

State of Wisconsin  
JIM DOYLE  
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# Drug Arrests in Wisconsin, 2004

June 2006



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## *Building Safer Communities*

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- *The Statistical Analysis Center is a program of the Wisconsin Office of Justice Assistance. Its purpose is to collect, analyze, interpret, and disseminate criminal justice data in the state of Wisconsin.*
- *The Statistical Analysis Center also provides technical assistance to local law enforcement agencies and promotes the coordination and development of criminal justice statistical systems throughout Wisconsin.*
- *The Statistical Analysis Center provides access to federal criminal justice statistical information to state and local government.*
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## Executive Summary:

- There were 26,514 drug arrests in 2004 – an increase of 0.1 percent from 2003 and 6.7 percent from 2000.
- 76.7 percent of drug arrests were for possession while the remaining 23.3 percent were for sales and manufacturing
- There were 20,331 possession arrests in 2004, an increase of 0.4 percent from 2003.
- There were 6,183 sales and manufacturing arrests in 2004, a decrease of 1.1 percent from 2003.
- Arrest type (possession vs. sales and manufacturing) varied drastically across substance categories. For example, only 11.5 percent of marijuana arrests were for sales and manufacturing compared to 67.9 percent for opium/cocaine.
- Drug arrest by substance type summary:
  - ◆ Marijuana was involved in 16,665 drug arrests in 2004, an increase of 3.1 percent from 2003. Marijuana arrests accounted for 62.9 percent of all drug arrests.
  - ◆ Opium/cocaine was involved in 4,698 drug arrests in 2004, an increase of 44.9 percent from 2003. Opium/cocaine arrests accounted for 17.7 percent of all drug arrests.
  - ◆ Synthetic narcotics were involved in 1,008 drug arrests in 2004, an increase of 19.6 percent from 2003. Synthetic narcotic arrests accounted for 3.8 percent of all drug arrests.
  - ◆ Dangerous non-narcotics were involved in 4,143 drug arrests in 2004, a decrease of 33.6 percent from 2003. Dangerous non-narcotics arrests accounted for 15.6 percent of all drug arrests.
- During 2004, 81.4 percent of all those arrested for drug law violations were male, a slight decrease compared to 82.8 percent in 2003.
- There were 21,039 adult drug arrests, an increase of 0.7 percent from 2003.
- There were 5,475 juvenile drug arrests, a decrease 2.4 percent from 2003.
- Milwaukee County accounted for 6,744 or 25.4 percent of Wisconsin's 26,514 drug arrests.
- The type of substance in drug arrests shows strong variation by race. For example, whites accounted for 88.1 percent of synthetic narcotic drug arrests but only accounted for 44.9 percent of opium/cocaine arrests.

## A. Introduction

This report summarizes information on drug-related arrests made by Wisconsin law enforcement agencies in 2004. Data on drug arrests is collected as part of the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program and is based upon information submitted by nearly 370 law enforcement agencies. It should be noted that all UCR arrests are subject to the Hierarchy rule, which states that "...when more than one Part I offense is classified, the law enforcement agency must locate the offense that is highest on the hierarchy list and score that offense involved and not the other offense(s) in the multiple-offense situation." If an officer arrested an individual for aggravated assault and the offender had an ounce of marijuana, the marijuana arrest would not be known to the UCR system because according to the hierarchy rule, only the aggravated assault arrest may be reported. The hierarchy rule thus causes slight underreporting of drug arrests. Each drug arrest is first categorized as either a possession arrest or a sales and manufacturing arrest. Possession arrests, which are deemed less serious, are trumped by sales and manufacturing arrests. Of the many types of drugs, the most serious substance involved in the arrest, according to UCR guidelines, is placed in one of four categories: opium/cocaine, marijuana, synthetic narcotics, and the dangerous non-narcotics. For examples of drugs in their respective categories, please see Appendix B. Since a large proportion of drug arrests are made by law enforcement agencies in Milwaukee County, Appendix A separates drug arrest figures into those made by Milwaukee County law enforcement agencies and those made by all other Wisconsin law enforcement agencies.

## B. Comparison of 2003 and 2004 Arrests

### 1. Total Arrests

Table 1 presents basic information on drug-related arrests during 2003 and 2004. (Note: UCR definitions for the drug categories are delineated in Appendix B).

**Table 1: Total Drug-Related Arrests, 2003 and 2004**

<u>Arrest Category</u>	<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>Percent Change</u>
SALE & MFG.	6,249	6,183	-1.1
Opium/Cocaine	1,616	3,188	+97.3
Marijuana	2,067	1,918	-7.2
Synthetic Narcotics	272	290	+6.6
Dangerous Non-Narcotics	2,294	787	+65.7
POSSESSION	20,245	20,331	+0.4
Opium/Cocaine	1,627	1,510	-7.2
Marijuana	14,097	14,747	+4.6
Synthetic Narcotics	571	718	+25.7
Dangerous Non-Narcotics	3,950	3,356	-5.0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>26,494</b>	<b>26,514</b>	<b>+0.1</b>

**Total drug arrests in Wisconsin increased marginally by 0.1 percent during 2004, compared to an increase of 2.8 percent in 2003, and a 1.5 percent increase in 2002. While arrests for sale offenses decreased by 1.1 percent, arrests for possession offenses increased slightly by 0.4 percent.**

## 2. Arrests by Drug Type

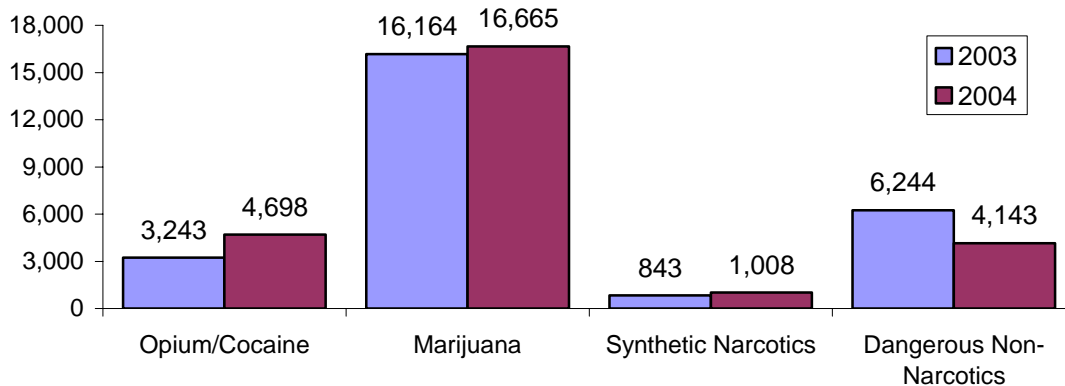
**Table 2 and Graph 1** show total drug-related arrests during 2003 and 2004. Drug arrests are categorized into opium/cocaine, marijuana, synthetic narcotics, and dangerous non-narcotics to highlight differences in arrest patterns.

**Table 2: Total Arrests by Drug Type, 2003 and 2004**

<u>Substance Type</u>	<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>Percent Change</u>
Opium/Cocaine	3,243	4,698	+44.9
Marijuana	16,164	16,665	+3.1
Synthetic Narcotics	843	1,008	+19.6
Dangerous Non-Narcotics	6,244	4,143	-33.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>26,494</b>	<b>26,514</b>	<b>+0.1</b>

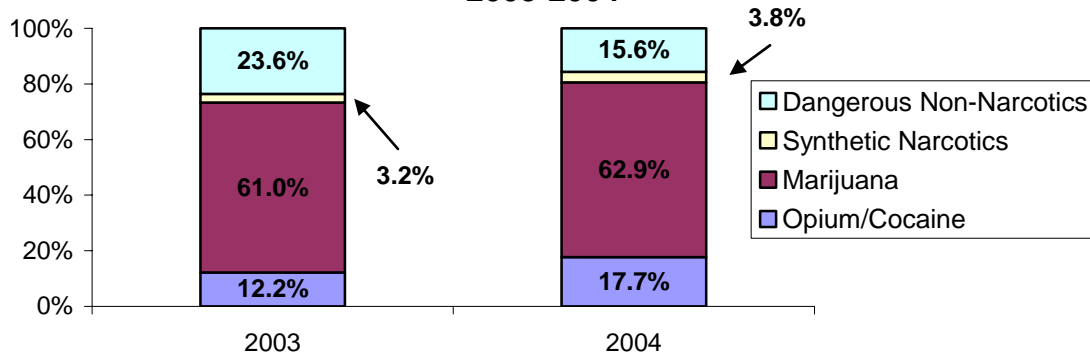
**While marijuana arrests increased by 3.1 percent in 2004, arrests involving opium/cocaine increased by 44.9 percent, arrests involving synthetic narcotics increased 19.6 percent, and arrests for dangerous non-narcotics decreased by 33.6 percent.** It should be noted that dangerous non-narcotics was the only substance type that saw a decline in the number of arrests in 2004.

**Graph 1: Total Drug Arrests by Substance Type, 2004**



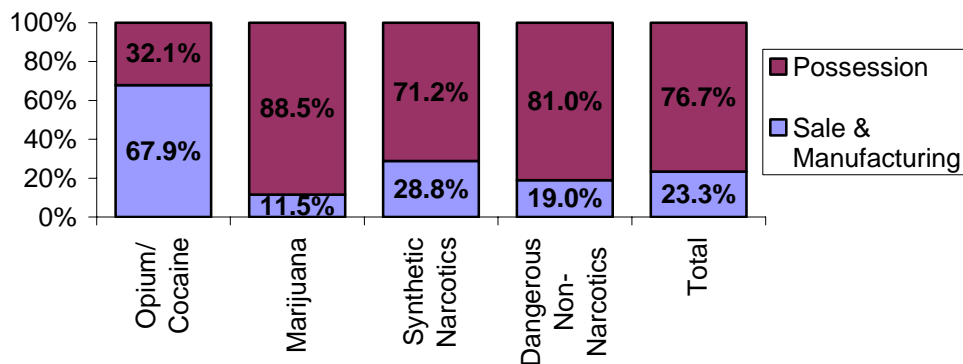
**Graph 2** shows total drug arrests as a percentage of total drug arrests in 2003 and 2004. The most major change between 2003 and 2004 was the decrease of 8.0 percent in dangerous non-narcotics. The opium/cocaine category saw an increase of 5.5 percent.

**Graph 2: Percentage of Total Drug Arrests by Drug Type, 2003-2004**



**Graph 3** shows the difference in arrest patterns by substance type and arrest type. Possession arrests made up 88.5% of marijuana arrests while sales and manufacturing arrests accounted for 67.9% of opium/cocaine arrests. Differences across substance type may be due to several variables and reasons for the distribution found in the graph are open to interpretation. The Drug Task Forces operating throughout the state tend to focus on sales and manufacturing of drugs other than marijuana. Possession arrests for marijuana are often made during routine arrests for other offenses by police officers. This helps explain why arrests involving marijuana are more likely than the other drug types to be possession rather than sales and manufacturing arrests.

**Graph 3: Substance Type by Arrest Type, 2004**



### 3. Arrests by Gender

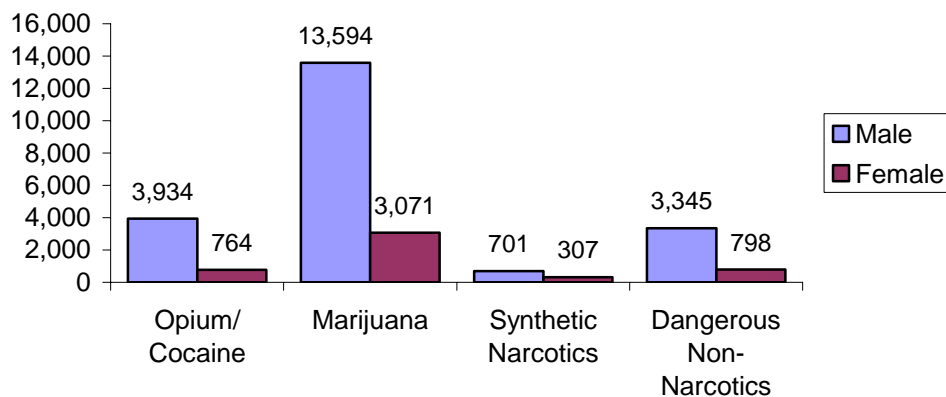
**Table 3: Total Arrests by Gender**

<u>Substance Type</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
SALE & MFG.	5,257	926	6,183
Opium/Cocaine	2,744	444	3,188
Marijuana	1,656	262	1,918
Synthetic Narcotics	206	84	290
Dangerous Non-Narcotics	651	136	787
POSSESSION	16,317	4,014	20,331
Opium/Cocaine	1,190	320	1,510
Marijuana	11,938	2,809	14,747
Synthetic Narcotics	495	223	718
Dangerous Non-Narcotics	2,694	662	3,356
BOTH			
Opium/Cocaine	3,934	764	4,698
Marijuana	13,594	3,071	16,665
Synthetic Narcotics	701	307	1,008
Dangerous Non-Narcotics	3,345	798	4,143
<b>Total</b>	<b>21,574</b>	<b>4,940</b>	<b>26,514</b>

During 2004, 81.4 percent of all those arrested for drug law violations were male, a slight decrease compared to 82.8 percent in 2003. There were several significant differences by gender with regard to substance type and arrest type.

Graph 4 displays substance type by gender of the arrestee. The number of female arrests for a given substance type was generally between 1/5 to 1/4 of their male counterparts.

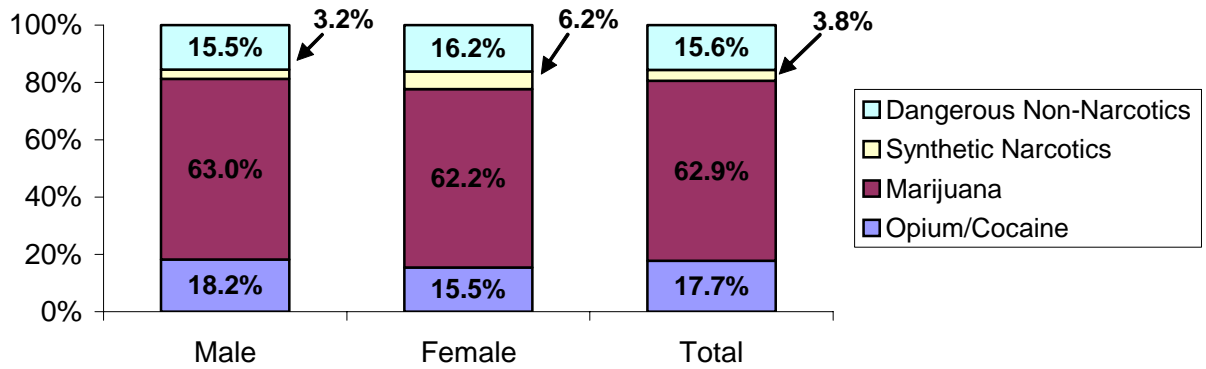
**Graph 4: Substance Type by Gender, 2004**



Graph 5 (next page) shows that males and females are fairly similar when comparing the percentage of arrests that each substance type makes up. The main observation is the roughly 3 percent differences

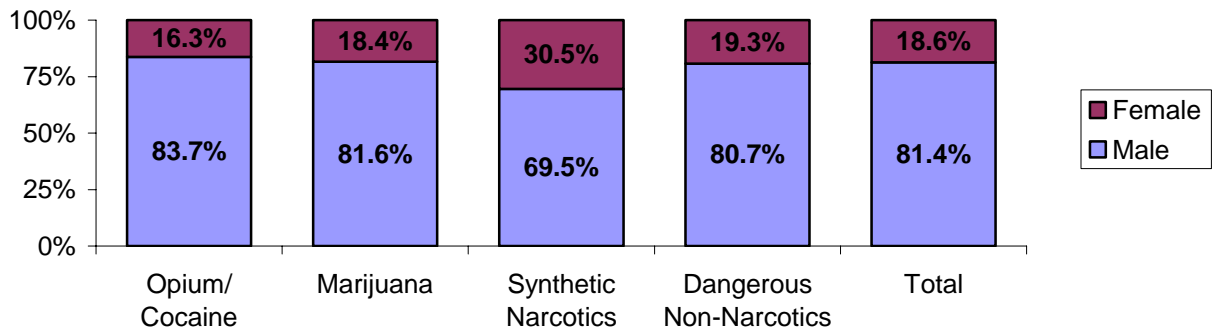
between synthetic narcotics by females and the opium/cocaine category by males.

**Graph 5: Gender by Substance Type, 2004**



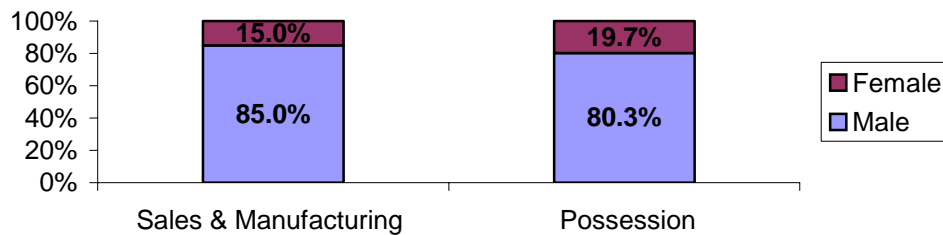
**Graph 6** shows that females made up a high of 30.5 percent of synthetic narcotic arrests and a low of 16.3 percent of opium/cocaine arrests in 2004.

**Graph 6: 2004 Drug Arrests by Gender and Drug Type**



**Graph 7** displays the differences in gender between the two drug arrest types, sales and manufacturing and possession. Males made up a larger percentage of sales and manufacturing arrests than they did possession arrests in 2004, 85.0 percent compared to 80.3 percent respectively.

**Graph 7: 2004 Gender by Drug Arrest Type**



#### 4. Arrests by Age

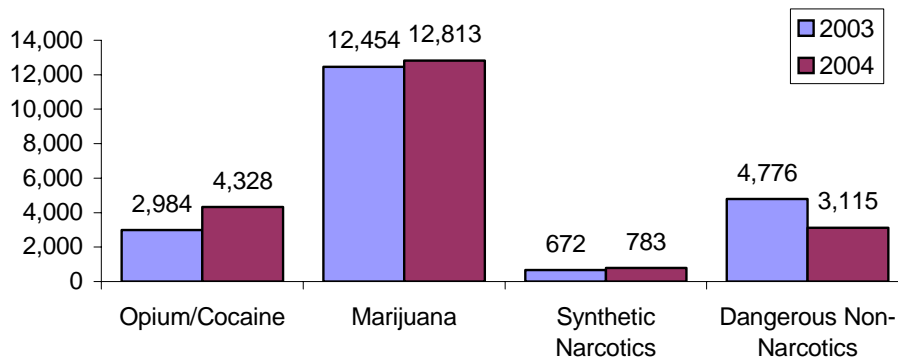
**Table 4: Drug-Related Arrests of Adults, 2003 and 2004**

<u>Arrest Category</u>	<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>Percent Change</u>
<b>SALE &amp; MFG.</b>	5,345	5,357	+0.2
Opium/Cocaine	1,486	2,907	+95.6
Marijuana	1,733	1,586	-8.5
Synthetic Narcotics	215	222	+3.3
Dangerous Non-Narcotics	1,911	642	-66.4
<b>POSSESSION</b>	15,541	15,682	+0.9
Opium/Cocaine	1,498	1,421	-5.1
Marijuana	10,721	11,227	+4.7
Synthetic Narcotics	457	561	+22.8
Dangerous Non-Narcotics	2,865	2,473	-13.7
<b>BOTH</b>			
Opium/Cocaine	2,984	4,328	+45.0
Marijuana	12,454	12,813	+2.9
Synthetic Narcotics	672	783	+16.5
Dangerous Non-Narcotics	4,776	3,115	-34.8
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>20,886</b>	<b>21,039</b>	<b>+0.7</b>

**Table 4 shows that total adult arrests for drug law violations increased by 0.7 percent in 2004.** While arrests involving opium/cocaine sales and manufacturing decreased by 47.8 percent from 2002 to 2003, they increased from 2003 to 2004 by 95.6 percent due mainly to an increase in the number of arrests from the Milwaukee Police Department. Sales and manufacturing arrests for dangerous non-narcotics decreased by 34.8 percent in 2004 after they increased 497.2 percent the year before. Sales and manufacturing arrests for synthetic narcotics increased 22.8 percent. Possession arrests for opium/cocaine increased 45.0 percent while possession arrests for dangerous non-narcotics decreased by 34.8 percent.

**Graph 8** depicts the number of adult arrests by substance type which follow the same pattern as the number of total drug arrests in Graph 1.

**Graph 8: Adult Drug Arrests by Substance Type, 2003-2004**





























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