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Interactive map: Where 12,800 California gun homicides happened

The researchers found only one third of gun homicides occur in California's 10 biggest cities



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PUBLISHED: August 17, 2023 at 1:28 p.m. | UPDATED: August 18, 2023 at 10:31 a.m.

Gun homicides killed nearly 13,000 people in California from 2014 through 2022. This new map is a grim memorial of sorts for those lives taken by gun violence, each life lost a dot on the map.

You can zoom in on your neighborhood, or any street in the state to see where these violent deaths happened. The map is from [Hope and Heal Fund](#), a violence prevention nonprofit formed in the wake of the mass shootings in San Bernardino in 2015. It was created in collaboration with RomoGIS Enterprises and with funding from Kaiser Permanente.



Refugio “Cuco” Rodriguez-Rodriguez, the nonprofit’s Chief Strategist and Equity Officer, recalls people asserting that homicides in Los Angeles were driving the state’s homicide rate, and thinking “Where’s that data point? where are you getting that?”

Now, after years of research and mapping, he has an answer, and it confirmed his hypothesis. One of the group’s main findings is that “rural counties are disproportionately impacted by gun violence.”

The research shows that some counties in the Central Valley, and rural counties in Northern California have among the highest gun homicide rates in the state. Others are coming to the same conclusion, with [a report released this week from California’s Attorney General finding the highest rates are in the state’s farm belt counties.](#)

“This is not an urban problem, this is a statewide problem,” Rodriguez said, while acknowledging that there are many urban areas where gun homicides are concentrated. “You may be in one of the safest counties, but if you happen to live in one of those neighborhoods... the rates can be 5 or 10 times higher than the state rate,” he said.

“But why do we have to do this map?” Saul Serrano wonders, who jumped at the opportunity to be trained in sophisticated mapping software as a program officer the Hope and Heal Fund. He has been working in the field for a long time, and gun violence has hit close to home for him and his family, so he knows the deeper impact each of those dots on the maps represents.

Serrano spent a lot of time creating and exploring the map, and he noted the data in the Central Valley. “That’s a high rate, it’s a lot of people dying,” he said. San Joaquin and Kern counties are both in the top five counties with the highest rate of gun homicides.

He also noted big differences from one neighborhood to the next, or one county to the next. They also analyzed data from 2010-2020 at the county level, as the map below shows. “One of the things that sticks out for me is the disparity between Santa Clara County and Alameda County,” Serrano added. Alameda’s rate was 7.26 per 100,000 residents, the 9th highest in the state, and right next door, Santa Clara’s rate was just a third of that, at 2.44.

Pinpointing and visualizing exactly where these gun homicides are happening, “helps you be very strategic and surgical about where your investments are going to go and where your resources and interventions will be targeted,” Rodriguez said.

“We’re doing our best through the map and other things to try to humanize the loss of life, and hopefully move systems to care.”

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