

Charlotte Residential Burglary Victimization Survey: Exploring Post-Burglary Adaption from a Victim Perspective



Alarm Industry
Research & Educational

FOUNDATION

- ▶ Joseph B. Kuhns, University of North Carolina at Charlotte
- ▶ Kristie R. Blevins, Eastern Kentucky University
- ▶ Michael Turner, University of North Carolina at Charlotte
- ▶ Shannon Messer, University of North Carolina at Charlotte

Purpose: To learn more about burglaries and determine whether, and how, victims change their security practices following a residential burglary

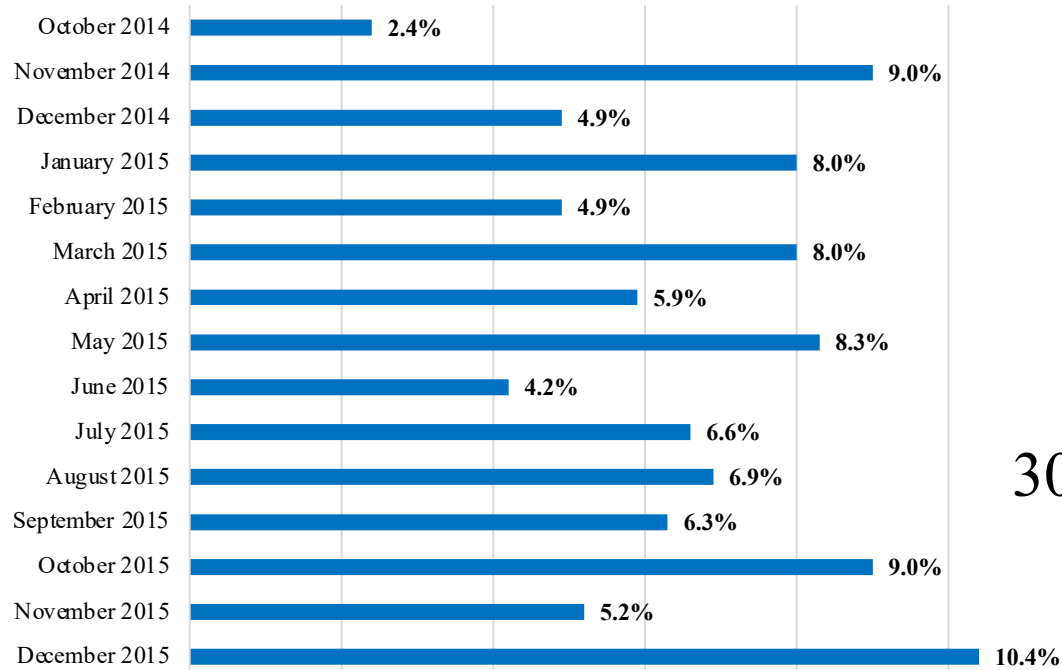
Study Methods

- CMPD provided email addresses for burglary victims each month for 18 months
- Initial invitations to participate in this research were sent about six months after the burglary
- Questionnaire was designed based on our prior survey of incarcerated burglars, existing literature, and suggestions from some security experts

Survey Structure

- ▶ General characteristics/location of structure
- ▶ General details about the burglary (e.g., entry process, items taken)
- ▶ Security measures taken before and at the time
- ▶ Information about police and/or security response
- ▶ Outcome of the case (e.g., offender apprehended, items recovered)
- ▶ Changes made following the burglary (e.g., lighting, alarm installed, other security measures taken)

Month of Burglary



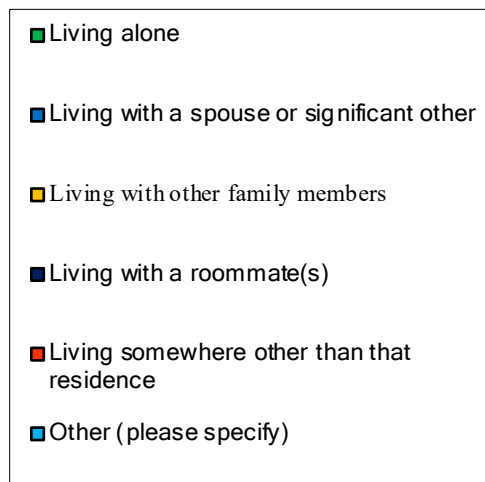
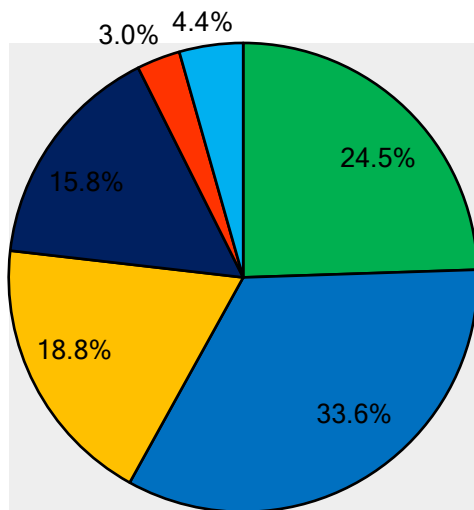
301 Total Responses

Respondent Demographics:

Gender		
	Male	47.3%
	Female	52.7%
Age		
	18-25	15.7%
	26-40	41.4%
	41-55	24.6%
	56-70	15.0%
	71 and older	3.2%

Race		
	Caucasian / white	63.1%
	African American / black	25.1%
	Hispanic	4.3%
	Asian	3.2%
	Native American	0.0%
	Other	4.3%

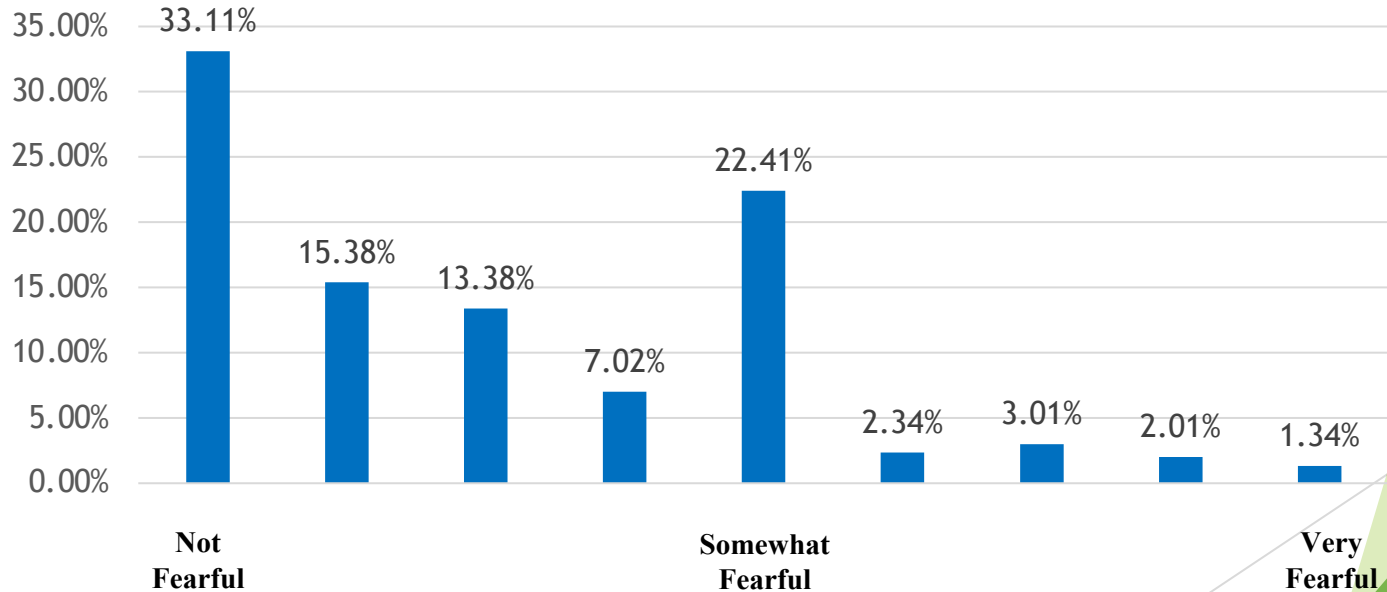
Victims' Living Situations at Time of Burglary:



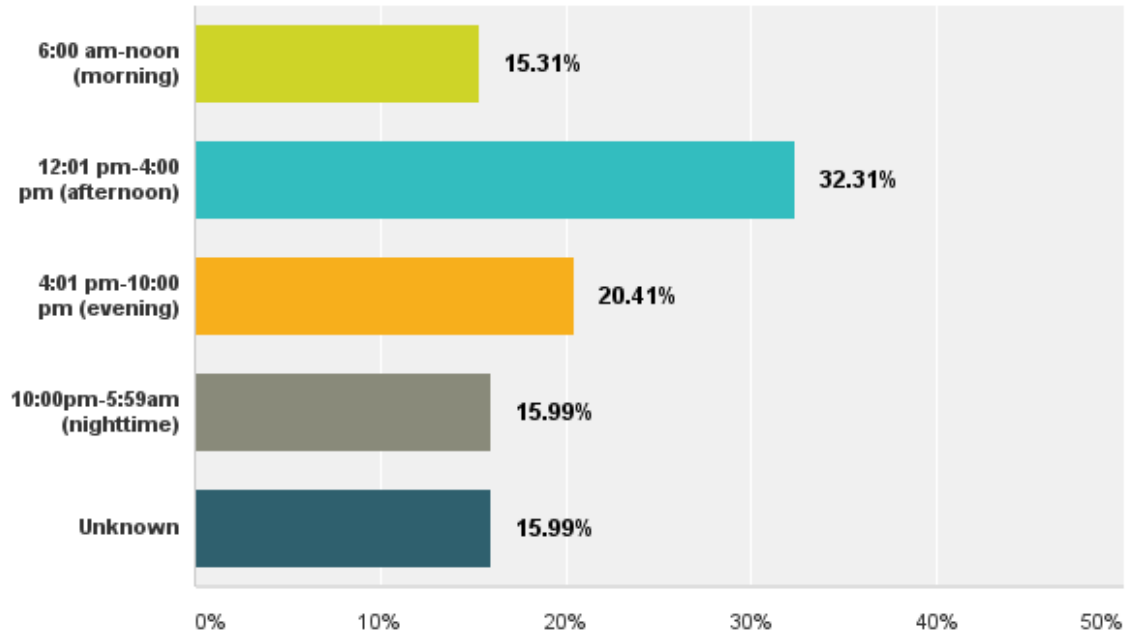
Other Details of the Target:

	Yes	No
Are there other homes or businesses within sight of the residence that was burglarized?	70.9%	29.1%
Is the residence that was burglarized near a major road?	66.7%	33.3%
Is there typically a lot of traffic in sight of the burglarized residence during the time-frame when it was burglarized?	32.4%	67.6%
Are there usually people walking near the residence that was burglarized during the timeframe when it was burglarized?	48.0%	52.0%
Was anyone in the residence at the time the burglary occurred?	19.9%	80.1%

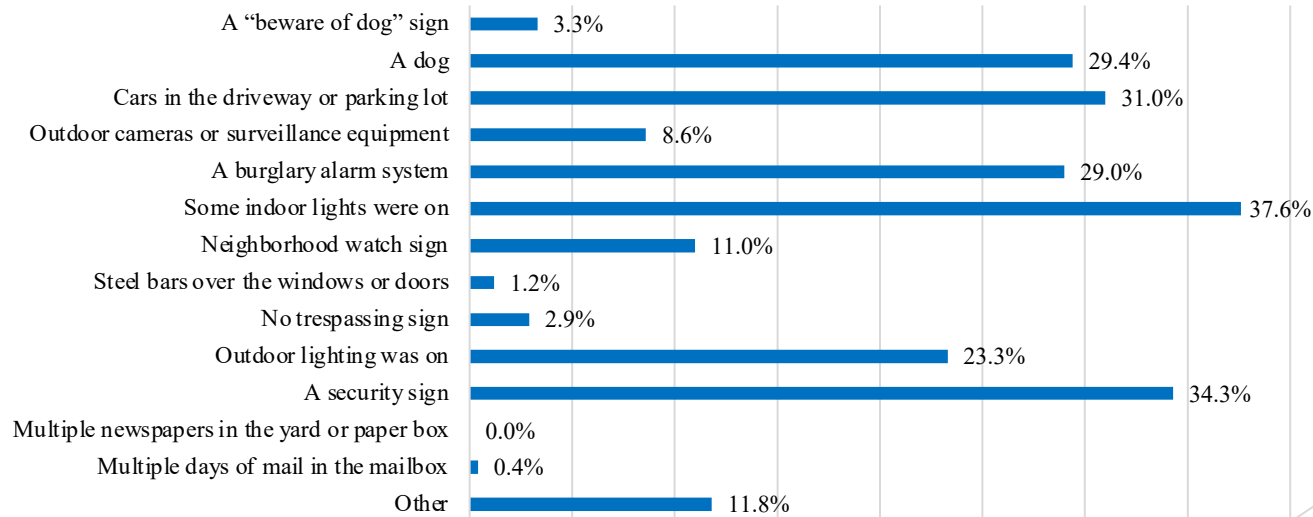
Before your home was burglarized, how fearful were you that you could be a burglary victim?



About what time of day or night was your residence burglarized?



Did you have any of the following items at/in your residence at the time it was burglarized?

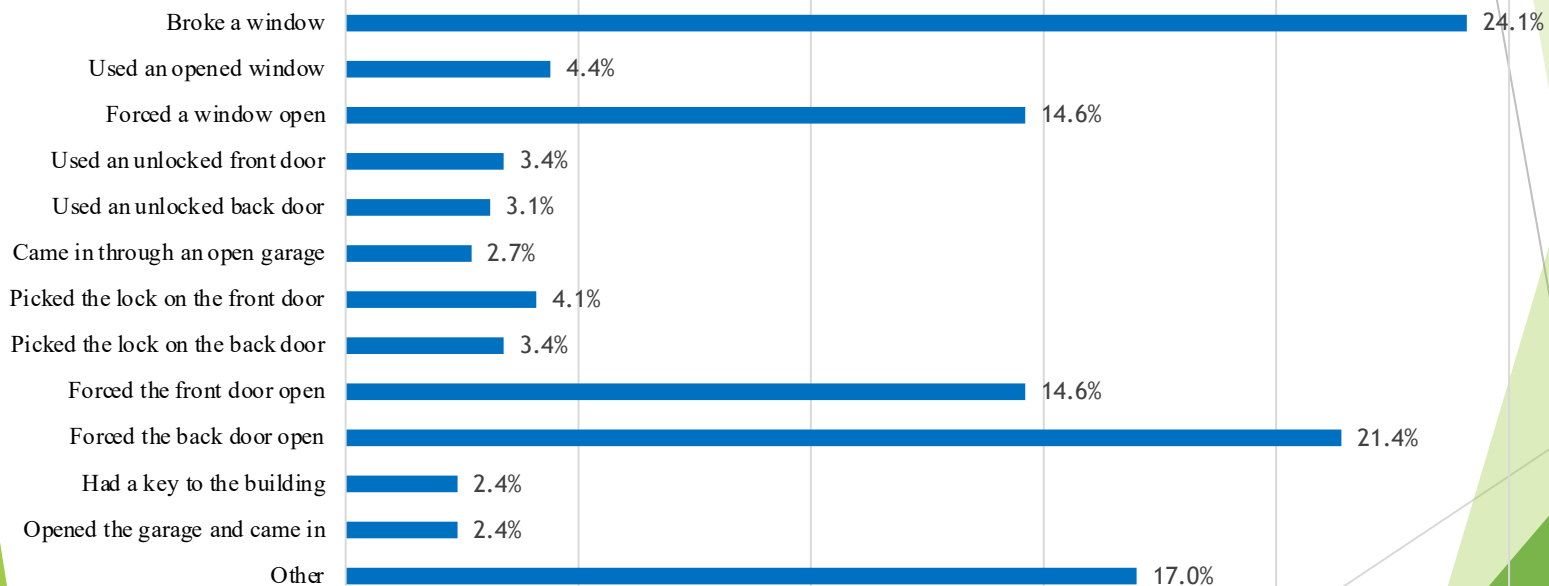


Additional Information from Alarm Owners:

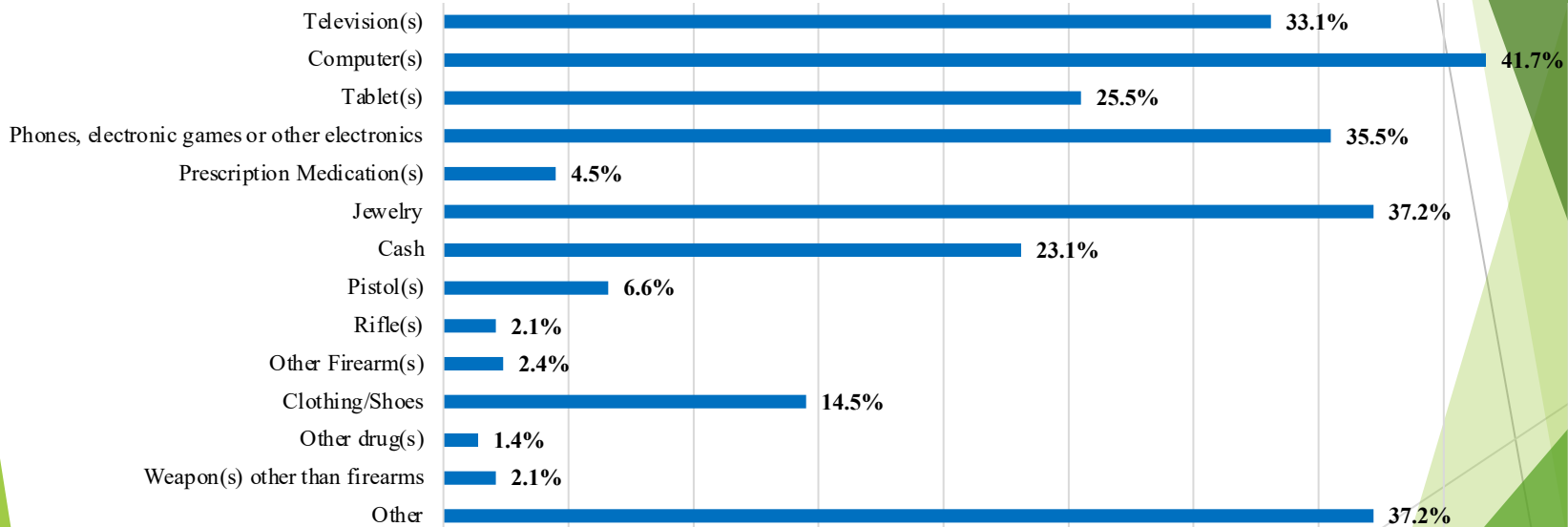
Was the alarm fully activated at the time of the burglary?		
	Yes, the alarm was fully activated	45.57%
	The alarm was activated but not fully activated	20.25%
	No	34.18%

	Yes	No
Was there any evidence that the burglar(s) disabled or attempted to disable your alarm?	13.92%	86.08%
Was there any evidence that the burglar(s) cut or attempted to cut alarm wires?	3.80%	96.20%
Was the alarm being monitored by an alarm company at the time of the burglary?	67.95%	32.05%

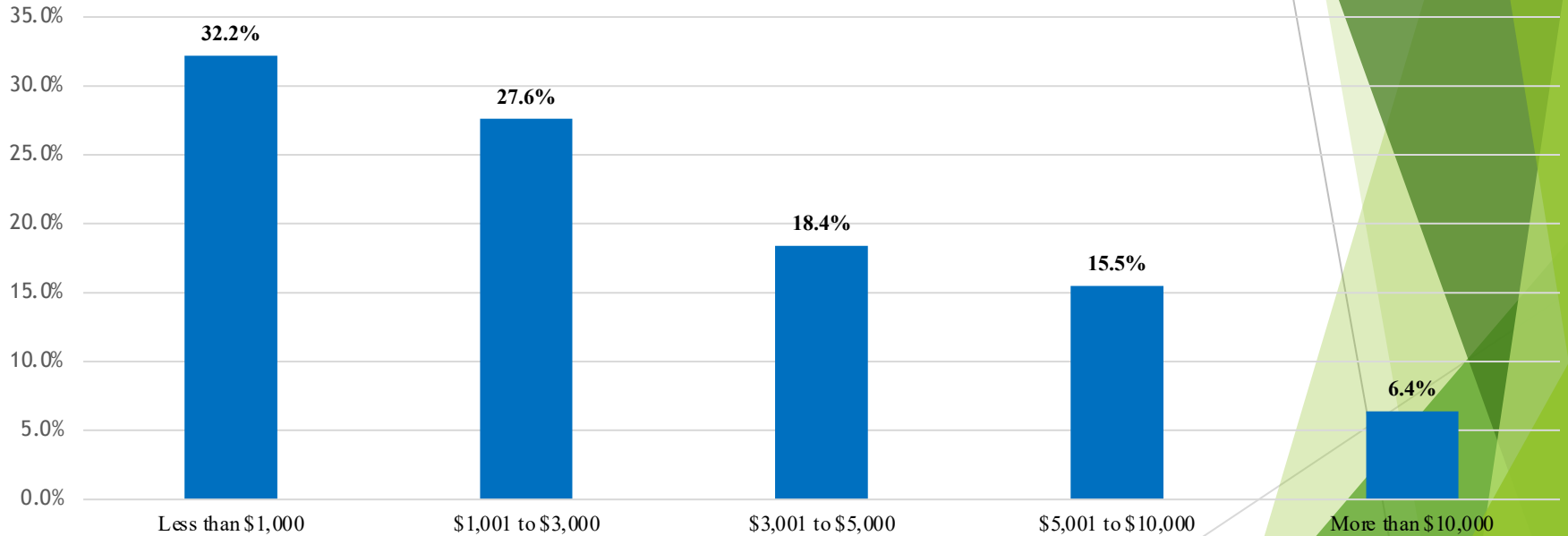
Method of Entry:



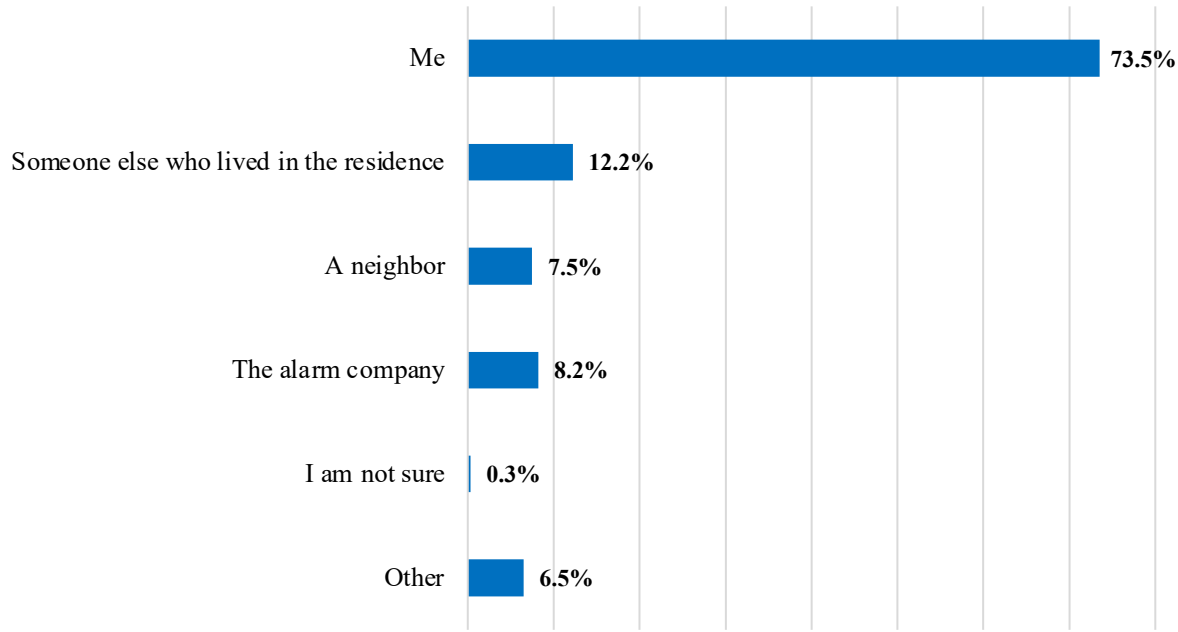
Items Taken during the Burglary:



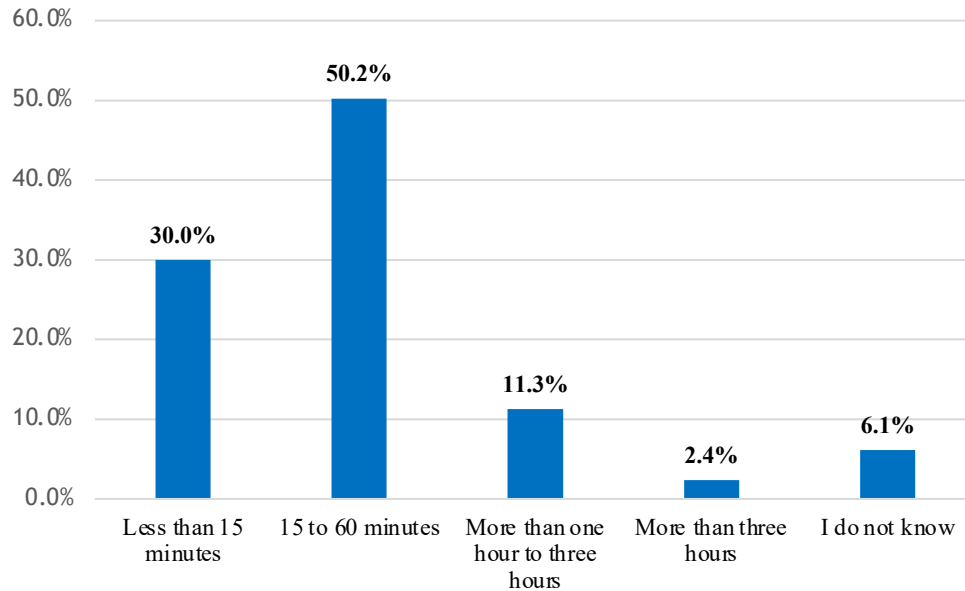
Value of Items Taken:



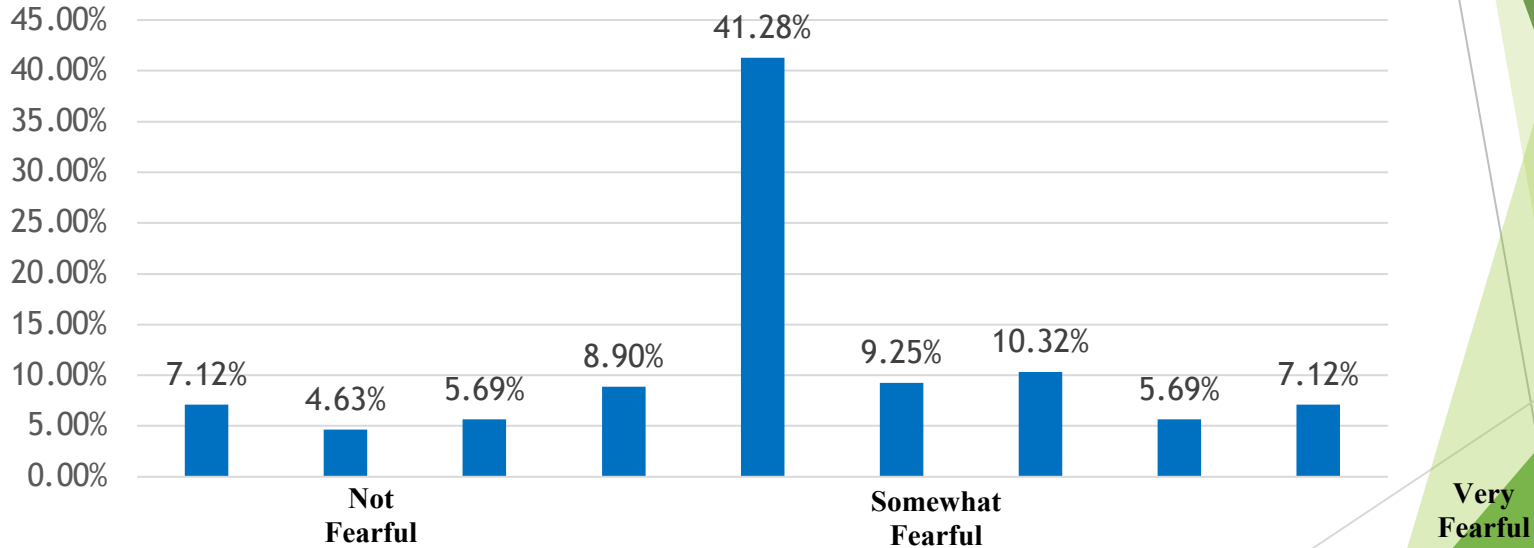
Who notified the police of the burglary?



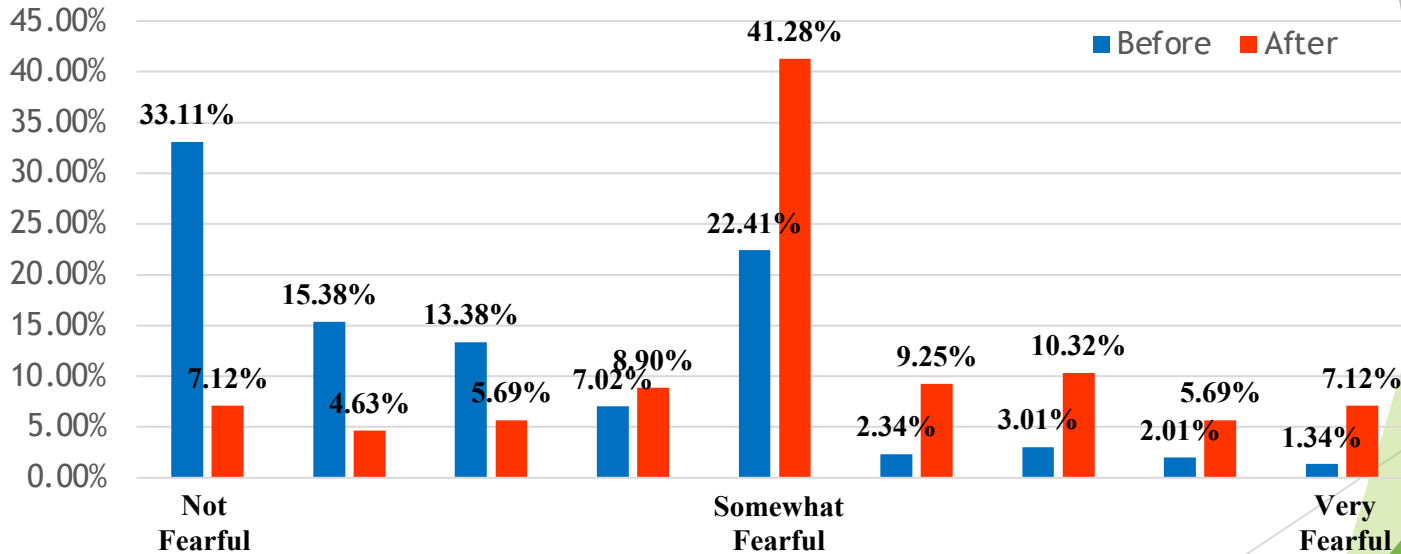
How long did it take the police to respond to your residence once they were notified of the burglary?



After your home was burglarized, how fearful were you that you could be a burglary victim?



Fear of becoming a burglary victim before and after:



Please indicate security changes that were made:

We added a “beware of dog” sign	5.2%
We got a dog	6.5%
We leave cars in the driveway or parking lot	11.2%
Outdoor cameras or surveillance equipment was added	19.8%
A new burglary alarm system was installed after the burglary	35.3%
An alarm system that was already installed, but not active (not being monitored by an alarm company) before the burglary, was reactivated after the burglary and is now being monitored by an alarm company	7.3%
Some indoor lights are left on at night	32.8%
Purchased a firearm	13.4%
We have a neighborhood watch sign	2.2%
Steel bars were installed over the windows or doors	3.0%
No trespassing sign was posted	1.7%
Outdoor lighting is left on at night	30.6%
A security sign was installed	24.1%
We have not made any major changes	8.2%
Other	31.0%

What is the primary reason why you do not have a burglar alarm?

I am thinking about getting an alarm system	14.29%
I don't think I need an alarm system	6.35%
I have not thought about getting an alarm	3.97%
I would like to get an alarm system but it is too expensive	19.05%
I don't think an alarm system would protect my house	10.32%
I am renting my current home	42.86%
I asked the landlord to install an alarm	3.17%

Summary

- ▶ Results are generally consistent with previous research
- ▶ Burglaries occurred most frequently between noon and 4:00 pm; only one in six occurred during nighttime hours
- ▶ No one was present during 80.1% of the burglaries
- ▶ Most common methods of entry were breaking a window (24.1%) or forcing open a back door (21.4%), front door (14.6%), or a window (14.6%)

Summary (cont.)

- ▶ The most common items taken during the burglaries were computers, jewelry, phones, electronic games, and other electronic devices, and televisions
- ▶ The offender(s) had been apprehended in 17.93% of cases; 16.84% of victims had recovered any of the items taken

Summary (cont.)

- ▶ Most respondents reported having some security measure(s) in place at the time of the burglary
 - ▶ Most common: indoor lights left on, a security sign, car in the driveway or parking lot, owning a dog
 - ▶ Only 29.0% had an alarm system; mostly single family homes
 - ▶ More than half of these systems were not fully activated at the time of the burglary
 - ▶ Renting the residence was the primary reason cited for not having an alarm at the time of the burglary

Summary (cont.)

- ▶ Levels of fear of becoming a burglary victim increased for 68.9% of respondents
 - ▶ The overall average increase in fear levels was 2.25 points on a nine-point scale
 - ▶ Those with increases of three or more points were significantly more likely to move from the burglarized residence

Summary (cont.)

- ▶ Four of five respondents took action to increase or improve security after the burglary
 - ▶ Most common enhancement was to install a new alarm system (35.3%); some respondents reactivated (7.30%) existing systems
 - ▶ Respondents living in single family homes were significantly more likely to buy a new system than those living in other types of residences

Future Research

- ▶ While these findings correspond with existing research in the area, the study should be replicated in other locations to determine if victims have similar experiences and reactions to residential burglary