

HOT SPOTS POLICING

What is it?	Hot spots policing strategies increase police attention to places with concentrated criminal opportunities.
Does it work?	Hot spots policing is generally effective. In general, hot spots policing has the potential to reduce crime modestly. Problem-solving approaches tend to be more successful than patrol strategies in crime hot spots.
How is it normally done?	There is no standardized list of hot spot approaches and various tactics have been applied. Successful approaches have in the past included increased gun searches and seizures, foot patrols, problem-oriented policing, and offender-focused tactics. For focused patrols, some evidence (called the Koper Curve) suggests 15 minute police stops every couple of hours are effective.
Mechanism?	Usually general deterrence. Hot spots policing relies primarily on focused law enforcement strategies. For example, increased enforcement can convey a heightened sense of risk of apprehension to potential offenders. This discourages offenders from taking advantage of opportunities (though note that it doesn't change the distribution of opportunities). Problem-solving approaches often use situational crime prevention techniques.
A hot spot?	There isn't really a standard definition of a place for hot spots policing, but in general crime hot spots are places as small as individual buildings or street corners, blocks or clusters of a few streets, where crime is higher relative to the rest of the area. The term is generally not used once you get to the size of whole neighborhoods.
How's the research?	Reliable. A substantial number of studies, rigorously conducted, have generally found some positive benefits from hot spots studies.
Caveats?	For patrol strategies, dosage is always an issue. If you don't invest the resources in the right places (active, engaged officers, in small, high-crime areas), you won't see any effects.
Other considerations?	Little evidence of backfire effects damaging public perception, but be aware of that possibility. More evidence of a diffusion of crime control benefits to nearby (non-patrolled) areas than displacement.
Click more?	https://www.crimesolutions.gov/PracticeDetails.aspx?ID=8 https://www.policefoundation.org/5-things-you-need-to-know-about-hot-spots-policing-the-koper-curve-theory/ http://cebcp.org/evidence-based-policing/what-works-in-policing/research-evidence-review/hot-spots-policing/ http://library.college.police.uk/docs/what-works/What-works-briefing-hotspot-policing-2013.pdf
Read more?	Reducing Crime: A Companion for Police Leaders, Chapter 6.
And finally?	Standard disclaimer: This is a one page summary based on an individual's reading of the literature. It shouldn't be a replacement for your own thorough review of the research. That's why there are links above, and why this is free. Also, your mileage may differ. Experiment, evaluate, learn, share.
Can I use this?	Licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License.
Comments?	info@reducingcrime.com v.2018-12-17