

Wisconsin At A Glance



Average Annual Drug Arrest Rates by County, 2001 to 2003

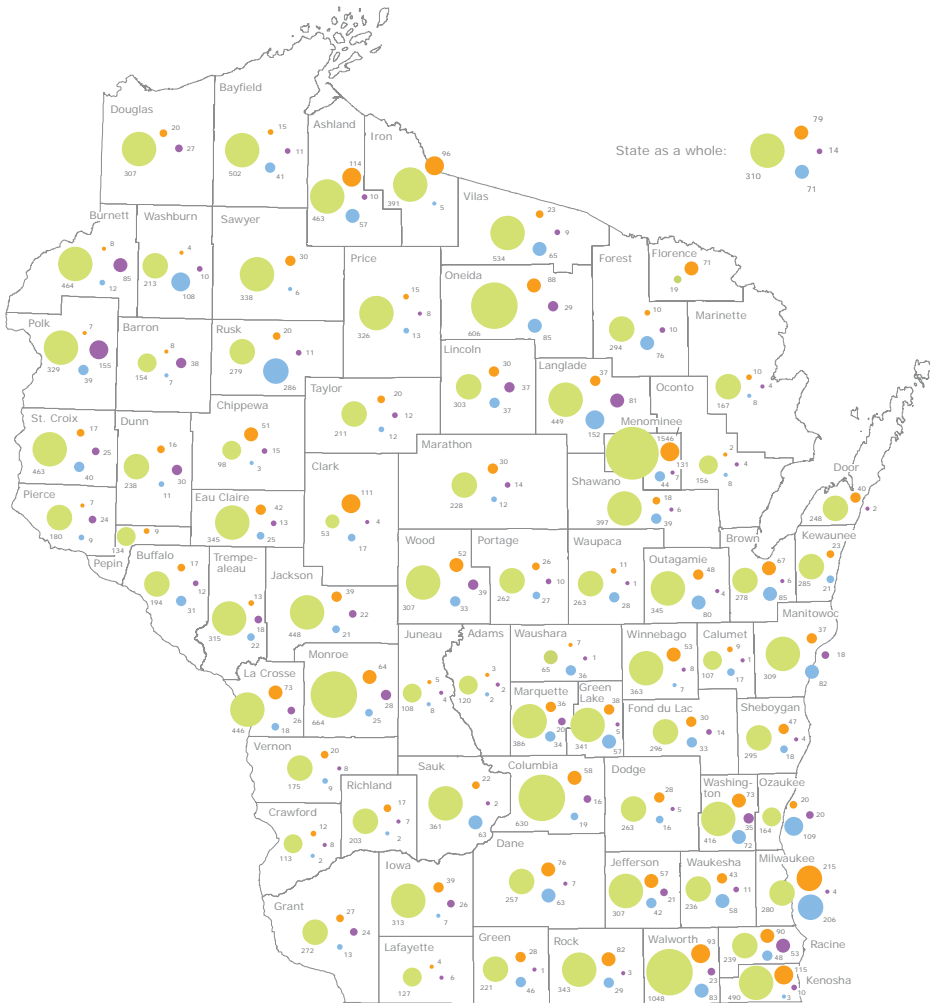
Drug abuse and drug trafficking create numerous costs for society, including the economic costs of lost productivity, property damage, hospital treatment, rehabilitation, policing, prosecution, and incarceration.

Arrest data provides an indirect measure of illegal drug activity. (No single, comprehensive measure is available; other indirect measures include surveys, substance abuse treatment admissions data, emergency department data, and drug seizure data.) The map gives a sense of the scale of drug activity, relative to population, in different Wisconsin counties (but see Note 1 for caveats), and reflects a number of general patterns that are indicated by other measures:

- Marijuana is the most readily available and abused drug throughout the state.
- Cocaine is also widely available and abused. In most counties, cocaine is the predominant drug indicated by the orange circle on the map. Milwaukee is the primary distribution hub for cocaine in Wisconsin. The Milwaukee area has also experienced significant heroin activity.
- Methamphetamine has been a major problem in western parts of the state, where it has crossed over from neighboring Minnesota and Iowa. In Polk and Barron counties, for example, methamphetamine is the predominant drug indicated by the purple circle on the map, and in Washburn County, by the blue circle. In other counties, methamphetamine arrests may be included in the purple or blue circle, or in both circles. (See Note 2.)
- Prescription painkillers (such as Percocet, Vicodin, and OxyContin) have contributed significantly to arrest numbers in some places. In Rusk County, for example, they are the predominant drug indicated by the blue circle on the map, and in Racine County, by the purple circle. In other counties, arrests related to these drugs may be included in the purple, blue, or orange circle, or in all three circles. (See Note 2.)

Note 1: Arrest rates are likely lower than the actual rates of drug activity since some drug violations are not detected, and the degree by which they are lower may vary between drug categories and between jurisdictions due to different levels of resources, different drug enforcement priorities, and different modes of drug abuse and distribution. In addition, arrest rates are inflated in jurisdictions where arrests include a significant number of nonresidents (since arrest rates are calculated on the basis of resident population). For example, the arrest rate for marijuana violations in Walworth County is due in part to visitors to the Alpine Valley Music Theatre, a large outdoor concert venue.

Note 2: The arrest data displayed on the map is collected using drug category names that are vague to some extent (these are the names that appear in the map legend). As a result, arrests for drugs that are not specifically mentioned in those names are sometimes reported under different drug categories by different jurisdictions. Because the county data shown on the map is made up of data reported by multiple jurisdictions, it is possible that arrests for a given drug are included in more than one of the circles shown for a county.



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- Marijuana
- Opium or Cocaine and Their Derivatives (Morphine, Heroin, Codeine)
- Synthetic Narcotics (Manufactured narcotics which can cause true drug addiction (Demerol, Methadone))
- Other (Dangerous Non-Narcotic Drugs (Barbiturates, Benzdrine))

Rates are per 100,000 population and are rounded to the nearest whole number. For rates that round to 0, no circle or number is shown.

Nine progressively larger circle sizes represent nine progressively larger numerical ranges. A tenth, largest circle size represents the largest number shown.

Calculations are based on drug arrests reported under the Wisconsin State Uniform Crime Reporting Program. All drug arrests have been included: adult and juvenile; sale/manufacturing and possession.

Data: Office of Justice Assistance, Wisconsin Department of Administration; Demographic Services Center, Wisconsin Department of Administration

