



## Oregon Drug Arrest Trends

Prepared by the Oregon Criminal Justice Commission (November 2009)

### Background:

In 2006 in response to the meth epidemic Oregon broke out the drug crimes by type and possession, manufacturing and delivery which allowed the state to track drug arrests. The data source is the State Police Law Enforcement Data System (LEDS) where all police agencies report all arrests.

Also, Oregon law enforcement staffing increased slightly from 1.5 sworn officers per 1,000 population in 2006 to 1.6 officers per 1,000 in 2007 and 2008. While this does not necessarily mean a directly proportionate increase in the number of officers on patrol in the community (many officers are assigned to staff jails) it does mean that the number of officers on patrol have been relatively constant so changes in arrests are not a result of fewer officers.

Finally, in order to achieve a better look at overall trends the Criminal Justice Commission (CJC) uses a six month rolling average so actual arrests per month may differ from the numbers CJC reports.

### Statewide trends:

- From a high of 1817 arrests per month in November of 2006 Oregon dropped to a low of 1277 arrests per month in September 2008 and the average has leveled off at about 1370 arrests per month since August of 2009 (through October).
- The largest portion of these arrests are meth related (40 percent). But the drop in meth arrests has accounted for almost the entire drop in overall drug arrests in the state. Meth arrests dropped from 956 arrests per month in March 2007 to 541 arrests per month in October 2009 (a 43 percent drop). The steepest drop in meth arrests have come following the pseudoephedrine restrictions and have remained level or slightly lower since July 2008.
- This drop is mirrored in Clackamas County and with small fluctuations in Washington County. The exception is Marion County which has had an increase of 30 percent in meth arrests since July 2008, which appears to be related to a specific drug program run by Salem Police Department.
- There has been a 47 percent drop in the number of meth possession arrests since March 2007. This drop is potentially indicative of less meth in the state since the vast majority of these arrests are made by street cops, not drug teams.
- There has been an increase in the number of marijuana arrests since August of 2008 (236 arrests per month to a current average of 299 arrests per month). But

this comes with a caveat, every fall since we have been monitoring drug arrests marijuana arrests increase during harvests and the latest numbers come during the fall harvest.

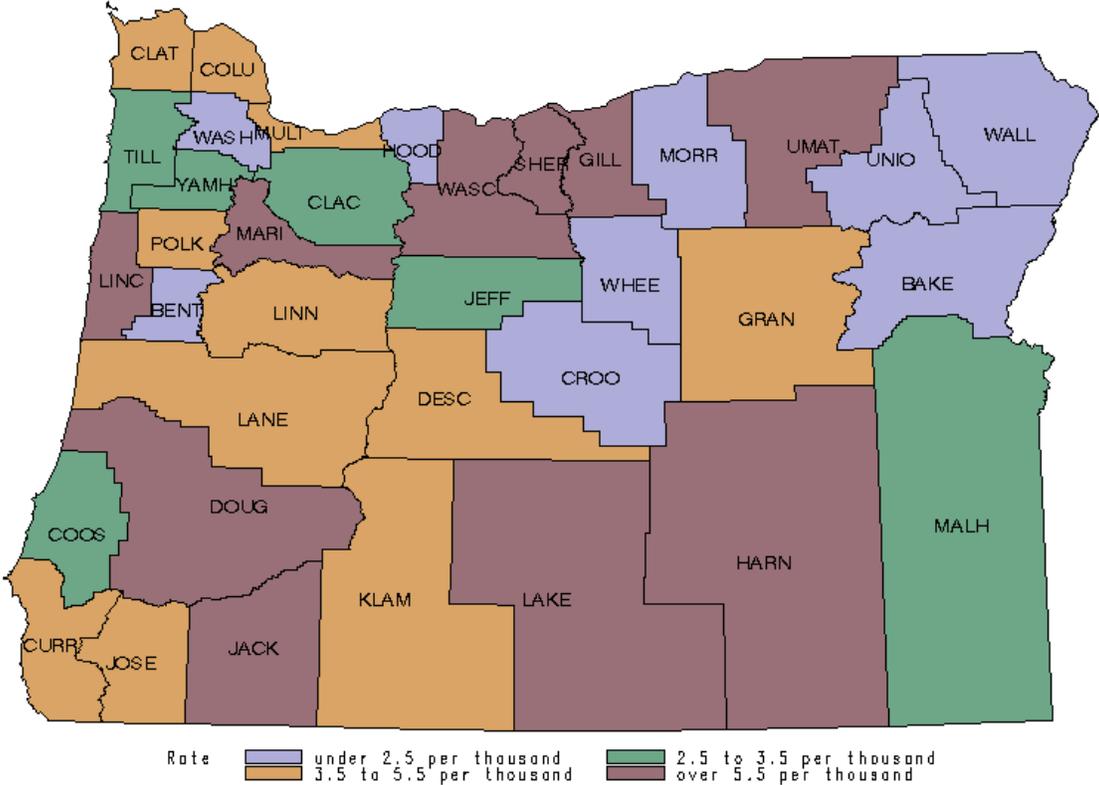
- There has been a spike in heroin arrests, rising from an average of 80 per month in May 2007 to 162 arrests per month in October 2009. The increase has been particularly sharp since December 2008 (93 arrests per month). Most of this increase can be attributed to the Portland metro area. But the increase has also been seen in Washington County (from 6 per month in January 2009 to 17 per month in October 2009) with small numerical increases in Clackamas and Marion counties. These three counties account for most of the remainder of the increase.

#### Multnomah County Trends:

- Multnomah County accounts of approximately 45 percent of all heroin arrests in the state and accounts for approximately 65 percent of the increase in heroin arrests since December 2008.
- Meth arrests continue to drop in Multnomah from a high of 126 per month in November 2006 to 65 per month in October 2009.

#### Overall Drug Arrest Rates

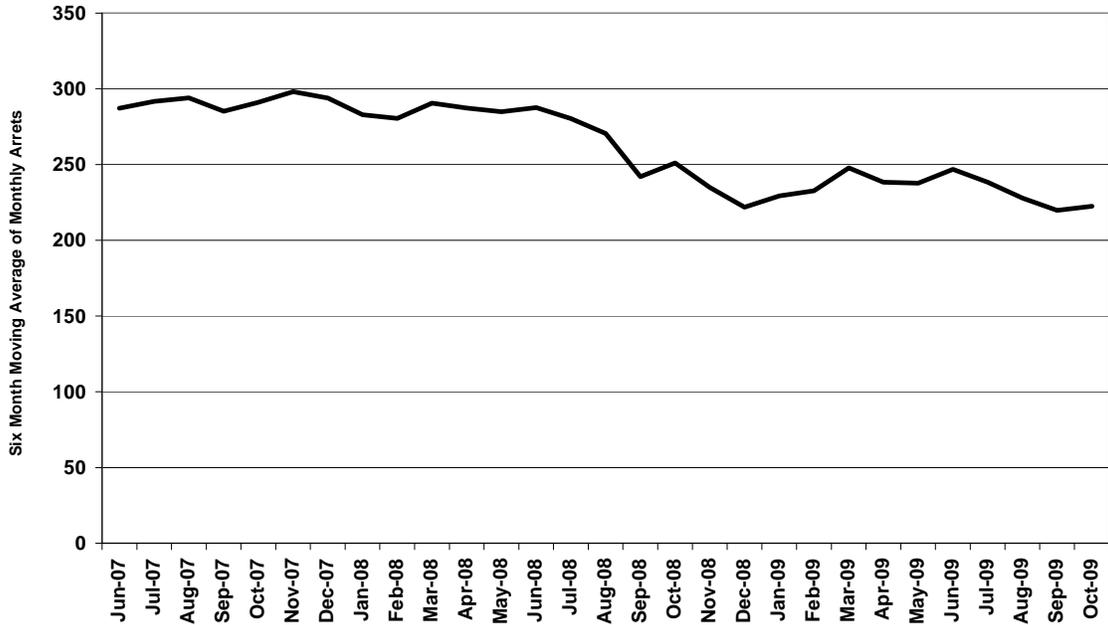
### Drug Arrests Nov 08 – Oct 09 Rate



Data Source: OSP LEDS

Portland Police Bureau Drug Arrest Charts

Portland Police Bureau All Drug Arrests



Portland Police Bureau Selected Drug Arrests

