

Office of National Drug Control Policy

Drug Policy Information Clearinghouse

Laredo, Texas

Profile of Drug Indicators

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ONDCP Drug Policy Information Clearinghouse staff compiled this profile by using the most recent data available from open sources. The data presented are as accurate as the sources from which they were drawn. The information contained in this profile should not be used to rank or compare States or jurisdictions, due to differences in data collection and reporting methods.

Laredo, Texas

The following profile contains information on demographics, political figures, programs, crime, drug use, drug trafficking, and enforcement statistics.

Demographics¹

- Population: 176,576 (2000 Census)
- Race/Ethnicity: 84.4% white; 0.4% black/African American; 0.5% American Indian/Alaska Native; 0.5% Asian; 14.3% other race; 2.6% two or more races; 96.5% Hispanic
- County: Webb

Politics²

- Mayor: Elizabeth G. Flores
- City Council (Districts 1-8, respectively): Alfredo Agredano; Louis H. Bruni; John C. Galo; Johnny Amaya; Eliseo Valdez, Jr.; Joe Guerra; Jose Alberto Valdez, Jr.; and Juan Ramirez
- City Manager: Larry Dovalina

Programs/Initiatives³

- High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area
Designated in 1990, the Southwest Border HIDTA/South Texas Partnership is responsible for the following Texas counties: Bexar, Cameron, Dimmit, Hidalgo, Jim Hogg, Kinney, La Salle, Maverick, Starr, Val Verde, Webb, Willacy, Zapata, and Zavala. This region received its HIDTA designation due to the high level of illicit drugs imported into and distributed from the region throughout the United States. Goals of this Partnership include the reduction of regional drug trafficking, money laundering activities, drug-related crime, drug availability, and drug-related public corruption.

Crime and Drug-Related Crime

- During 2000, there were 1,286 drug possession arrests in Webb County.⁴

Number of Drug Arrests, Webb County, 1997-2000

Offense Type	1997	1998	1999	2000
Trafficking, all drugs	10	3	15	7
Possession, all drugs	1,419	930	1,226	1,286
Trafficking, marijuana	9	2	12	4
Possession, marijuana	970	649	896	976
All drug offenses	1,429	933	1,241	1,293

- Preliminary data for January to June 2001 indicate that there were 4,373 larceny-theft offenses known to the police in Laredo.⁵
- During 2000, there were 9,875 larceny-theft offenses known to police in Laredo.⁶

Number of Offenses Known to Police, Laredo, 2000 and January-June 2001

Type of offense	Full Year 2000	January-June 2001
Murder	10	4
Forcible rape	65	21
Robbery	181	90
Aggravated assault	716	405
Burglary	1,749	827
Larceny-theft	9,875	4,373
Motor vehicle theft	788	420
Arson	77	43

- Preliminary 2000 data from the Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring Program (ADAM) are available for adult male arrestees in Laredo.⁷
- In Laredo during 2000, 57% of adult male arrestees tested positive for drugs at the time of their arrests. 44% of these arrestees tested positive for cocaine, 6% tested positive for opiates, and 30% tested positive for marijuana. None of the Laredo arrestees tested positive for methamphetamine.⁸
- In Laredo during 1999, 66.1% of adult male arrestees and 20.0% of adult female arrestees who committed a drug offense tested positive for drugs.⁹

Percent of Adult Arrestees Testing Positive for Drugs, by Offense, Laredo, 1999

Offense	Cocaine		Marijuana		Meth		Any Drug	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Violent	46.8	31.3	30.2	12.5	0.0	0.0	58.3	31.3
Property	49.6	17.2	46.9	6.9	0.0	0.0	73.5	20.7
Drug	46.0	20.0	40.2	6.7	0.6	0.0	66.1	20.0
Sales	33.3	0.0	19.4	0.0	2.8	0.0	44.4	0.0
Possession	49.6	27.3	45.3	9.1	0.0	0.0	71.9	27.3
Other offense	35.1	38.5	25.7	7.7	0.0	0.0	47.5	38.5

Juveniles

- During 2000, 12.9% of elementary school students along the Texas border (including Webb County) reported using inhalants at least once during their lifetime.¹⁰

Percent of Elementary School Students Reporting Drug Use, Texas Border, 2000

Drug Type and Grade	Used in School Year	Used in Lifetime
Inhalants	9.5%	12.9%
Grade 4	7.9	10.7
Grade 5	8.4	11.5
Grade 6	12.3	16.6
Marijuana	1.9	2.6
Grade 4	0.7	0.9
Grade 5	1.0	1.6
Grade 6	4.2	5.4

- Among Texas border students in grades 7-12, more than 32% reported using an illicit drug at least once during their lifetime.¹¹

Percent of Secondary School Students Reporting Drug Use, Texas Border, 1998 and 2000

Drug Type	Past Month Use		Ever Used	
	1998	2000	1998	2000
Any illicit drug	15.6%	15.6%	33.3%	32.5%
Inhalants	8.9	8.8	21.0	20.6
Marijuana	12.7	12.7	30.2	28.9
Cocaine/crack	6.0	5.7	13.7	13.8
Hallucinogens	1.4	1.0	4.0	3.3
Uppers	2.8	2.3	7.1	6.0
Downers	3.0	2.4	7.7	6.2
Rohypnol	5.0	4.2	13.4	12.6
Steroids	0.6	0.8	1.8	2.3
Ecstasy	0.7	1.5	2.1	3.5
Heroin	0.6	0.6	1.9	1.6

Drugs¹²

- 7.6% of adults in the South Texas region consisting of Jim Hogg, Starr, Webb, and Zapata Counties reported using drugs in the past year.
- 1.7% of adults in the entire Lower South region of Texas (which consists of 19 counties including Webb County) reported that they continued using drugs despite experiencing problems associated with their drug use.

Drug-Related Problems, Lower South Region, Texas, 2000

Type of Problem	Percent Reporting Problem
Used more than intended	0.5%
Tried to cut down	1.8
Spent a lot of time using	2.2
Hazardous use/neglected roles	2.5
Gave up important activities	1.0
Continued use despite problems	1.7
Tolerance	1.8
Withdrawal symptoms	0.6
Used drug(s) to relieve withdrawal symptoms	0.4
Felt dependent on drug	0.7

Enforcement

- Southwest Border HIDTA/South Texas Partnership Initiatives include the following:¹³
 - South Texas HIDTA Laredo Initiative: This initiative consists of four multi-agency task forces which target major international drug trafficking organizations that have regional ties.

- South Texas Multi-Agency Drug-Related Public Corruption Task Force: This joint task force focuses on drug-related public corruption investigations.
- As of October 31, 2000, there were 403 full-time law enforcement employees in Laredo.¹⁴

Trafficking and Seizures¹⁵

- The South Texas Partnership (HIDTA) region consists of the following: more than 23,000 square miles; a 647-mile portion of the Rio Grande River, which marks the Southern Texas Partnership boundary and its border with Mexico; and approximately 70 miles of Gulf of Mexico intercoastal waterways, which form the eastern border of this region.
- The South Texas Ports of Entry are among the busiest in the Nation.
- Drug origins found in this area are primarily Mexico, Central and South America.
- In 1999, the South Texas Partnership seized 48% (136,192 kilograms) more drugs than it did in 1998.
- The amount of U.S. currency seized increased by over 25% (\$4,193,088) from 1998.
- Returns from asset forfeitures assist in developing demand reduction activities in the local communities.

Courts

- As of January 17, 2002, there was one drug court being planned in Laredo. There are currently no drug courts in existence in Laredo.¹⁶
- During FY 2000, 45% of the Federally sentenced offenders in Southern Texas had been charged with a drug offense. Over 60% of these offenses involved marijuana.¹⁷

Federally-Sentenced Drug Offenders, Southern Texas, FY 2000

Drug Involved	Number	Percent
Marijuana	1,015	62.2%
Powder cocaine	356	21.8
Crack cocaine	149	9.1
Heroin	63	3.9
Methamphetamine	26	1.6
Other	24	1.5

Consequences of Use¹⁸

- During 2000, there were a total of 12 drug-related deaths in Webb County.

Number of Substance-Related Deaths, Webb County, 1998-2000

	1998		1999		2000	
	Youth	Adult	Youth	Adult	Youth	Adult
Total alcohol-related	3	70	N/A	65	N/A	65
Direct alcohol-related	1	13	N/A	15	N/A	14
Indirect alcohol-related	2	57	N/A	50	N/A	51
Total drug-related	2	10	1	10	1	11
Direct drug-related	2	6	1	6	1	6
Indirect drug-related	N/A	4	N/A	4	N/A	5

Treatment¹⁹

- During 2000, there were 200 adult admissions to treatment for heroin in TCADA (Texas Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse)-funded programs in Webb County.

Number of Admissions to Treatment, Webb County, 2000

Drug Type	Juveniles	Adults
Alcohol	8	69
Cocaine	34	121
Crack	14	39
Downers	--*	6
Heroin	64	200
Marijuana/hashish	6	27
Other drugs	29	4
Other opiates	--*	9
Inhalants	6	N/A

* The number of admissions is less than 4.

¹ U.S. Census Bureau Web site: <http://www.census.gov>

² Laredo Web site: <http://www.cityoflaredo.com>

³ Southwest Border HIDTA/ South Texas Partnership Fact Sheet:
<http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/enforce/hidta/stex-fs.html>

⁴ Texas Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse, Substance-Related Statistics by County:
<http://www.tcada.state.tx.us/research/statistics/ctysearch.html>

⁵ Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Crime in the United States, Preliminary Report, 2001*, December 2001:
<http://www.fbi.gov/pressrel/pressrel01/01prelimcius.htm>

⁶ Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Crime in the United States, 2000*, October 2001:
<http://www.fbi.gov/ucr/00cius.htm>

⁷ National Institute of Justice, *ADAM Preliminary 2000 Findings on Drug Use & Drug Markets*, December 2001: <http://www.ncjrs.org/pdffiles1/nij/189101.pdf>

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ National Institute of Justice, *1999 Annual Report on Drug Use Among Adult and Juvenile Arrestees*, June 2000: <http://www.ncjrs.org/pdffiles1/nij/189101.pdf>

¹⁰ Texas Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse, *Texas School Survey of Substance Use Among Students: Grades 4-6, 2000*, June 2001: http://www.tcada.state.tx.us/research/school_elementary2000.pdf

¹¹ Texas Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse, *Texas School Survey of Substance Use Among Students: Grades 7-12, 2000*, May 2001: http://www.tcada.state.tx.us/research/school_survey2000.pdf

¹² Texas Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse, *2000 Texas Survey of Substance Use Among Adults*:
<http://www.tcada.state.tx.us/research/AdultHousehold.pdf>

¹³ Southwest Border HIDTA/ South Texas Partnership Web site:
<http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/hidta/stex-content.html>

¹⁴ Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Crime in the United States, 2000*, October 2001:
<http://www.fbi.gov/ucr/00cius.htm>

¹⁵ Southwest Border HIDTA/ South Texas Partnership Web site:
<http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/hidta/stex-content.html>

¹⁶ OJP Drug Court Clearinghouse and Technical Assistance Project, *Summary of Drug Court Activity by State and County*, January 17, 2002: <http://www.american.edu/spa/justice/publications/drgchart2k.pdf>

¹⁷ U.S. Sentencing Commission, FY 2000 Federal Sentencing Statistics, Southern Texas:
<http://www.ussc.gov/JUDPACK/2000/txs00.pdf>

¹⁸ Texas Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse, Substance-Related Statistics by County:
<http://www.tcada.state.tx.us/research/statistics/ctysearch.html>

¹⁹ Ibid.

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