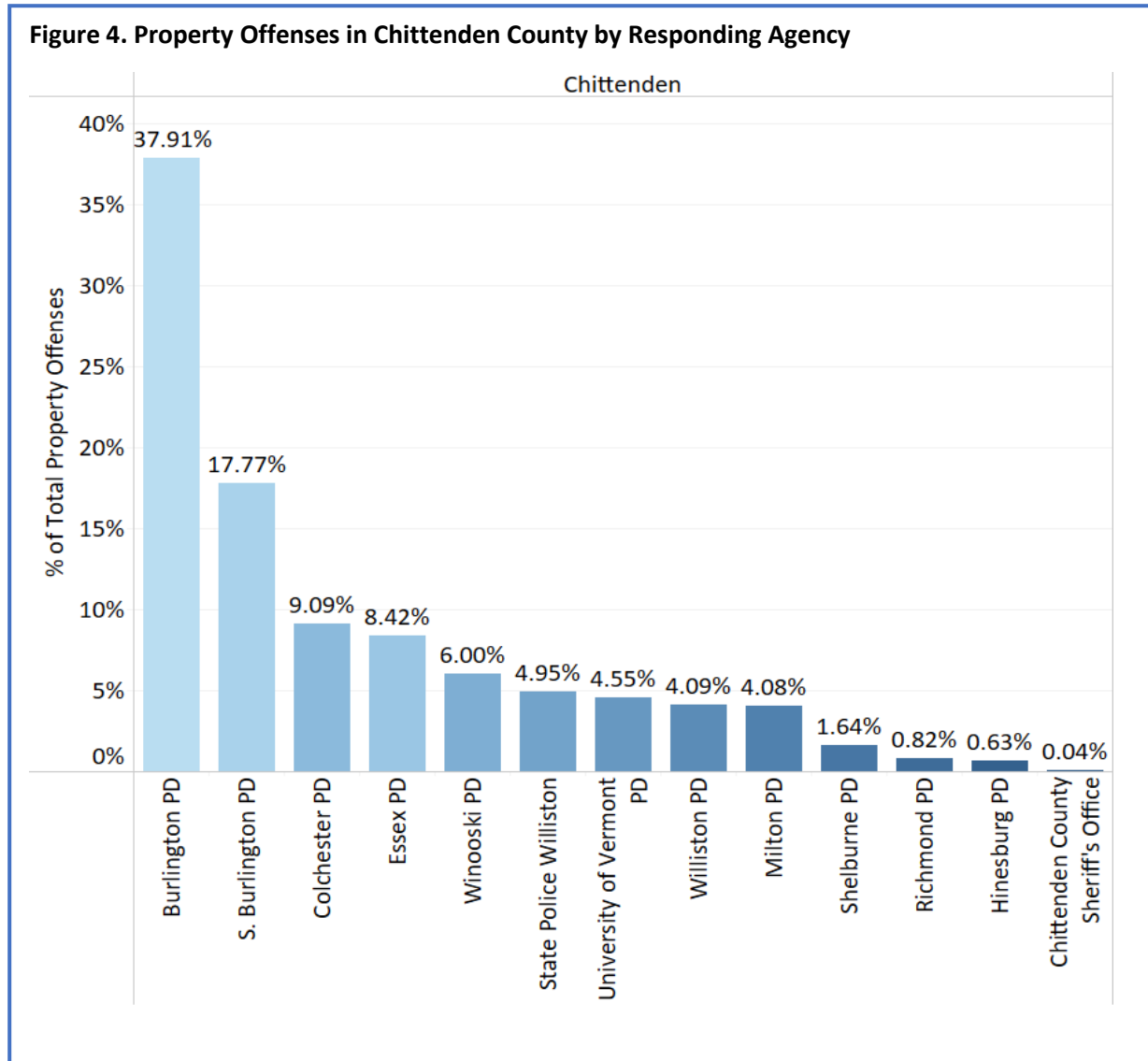
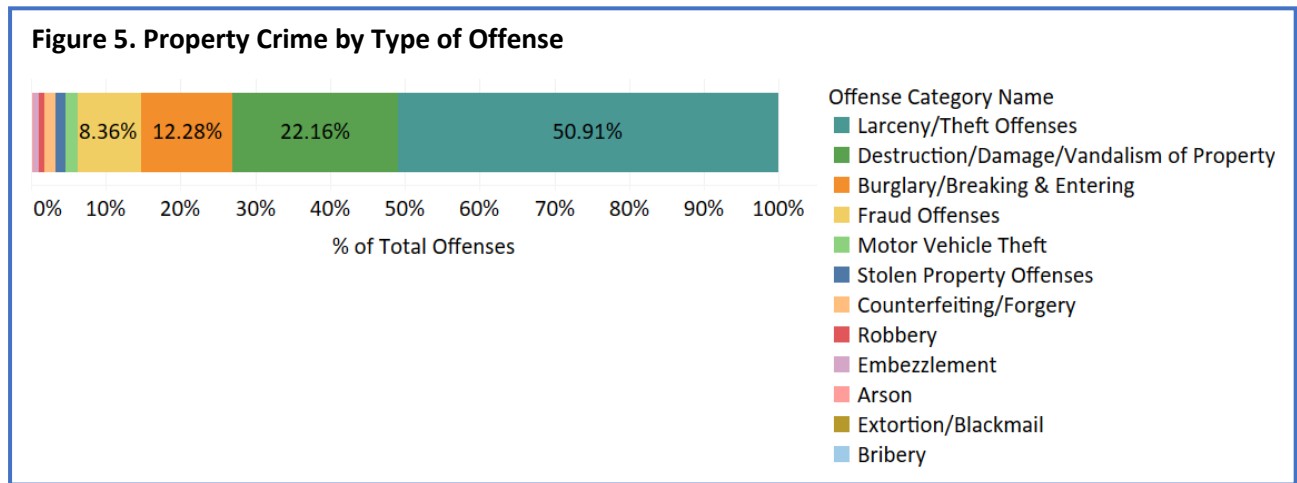
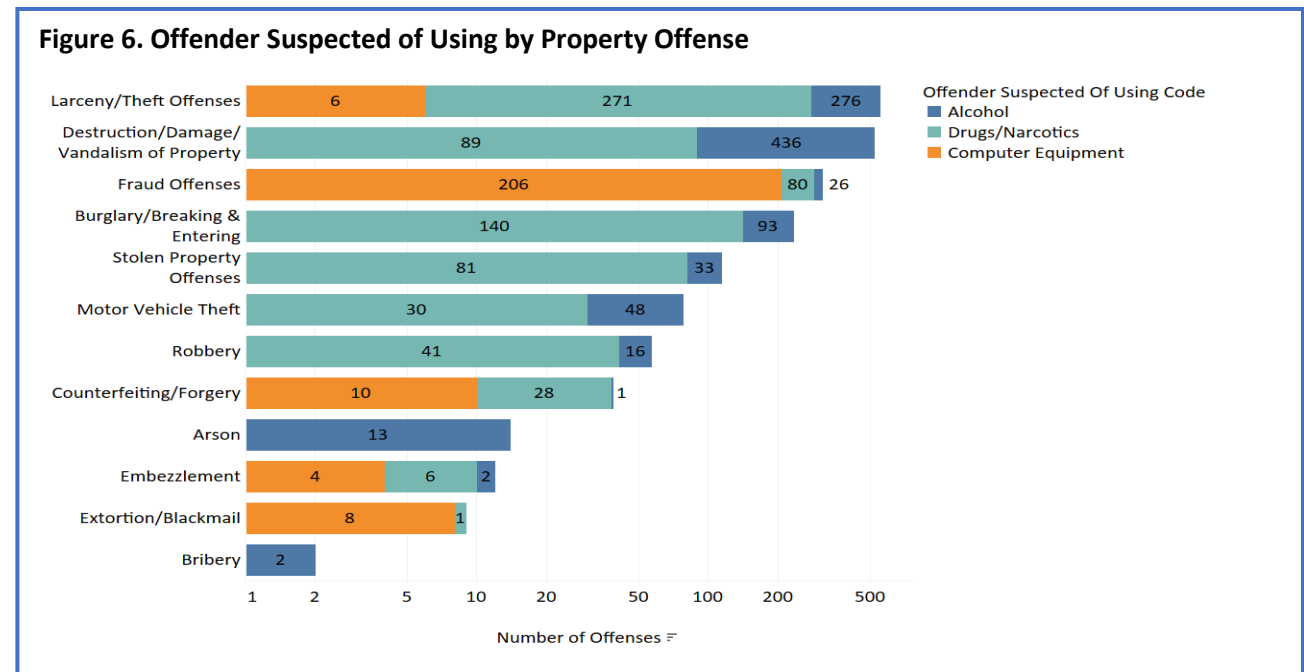


Figure 5 shows the most common property crime offense committed was larceny/theft (39,136 / 50.91%) followed by destruction/damage/vandalism of property (17,034 / 22.16%), burglary/breaking and entering (9,438 / 12.28%), and fraud (6,428 / 8.36%). Eight offenses – motor

vehicle theft, counterfeiting/forgery, stolen property, robbery, embezzlement, arson, extortion/blackmail, and bribery – comprise the remaining 6.29%.



NIBRS data capture when an offender is suspected of using drugs shortly before or during the incident, as well as whether offenders were suspected of using computer equipment to perpetrate the crime. Offenders were suspected of using substances in a total of 1,835 (2.39%) offenses, of which 913 (1.19%) offenses involved offenders suspected of using alcohol and 687 (0.89%) offenses in which an offender was suspected of using drugs/narcotics (see Figure 6 below). Offenders were suspected of using computer equipment in 235 (0.31%) of property crime offenses. Most of these offenses involved fraud (206).



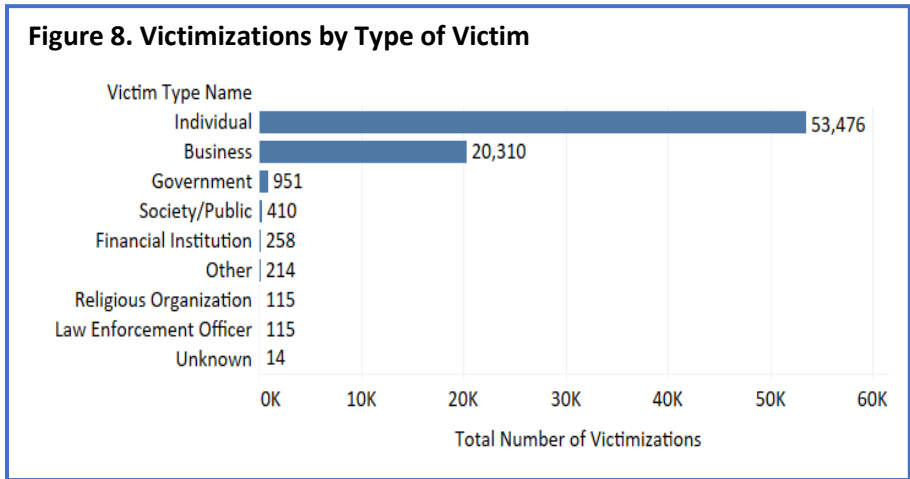
Victimization

Between 2015 and 2019 there were a total of 71,298 victims of property crime who experienced 75,863 victimizations. For a better understanding of how victims are harmed by offenses, NIBRS records the number of times victims were victimized during an incident. A victim may experience several different types of harm (e.g., being assaulted and having your wallet stolen during a robbery) during one property crime incident. Additionally, they might experience the same type of harm multiple times during the course of one incident (e.g., having multiple credit cards stolen and used without authorization).

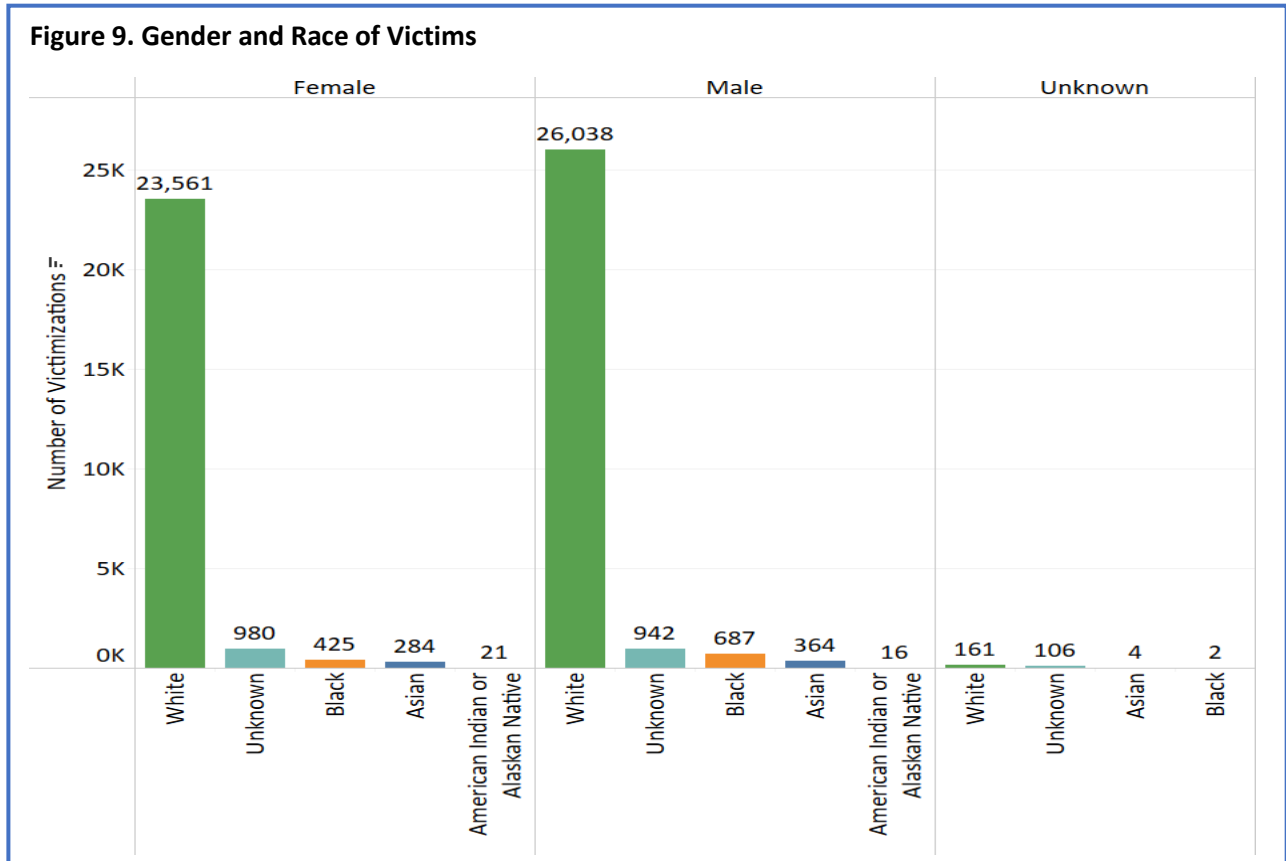
Victims commonly experienced larceny/theft which accounted for 39,812 (52.48%) of all 75,863 victimizations (see Figure 7). Next, destruction/damage/vandalism of property comprised 24.99% (18,961) of victimizations and burglary/breaking & entering accounted for 14.37% (10,905). The remaining 6.16% of victimizations consisted of eleven offenses. These trends are similar for different types of victims (i.e., individuals, business).



Figure 8 illustrates that most property crime victimizations happened to individuals (53,476 / 70.49%) and businesses (20,310 / 26.77%). The remaining 2.74% (2,077) of victimizations are detailed on Figure 8.

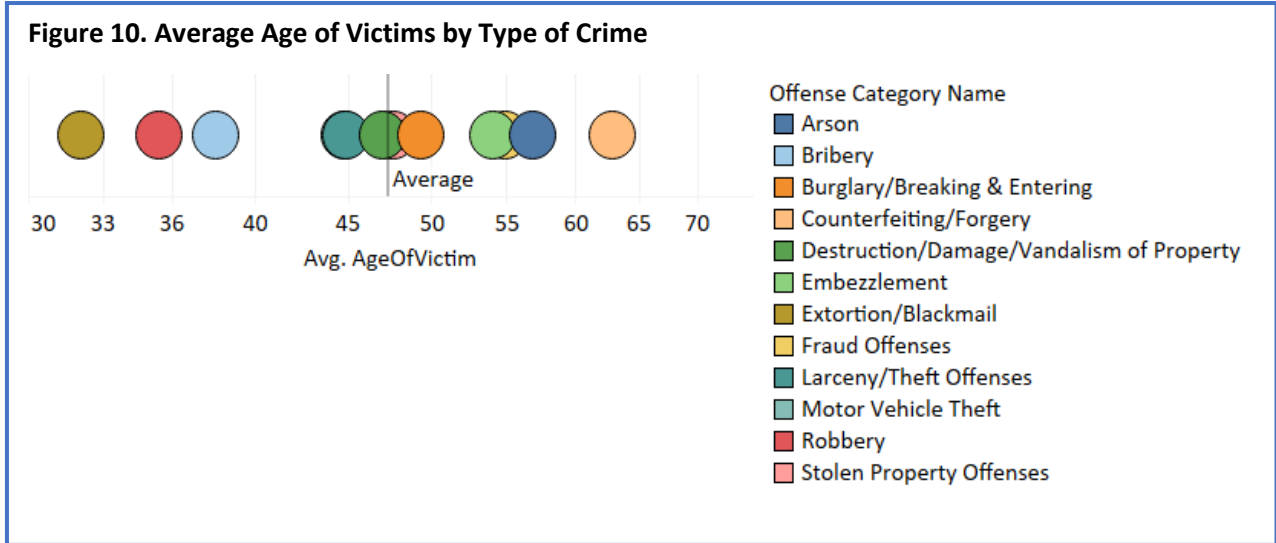


Below, Figure 9 shows that of the 53,476 total property crime victimizations experienced by individuals, 93.05% (49,760) happened to victims who were White. Males experienced 52.45% of



victimizations, while Females experienced 47.26% of victimizations.² The victim’s sex was unknown for 273 (0.36%) of victimizations and race was unknown for 3.79% (2,028).

Victims’ average age was 47.43 and ranged from 32.09 to 62.83. Specific averages varied by type of property crime. For example, the average age of robbery victims was 35.44 and 56.85 for victims of arson. Figure 10 below details the average age of victims by each type of property crime.

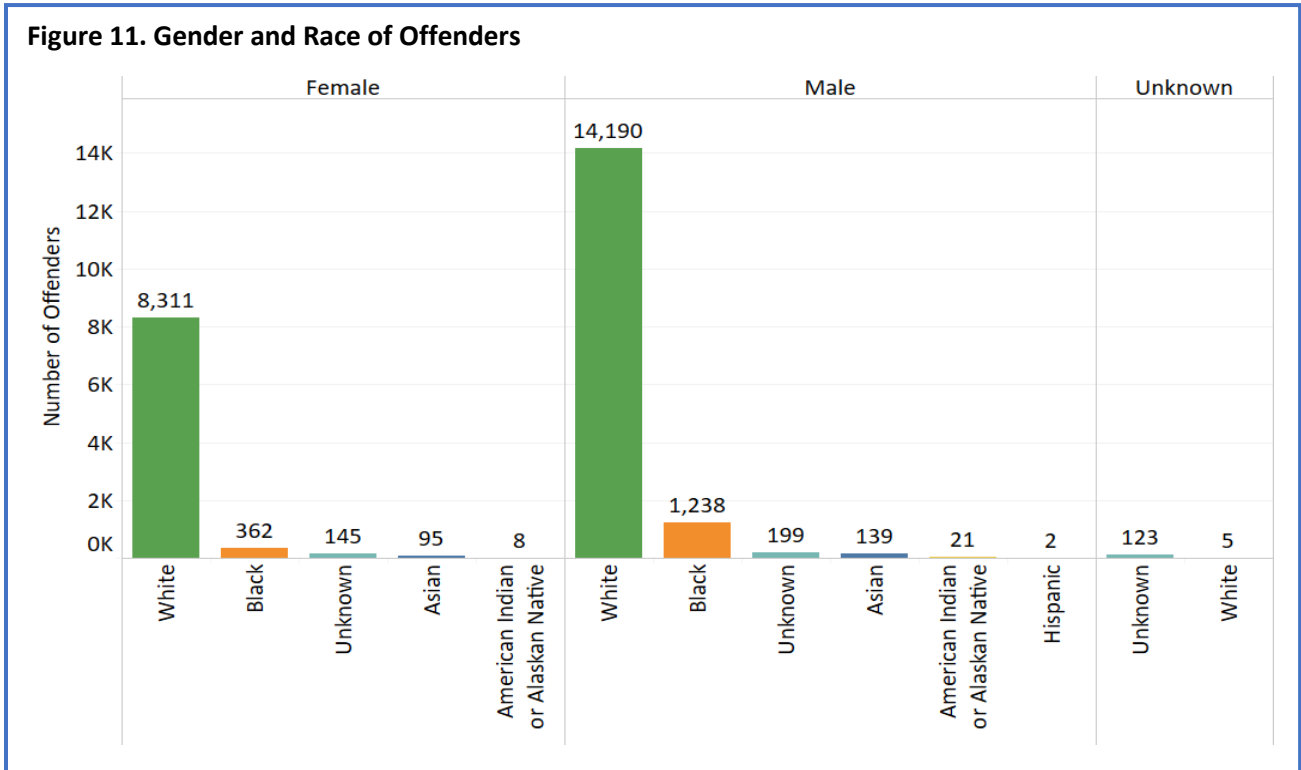


Offender and Arrestee Demographics

There was a total of 70,923 property crime offenders recorded between 2015 and 2019. Most offenders were unknown (46,085 / 64.89%) and therefore, demographic information was not available. It is expected that a large portion of offenders would be unknown because victims are not always present when the crime is committed. Of the 24,838 known offenders, most were White males (14,190 / 57.13%) followed by White females (8,311 / 33.46%). Next, Black males comprised 4.98% (1,238) of known offenders and then 1.46% (362) were Black females. Below, Figure X shows the demographic breakdown of all offenders. Sex was unknown for 128 (0.52%) offenders and race information was unknown for 1.38% (344) of offenders.

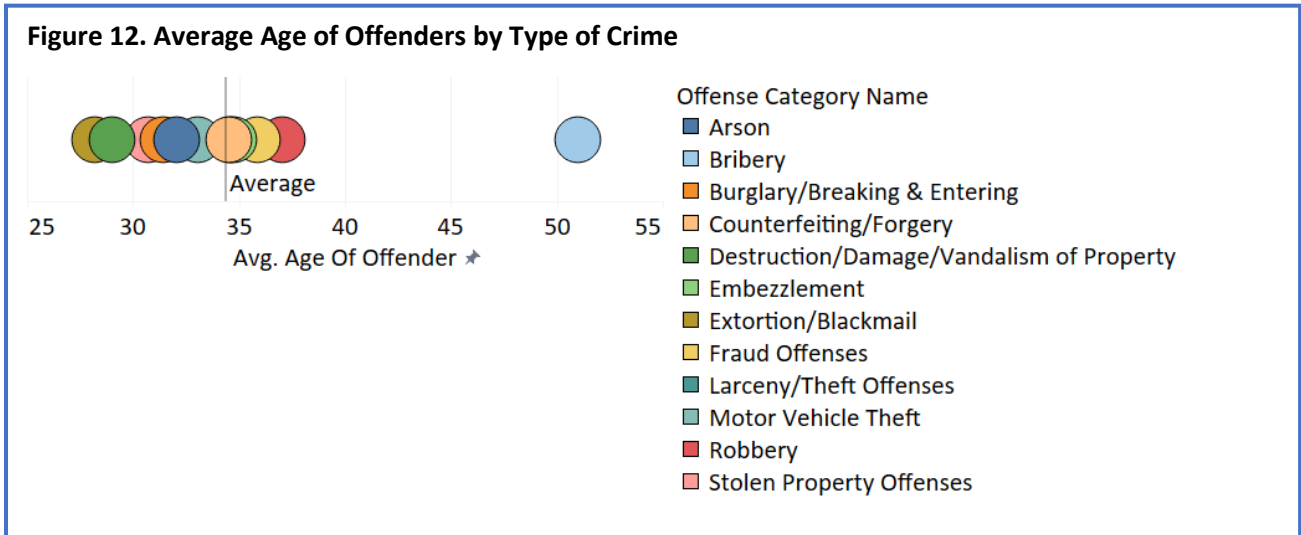
² NIBRS records information about the sex of the victim and gives law enforcement 3 categories to choose from- Male, Female, or Unknown.

Figure 11. Gender and Race of Offenders

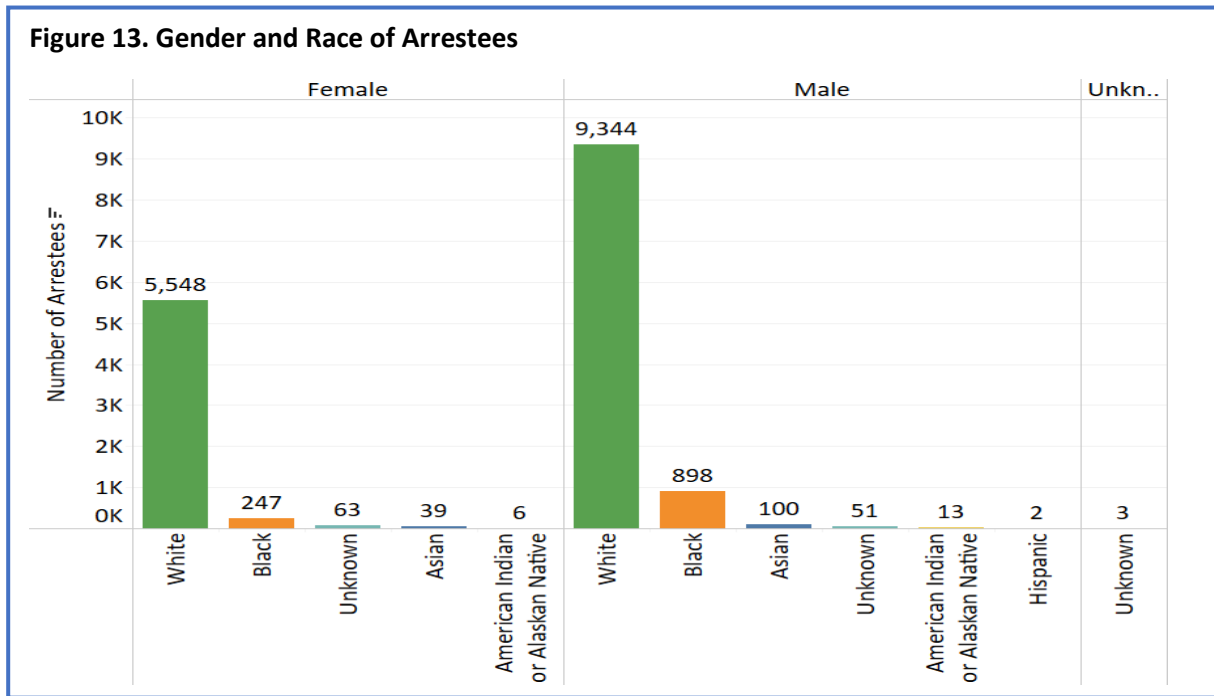


Offenders' average age was 33.50 and ranged from 28.19 to 51. Again, the average age varied by type of crime. Below, Figure 12 illustrates the average age of offenders by type of property crime.

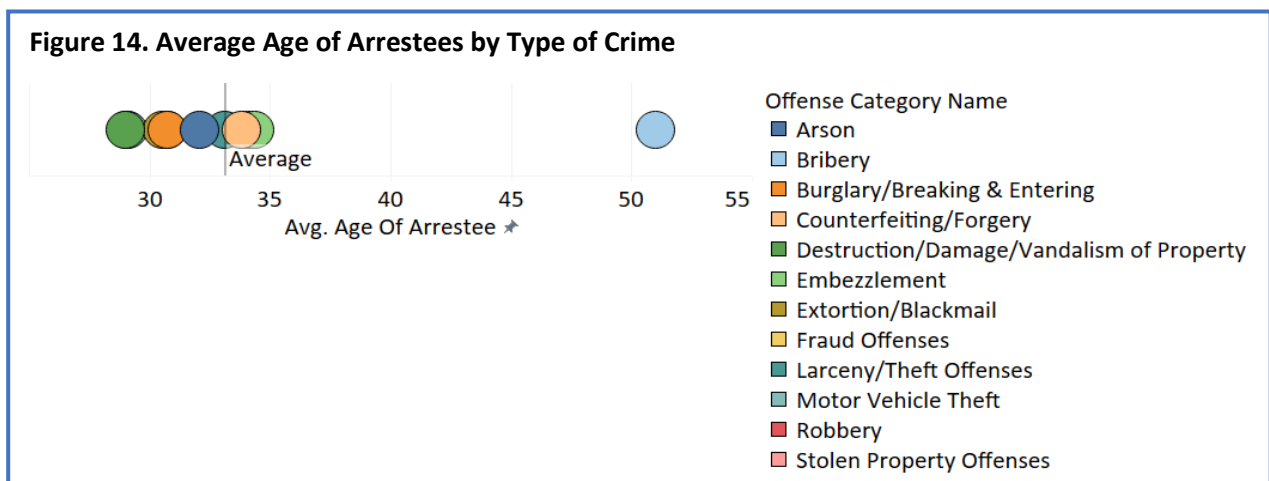
Figure 12. Average Age of Offenders by Type of Crime



Of the 70,923 property offenders, a total of 16,314 people were arrested for property crime offenses between 2015 and 2019. Most arrestees were White males (9,344 / 57.28%) followed by White females (5,548 / 34.01%). Next, Black males comprised 5.50% (898) of known arrestees and then 1.51% (247) were Black females. Figure 13 shows the demographic breakdown of all arrestees. Sex was Unknown for 3 arrestees and race information was unknown for 114 of arrestees.

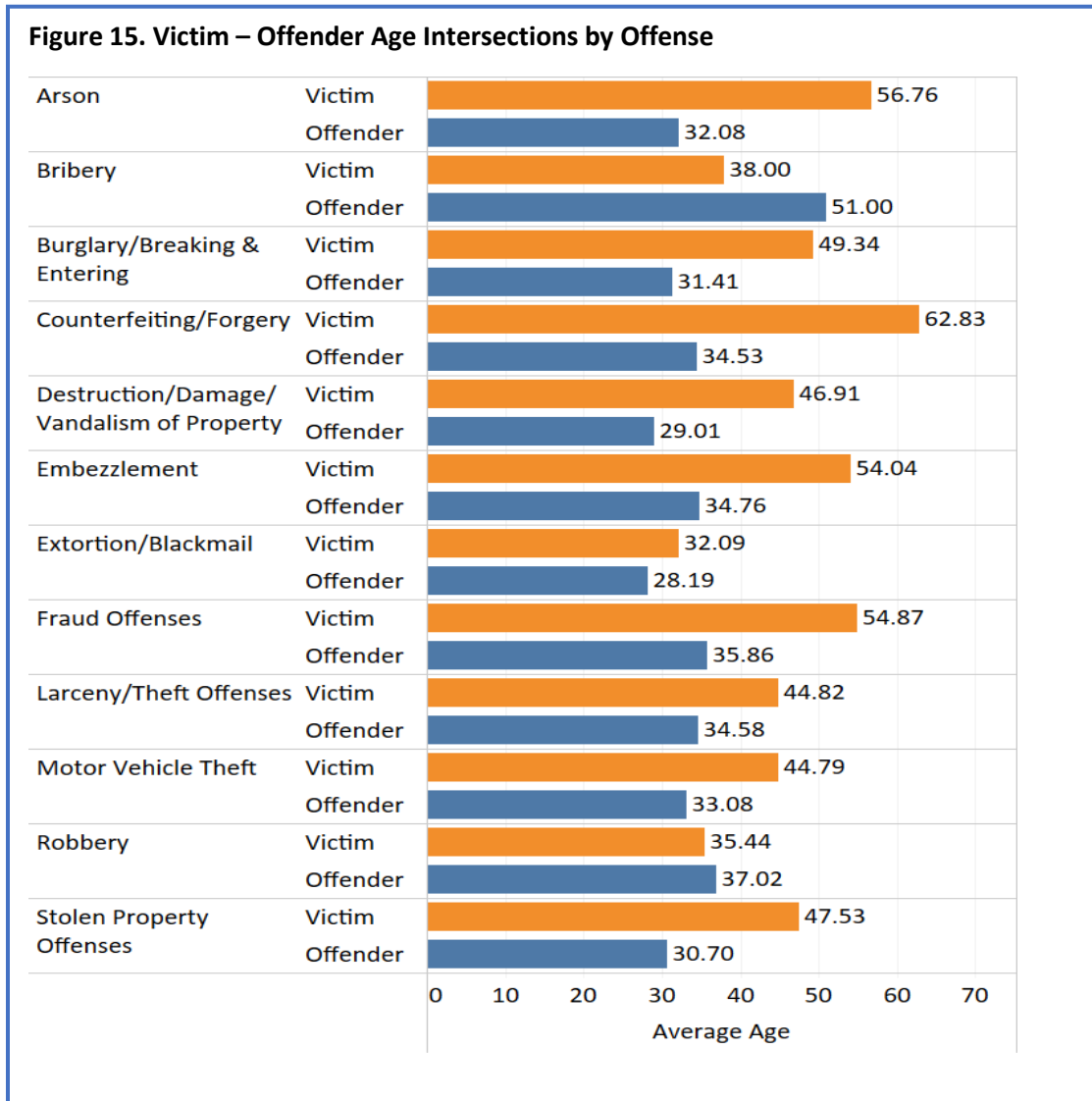


Arrestees' average age was 32.05 and ranged from 28.98 to 51. Figure 14 illustrates the average age of offenders by type of property crime.



Victim-Offender Age Intersections

Figure 15 compares the average age of victim to the average age of the offender for each property crime offense category. On average, victims are older than offenders for all property crime offense categories with a couple of exceptions. The average age of bribery victims is 38 while offenders are 51 on average; however, these averages are based on a very small number of offenses (3). Next, robbery victims and offenders are close in age on average with victims being slightly younger than offenders.



Conclusion

NIRBS data offer a rich source of information about property crimes in Vermont. Between 2015 and 2019, there were 76,880 property crimes recorded in NIBRS by law enforcement in Vermont. Many of these offenses occurred in Chittenden County (36.18%), while Washington County accounted for 10.84% of total incidents. Windham, Franklin, and Rutland counties each reported for slightly more than 8% of property crime incidents. The majority of offenses were larceny/theft offenses (50.91%) followed by destruction/damage/vandalism of property (22.16%). These offenses were committed by 70,923 offenders against 71,298 victims. During the 5 years analyzed, a total of 16,314 offenders were arrested. Continued monitoring of NIBRS property crime data and production of annual reports on property crime trends will help law enforcement and other stakeholders focus efforts and utilize resources more efficiently.