

2013 Crime Stats from Watauga, Avery

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End of year crime statistics have been released by two area Sheriff's Offices, with a number of substantial statistical increases reported. Narcotics stats released by the Watauga Sheriff's Office come with the explanation that some suspects have been formally charged, others not charged as they are providing what the release called "substantial assistance" in cooperation with investigators and the 24th District Attorney's Office. In that statistical category, 161 defendants were either charged formally or are pending, as compared to 77 in 2012, 524 drug charges for 2013 as compared to 380 in 2012. The Watauga Sheriff's Office responded to 17 meth lab cases, with 31 labs, dump sites and/or precursor chemicals found—that up from 14 from 2012. Marijuana grow operations discovered were up substantially, as well, with 19 found in 2013, 5 in 2012. In addition, residential search warrants were up—40 in 2013 as opposed to 32 in 2012, the release stating that these stats don't include consent searches or cell phone search warrants.

Avery County reported 11 meth labs found in 2013, the second year of double-digit discoveries, with 539 grams of Meth confiscated, a dozen heroin busts, 2056 grams of marijuana, and 546 dosage units of various prescription pills. Felony arrests—218—were up 32% in Avery, the 493 misdemeanor arrests representing a 4% increase over 2012.