**Strategy:** Hot Spot Policing  
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**Abstract:** Crime is not evenly distributed in any given neighborhood, so some areas have higher rates of crime than others. Hot Spot Policing is a strategy used by many police departments. This strategy helps police officers focus on a specific area where high crime activities are occurring the most. By focusing on these areas, the police are able to reduce crime in areas where crime is considered high. This report will explain and evaluate the effectiveness of hot spot policing strategy. The evaluation of this program involves two studies that have been conducted of hot spot program. First, a review of hot spot policing programs/strategy on other crime prevention websites. Second, the existence of this strategy in the city of Rochester NY as well as other communities, and the types of crime this program is intended to reduce. Furthermore, I will conclude the findings of the program and give some of my own recommendations.

1. **Describe it**

   Hot Spot Policing is a strategy used by law enforcement departments. This strategy focuses on high crime areas within neighborhoods where crime is occurring the most. Police departments use maps via the Geographic Information System (GIS) and statistical tests to identify and pinpoint high-crime activity areas within a neighborhood. This assists officers in identifying which places are more trouble spots than others when patrolling their area and with identifying the kinds of criminal activities that are occurring in these areas. However, not only does this strategy of hot spot policing help officers identify high-crime activity within a given area, it also aids in the identification of specific criminal activity. It also assists police officers in developing problem-solving strategies that can help control these hot spot areas. By having more police officers focused on these high-crime areas (hot spots) can help reduce crime problems in these neighborhoods.

2. **Is the program or something similar reviewed on** [http://www.crimesolutions.gov/](http://www.crimesolutions.gov/) **or Blueprints for Violence Prevention** ([http://www.colorado.edu/cspv/blueprints/](http://www.colorado.edu/cspv/blueprints/))?
This program has been reviewed on crime solutions website. In 2005, the Lowell, MA police department implemented the hot spot policing strategy. This strategy was put in place to improve social and physical order in high-crime areas (hot spots). The Lowell police department strategy of “Hot Spot Policing” focus on three approaches; the increase of misdemeanor arrest, situational prevention strategies and social service actions. This program was rated effective and it’s still an active program. No program or anything similar to this program was not reviewed on Blueprints.

3. **What types of crime is it intended to prevent or reduce?**

Hot spot policing strategies are intended to prevent crimes such as personal crimes, violent crimes, property crimes, and narcotics crimes. Here are some of the types of crimes that are prevented when police department use “Hot Spot Policing” as a crime prevention strategies.

- Robberies
- Assault
- Drug Sales
- Disorderly behavior, etc.

4. **Is there a clear theoretical foundation?**

Yes, there is a clear theoretical foundation in hotspot policing strategies. By mapping areas and identifying high-crime areas, officers have the opportunity to perform their duties appropriately to those areas therefore, decreasing crime rates in these areas.

5. **Is there a direct, indirect or no clear link to Crime reduction?**

“Hot Spot Policing” strategies has a direct link to crime reduction, because officers are able to target the areas of neighborhoods were crime is more activist. When officers are able to focus
their attention on areas were crime is a problem they’re able to be more effective in reducing crime.

6. Describe the logic model. Diagram it. How is it intended to reduce crime?

Crime is typically concentrated in specific areas within a neighborhood and it’s not typically spread through a community. The use of maps and statistical tests increase the ability to identify and target major high-crime areas. Police departments are able to develop effective problem-solving strategies to engage in these high-crime areas and reduce the levels of crime committed in these high-crime (hot spot) areas.

By identifying hot-spot areas police officers are able to target the areas were crimes are being committed and develop problem-solving strategies that can help reduce crimes in these areas. Therefore, hot spot strategies are intended to reduce crime by identifying where crime is mostly being committed in a given neighborhoods.
7. Does this program or strategy exist in this community? If yes, what agency is it run through? How long has it been in existence here? How is it funded?

Yes, “Hot Spot Policing” strategies are used by the Rochester Police Department. According to Chris Delaney from Rochester Police Department, patrols in crime hotspots have been in use for 10-15 years in the Rochester area. The Rochester Police Department receives grant funding from NYS Department of Criminal Justice for “IMPACT”. Project IMPACT is implemented through the police department. There is also a joint patrol between Monroe County Sheriff and NY State Police to identify violent crime hotspots within Rochester.

8. Does it exist in other communities? If yes, where?

Yes, police hotspot strategies are used in other community though out the United States as well as other countries. According to Anthony Braga, 7 in 10 departments with more than 100 officers report using crime mapping to identify crime hotspots.


Research shows that focusing police efforts at high-crime places can be effective in preventing crime. The use of mapping hotspot within a community is effective in helping police officers in being more effective in the types of approaches they use to limit crimes activities within high-crime areas. Research also show that focus police efforts at high-crime places dose lead to displacement of crime, but it is difficult to detect displacement effects. Displacement of crime occurs when criminals feel that they are under pressure because of police present, so they end up moving away from that area and locate to another area were they began their criminal
activities again. Overall, the use of hot spot policing is effective in reducing crime in high-crime activity areas (hotspots).


10. Provide a review of the research (at least 2 studies)

a. What was the research design?

Anthony A. Braga conducted a study titled “Effects of Hot Spots Policing on Crime”. This study focused on existing published and non-published evidence on the effects of focused police crime prevention interventions at crime hot spots (Braga, 2007, pg6). Studies that compared hot spot policing intervention to places that experienced traditional police service were reviewed. The studies reviewed in this research had to be either an experimental design study (treatments on groups of objects in the intent to observe the response) or a quasi-experimental design study (an evaluation that aims to determine if an intervention has an effect on a study’s participants). There were nine studies that were reviewed in this study and five of the selected studies used experimental designs will four others studies used quasi-experimental design. The study took places in five large cities within the U.S and one suburb in Australia.

David Weisburd and Lorraine Mazerolle conducted a study on crime and disorder in drug hot spots in Jersey City, NJ. The researchers asked whether places that have a disproportionate amount of street-level drug activity also evidence disproportionate rates of other types of crime and disorder (Weisburd & Mazerolle, 2000, pg.333). This study focuses on blocks in neighborhoods that were defined as drug hop spots and a spatial research technique is the
methodology the researchers approach. An analysis of reported crime and disorder within the Drug hot spot areas were conducted in this study. The researchers also describable how they defined areas as drug hot spots.

b. Describe the data.

Braga research looks at interventions that are used by police officers to control crime hot spots. This includes traditional police service such as directed patrol and traffic enforcement as well as alternative strategies such as aggressive disorder enforcement and problem-oriented policing. The measure of crimes in this study includes crime incident reports, calls for service, and arrest data. Systematic observations of social disorder, survey, interviews, victimization, and physical disorder were also measured. There were eleven databases that were searched to identify eligible hot spot policing studies which provide the researcher with published and unpublished studies on hot spot policing. There was also a systematic review of hot spot policing that used voting count procedures to identify the effects of interventions on crime. Mata- analytical methods were also used to identify the effects of hot spot policing in this study as well.

David Weisburd and Lorraine Mazerolle study looked at the intersections of the neighborhoods they studied. This study identified 1,553 intersections in Jersey City, using a mapping strategy. Once they identified these intersection areas, the researcher’s than focused their attention to narcotic sales, emergency calls for service, and data from a tip line within these areas. They also interviewed officers from the narcotics unit, because of their knowledge and ability to obtain information on drug hotspots. Observations of these drug hot spot areas were also conducted. The researchers further state, that tips and emergency calls do not provide solid evidence of drug activity. So they develop three criteria for identifying active within these areas.
The characteristics of drug hot spots were also identified in study as well as the types of crimes that are committed within these drug hot spots.

**Summarize the findings.**

Braga, search strategies produced 697 abstracts which were reviewed for any suggestion of an experimental or quasi-experimental evaluation of hot spots policing interventions (Braga, 2007, pg11). Only 57 of those abstracts were selected for review and the full-text of these abstracts was carefully assessed to determine if it involved police efforts at crime hot spots. Out of the 57 only 9 were funded to be eligible for his study. It was founded that there were three broad categories for treatment used to prevent crime at hot spots within 6 of the 9 evaluations. They are as followed: enforcement problem-oriented policing interventions, directed and aggressive patrol programs, and police crackdowns and raids (Braga, 2007, pg.12). The researcher also reported that 9 out of the 7 selected studies reported crime reduction. Jersey City was the city which had the strongest reduction of crime out of the studied areas in this research. When looking at displacement and diffusion effects the researcher points out that it’s difficult to detect displacement effects. Five studies showed that there were no immediate displacements of crime after targeting an area. There were four studies the suggested possible effects associated with the focused police interventions (Braga, 2007, pg16). When it comes to the calls for service the researcher found that calls considering violence acts and property act were not significant with the effects of hot spot policing, but hot spot policing interventions did have significant treatment effects on call considering disorder.

Out of the 1,553 intersection areas that Weisburd and Mazerolle studied only 41% were linked to narcotics activity and 10% of these areas met one or more of the researcher’s criteria.
This study also found that Jersey City includes three or four very large drug areas, each covering 25 or more blocks (Weisburd & Mazerolle, 2000, pg336). The detectives that were interviewed in this study stated that dealers tended to sell drug in the same areas. Weisburd and Mazerolle identified 56 drug hot spots covering 192 segment and intersection (pg.337) after conducting their observations. Cocaine was the most selling drug in these areas followed by heroin and marijuana. When looking at the age and race of the individuals that lived within these areas, it was found that 29% of individuals who were under 18 and 90 % were non-White. However, arrests and emergency calls for service show that 47.8% of individual were getting arrested for narcotics offenses the most compared to 41.6% of individuals getting arrested for disorderly behavior. They also found that individuals were getting arrested from robbery, assaults, possession of a weapon, and vandalism in the drug hotspot areas. Individuals who called the police for help in these areas competed about disorderly behavior, narcotics, and violent crimes. Overall, this study also found that about 73% of nonmarket areas also called about the same types of crimes.

11. How would you rate this program or strategy?
   
   a. Generally recognized as effective
   b. Good likelihood that it is effective
   c. Inconclusive
   d. Probably not effective
   e. Generally recognized as not effective
   f. Harmful or likely to be harmful

12. Explain your rating.

   Hot spot policing has been shown to be effective in reducing crime within a given area. The use of mapping crime and locating were crime is occurring the most is accommodating to police
officers. By point pint areas where crime is mostly occurring, officers have the advantage to be more productive in the outcomes of solving the issues within those areas. Also research has shown that hot spot policing strategies in high-crime areas does result in the reduction of crime within those given areas. Therefore, I acknowledge that this strategy is beneficial in reducing crime.

13. Finally, provide a one paragraph summary of the program, the findings and your recommendation.

Overall, the program focuses on identifying areas within a neighborhood that are mostly troubled. These troubled areas have higher criminal activity than other areas. By the use of technology, police departments are now able to conduct analysis of these types of areas within these neighborhoods and use mapping techniques to pin point what is known as a hot-spot area. With the use of this technique police officers have the advantage to be more productive in developing problem-solving strategies that can help control these hot spot areas. Research shows that this strategy is effective in reducing criminal acts, but it cannot be identified if this strategy detects displacement effects. I would recommend that officers should not only patrol that hotspot areas by the use of a vehicles, but they should also use foot patrol in these areas as well.