

# Serious crime on increase in Watsonville

## Picture is brighter in rest of county

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Serious crime rose in Watsonville but dropped or held steady in the unincorporated areas of Santa Cruz County during 1993.

Statewide, the state Department of Justice reported Tuesday that crime in all major categories but one — murder — declined in 1993 when compared to 1992.

But in Watsonville, the city police department reported substantial statistical increases in murders, robberies, vehicle thefts and larcenies.

Police Chief Terry Medina was out of town this morning and unavailable for comment.

In the unincorporated areas, the picture was brighter, with vehicle thefts the only crime category showing an increase.

<b>Watsonville</b>		
Crime	1992	1993
Murder	0	1
Rape	14	12
Robbery	65	128
Assault	277	206
Burglary	405	399

Vehicle theft	141	199
Larceny	1589	1729
Arson	15	11

### Unincorporated areas of Santa Cruz County

Murder	5	5
Rape	38	32
Robbery	81	75
Assault	500	493
Burglary	1,272	1,175
*Veh. theft	258	271
Larceny	2,564	2,615

\*Combined SCSO and CHP reports

Statewide, rapes, robberies, assaults, burglaries and car thefts decreased by an average 6 percent. Murders increased by 5 percent.

### Statewide

Crime	1992	1993
Murder	2,973	3,121
Rape	8,196	7,529
Robbery	99,890	96,213
Assault	136,558	131,126
Burglary	266,382	252,604
Veh. theft	217,002	209,137
Larceny	575,927	554,569
Arson	15,510	14,253

The state announcement came

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amid continuing debate over whether the state can afford new "Three Strikes, You're Out" anti-crime legislation and an uproar over the pending parole of convicted rapist Melvin Carter.

State Attorney General Dan Lungren, releasing crime statistics at a Sacramento news conference, said Californians are more concerned than usual about crime now because violence has become increasingly vicious, senseless, and random.

"This is a hopeful report," with the exception of homicides, said Lungren, commenting on the statewide figures.

Younger people are committing more of the murders, without remorse, Lungren said.

Some Californians, who did not believe crime could happen to them, have come to the shocked realization that they are not immune, he said.

Lungren blamed much of the murder problem on the "destruction of the family" and a culture of violence that popularizes crime.

The attorney general sidestepped reporters' questions aimed at whether television news emphasizes crime too heavily and

whether the current public obsession with crime has been fostered for political reasons.

The 1993 state Justice Department statistics, based on numbers from the 63 law-enforcement jurisdictions that serve populations of 100,000 or more, indicate that six major categories of crime, including murder, declined an overall 4.3 percent in 1993 compared to the previous year.

Overall, the number of violent crimes declined 3.9 percent and property crimes, by 4.5 percent.