

Despite rise in homicides, Annapolis gun seizures down



Three of the six guns seized by Annapolis Police in the recent heroin bust in October 2015. Last year was a peak year for gun seizures, and city police said the numbers this year are down. (File photo by Ulysses Munoz / Staff)



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DECEMBER 14, 2016, 8:25 PM

Despite homicides in Annapolis reaching the highest number in city history, police have seized fewer guns and made fewer firearm-related arrests in 2016 than they did the previous year.

Annapolis police recovered 67 firearms so far in 2016; compared to 90 the previous year — a decrease of 25.5 percent. The numbers include guns seized in crimes as well as those that were found, said Cpl. Amy Miguez, a department spokeswoman.

Police found five handguns Oct. 24 outside in the Robinwood neighborhood following the non-fatal shooting of a 19-year-old man in the 1300 block of Tyler Avenue. It remains unclear whether any of the weapons are connected to the shooting.

Police also made fewer gun-related arrests in 2016. As of late Friday, city police had made 19 arrests for 2016 — compared to 35 in the previous year.

The drop appears to contradict statements made by Annapolis Police Chief Michael Pristoop indicating an increase in the number of seizures.

"I do believe it is not an anomaly we are seizing and seeing more guns and there is more gun-related violence in the city," Pristoop said at a City Council meeting in July. "The fact is there are more guns out there and there is that propensity for violent crime."

Miguez said that Pristoop meant the department had seized more guns in recent years than it had in the past.

The 90 guns seized in 2015 was the most in the past several years, Miguez said. The number of seizures so far this year still represent a 52 percent from the number seized in 2014, according to numbers provided by police.

"We take that as an indication that there are more people out there carrying guns," Miguez said.

So far this year, Anne Arundel police have seized some 713 guns — slightly more than the 709 the agency seized in 2015, according to numbers provided by department spokesman Marc Limansky.

The numbers are down roughly 15 percent from 2014 when the agency seized 840 guns.

Unlike Annapolis, homicides in the county are slightly lower than they were in 2015. As of Wednesday, there had been 16 homicides, compared to 18 the previous year.

City and county police regularly work with the Federal Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco and Firearms in cases where federal charges may be applicable, such as when guns have been carried across state lines or when serial numbers have been obliterated, spokespeople for both agencies said.

As of Wednesday, city police had made arrests in six out of the 10 homicides in the city in 2016.

Investigations into the April fatal shootings of DeAndre Wayman and Charles King remain ongoing.

Wayman, 27, was found in the 1000 block of Paddington Road in April, with a gunshot wound to the chest.

Less than a week later, King, also 27, was found shot to death in a wooded area near Tuckahoe Creek Court.

Last month, the FBI announced that it was offering a \$10,000 reward in the fatal shooting of 25-year-old Charles Edward Carroll Jr. Carroll, the son of a local pastor who spearheaded a campaign against gun violence in the city.

Carroll was found shot inside a vehicle after crashing into the side of a townhouse in the Bywater Mutual Homes Complex on July 28.

Police continue to search for the person who fatally shot Scotty Moss Jr., 24, on Nov. 25 on Clay Street.

Except for Jan. 7 fatal stabbing of 44-year-old Arnold Lee Bowman in Brooklyn Park, county police have closed investigations in all of its homicides so far in 2016, Lt. Ryan Frashure, an agency spokesman said.

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