



CRIME IN THE SAN DIEGO REGION DURING THE FIRST HALF OF 2021

On a bi-annual basis, SANDAG works with local law enforcement agencies to compile regional crime statistics that are reported to the FBI through the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) program. With the release of data highlighting crime numbers for the first six months of 2021, this CJ Flash highlights some of the key findings, including how numbers have changed, both compared to the previous year (2020), as well as the same months in 2019, prior to the pandemic.

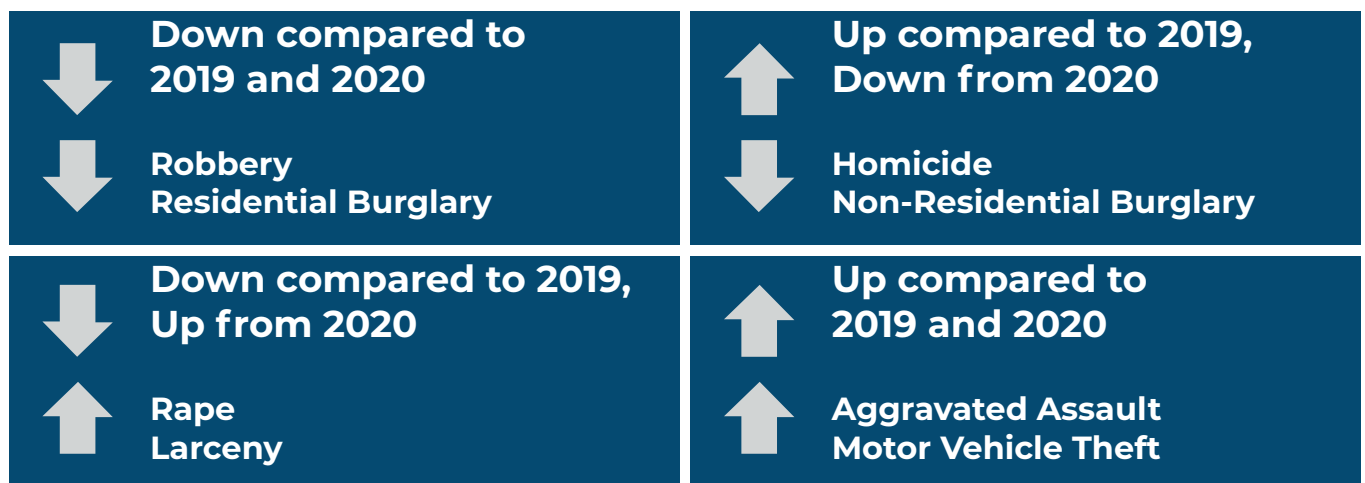
Highlight 1

There are four violent crimes here (homicide, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault) and three property (burglary, larceny, and motor vehicle theft) that are tracked as part of UCR statistics. While violent and property crime rates were both higher in the first half of 2021, compared to 2020 (14% and 10%, respectively), it is important to note that not all crimes increased or increased to the same degree. In addition, some crimes increased compared to last year when the stay-home order went into effect, but were around what they were, or lower than they were, prior to the pandemic. As Figure 1 shows:

- the number of robberies (-17% in 2019 and -7% in 2020) and residential burglaries (-22% and -4%, respectively) reported to date in 2021 were lower than the number reported in both previous comparison years
- there were fewer homicides (-11%) and non-residential burglaries (-2%) in 2021, compared to 2020, but more compared to 2019 (26% and 7%, respectively)
- rapes (23%) and larcenies (10%) both increased in number from 2020 to 2021, which could reflect less opportunity with the stay-home order, but were less than they were in 2019 (-1% and -4%, respectively)
- more aggravated assaults and motor vehicle thefts were reported at mid-year 2021 than in both 2020 (20% and 21%), and as in 2019 (21% and 19%)

Figure 1

How Many Crimes Were Reported to Law Enforcement in the San Diego Region in the First Six Months of 2021, Compared to 2019 and 2020



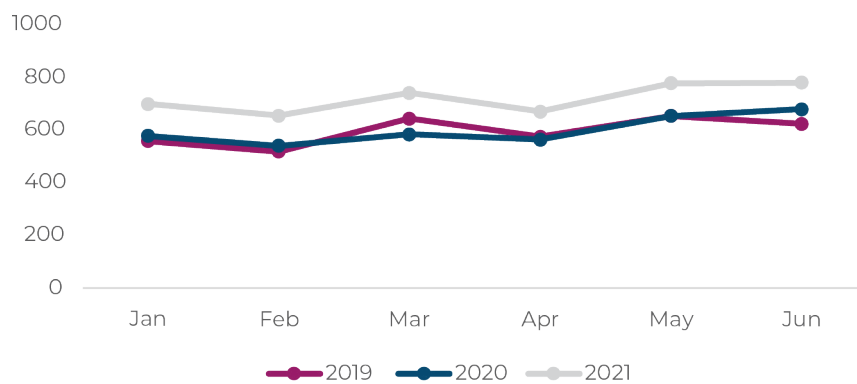


Highlight 2

Aggravated assault, which involve assaults either with a weapon or that result in great bodily injury, was the crime that increased the most in number from both 2019 (21%) and 2020 (20%). As Figure 2 shows, there have been a greater number of aggravated assaults reported each month to date in 2021, compared to the two previous years. In addition, aggravated assaults that involved the use of a firearm increased to an even larger degree (up 55% from both comparison years). In 2019 and 2020, 14% of aggravated assaults involved the use of a firearm, compared to 18% in 2021 (not shown).

Figure 2

Number of Aggravated Assaults Reported to Local Law Enforcement January to June 2019, 2020, and 2021 in the San Diego Region

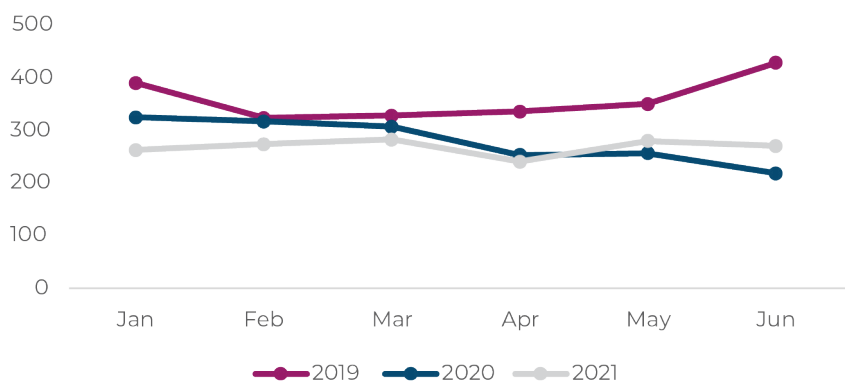


Highlight 3

During the stay-home order, SANDAG reported that residential burglaries were down, and non-residential burglaries were up, compared to 2019, which is consistent with more people staying home and fewer businesses open for business. How have the frequencies of these crimes changed more recently? As Figure 3 shows, 2019 consistently saw the greatest numbers of residential burglaries during the first six months of the year, with fewer and decreasing numbers during the first half of 2020. For 2021, there were fewer residential burglaries each month through April, with more being reported in May and June, consistent with a greater number of individuals possibly returning to work and engaging in more activities outside the home.

Figure 3

Number of Residential Burglaries Reported to Local Law Enforcement January to June 2019, 2020, and 2021 in the San Diego Region

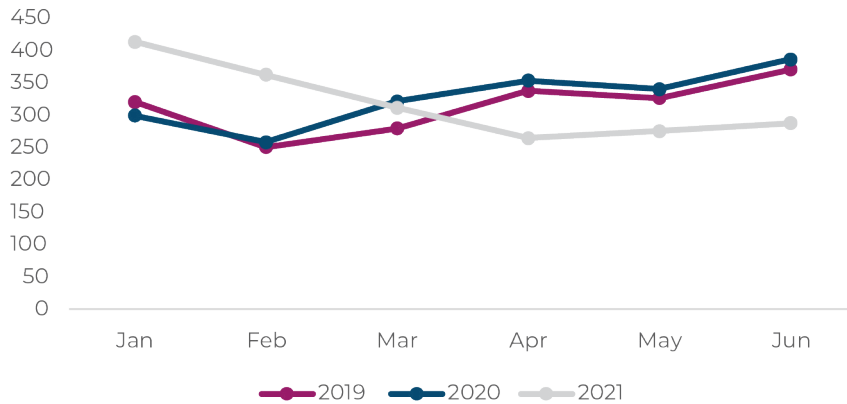




In comparison, non-residential burglaries showed a similar pattern for the first half of 2019 and 2020, although numbers were slightly higher in 2020. In 2021, there were a greater number of non-residential burglaries in January and February, compared to the two prior years, but a steady decline through April that resulted in fewer of these crimes reported between April and June.

Figure 4

Number of Non-Residential Burglaries Reported to Local Law Enforcement January to June 2019, 2020, and 2021 in the San Diego Region



Highlight 4

Larceny is the most common crime reported to law enforcement (54% of the UCR reported offenses) and increased ten percent from 2020 to 2021. However, it was four percent lower than it was in 2019 and the different larceny types did not show the same patterns of change, reflecting at least in part, opportunity to commit the different types of offenses. Theft of motor vehicle parts/accessories increased the most from mid-year 2020 to mid-year 2021 (86%, from 782 to 1,456), with double-digit increases also seen in theft from motor vehicles (15%), the most common type of larceny, and theft of bicycles (13%). Pickpocketing and shoplifting were lower over the past six months, compared to the first half of 2020 and there were small increases for theft from buildings and theft from coin-operated machines/other types of larcenies.

Figure 5

Percent Change Mid-Year 2020-2021 by Larceny Type, San Diego Region

