

Vermont Federation of Sportsman's Clubs
Vermont's 2021 Ranking
Firearms Recovered at Crime Scenes & Straw Purchases

Overview

Given that the number of people who went to a gun store, bought a gun and then ended their lives with it is very small (anecdotal evidence seems to only show 2 such suicides in Vermont in the last 10 years), the rationale for expanding a Waiting Period was augmented to suggest that Vermont has an "*epidemic*" of firearms being purchased in Vermont that are then involved in crime in other states.

That does not seem to be true, especially in relation to other states, nor is it true that recovered firearms that originated in Vermont are responsible for a high number of homicides.

The first of the two following sections provide insight into Vermont's position in regards to firearms that were recovered at a crime scene that were later traced back to having been originally purchased in Vermont.

The second section provides insight into Vermont's position in regards to "Time-to-Crime" for recovered firearms, with "Time-to-Crime" being the time that elapsed between when a traced firearm was originally purchased versus when it was later used in crime.

There is no question that straw purchases do occur, and it is criminal activity that supports straw purchases.

Based on the ATF data this report provides, straw purchases **do not** seem to be a pervasive problem in Vermont as it clearly is in other states, and it most assuredly is not an "*epidemic*" as described by an H.230 witness in his testimony.

For every straw purchaser that is delayed with a waiting period, there are one or more people who may need immediate defense to protect themselves from the same prohibited persons that are obtaining firearms illegally through straw purchases.

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BATFE Trace Data

The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (BATFE) attempts to trace, as best as they can, firearms that are recovered as a result of crime back to the state where the firearms were originally sold.

For reference, Vermont had **51,549** background checks performed per FBI data in 2021, with that data found [here](#). ATF Trace data on Vermont can be found [here](#).

In examining ATF Trace data as it pertains to Vermont, 3 metrics seem important:

- The total firearms recovered that originated in VT,
- The total firearms recovered that originated in VT and were recovered in VT, and
- The total firearms recovered that originated in VT, but were recovered out-of-state.

Total Firearms Recovered that Originated in VT

Vermont had the **SECOND LOWEST** Total Firearms recovered in the nation at **424**, with Rhode Island being the absolute lowest at **393**.

Total Firearms Recovered that Originated in VT and were Recovered in VT

Vermont had the **SECOND LOWEST** Total Firearms that originated in Vermont and were recovered in Vermont in the nation at **162**, with Wyoming being the absolute lowest at **135**.

Total Firearms Recovered that Originated in VT but were Recovered Out-Of-State

Vermont had the **THIRD LOWEST** source of firearms recovered out-of-state at **272**, New Jersey was second lowest at **263**, with Rhode Island being the lowest at **116**.

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Time-to-Crime

An exceptionally useful number for determining how much “straw purchasing” occurs is the measurement of the Time-To-Crime, or the amount of time that elapses between when a firearm is bought versus when it was recovered at a crime scene. Short amounts of time may be an indication of “straw purchase” activity, and this information is captured by the BATFE when tracing recovered guns.

For the period 1/1/2021 to 12/31/2021, Vermont-specific data on Time-to-Crime can be found [here](#).

Vermont's Average Time-To-Crime

Vermont's average Time-to-Crime was 7.8 years, whereas the national average was 6.24.

Time-To-Crime Under 3 Months

Vermont had the SECOND LOWEST number of firearms recovered at 22, Wyoming was the lowest at 17.

Time-To-Crime 3 Months to Under 7 Months

Vermont had the LOWEST number of firearms recovered at 10, Wyoming was second lowest at 13.

Time-To-Crime 7 Months to Under 1 Year

Vermont had the LOWEST number of firearms recovered at 17, Wyoming was second lowest at 22.

Time-To-Crime 1 Year to Under 2 Years

Vermont TIED Wyoming with the LOWEST number of firearms recovered at 26.

Time-To-Crime 2 Years to Under 3 Years

Vermont had the LOWEST number of firearms recovered at 16, Wyoming was second lowest at 19.

Time-To-Crime 2 years to under 3 Years and Over

Vermont had the LOWEST number of firearms recovered at 103, Wyoming was second lowest at 131.

Recovered Vermont Firearms Involved with Homicide

Vermont had the LOWEST number of firearms recovered that were involved with a homicide at 3, Maine was second lowest at 4.