

A&M crime rate drops 19%

by David Tharp
Battalion Reporter

Although the crime rate in Texas rose 1.3 percent in the last six months, crime decreased at Texas A&M University and in the city of Bryan while rising in College Station.

The overall increase is attributed to non-violent crimes, according to figures compiled by the Department of Public Safety.

Shoplifting, along with auto and bicycle thefts, are the main reasons for the local crime rate increase, said Maj. Edgar Feldman of the College Station Police Department.

"They will take just about anything that we pick up and walk away with," he said.

Another reason for the increase, Feldman said, is the statewide economic crunch that has spurred layoffs of area workers. Transient oilfield workers and northern migrants who find no work here sometimes resort to theft to get enough money to return home, he said.

In the first six months of 1982, College Station experienced 1,173 crimes, compared with 938 in all of 1981 — a 150 percent increase.

Texas A&M had a 19 percent decline with 433 crimes in 1982 compared with 537 for 1981, according to DPS figures. Bryan reported a 9 percent decline, reporting 1,513 crimes in 1982 compared with 1,670 in 1981.

According to the DPS Uniform Crime Reporting Bureau, the Texas crime rate for the first half of 1982 was up 5.4 percent or 1.3 percent if adjusted for population increase of 4.1 percent.

The adjusted rates for Bryan, College Station and Texas A&M were not available.

Besides the increases noted by Feldman, murders, rapes and robberies in College Station have doubled for the first half of 1982.

Two murders were reported in 1981, while four were reported in 1982. Four rapes were reported while eight were reported in 1982. Robberies rose from six in 1981 to 14 in 1982.

The reasons for the increase

of reported rapes is that people are more aware of the need to report rapes, Feldman said. He said that for every rape reported, six to 10 are not reported.

Since College Station has grown almost overnight, the police department needs the public to get involved in the Crimestoppers and Neighborhood Watch programs, Feldman said.

In response to the crime increase, the department has hired 14 more officers this year.

"In addition, we will be using a new computer system for crime analysis to see where and why traffic accidents and thefts are occurring," Feldman said. "Thefts and burglaries occur

mainly at apartment complexes, Feldman said.

In contrast to College Station, the University Police saw a decline in reported criminal activity during fiscal year 1982. According to the annual report there were 1,391 offenses reported compared with 1,526 the previous year resulting in a 9 percent decrease.

Reported property crimes at Texas A&M were 877 in fiscal year 1982 compared to 1,073 in 1981 for a 19 percent decrease. The dollar value of property lost in 1982 was \$230,106 with \$53,562 recovered for a 23 percent recovery rate. The recovery rate for fiscal year 1981 was 17 percent.

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Rail strike not yet hurting Texas

United Press International
Immediate effects of the nationwide strike of locomotive engineers appeared minimal in Texas, but an industry spokesman predicted a prolonged strike could harm west Texas grain producers, grocery distributors, Port of Houston traffic and trade with Mexico.

"A protracted rail strike would shut off transcontinental movements of freight via Houston (through the Port of Houston) with the railroads substituting for what normally would be

a long voyage (by ship) through the Panama Canal," said Frank Kenfield, manager of the Houston Chamber of Commerce's freight traffic division.

An estimated 5,400 railroad cars move in and out of the Port of Houston each day.

"If you have a protracted cutoff of the rail link in that service, that would necessitate re-scheduling a lot of ships," Kenfield said.

However, Kenfield and an industry spokesman said Monday the impact of the strike has been minimal because of the slowdown in traffic caused by the ailing national economy.

Produce distributors, who rely heavily on the trucking industry, reported no major problems Monday, the second day of the strike, but warned there could be problems in obtaining certain fresh foods if the strike continues.

"If you're looking at two days, three days, you're fine," said Mike Seidler, with the Aldorf Warehouse in Houston. "But if you're looking at several days, then we'll be in trouble."

And Elbert Harp, president of the Grain Sorghum Producers Association, said a long strike

could "throw a bottleneck into getting this year's crop into storage."

"We depend on the railroads to keep supplies of grain to the ports. There's a large number of ships at ports waiting to be loaded. To the extent we can't move grain there, it hurts our export situation," Harp said.

Sunray Coop manager Don Graham said the cooperative had to move 800 cars of grain to get the fall milo crop into storage.

"I don't anticipate the rail strike staying that long. If it does, it could be serious," he said.

The nationwide rail strike idled Amtrak Texas passengers. A spokesman for Amtrak said passengers holding tickets for travel during the strike could get refunds, exchange them for tickets at a later date or use them for travel by Greyhound or Trailways buses.

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\$1000	7	1:286	1:22	1:57
\$500	14	1:143	1:11	1:29
\$100	140	1:7.1	1:1	1:2.9
\$50	280	1:3.6	1:0.5	1:1.5
\$10	1,400	1:1.8	1:0.2	1:0.7
\$5	2,800	1:0.9	1:0.1	1:0.4
Total	3,936	1:0.26	1:0.02	1:0.1

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