

Billings Metro VISTA Project

Each year the City of Billings Community Development Division hosts Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA) volunteers. These volunteers delve into community issues in an effort to identify causes and develop solutions.

Among the 2018-19 VISTA assignments is a Community-Wide Opioid and Methamphetamine Response Initiative.

Volunteers Amy Trad and Nick Fonte have gathered information from stakeholders throughout the community as part of this initiative. They spend several hours each week at Billings Police Department, combing through drug cases investigated by officers and learning about meth, opioid and other drug crimes.

The following pages summarize the data they compiled on cases from the fourth quarter of 2018.

Fourth Quarter 2018 Drug Offense Cases

Data collected and analyzed by AmeriCorps VISTAs Amy Trad and Nick Fonte

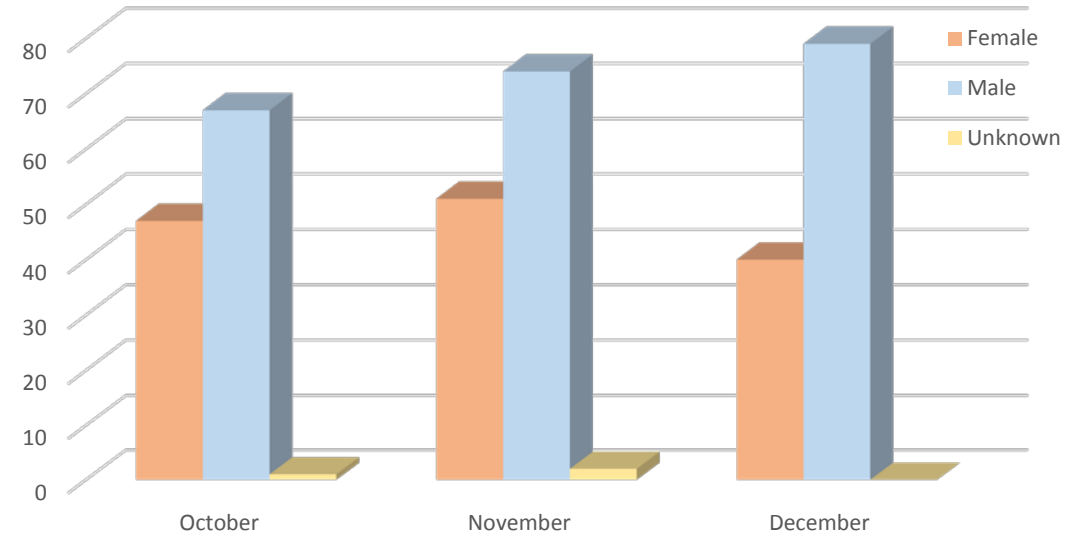
	Total Drug Offense Suspects	Total Drug Offense Cases	Total Cases	Percentage of Drug Offense Cases
October	109	69	1446	4.77%
November	127	82	1505	5.45%
December	119	75	1480	5.07%

The above chart displays the total number of drug offense suspects, the total number of drug offense cases, and the total number of calls that resulted in a case for each month of the fourth quarter of 2018 (October, November, and December). The far right column displays the total number of drug offense cases as a percentage of the total number of cases for each given month.

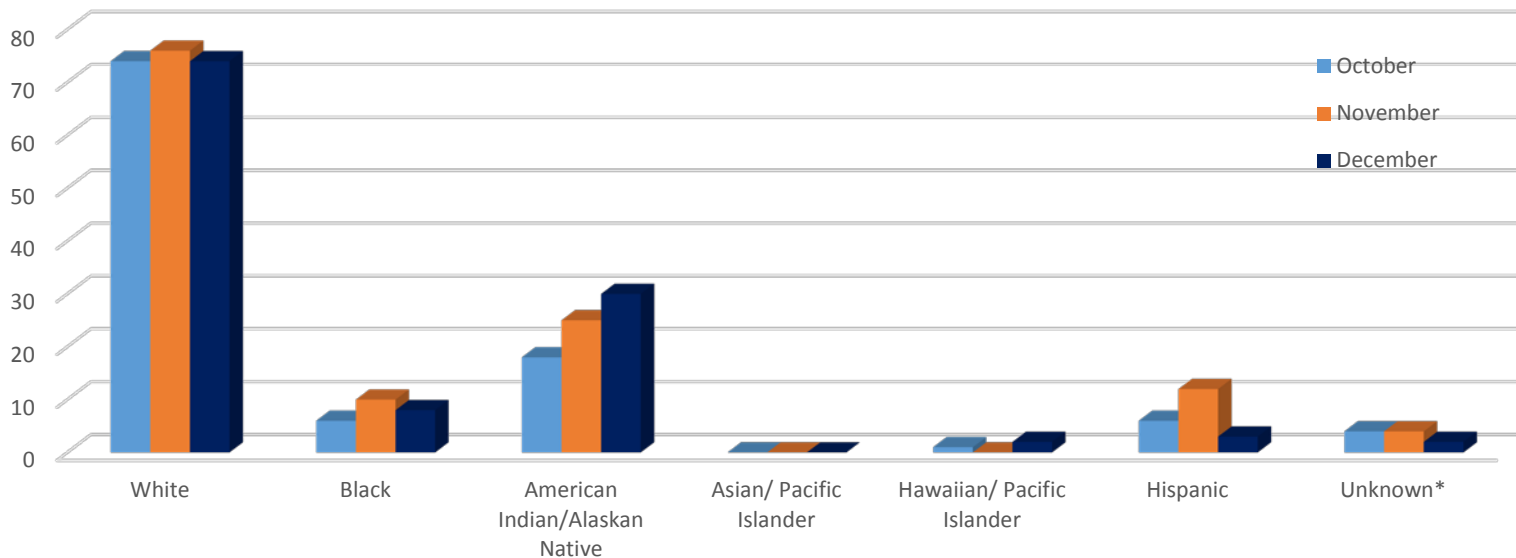
Demographic Data for Drug Offense Suspects

The graph to the right displays the gender of the individual suspects involved in drug offense cases in the fourth quarter of 2018. For the months of October and November the number of male suspects is only slightly higher than the number of female suspects. For the month of December, however, there is a slightly larger disparity, with 79 male suspects and 40 female suspects.

Gender of Case Suspects

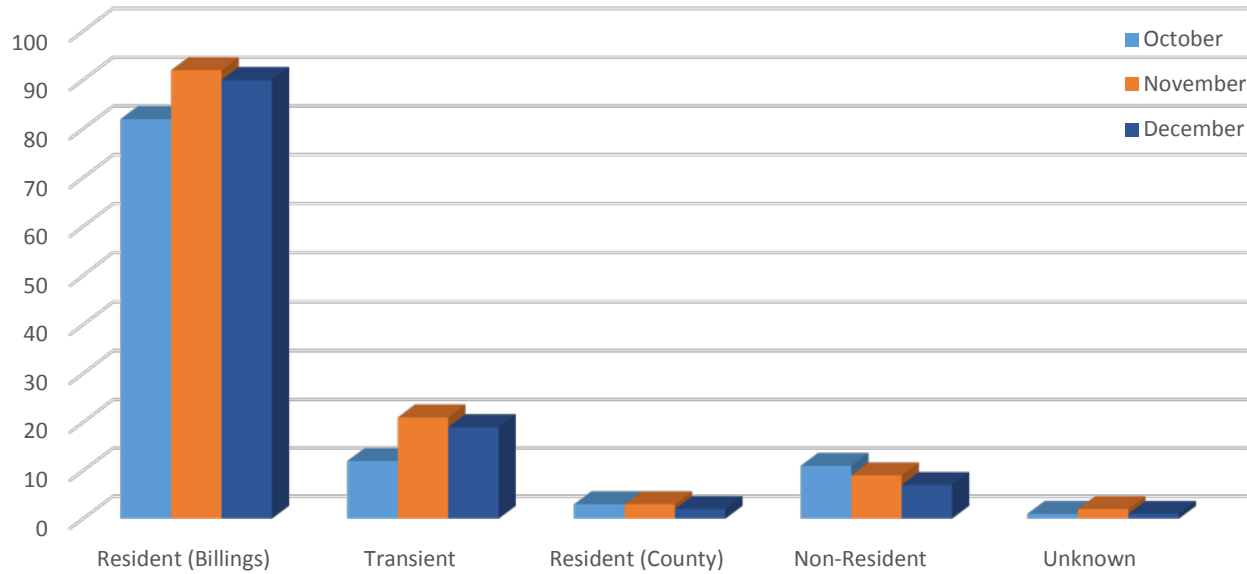


Race of Case Suspects



The figure to the left displays the race of individual suspects involved in drug offense cases in the fourth quarter of 2018. There are a large majority of White individuals involved with drug offenses over this three month period, which correlates with the racial breakdown of Billings, MT being 86% white (according to 2015 census data).

Case Suspect Resident Status



The graph to the left shows the resident status of the case suspects involved in drug offense cases in the fourth quarter of 2018. It is clear that a majority of case suspects have a residential street address in Billings. This is an important point, considering a number of conversations involving drug crime tend to point out the transient population, which is a small portion of individuals involved.

Displayed in the chart to the right are the age ranges of case suspects involved in drug offense cases during the fourth quarter of 2018. Consistently, the largest age group of case suspects is the 30 to 40 age range. The average age for a drug offense case suspect for the month of October was 31, for November was 33, and for December was 30.

Age	Number of Case Suspects in Age Range		
	October	November	December
13-17	14	8	10
18-21	16	10	18
22-29	24	32	33
30-40	36	46	44
41-50	17	19	8
51 and above	2	10	6
Average (mean) Age	31	33	30

Recidivism Rate

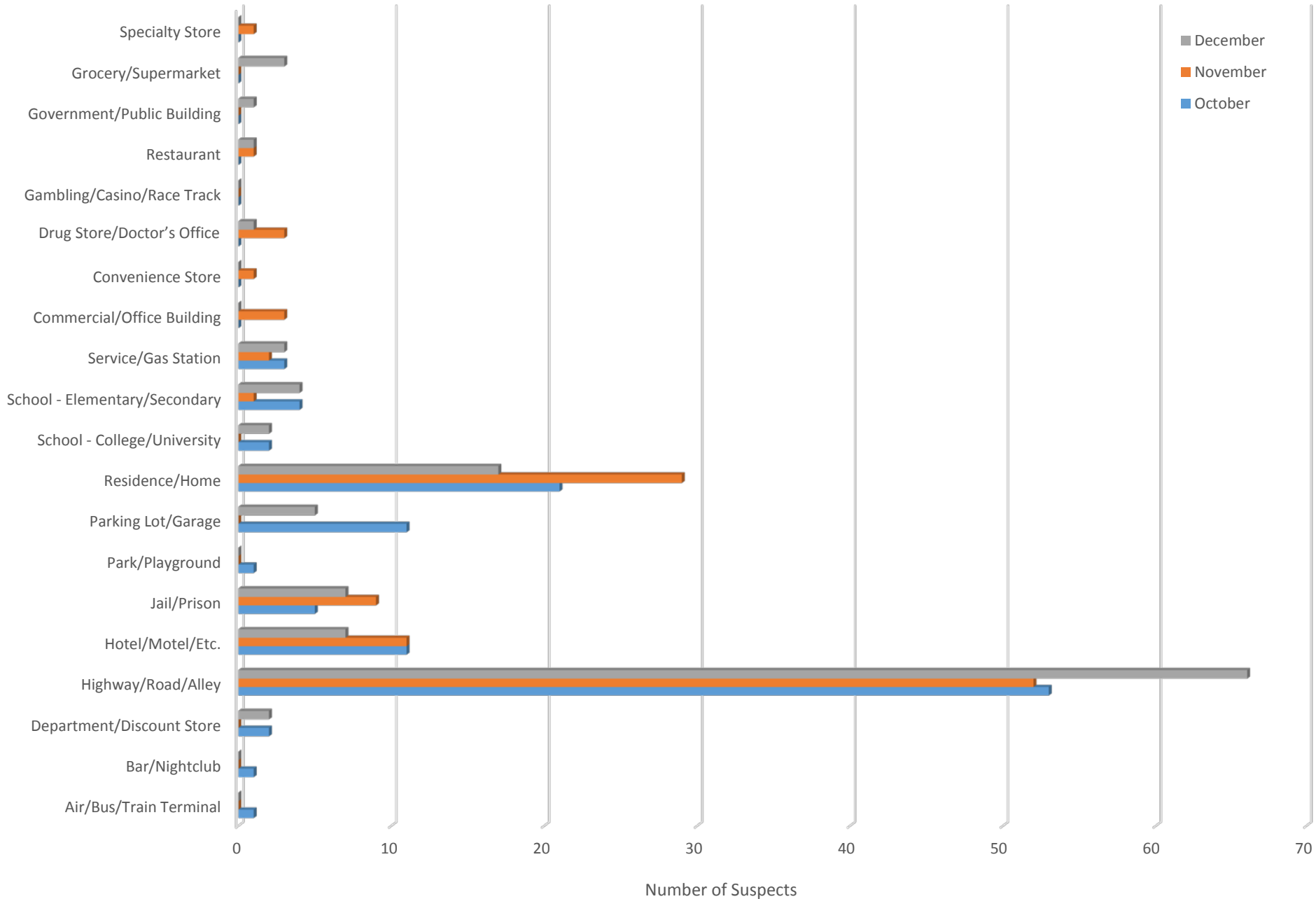
There were a total of 305 unique individual drug offense suspects for the fourth quarter of 2018, not including unknown suspects.

There were a total number of 53 instances where a previous drug offense suspect, from one of these three months, was charged a second or third time.

Of those 305 individuals, 25 were charged with a drug offense more than once.

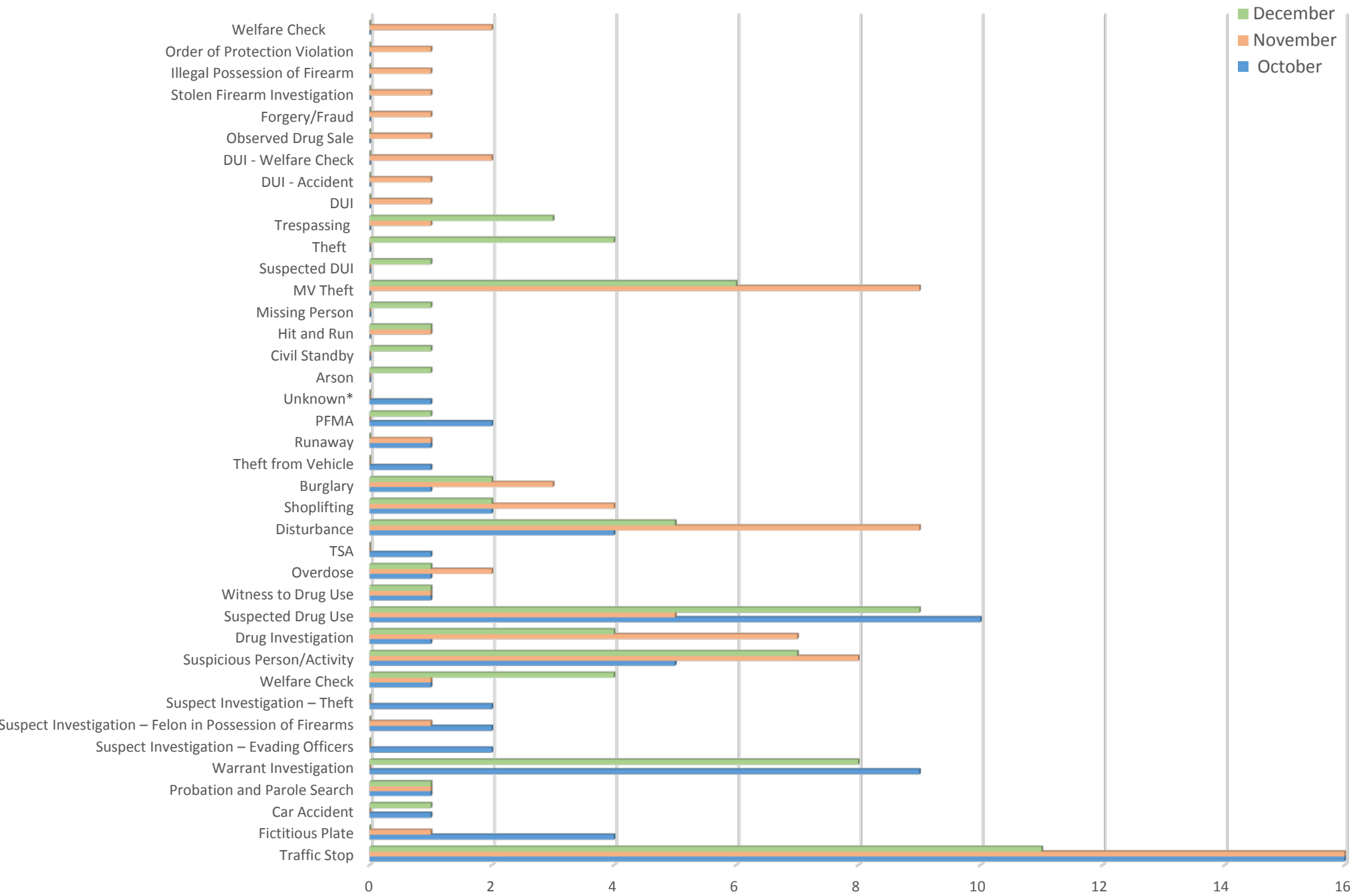
Thus meaning the recidivism rate for the months of October through December would be **8.2%**

Suspect Arrest Locations



The graph to the left shows the various scene locations where suspects were found to be in possession of drugs and/or drug paraphernalia and thus charged with a drug offense during the fourth quarter of 2018. Across all three months, the most individuals were arrested at a Highway/Road/Alley. The reason Jail/Prison shows up as a drug offense arrest location, is drugs and/or paraphernalia was found on an individual as they were being searched during the booking process.

Initial Cause of Drug Offense Incident



This graph (left) shows the various initial causes of drug offense incidents in the fourth quarter of 2018. Across all three months, the number one cause for a drug offense incident was traffic stops. Other common reasons why calls were made to dispatch that resulted in drug cases were Suspected Drug Use, Warrant Investigations, Disturbances, Motor Vehicle (MV) Theft, Drug Investigations (typically involving the Street Crimes Unit), Suspicious Person/Activity, and Welfare Checks.

Top 5 Drug Combinations by Month

Top 5 Drug Combinations in October 2018	Number of Cases
Marijuana	35
Methamphetamines	31
Marijuana, Methamphetamines	11
Prescription Opioids	4
Methamphetamines, Prescription Opioids	3

Top 5 Drug Combinations in November 2018	Number of Cases
Methamphetamines	26
Marijuana	14
Marijuana, Methamphetamines	9
Prescription Opioids	2
Heroin	2

Top 5 Drug Combinations in December 2018	Number of Cases
Methamphetamines	22
Marijuana	22
Marijuana, Methamphetamines	8
Prescription Opioids	2
Heroin	2

The three charts, shown to the left, display the top five drug combinations for each month of the fourth quarter in 2018. The number of cases corresponds to the number of times a drug offense case involved possession of drugs/paraphernalia related to the specified drug(s). Some of the top combinations were not combinations at all, but rather one specific drug. When listed with a comma, the various drugs listed were found in the same case. For October, November, and December the top three drug combinations for drug offense related cases were Methamphetamines, Marijuana, and Marijuana and Methamphetamines (not always in this order). The remaining top combinations included Prescription Opioids, Methamphetamines and Prescription Opioids, and Heroin.

Top 5 Drugs by Weight Seized by Month

To the right, the three charts display the top five drugs seized by Weight (measured in grams or number of pills) for each month of the fourth quarter in 2018. Methamphetamine and Marijuana appear in the top five list for October, November, and December. The amount of drugs seized each month varies dramatically, and this is in part due to the consumable nature of these illicit substances, as well as the possibility there may have been a bigger drug investigation going on in a given month yielding a greater quantity of drugs seized.

Top 5 Drugs by Weight in October 2018	Weight/Amount
Methamphetamines	203 g
Amphetamines	102 g
Marijuana	51.8 g
Prescription Opioids	51.5 pills
Heroin	46 g

Top 5 Drugs by Weight in November 2018	Weight/Amount
Marijuana	168.35 g
Methamphetamines	43.1 g
Prescription Opioids	97 pills
Antidepressants	39.5 pills
Fentanyl	32 pills

Top 5 Drugs by Weight in December 2018	Weight/Amount
Heroin	185.5 g
Marijuana	168.59 g
Methamphetamines	136.42 g
Clonazepam	107 pills
Alprazolam	39 pills