

2006-2008

ALCOHOL and CRIME in WYOMING



**Wyoming Association of Sheriffs
and Chiefs of Police**

WYOMING DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION – Highway Safety Program

ALCOHOL AND CRIME IN WYOMING: Trends Analysis 2006 - 2008

MAY 2009

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INTRODUCTION

The impact of alcohol abuse on crime and public safety in this country is a concern which has been a topic of considerable national research in recent years. The most recent national analysis concluded that: “*Nearly 4 in 10 violent victimizations involve the use of alcohol, about 4 in 10 fatal motor vehicle accidents are alcohol-involved, and about 4 in 10 convicted offenders self-report that they were using alcohol at the time of their offense.*”¹ Although it has been suspected that alcohol is a factor in a large number of custodial arrests in Wyoming, reliable data had not been available previously to more accurately determine the scope and impact of the problem in this state.

A related public health and safety issue involves the alarming rate of alcohol consumption by youth in Wyoming. It is estimated that *in 2001 underage drinkers consumed 23% of all alcohol sold in the state.*² Wyoming youth continue to lead the nation (top ten states) in several categories involving alcohol: *early consumption (by age 13), binge drinking and driving after drinking.*³ These statistics, coupled with the national statistics that indicate that *motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death among young persons aged 16 to 20,*⁴ and that *29% of drivers aged 15 to 20 who were killed in motor vehicle crashes in 2002 had been drinking alcohol...*⁵ emphasize the need to find ways to respond more effectively to youth involvement with alcohol.

In spring of 2005, the Wyoming Association of Sheriffs and Chiefs of Police received grant funding from the Wyoming Department of Transportation – Highway Safety Program to collect and evaluate alcohol-related arrest data in ten counties in Wyoming. The project was initiated with the expressed purpose of devising more effective enforcement strategies to reduce the number of alcohol related crimes and traffic crashes in Wyoming. The information collected from a total of 7,980 persons who were arrested and subsequently detained in a detention facility in the participating counties during the six-month project period (April through September) confirmed what law enforcement officers who patrol the highways and who respond to calls for service in Wyoming already knew from experience – that alcohol is a major contributing factor in situations that result in someone going to jail.



¹ Bureau of Justice Statistics, Alcohol and Crime: An Analysis of National Data on the Prevalence of Alcohol Involvement in Crime, April 28, 1998.

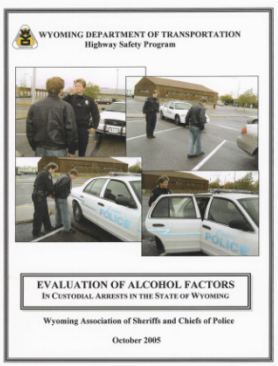
² Underage Drinking in Wyoming: The Facts, publication produced by the Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation (PIRE), March 2004

³ 2003-2007 Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) data

⁴ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control (2004, November 30). WISQARS leading causes of death reports, 1999 – 2002

⁵ National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (2003, August) Traffic Safety Facts 2002: Young drivers.

ALCOHOL and CRIME in WYOMING: 2006-2008



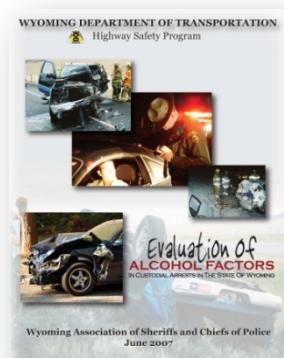
This initiative began as a pilot project in 2005 to evaluate the feasibility of collecting alcohol-related arrest data in Wyoming. The data collection process was continued, refined and expanded in the subsequent years to include data collection in all twenty-three counties in 2006. The collection of data was extended to a full twelve-month period in 2008. The Wyoming Department of Transportation - Highway Safety Program and the Wyoming Association of Sheriffs and Chiefs of Police are currently working to institutionalize the data collection process.

To date, information has been collected from a total of 51,927 persons who were arrested and subsequently detained in a detention facility in Wyoming. Specific information collected during the book-in process includes the following:

- Type of offense;
- Whether alcohol or drugs were involved;
- Location of last consumption and point of sale;
- Known blood alcohol content levels for alcohol-related arrests; and
- Demographic information

A sufficient amount of alcohol-related arrest data has now been collected which can be analyzed for the purpose of identifying trends in alcohol involvement in crime in Wyoming. Consistent patterns of alcohol involvement for certain crimes are now more evident and the times when these crimes are occurring more predictable. The analyzed data and findings contained in this report should also prove useful in establishing a baseline of experience for devising, as well as evaluating selected strategies in the future.

The Wyoming Association of Sheriffs and Chiefs of Police have published the results of their data collection efforts each year for the last three years in two separate reports. The main report provides statewide statistics and averages, along with comparisons of county statistics in specific categories. The accompanying supplemental report provides county, community and local law enforcement agency specific statistics. These reports can be accessed online at the following two websites: The Wyoming Association of Sheriffs and Chiefs of Police website <http://wascop.com> and the Wyoming First Lady's Initiative to Reduce Childhood Drinking website <http://wfli.org>.



The trends analysis and findings contained in this report are based on the data collected in all twenty-three counties in Wyoming during the same six-month time period in 2006 – 2008. A separate, monthly analysis of the data collected for the twelve month period ending in September of 2008 is also included. The data collected in 2005 is not included in this analysis as it involved only ten counties.

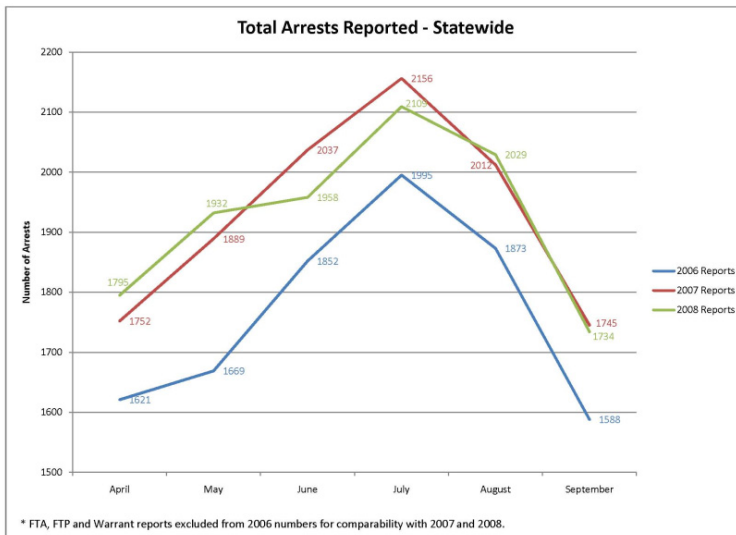
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report contains an analysis of alcohol-related arrest information collected by the Wyoming Association of Sheriffs and Chiefs of Police in all twenty-three counties in Wyoming during the years 2006 through 2008. Specific alcohol-related information collected from a total of 43,060 persons who were arrested and subsequently detained in a county detention facility was considered in this analysis.

This Executive Summary highlights a few of the significant findings contained in this report. It focuses on issues that are of obvious concern or which may be of greater interest to the general public; however, a careful review of other relevant findings and statistics contained in the main body of this report is essential in order to gain a more complete perspective of the impact of alcohol on crime in Wyoming.

A review of the data collected from persons arrested and subsequently taken to jail indicates that Wyoming is relatively safe from what is generally considered to be “serious” crime. The numbers of persons who are arrested for felonies are relatively low when compared to the number of persons arrested for minor crimes (misdemeanors). Felony arrests accounted for less than 8% of the total arrests statewide.

The profile of the average person taken to jail in Wyoming has been relatively consistent each year. Eight out of ten times it will be a male – average age 33. The average age for a woman arrested is 32. Juveniles accounted for less than 2% of all persons arrested and placed in a detention facility; however, the percentage for juvenile felony arrests was higher than for adults – 14% compared to 8%.



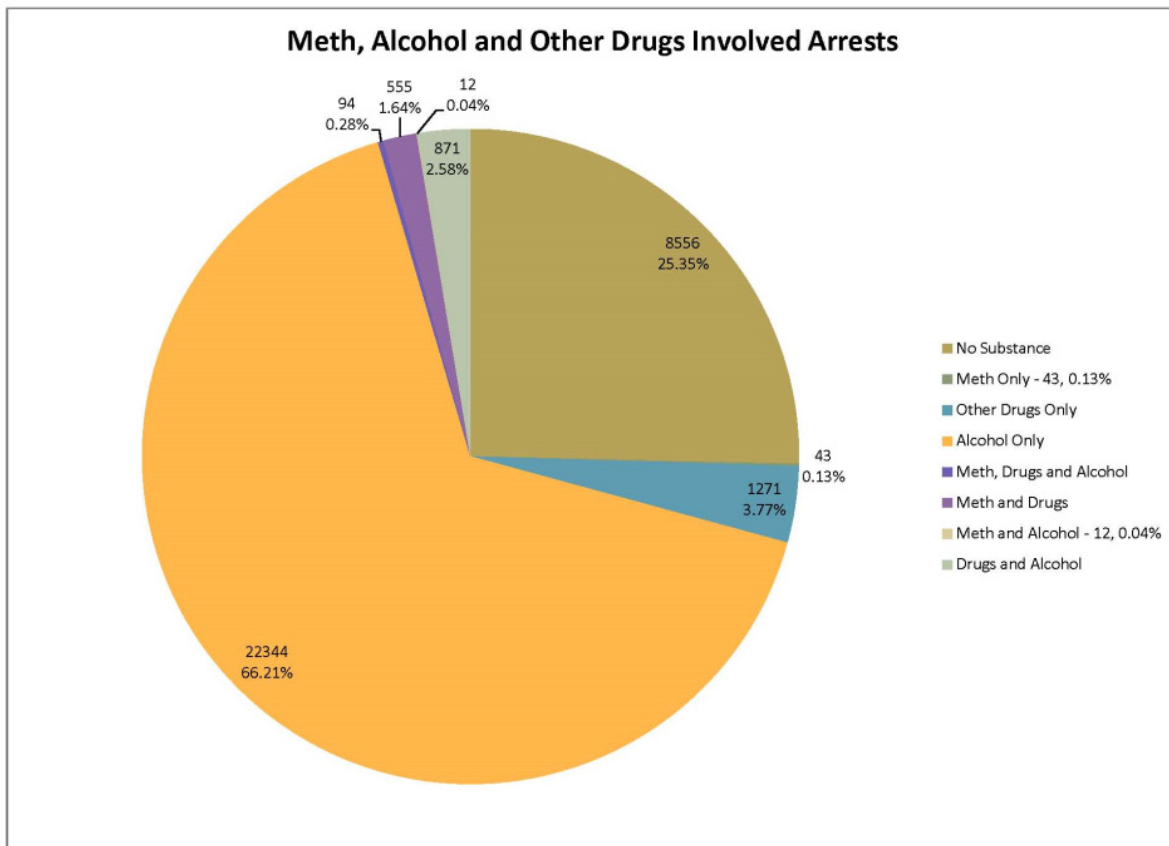
Summer is the time of year when more people are arrested and taken to jail in Wyoming. The statistics have been relatively consistent in that regard for the last three years. Although there is a slight “spike” in the arrest rate during the end-of-the-year holiday season, June – July – August are the peak months for arrest activity.

ALCOHOL and CRIME in WYOMING: 2006-2008

Approximately 22,000 persons a year are arrested statewide and taken to jail. And three out of four times the arrest will involve alcohol and/or other drugs. The level of alcohol involvement in these arrests each year indicates that alcohol is the drug which consistently has the greatest influence on crime in Wyoming.

Of the 33,746 arrests reported during the same six month period (April through September) in each of the last three years:

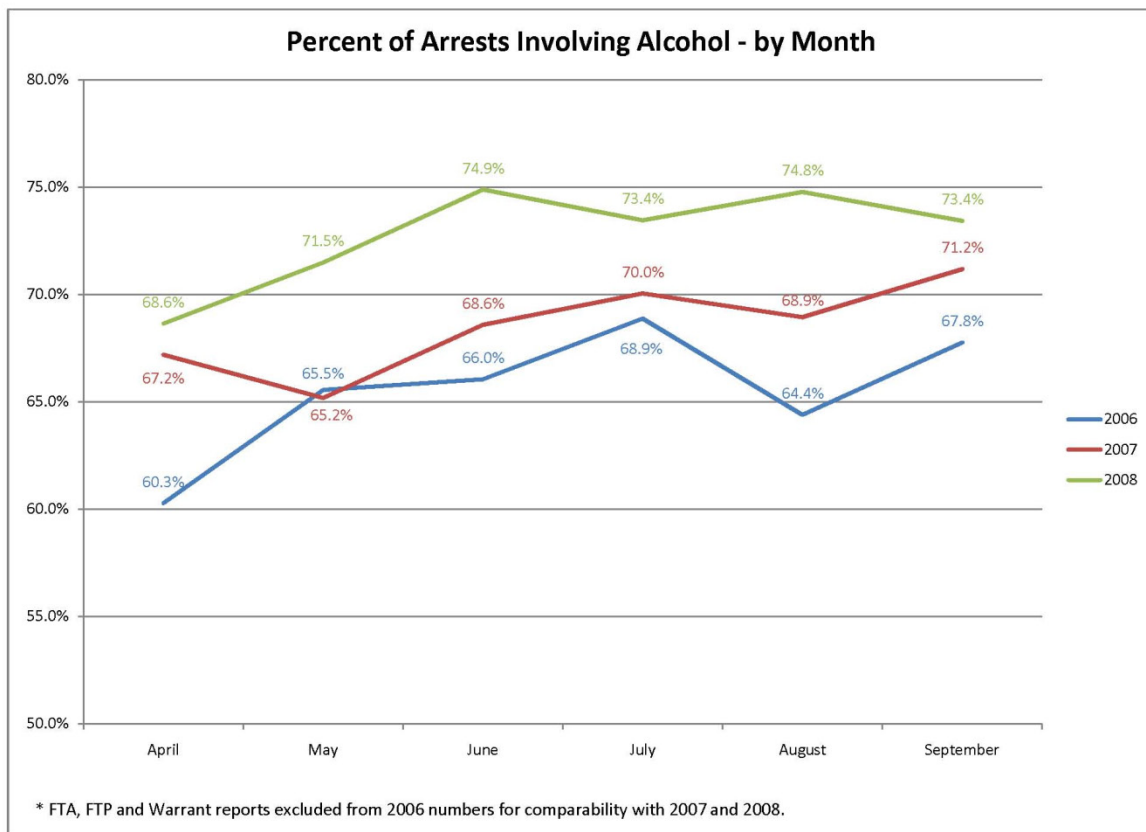
- ❖ 69% involved alcohol
- ❖ 76% of all misdemeanor arrests involved alcohol
- ❖ 8% involved “Other” drugs
- ❖ 2% involved methamphetamine



ALCOHOL and CRIME in WYOMING: 2006-2008

Alcohol-involved arrests in Wyoming have shown a consistent upward trend during the last three years. The number and percentage of arrests involving alcohol in Wyoming has increased each year:⁶

- ❖ 2006 - 6,959/65.7%
- ❖ 2007 - 7,944/68.5%
- ❖ 2008 - 8,418/72.8%



2006-2008 Trends Analysis

A further review of alcohol-related arrest statistics also indicate an upward trend in two circumstances which inherently pose a greater risk to public safety – public intoxication and driving under the influence. These situations involve individuals who have been arrested with a high concentration of blood alcohol content (BAC). Individuals who engage in binge drinking, heavy drinking or extreme drinking appear to be statistically “driving” most of the law enforcement activity in Wyoming communities.

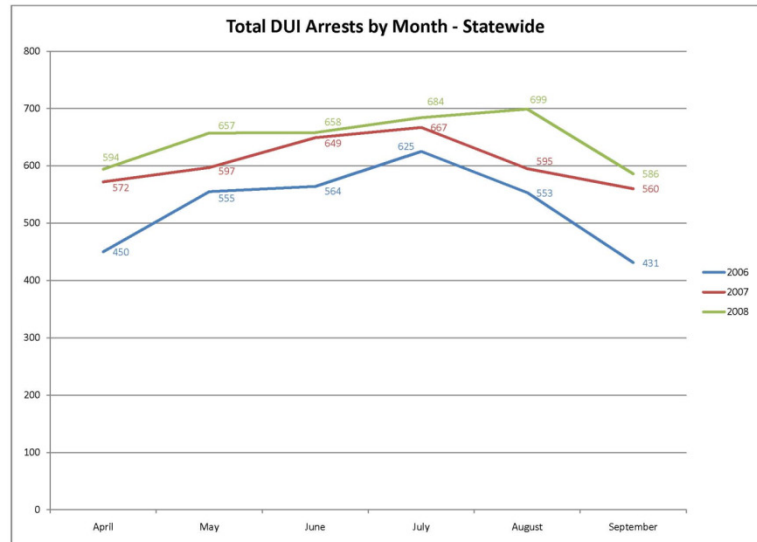
⁶ The number of arrests shown only represents six months of arrest activity each year.

ALCOHOL and CRIME in WYOMING: 2006-2008

Persons arrested for driving under the influence and public intoxication accounted for almost half of all the persons jailed in Wyoming in 2008. The numbers and percentage of arrests in both categories have also increased each of the last three years. The statistics listed below reflect only six-months of arrest activity in the state – April through September of each year.⁷

Arrests for Driving Under the Influence:⁸

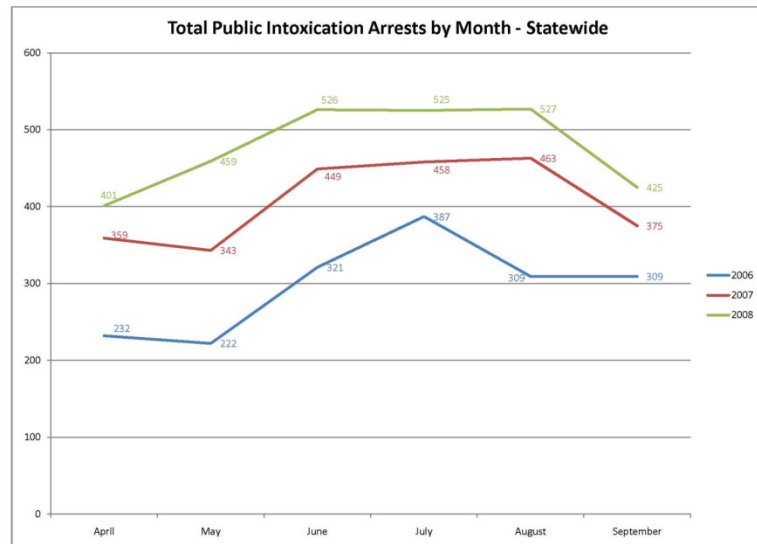
- ❖ 2006 - 3,167/29.9%
- ❖ 2007 - 3,611/31.1%
- ❖ 2008 - 3,810/32.9%



2006-2008 Trends Analysis

Arrests for Public Intoxication:⁹

- ❖ 2006 - 905/8.5%
- ❖ 2007 - 1,075/9.3%
- ❖ 2008 - 1,612/13.9%



2006-2008 Trends Analysis

⁷ A separate analysis of a full-year of arrest activity for 2008 is provided in the main body of the report.

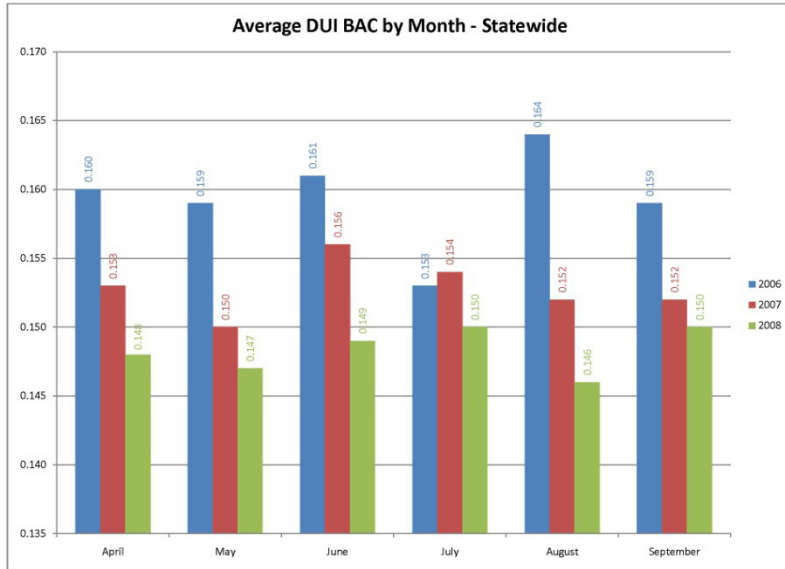
⁸ In 2008, a total of 7,094 persons were arrested for driving under the influence.

⁹ In 2008, a total of 2,700 persons were arrested statewide for Public Intoxication – an additional 2,399 persons were either arrested or admitted to the Fremont County Alcohol Crisis Center for that reason.

ALCOHOL and CRIME in WYOMING: 2006-2008

The average blood alcohol content (BAC) of persons arrested for public intoxication in Wyoming is .241. This high level of BAC has remained fairly consistent during the last three years: 2006 - .235; 2007 - .251; 2008 - .236.

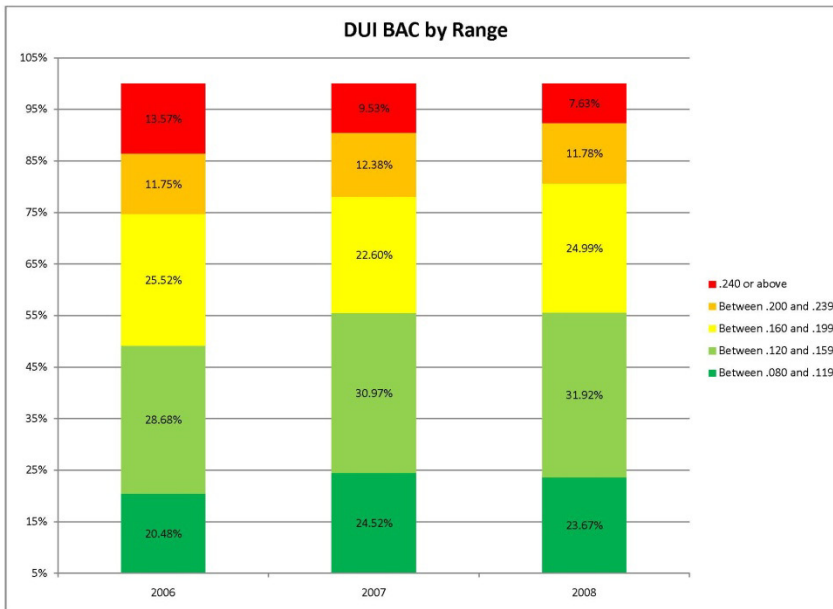
The average BAC of persons arrested for DUI in Wyoming is .155 – almost twice the presumptive or legal level for impairment. While the number of persons arrested has increased each year, the level of BAC for these arrests has decreased incrementally during each of the last three years:



2006-2008 Trends Analysis

- ❖ 2006 - .159
- ❖ 2007 - .153
- ❖ 2008 - .152

The number of persons arrested for driving under the influence has increased each of the last three years; however, the number and percentage of persons arrested with a BAC above .240 has decreased significantly during that same time period:



2006-2008 Trends Analysis

- ❖ 2006 – 13.57%;
- ❖ 2007 – 9.53%;
- ❖ 2008 – 7.63%.

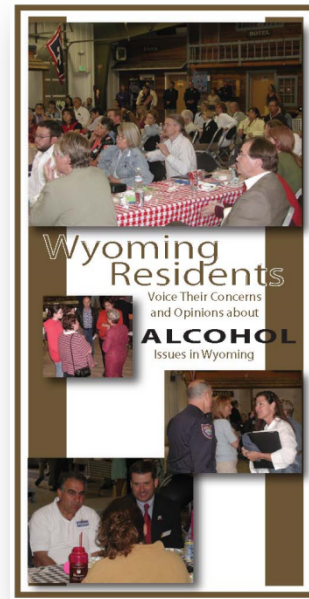
ALCOHOL and CRIME in WYOMING: 2006-2008

In order to grasp the significance of the statistics regarding blood alcohol content, it should be noted that a physically fit male who weighs 180 pounds would have to consume at least seven drinks in one hour in order to achieve a BAC of 0.15 – a female weighing 120 pounds would have to consume five drinks in one hour.¹⁰

The high percentage of alcohol-involved arrests, the inordinate number of arrests for public intoxication and driving under the influence, and the high levels of blood alcohol content recorded for persons arrested in Wyoming provide compelling evidence that a percentage of Wyoming citizens do not drink responsibly. Research indicates that although binge drinkers comprise only 23 percent of the population – they consume 76 percent of the alcohol; and although frequent binge drinkers comprise only 7 percent of the population, they drink 45 percent of the alcohol consumed by adults in the United States.¹¹

The arrest data also serves to confirm what most residents in Wyoming already believe – that alcohol abuse is a serious state and community problem. A recent phone survey of 4,699 households in all twenty-three counties in Wyoming indicated the high level of public concern for alcohol use and abuse in Wyoming.¹²

- ❖ 92.1% believe that youth alcohol use is a problem in the state.
- ❖ 77.8% believe that adult alcohol abuse is a serious problem in the state.
- ❖ 71% believe that binge drinking is a serious problem on college campuses.
- ❖ 86% believe that drinking and driving is a serious community problem



CONCLUSION

The statistics compiled during this three-year period provide compelling evidence of the influence of alcohol abuse on crime in every community in Wyoming. The impact is statistically significant. Although Wyoming is relatively “safe” from what is generally considered to be serious crime, the high percentage of alcohol-involved arrests, the inordinate number of arrests for public intoxication and driving under the influence, and the high levels of blood alcohol content for drivers arrested represent a real and significant threat to public safety.

¹⁰ Please refer to the Alcohol Impairment Educational Guides for males and females developed by J. Anderle, Laramie Police Department and Mike Moore, Wyoming Chemical Testing for information about the level of impairment for other body weights and drinks consumed. These guides are included in each of the Evaluation of Alcohol Factors reports published by the Wyoming Association of Sheriffs and Chiefs of Police.

¹¹ Drinking in America: Myths, Realities and Prevention Policy, Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 2002

¹² Wyoming Survey & Analysis Center, *Wyoming Alcohol Use Issues Survey*, October 2006.

STATISTICS/GRAPHS: 2006 - 2008

This section of the report provides alcohol-related arrest data collected statewide for a for the same six-month period (April 1 through September 30) for 2006 -2008. Data collection was limited to six months in 2006 and 2007 due to budgetary constraints. The time period in which data was collected during these two years was a result of when grant funds became available – and not because these months were intentionally selected or “targeted.”

The various graphs and charts help to identify trends involving alcohol-related arrest activity and provide a statistical picture about circumstances which result in someone being arrested and subsequently taken to jail in Wyoming. Listed below are a few of the significant findings/averages for this three- year period:

- Alcohol was involved in 69% of all custodial arrests.
- Alcohol was involved in 76% of all misdemeanor arrests.
- Arrests for public intoxication accounted for 10.6% of all arrests.
- The average blood alcohol content for persons arrested for public intoxication was 0.24
- Methamphetamine was involved in 2% of the 33,746 reported arrests.
- “Other drugs” were involved in 8% of the reported arrests.
- Driving under the influence arrests accounted for 31% of all arrests.
- The average reported blood alcohol content for DUI arrests statewide was 0.155.¹³
- 46.6% of persons arrested for DUI had a reported BAC level above 0.16; and 10.2% had a BAC of 0.240 or greater.
- June, July and August were the “peak” months for arrests, alcohol-involved arrests, public intoxication and driving under the influence.

¹³ In Wyoming, a person driving with a blood alcohol content of 0.08 is legally presumed to be impaired.

Statewide Arrests - April 1 through September 30

Numbers by Year

	Total Offenses	Misde-meanor	Felony	Domestic Violence	Resisting Arrest	Assault	Public Intoxication*	Alcohol Involved	DUI*	Meth Involved	Drugs Involved
2006	10,598	8,847	990	484	148	277	905	6,959	3,167	262	884
2007	11,591	9,861	861	405	137	233	1,075	7,944	3,611	228	912
2008	11,557	9,519	762	547	210	408	1,612	8,418	3,810	214	995

* Total percent of Public Intoxication and DUI arrests do not include FCACC.

Percents by Year

	Total Offenses	Misde-meanor	Felony	Domestic Violence	Resisting Arrest	Assault	Public Intoxication	Alcohol Involved	DUI	Meth Involved	Drugs Involved
2006	10,598	83.48%	9.34%	4.57%	1.40%	2.61%	8.54%	65.66%	29.88%	2.47%	8.34%
2007	11,591	85.07%	7.43%	3.49%	1.18%	2.01%	9.27%	68.54%	31.15%	1.97%	7.87%
2008	11,557	82.37%	6.59%	4.73%	1.82%	3.53%	13.95%	72.84%	32.97%	1.85%	8.61%

* Total percents may not equal 100 due to lack of information, or a single arrest involving multiple crimes.

Juvenile Statewide Arrests - April 1 through September 30

Numbers by Year

	Total Offenses	Misde-meanor	Felony	Domestic Violence	Resisting Arrest	Assault	Public Intoxication*	Alcohol Involved	DUI*	Meth Involved	Drugs Involved
2006	266	221	41	7	11	18	6	80	35	3	37
2007	140	111	18	2	4	6	9	56	33	1	22
2008	209	168	28	10	14	20	9	92	31	1	34

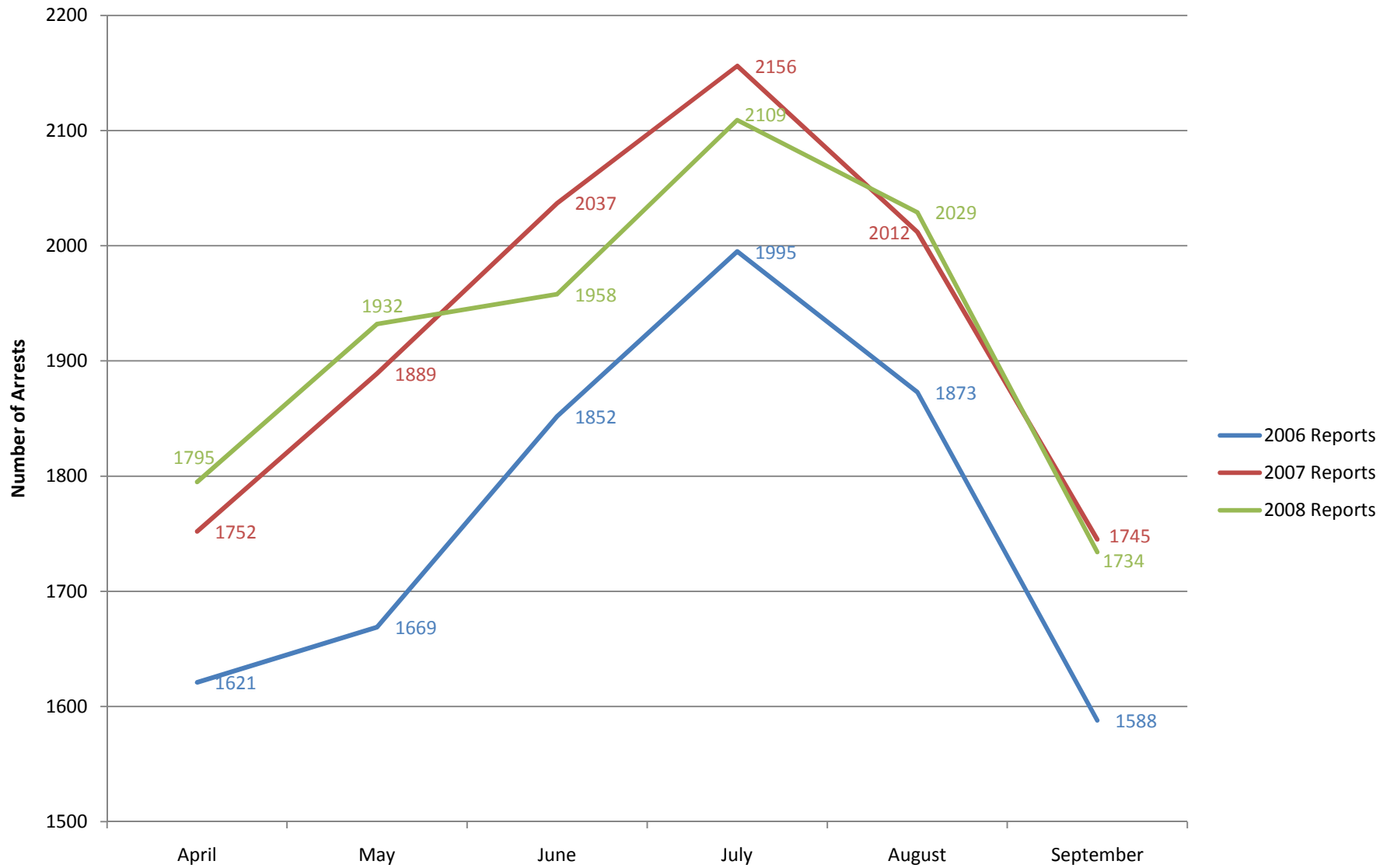
* Total percent of Public Intoxication and DUI arrests do not include FCACC.

Percents by Year

	Total Offenses	Misde-meanor	Felony	Domestic Violence	Resisting Arrest	Assault	Public Intoxication	Alcohol Involved	DUI	Meth Involved	Drugs Involved
2006	266	83.08%	15.41%	2.63%	4.14%	6.77%	2.26%	30.08%	13.16%	1.13%	13.91%
2007	140	79.29%	12.86%	1.43%	2.86%	4.29%	6.43%	40.00%	23.57%	0.71%	15.71%
2008	209	80.38%	13.40%	4.78%	6.70%	9.57%	4.31%	44.02%	14.83%	0.48%	16.27%

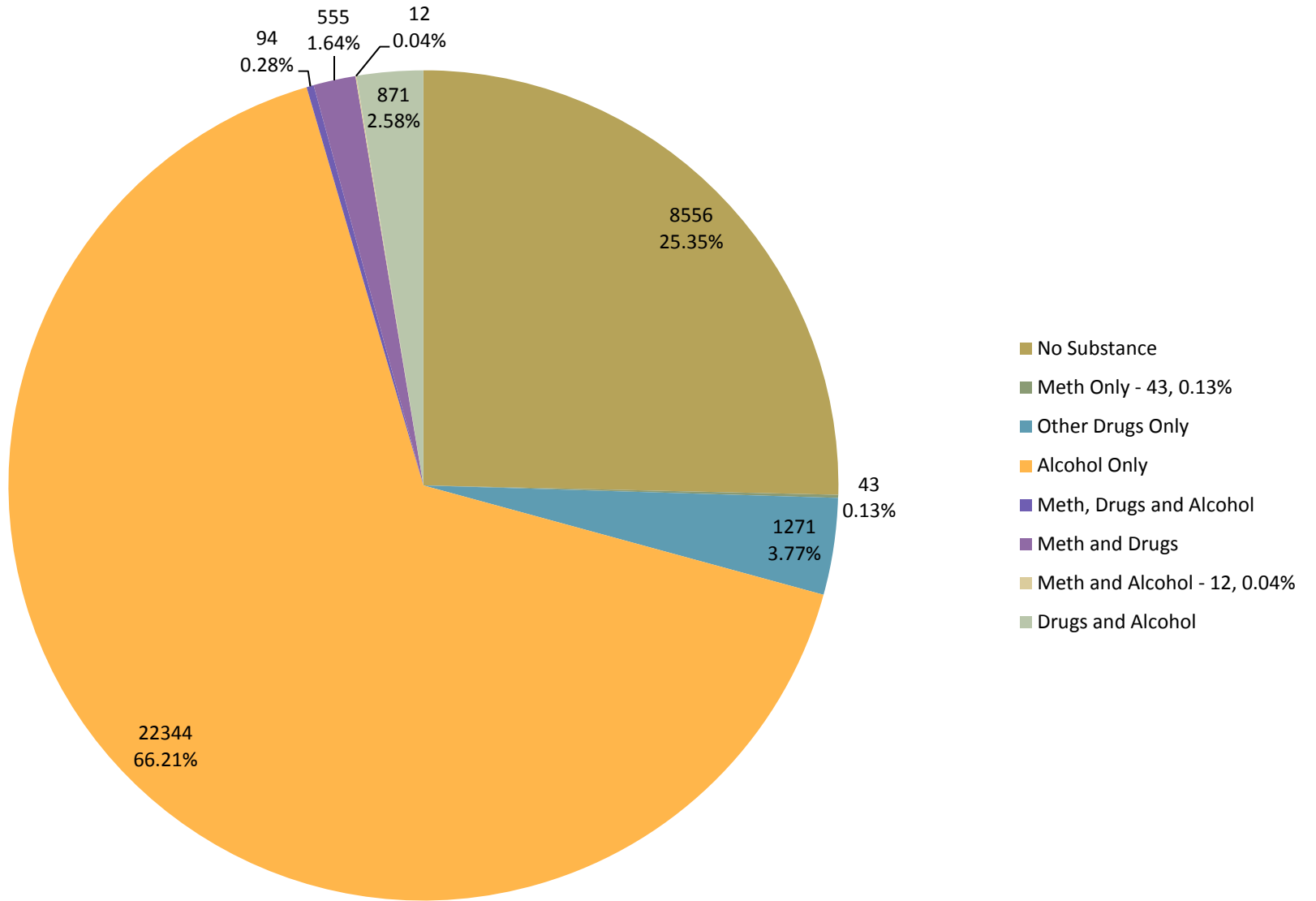
* Total percents may not equal 100 due to lack of information, or a single arrest involving multiple crimes.

Total Arrests Reported - Statewide

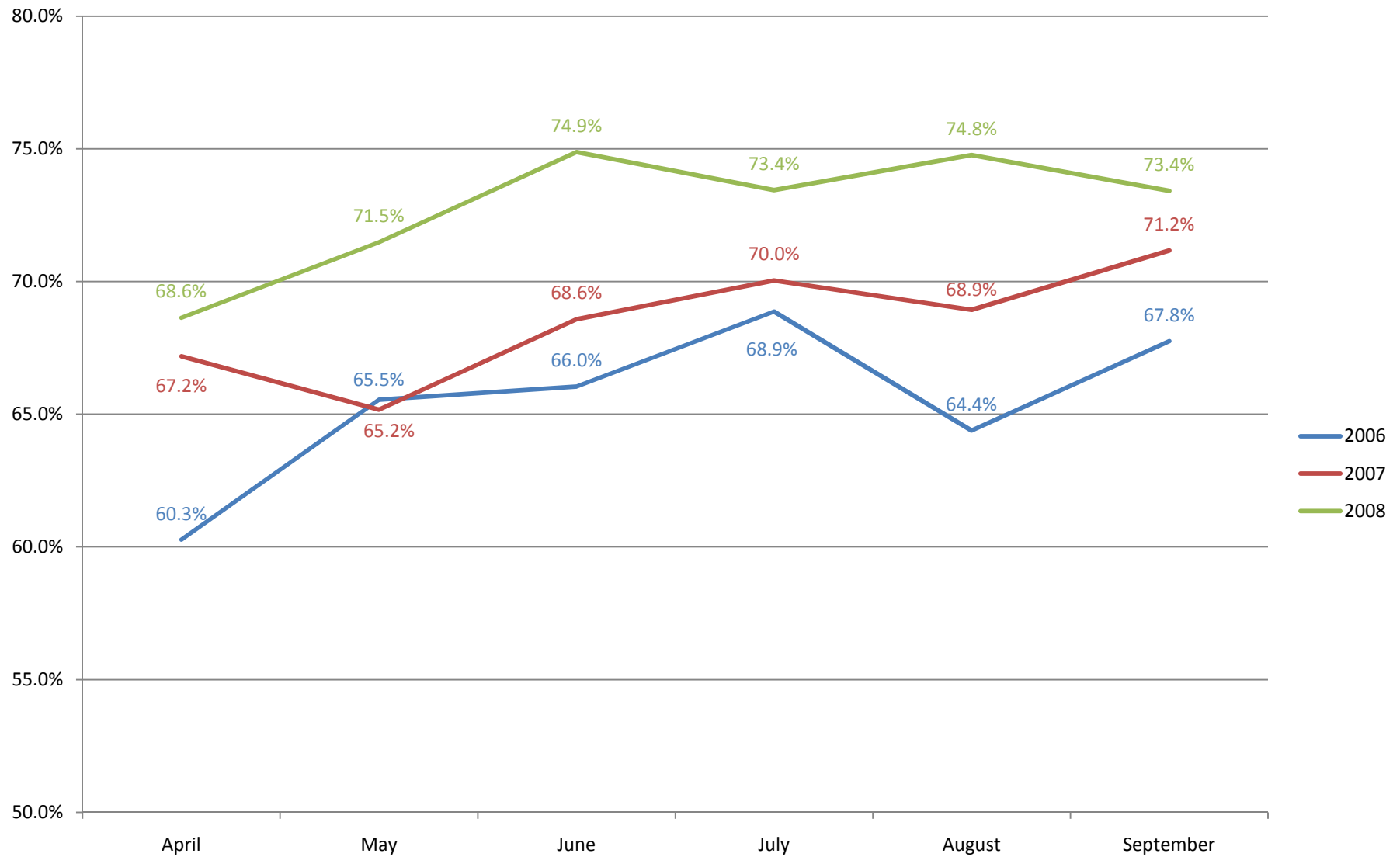


* FTA, FTP and Warrant reports excluded from 2006 numbers for comparability with 2007 and 2008.

Meth, Alcohol and Other Drugs Involved Arrests

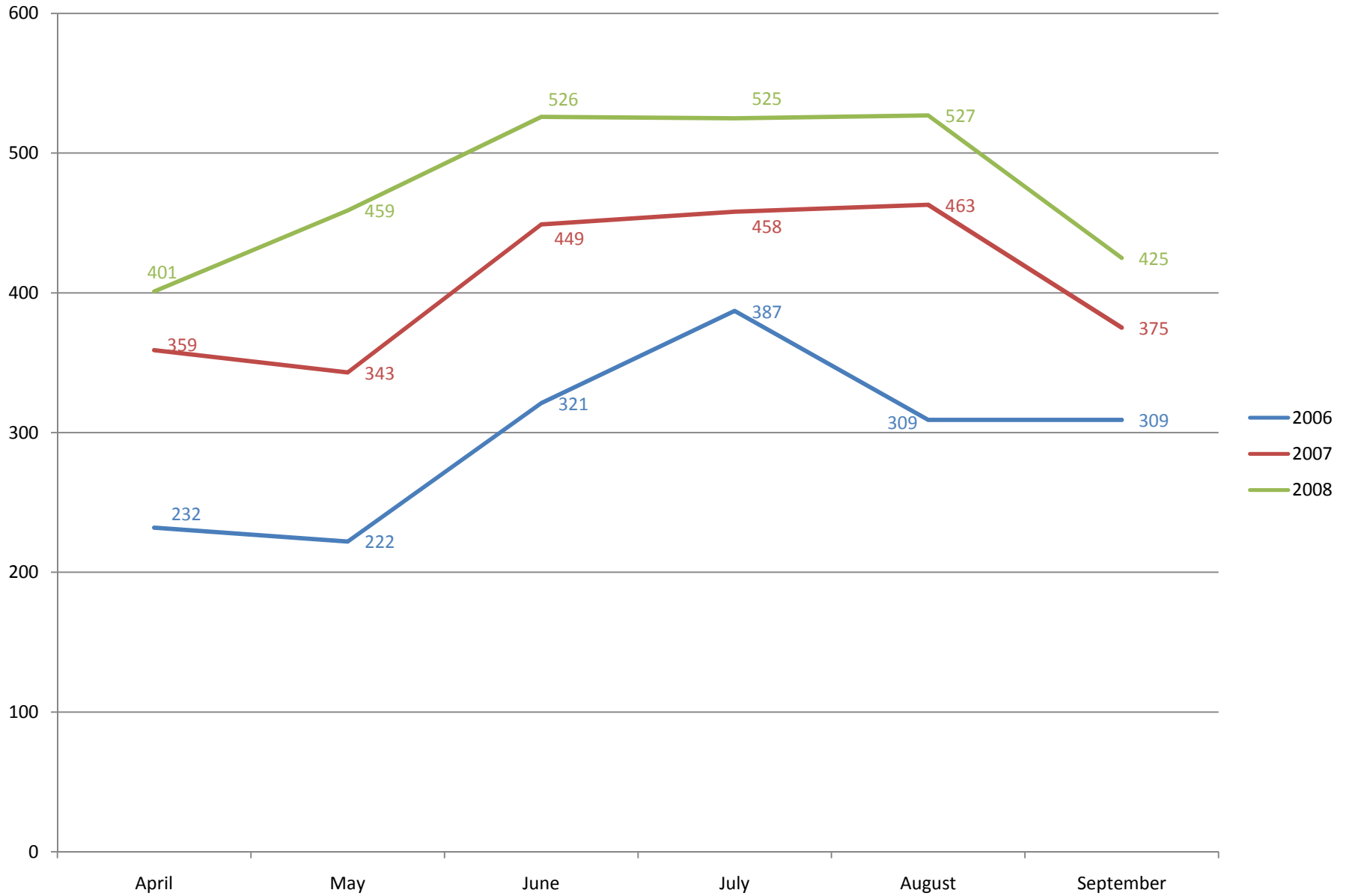


Percent of Arrests Involving Alcohol - by Month

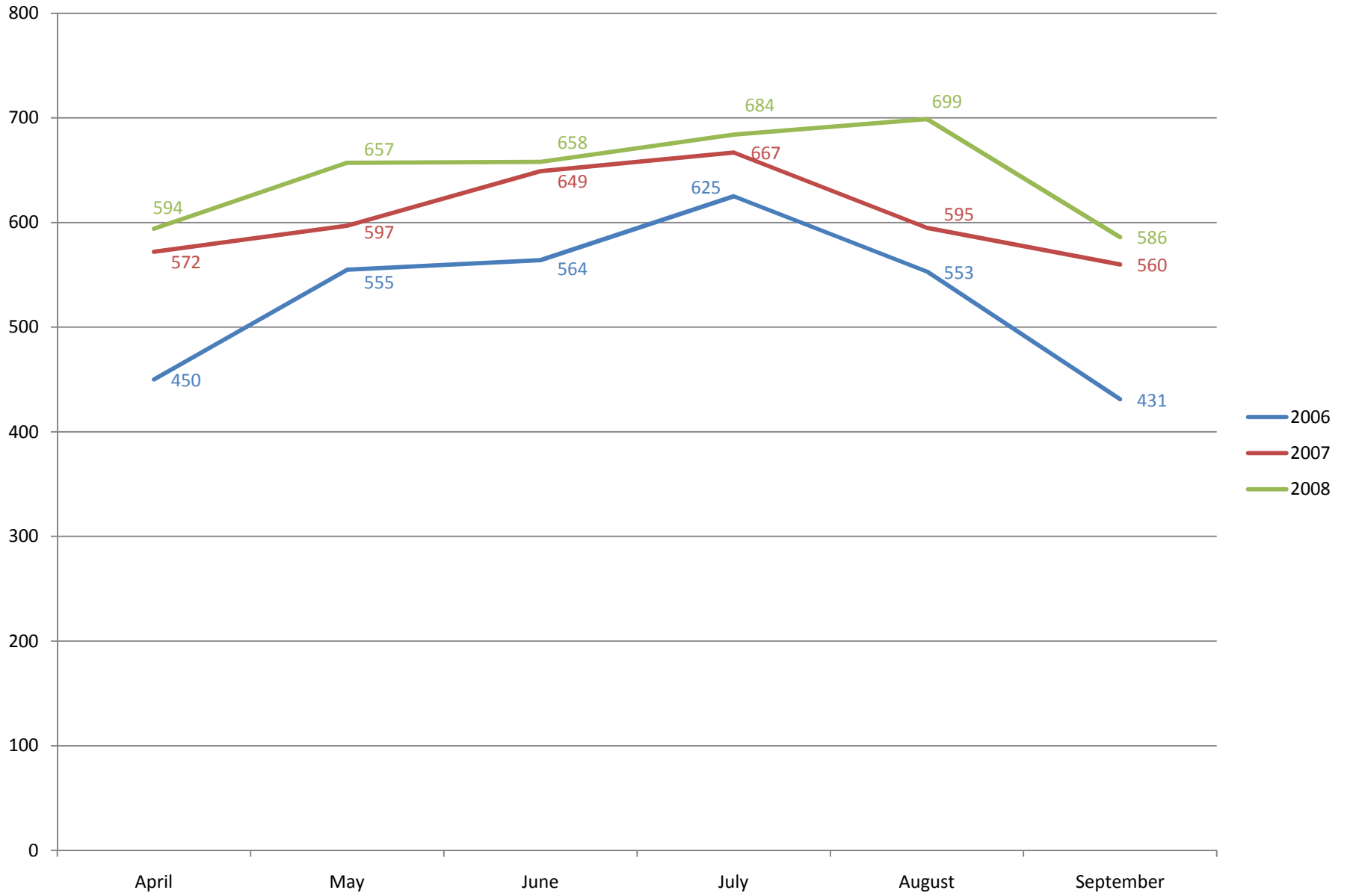


* FTA, FTP and Warrant reports excluded from 2006 numbers for comparability with 2007 and 2008.

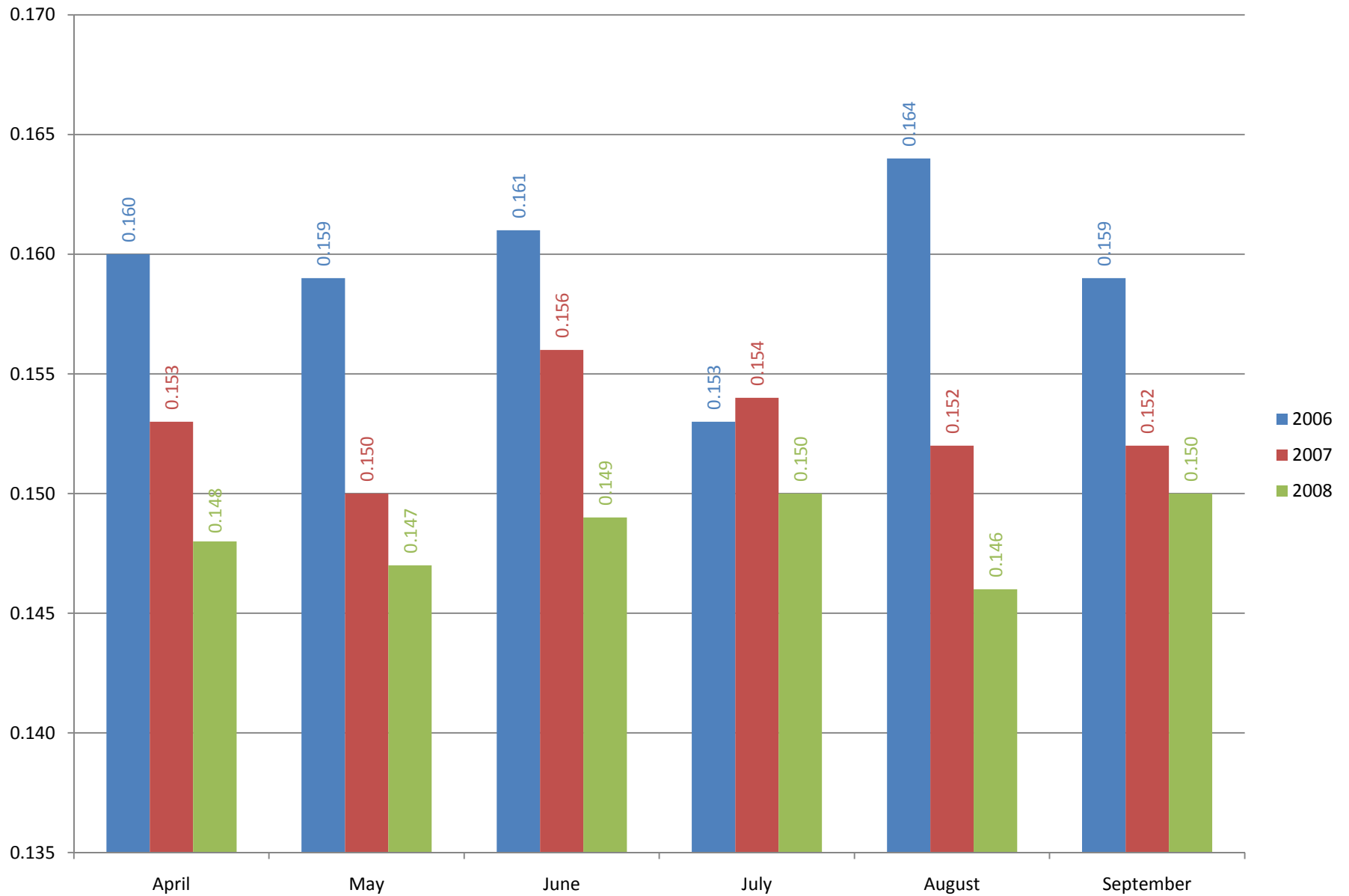
Total Public Intoxication Arrests by Month, Statewide



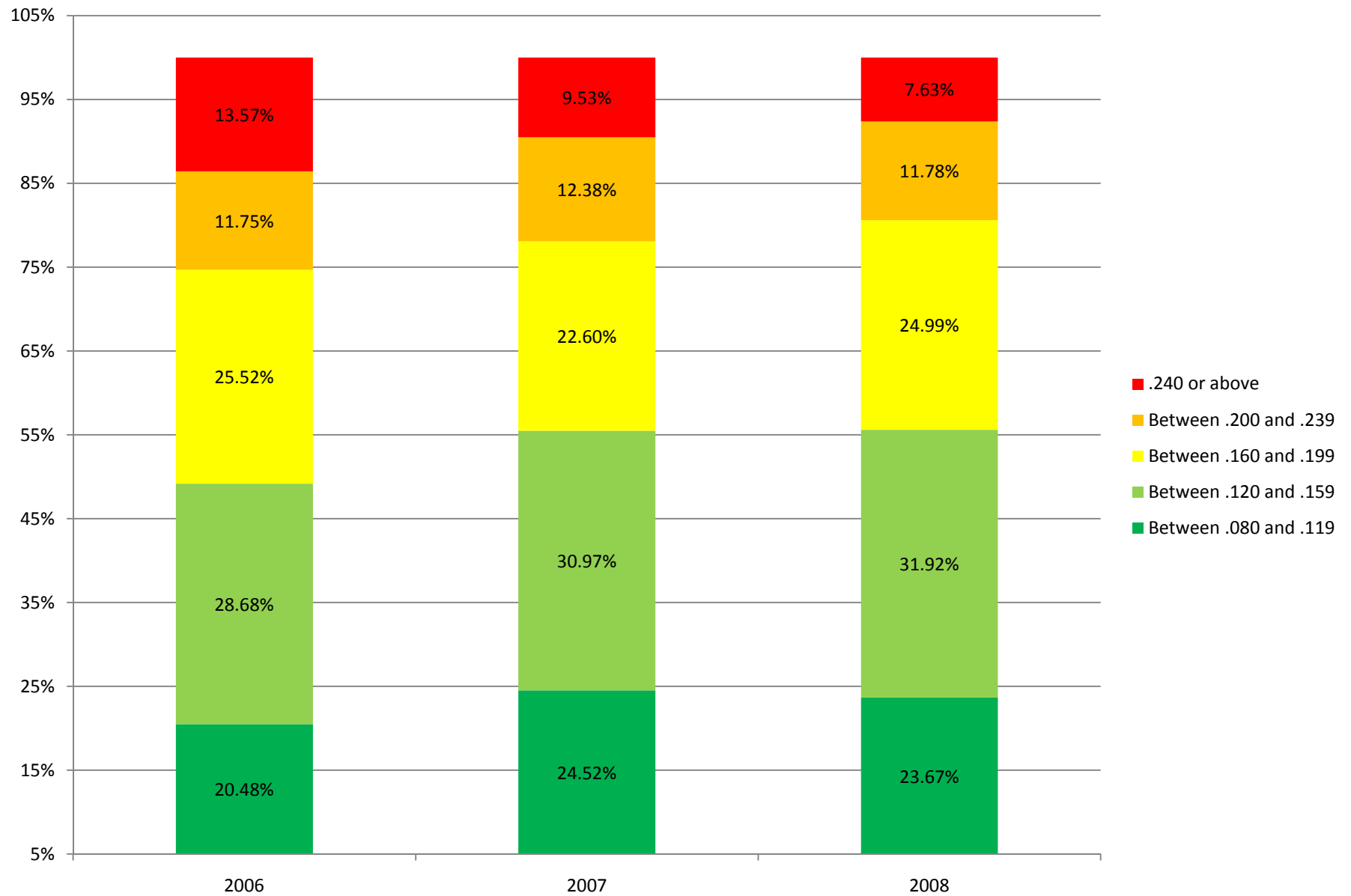
Total DUI Arrests by Month - Statewide



Average DUI BAC by Month - Statewide



DUI BAC by Range



STATISTICS/GRAPHS: 2008 - by Month

This section of the report provides alcohol-related arrest data collected statewide for a twelve-month period - October 1, 2007 through September 30, 2008. The time period in which data was collected during these two years was a result of when grant funds became available – and not because these months were intentionally selected or “targeted.”

The various graphs and charts help to identify “peak” months for arrest activity and provide a statistical picture about circumstances which result in someone being arrested and subsequently taken to jail in Wyoming. Listed below are a few of the significant findings/averages for this three- year period:

- Alcohol was involved in 70.65% of all custodial arrests.
- Alcohol was involved in 74.38% of all misdemeanor arrests.
- Arrests for public intoxication accounted for 12.41% of all arrests.
- The average blood alcohol content for persons arrested for public intoxication was 0.236.
- Methamphetamine was involved in 2.1% of the 21,758 reported arrests.
- “Other drugs” were involved in 9.07% of the reported arrests.
- Driving under the influence arrests accounted for 32% of all arrests.
- The average reported blood alcohol content for DUI arrests statewide was 0.152.¹
- 44.4% of persons arrested for DUI had a reported BAC level above 0.16; and 7.63% had a BAC of 0.240 or greater.
- June, July and August were the “peak” months for arrests, alcohol-involved arrests, public intoxication and driving under the influence.

¹ In Wyoming, a person driving with a blood alcohol content of 0.08 is legally presumed to be impaired.

Statewide Arrests - Oct. 2007 - Sep. 2008

Numbers by Month

	Total Offenses	Misde-meanor	Felony	Domestic Violence	Resisting Arrest	Assault	Public Intoxication*	Alcohol Involved	DUI*	Meth Involved	Drugs Involved
Oct.	1,636	1,300	117	97	39	51	186	1,046	460	53	171
Nov.	1,707	1,356	137	84	44	45	168	1,145	495	52	199
Dec.	1,695	1,335	106	112	40	68	198	1,198	536	22	129
Jan.	1,644	1,302	118	105	37	66	173	1,121	495	43	161
Feb.	1,636	1,338	115	71	33	58	168	1,132	551	48	151
Mar.	1,883	1,576	115	89	46	70	195	1,313	642	26	167
Apr.	1,795	1,490	138	86	38	52	219	1,232	588	38	175
May	1,932	1,600	132	99	28	73	248	1,381	648	43	170
Jun.	1,958	1,626	124	85	41	72	305	1,466	644	37	171
Jul.	2,109	1,753	127	94	43	79	322	1,549	672	29	189
Aug.	2,029	1,645	135	101	32	87	322	1,517	685	37	157
Sep.	1,734	1,405	106	82	28	45	196	1,273	573	30	133

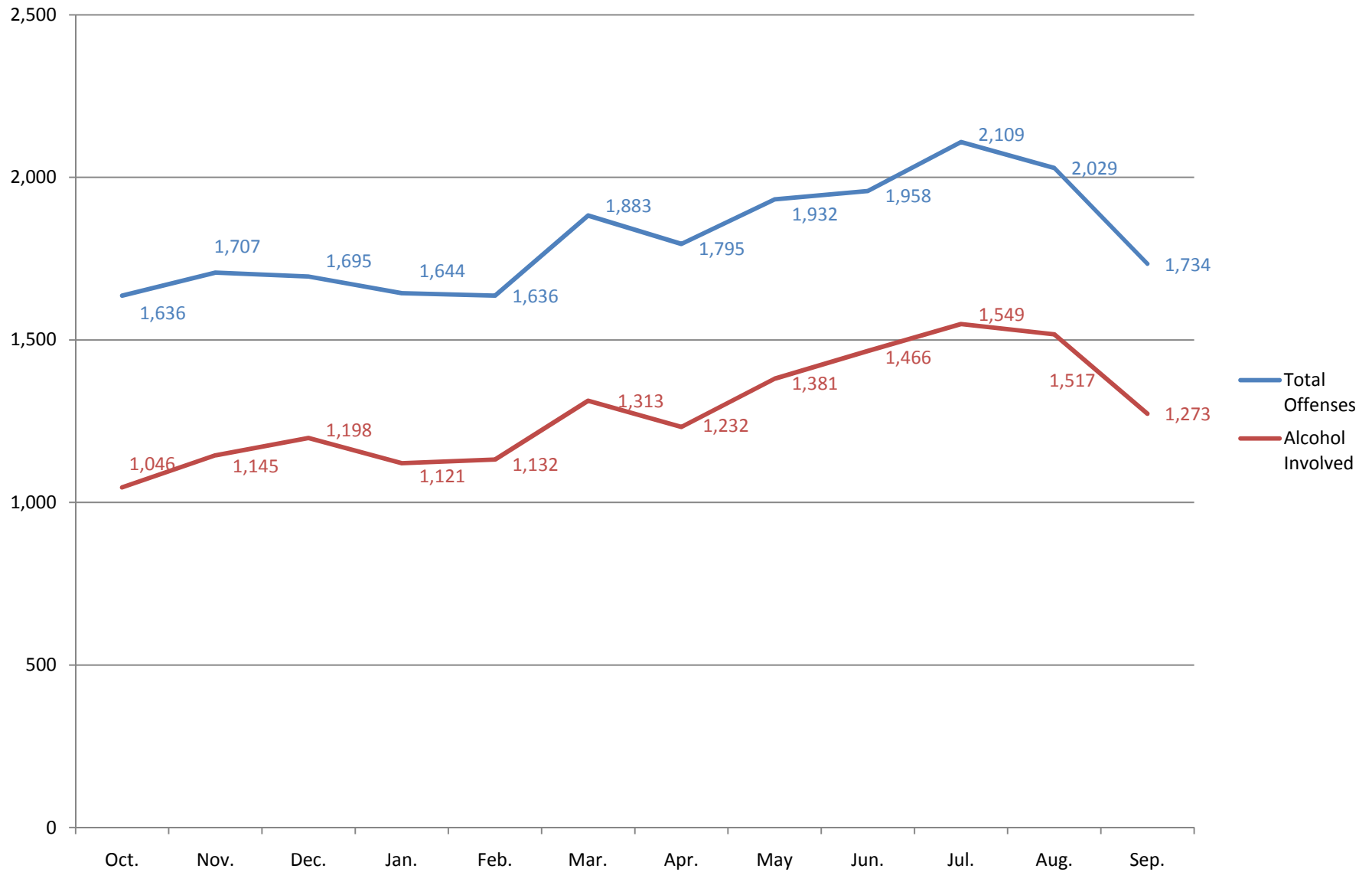
* Total percent of Public Intoxication and DUI arrests do not include FCACC.

Percents by Month

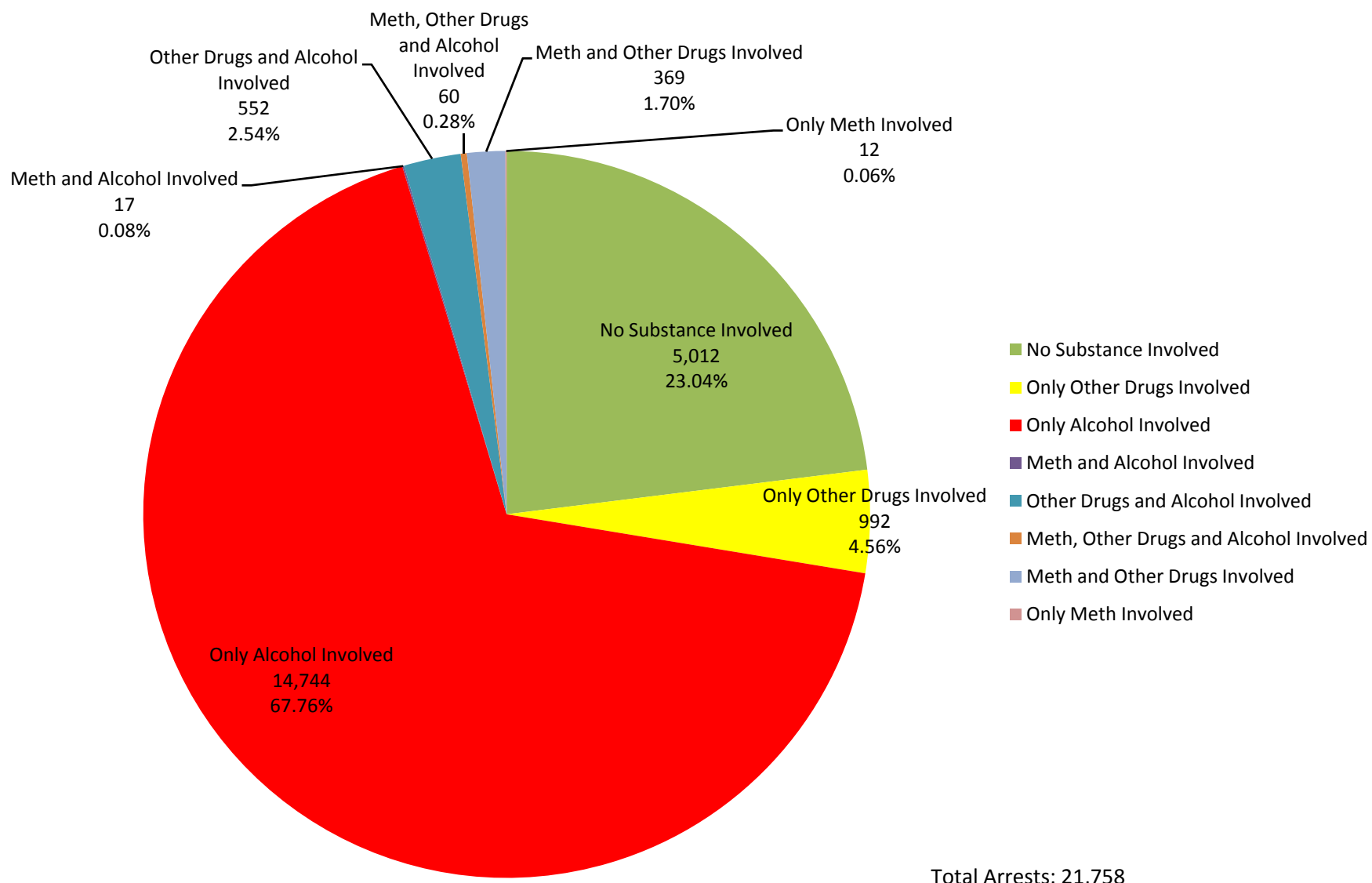
	Total Offenses	Misde-meanor	Felony	Domestic Violence	Resisting Arrest	Assault	Public Intoxication	Alcohol Involved	DUI	Meth Involved	Drugs Involved
Oct.	1,636	79.46%	7.15%	5.93%	2.38%	3.12%	11.37%	63.94%	28.12%	3.24%	10.45%
Nov.	1,707	79.44%	8.03%	4.92%	2.58%	2.64%	9.84%	67.08%	29.00%	3.05%	11.66%
Dec.	1,695	78.76%	6.25%	6.61%	2.36%	4.01%	11.68%	70.68%	31.62%	1.30%	7.61%
Jan.	1,644	79.20%	7.18%	6.39%	2.25%	4.01%	10.52%	68.19%	30.11%	2.62%	9.79%
Feb.	1,636	81.78%	7.03%	4.34%	2.02%	3.55%	10.27%	69.19%	33.68%	2.93%	9.23%
Mar.	1,883	83.70%	6.11%	4.73%	2.44%	3.72%	10.36%	69.73%	34.09%	1.38%	8.87%
Apr.	1,795	83.01%	7.69%	4.79%	2.12%	2.90%	12.20%	68.64%	32.76%	2.12%	9.75%
May	1,932	82.82%	6.83%	5.12%	1.45%	3.78%	12.84%	71.48%	33.54%	2.23%	8.80%
Jun.	1,958	83.04%	6.33%	4.34%	2.09%	3.68%	15.58%	74.87%	32.89%	1.89%	8.73%
Jul.	2,109	83.12%	6.02%	4.46%	2.04%	3.75%	15.27%	73.45%	31.86%	1.38%	8.96%
Aug.	2,029	81.07%	6.65%	4.98%	1.58%	4.29%	15.87%	74.77%	33.76%	1.82%	7.74%
Sep.	1,734	81.03%	6.11%	4.73%	1.61%	2.60%	11.30%	73.41%	33.04%	1.73%	7.67%

* Total percents may not equal 100 due to lack of information, or a single arrest involving multiple crimes.

Total Arrests Reported - Statewide Oct. 2007 - Sep. 2008

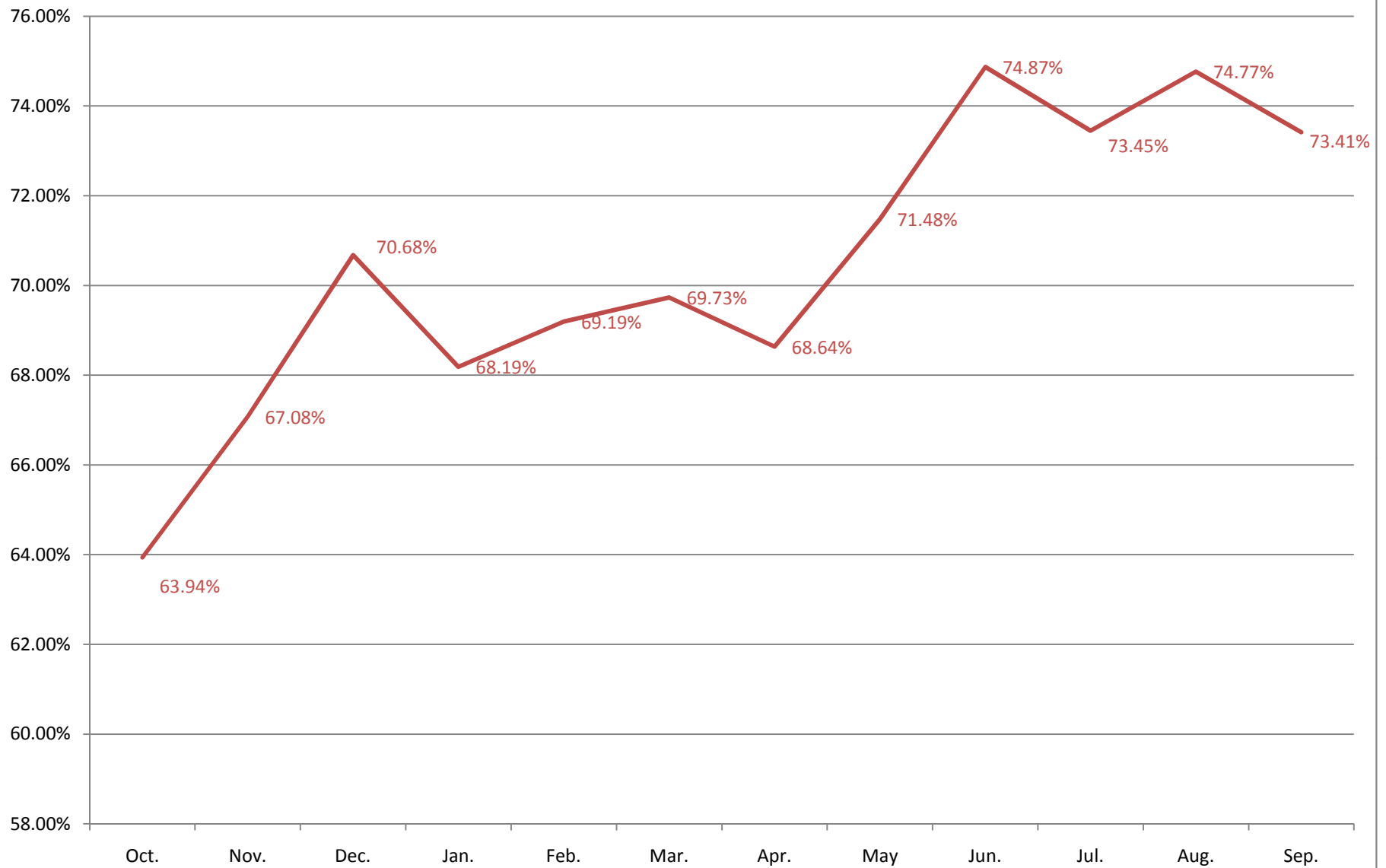


Meth, Alcohol and Other Drugs

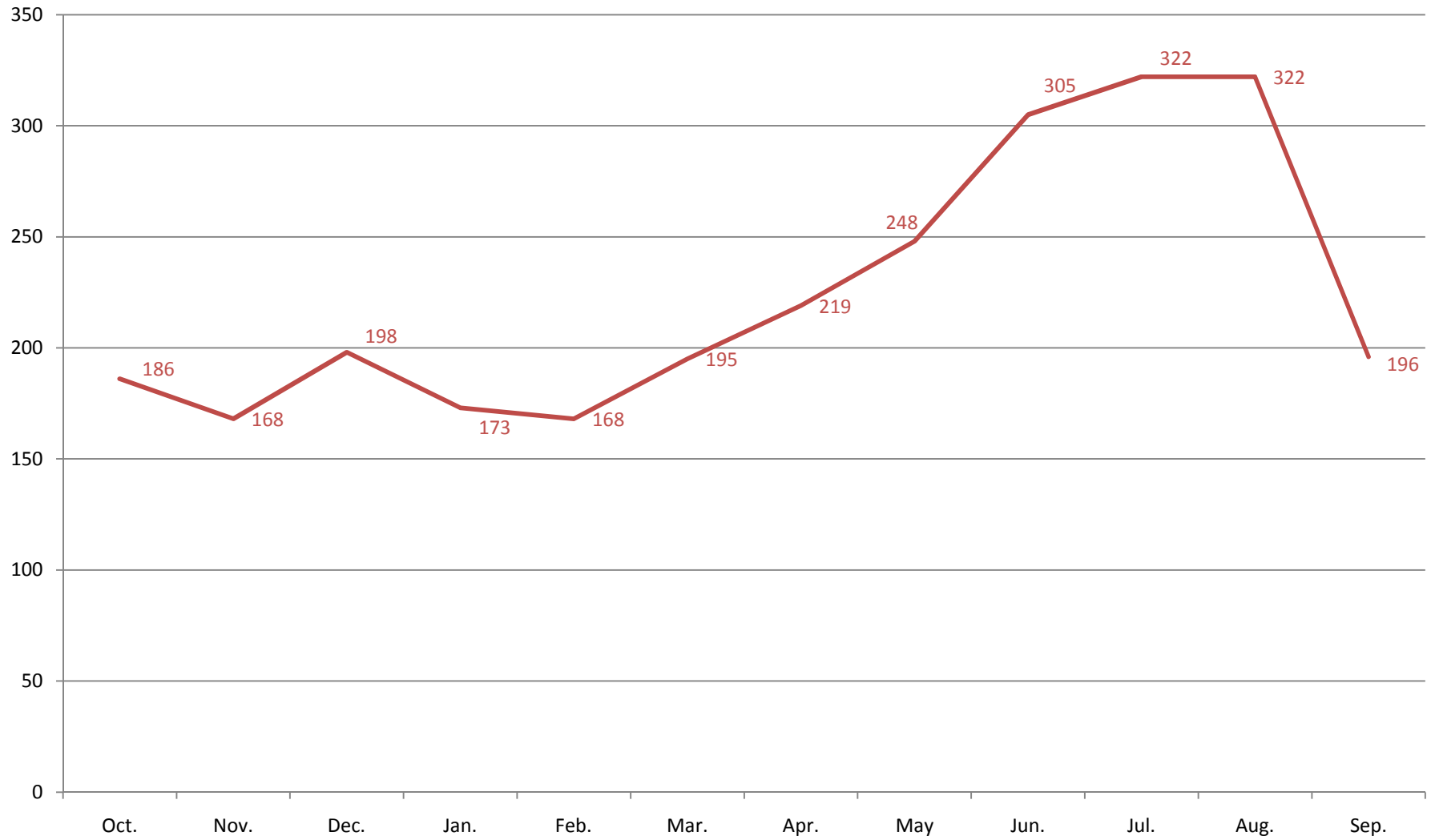


Given: Number of Arrests, Percentage of Total Arrests

Alcohol Involved as Percent of Total Arrests Oct. 2007 - Sep. 2008

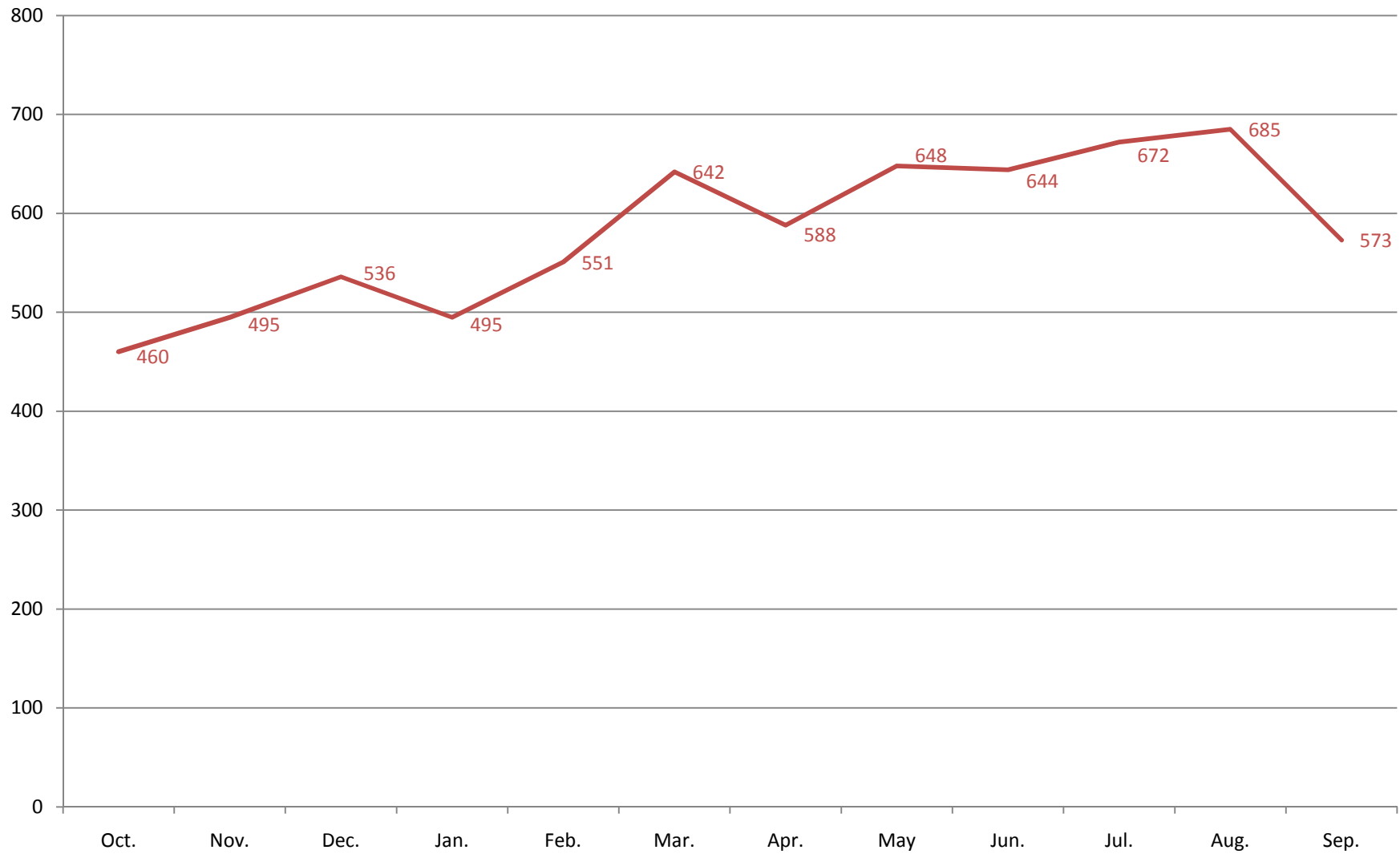


Public Intoxication Arrests - Statewide Oct. 2007 - Sep. 2008



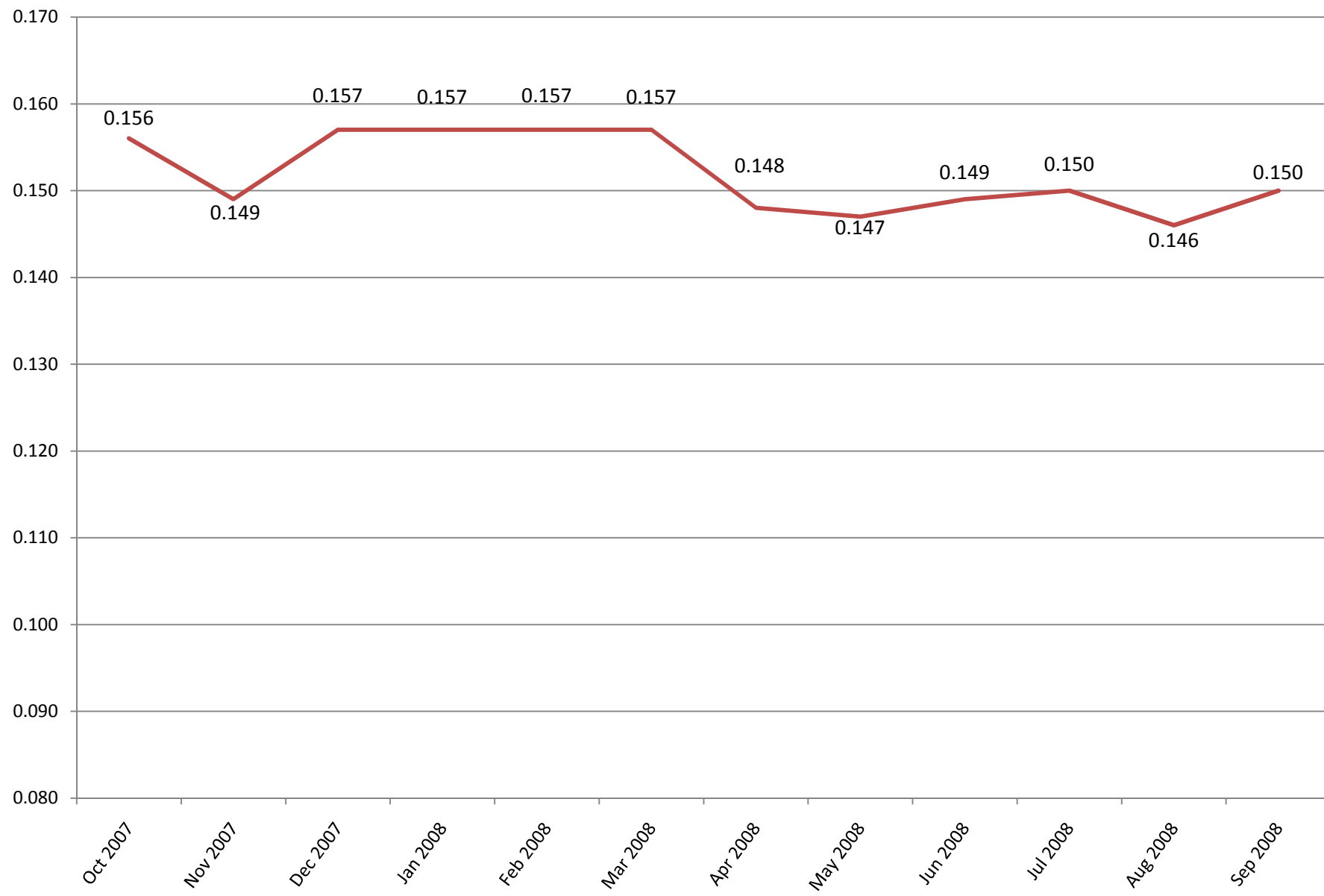
Note: Public Intoxication numbers do not include FCACC.

DUI Arrests - Statewide Oct. 2007 - Sep. 2008

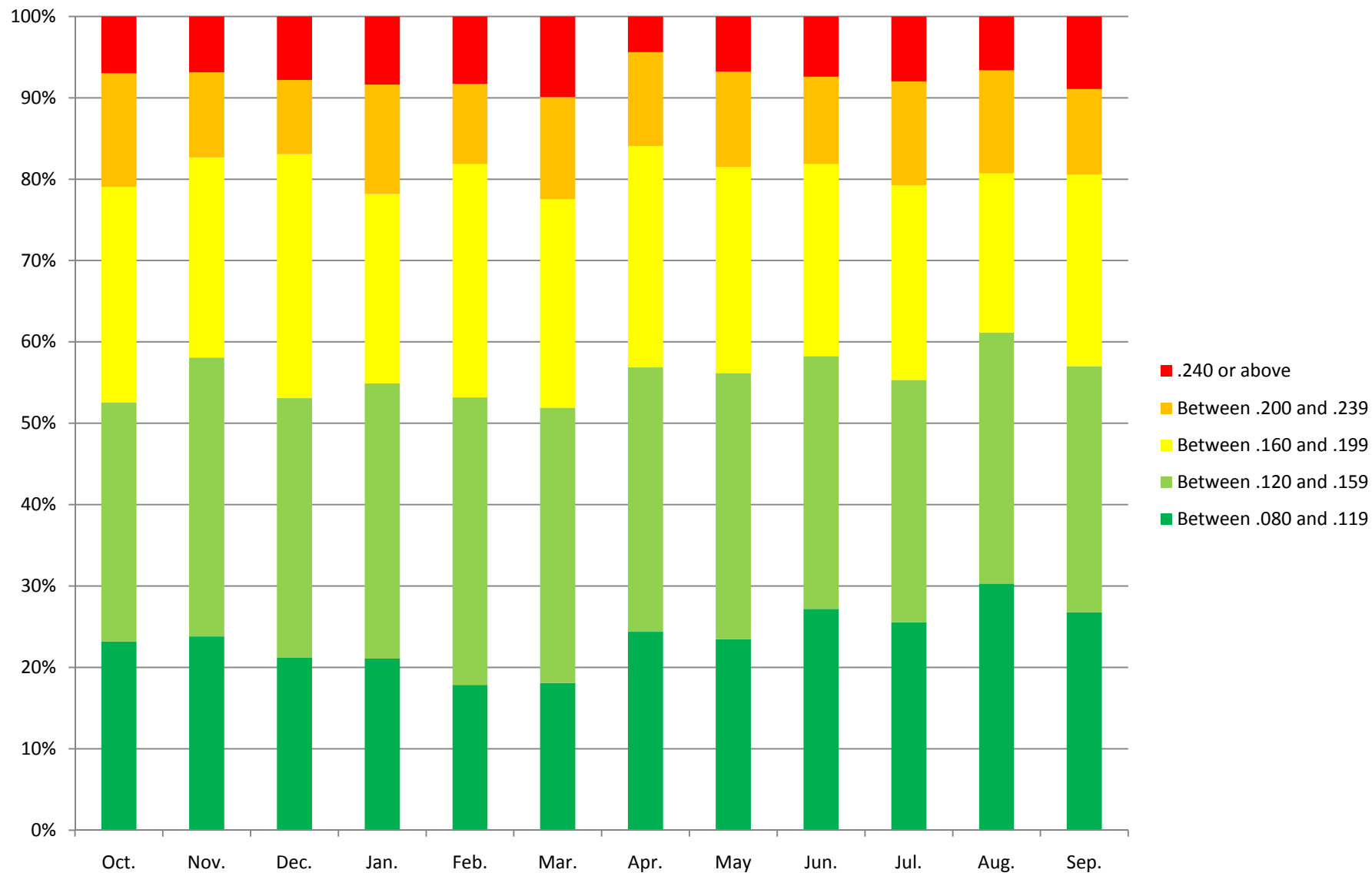


Note: DUI Arrests do not include FCACC.

Average DUI BAC by Month



DUI BAC by Range - Statewide Oct. 2007 - Sep. 2008



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