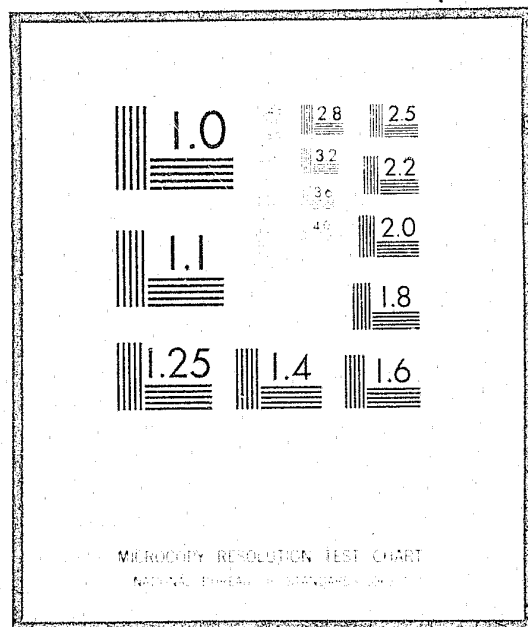


NCJRS

This microfiche was produced from documents received for inclusion in the NCJRS data base. Since NCJRS cannot exercise control over the physical condition of the documents submitted, the individual frame quality will vary. The resolution chart on this frame may be used to evaluate the document quality.



Microfilming procedures used to create this fiche comply with the standards set forth in 41CFR 101-11.504

Points of view or opinions stated in this document are those of the author(s) and do not represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.

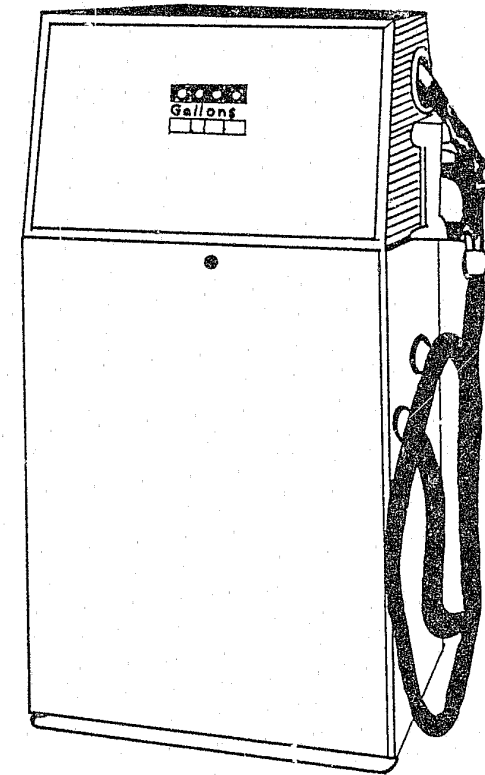
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
LAW ENFORCEMENT ASSISTANCE ADMINISTRATION
NATIONAL CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFERENCE SERVICE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20531

7/19/77

Date filmed,

CRIME ANALYSIS: GASOLINE LARCENY

1973 - 1976



*John
D.C.*

Prepared By
Police Planner
Gwinnett County Police Department
P.O. Box 602
Lawrenceville, Georgia
30245

*42226
D.C. 1*

NCJRS

JUL 5 1977

ACQUISITIONS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

A. Introduction.....1
B. Larceny Defined.....1
C. Larceny Trends Nationally.....2
D. Larceny in Georgia.....3
 1. Metropolitan Statistics5
E. Historical Trends of Larceny
 in Gwinnett County.....6
 1. Crime Analysis.....6
 (a) Gasoline Larceny by
 Half-Years and Quarters.....6
 (b) Gasoline Larceny by
 Police Zone.....8
 (c) Monthly Frequency.....9
 (d) Daily Frequency.....10
 (e) Time of Occurrence.....11
 (f) Type of Victim.....11
 (g) Dollar Loss.....11
 (h) Major Victim Response.....12
 (i) Police Service Costs.....14
F. Recommendations.....16
 Appendix A - Average Time Per Gasoline
 Larceny Call (1976).....19
 Appendix B - Typical Store Layout.....21
 Appendix C - Drive-off Report.....23

A. INTRODUCTION

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to document the extent and nature of the gasoline larceny problem in Gwinnett County from 1973 to June, 1976. This report is based on all the gasoline larceny reports taken by Gwinnett County Police Department officers during the time period just mentioned.

2. Scope

The scope of this study is limited to gasoline larcenies committed or attempted in Gwinnett County, Georgia.

3. Methodology

In order to examine the gasoline larceny problem a research assistant was detailed to gather the appropriate data elements under the direction of the Director of Planning for the Gwinnett County Police Department. The source of data was the detective log book located in the Detective Division into which all preliminary reports indicating a reported gasoline larceny are logged in sequential order prefixed by 45-XXXXX. Tally sheets were prepared with data from these reports which are reflected in the tables through out this document. A sample page of the detective log book is attached as an appendix to this document.

B. LARCENY DEFINED

Larceny is defined by the FBI Uniform Crime Reporting Program as the unlawful taking, carrying, leading, or riding away of property from the possession or constructive possession of another. Gasoline larceny falls within Georgia Code section 26-1803, theft by deception which is defined as:

26 - 1803: Theft by Deception

A person commits theft by deception when he obtains property by any deceitful means or artful practice with the intention of depriving the owner of said property. A person deceives if he intentionally:

(a) Creates or confirms another's impression of an existing fact or past event which is false and which the accused knows or believes to be false; or

(b) Fails to correct a false impression of an existing fact or past event which he has previously created or confirmed; or

(c) Prevents another from acquiring information pertinent to the disposition of the property involved; or

(d) Sells or otherwise transfers or encumbers property, intentionally failing to disclose a substantially and valid known lien, adverse claim, or other legal impediment to the enjoyment of the property whether such impediment is or is not a matter of official record; or

(e) Promises performance of services which he does not intend to perform or knows will not be performed. Evidence of failure to perform standing alone shall not be sufficient to authorize a conviction under this subsection. "Deceitful means" and "artful practice" do not, however include falsity as to matters having no pecuniary significance, or puffing by statements unlikely to deceive ordinary persons in the group addressed.

(Acts 1968, pp. 1249, 1290)

C. LARCENY TRENDS NATIONALLY

There were 1,855,400 larcenies in 1960. The average value of items taken in larceny offense in 1960 was \$74. By 1975, there were 5,977,700 larceny offenses reported to police with an estimated

loss to the American public of \$992,000,000. Table 1 as shown below is the number of offenses, dollar losses and clearance rates associated with larceny from 1966 to 1975.

TABLE 1

LARCENY OFFENSES IN THE UNITED STATES

1966 - 1975

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>NUMBER OF OFFENSES</u>	<u>DOLLAR LOSS</u>	<u>CLEARANCE RATE (%)</u>
1966	2,822,000	251,000,000	19.0
1967	3,111,600	292,000,000	18.0
1968	3,482,000	344,000,000	18.0
1969	3,888,600	420,000,000	18.0
1970	4,225,800	450,000,000	18.0
1971	4,424,200	485,000,000	19.0
1972	4,151,200	475,000,000	20.0
1973	4,347,900	603,000,000	19.0
1974	5,262,500	816,000,000	20.0
1975	5,977,700	992,000,000	20.0

Source: Crime in the United States, Federal Bureau of Investigation, 1975, p. 49

As can be seen, larceny volumes continue to climb. The only reporting procedure change was in 1973 when larcenies under \$50 were used in calculating the total Part I Index. Prior to that time only larcenies over \$50 in value were used in determining an agency's crime problem.

D. LARCENY IN GEORGIA

In 1975, Georgia experienced approximately 77,867 larcenies. Table 2 below indicates the growth of this crime from 1969 to 1975 in Georgia.

TABLE 2
LARCENY IN GEORGIA
1969 - 1975

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>
1969	26,288
1970	31,838
1971	32,102
1972	33,177
1973	66,558
1974	81,078
1975	110,762

Source: Crime in Georgia, Crime Statistics Data Center, Georgia State Crime Commission, December, 1975, p. 107 and Crime in the United States, 1975, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Washington, August, 1976, p. 49

1. Metropolitan Area Statistics

No published data on the number of actual larceny offenses occurring in the Atlanta metropolitan area was available until the publication, in 1974, of the "Metro Atlanta Crime Statistics", by the Metropolitan Atlanta Crime Commission. The 1974 report and the 1975 report presented data from 13 agencies representing 90 - 92% of the regions population.

Table 3 on the next page provides the reported crime figures for the offense of larceny for these 13 police agencies for 1973, 1974,

and 1975. As can be seen larceny-theft increased 32.6% from 1974 to 1975 in the Atlanta metro area in line with FBI reporting changes. All agencies showed an increase in this crime category from 11.7% to 133.6%.

The analysis in Table 4 and that which follows Table 5 of this report is only concerned with gasoline larcenies, a sub-element of the overall larceny problem.

TABLE 3
METROPOLITAN LARCENY
1973 - 1975

	<u>1973</u>	<u>1974</u>	<u>1975</u>	<u>Percent Increase/Decrease 1975/1974</u>
CLAYTON COUNTY				
Clayton County Police Dept.	1,005	1,518	1,695	11.7
Forest Park Dept. of Public Safety	540	682	805	18.0
Sub-Total	<u>1,545</u>	<u>2,200</u>	<u>2,500</u>	<u>13.6</u>
COBB COUNTY				
Cobb County Dept. of Public Safety	2,182	2,058	4,095	99.0
Marietta Police Dept.	1,315	1,329	1,611	21.2
Smyrna Police Dept.	404	493	695	41.2
Sub-Total	<u>3,901</u>	<u>3,880</u>	<u>6,402</u>	<u>65.0</u>
DEKALB COUNTY				
Decatur Police Dept.	208	364	524	44.0
DeKalb County Police Dept.	<u>6,113</u>	<u>6,112</u>	<u>10,813</u>	<u>68.3</u>
Sub-Total	<u>6,321</u>	<u>6,476</u>	<u>10,813</u>	<u>67.0</u>
DOUGLAS COUNTY				
Douglas County Sheriff's Dept.	91	152	355	133.6
Sub-Total	91	152	355	133.6
FULTON COUNTY				
Atlanta Bureau of Police Services	16,739	19,320	22,612	17.0
College Park Police Dept.	403	727	1,034	42.2
East Point Police Dept.	771	939	1,244	32.5
Fulton County Police Dept.	<u>1,212</u>	<u>1,891</u>	<u>2,170</u>	<u>14.8</u>
Sub-Total	<u>19,125</u>	<u>22,877</u>	<u>27,060</u>	<u>18.3</u>
GWINNETT COUNTY				
Gwinnett County Police Dept.	977	1,339	1,820	35.8
Sub-Total	977	1,339	1,820	35.8
GRAND TOTAL	31,960	36,924	48,950	32.6

E. HISTORICAL TRENDS OF LARCENY IN GWINNETT COUNTY

Larceny in Gwinnett County has grown from a reported 34 offenses in 1965 to 1,820 offenses in 1975. The figures on the bar chart on the next page indicate the actual number of offenses as reported to the Federal Bureau of Investigation through the Uniform Crime Reporting System during this period. They do not include the number of reported larcenies that were found by investigators to unfounded. However, in this report the number of unfounded incidents is included in the analysis because they were responded to by police officers as being legitimate crime complaints.

With the exception of 1968 larceny has generally exhibited an upward trend over the past decade. In 1975, this one offense represented 52.8% of the major crimes reported to the Gwinnett County Police Department.

CRIME ANALYSIS

1.

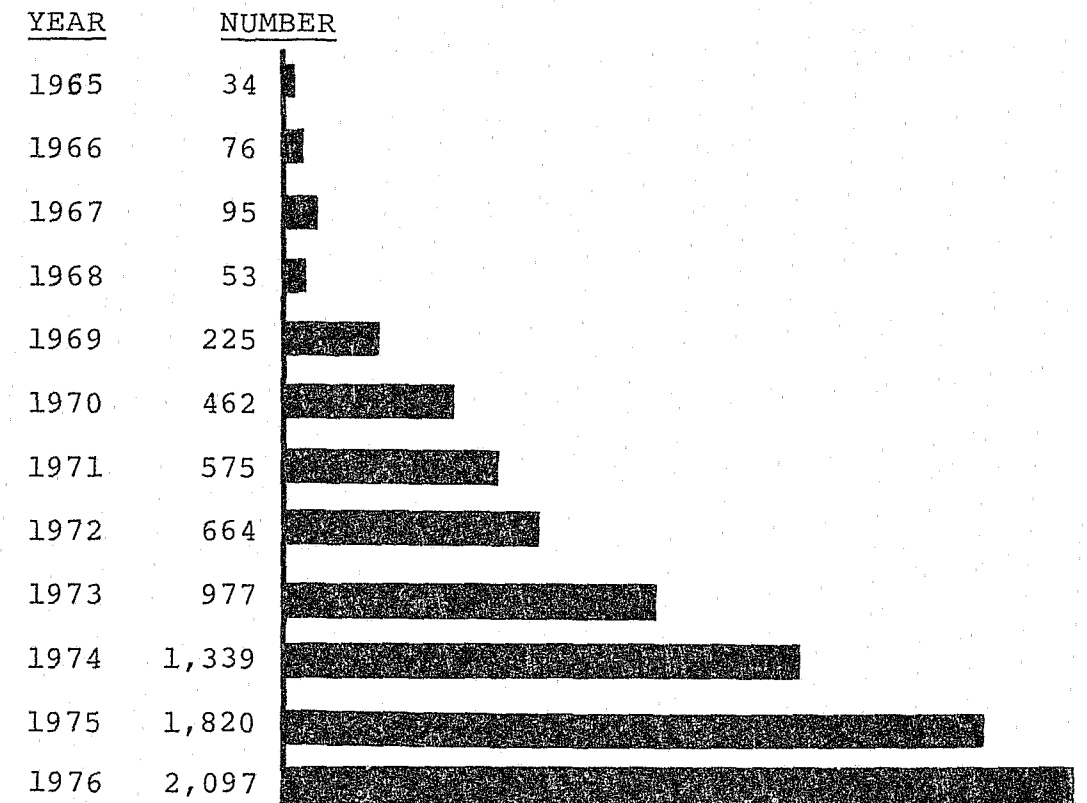
(a.) Gasoline Larceny by Half-Years and Quarters

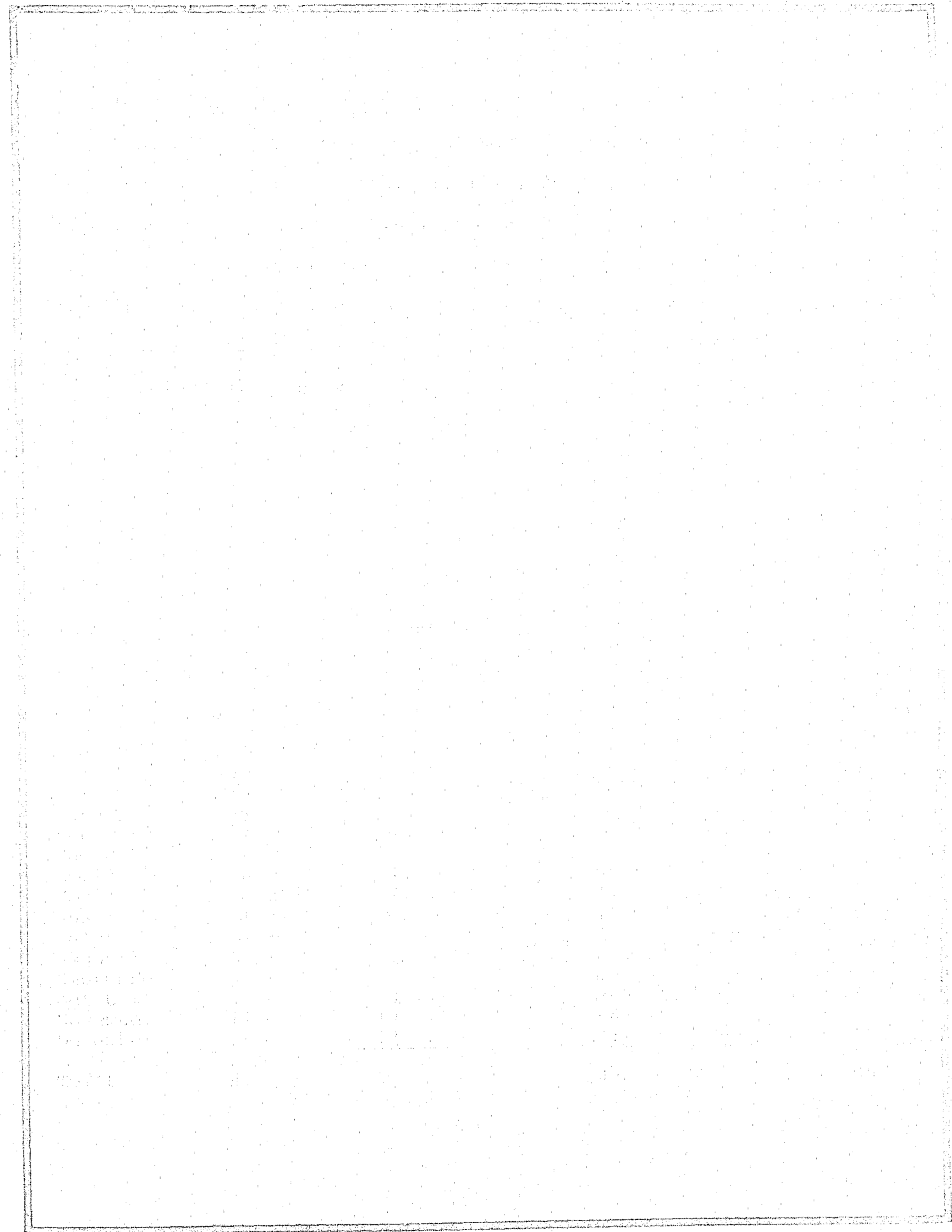
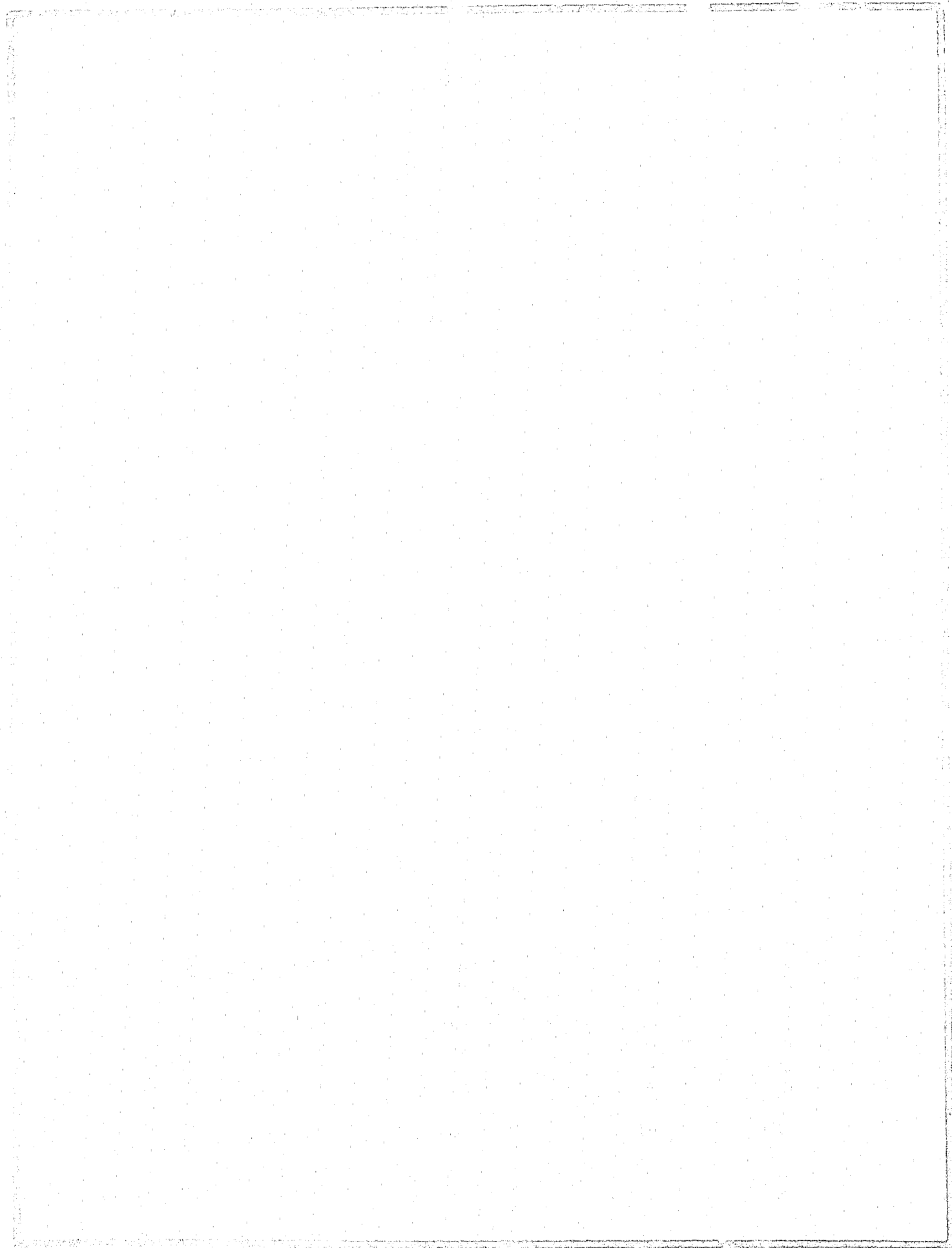
There were 123 reported gasoline thefts in the first six months of 1976. Table 4 below presents the data for the past three and one-half years on this crime.

TABLE 4

	1	2	3	4	TOTAL	
Quarters	1973	4	4	21	22	41
	1974	24	17	16	40	97
	1975	35	39	44	131	249
	1976	65	58	-	-	123
Half-Years	1973	8		33	41	
	1974	41		56	97	
	1975	74		175	249	
	1976	123		-	123	
Years	1973				41	
	1974				97	
	1975				249	
	1976				123	

TABLE 5
TOTAL LARCENY OFFENSES
1965 - 1976





(d.) Daily Frequency

An analysis of the reported gasoline larcenies indicated that the day of week when this crime was occurring had changed over time. In 1973, 29.3% of all gasoline larcenies occurred on one day, Friday. By 1974, 21.7% were occurring on Saturday and 18.6% on Monday. In 1974, 17.5% occurred on Sunday. In sum, 57.8% of all the gasoline thefts occurred on Saturday, Sunday and Monday. By 1975, Wednesday through Sunday were only separated by approximately 1.5% with each day having between 14.8 - 16.0% of all the gasoline larcenies reported. The distribution of this offense has flattened somewhat in 1976 with each day of the week for the January - June period having almost the same number of gasoline thefts as any other day. Each day has at least 12.2% of the thefts with the most frequent day being Wednesday (17.9%). The table below indicates the data for the period under analysis.

	1973	1974	1975	1976
Monday	8	18	33	17
Tuesday	5	9	26	15
Wednesday	6	8	37	22
Thursday	4	13	40	15
Friday	12	11	38	17
Saturday	1	21	36	18
Sunday	5	17	39	19
TOTAL	41	97	249	123

(e.) Time of Occurrence

Of the 510 gasoline thefts that occurred from 1973 to June, 1976 52.8% occurred during the night, 44.1% during the day and the remainder were unknown. Table 8 below indicates by year the time of occurrence of these crimes.

	GASOLINE LARCENY 1973 - 1976 BY TIME OF DAY			January - June 1976
	1973	1974	1975	
Daytime	11	32	174	58
Nighttime	25	61	120	63
Unknown	5	4	5	2
	41	97	249	123

(f.) Type of victim

In examining the gasoline theft reports to determine who was the victim it was found that for the 1973 - June, 1976 period 43.3% of all the gasoline thefts were perpetrated against one company, Munford, Inc. Table 9 below presents the types of other victims found in this analysis.

	GASOLINE LARCENY BY VICTIMS 1973 - 1976				Jan. - June 1976
	1973	1974	1975		
Munford, Inc./Majik Market	-	22	146		33
National Convenience/Stop & Go	-	-	5		8
Southland Corp./7-11	-	-	-		5
Wag-A-Bag	13	6	-		-
Service Station/Truck Stop	6	23	52		18
Individuals	9	27	25		13
Other Convenience/Grocery Stores	-	1	10		8
Globe Oil, Inc.	1	5	4		11
Kelly Alford	3	3	-		-
Other	9	10	7		7
	41	97	249		123

(g.) Dollar Loss

In 1973, gasoline larcenies caused a retail and individual dollar loss of \$332.64. By 1974, this loss had tripled to \$1033.99. Calendar year 1975 produced a dollar loss due to this crime of

\$3,208.34 while for the first six months of 1976 the dollar loss was \$1,315.48. The table below gives by the range of loss some indication of the average value taken per gasoline larceny. As can be seen the majority of the gasoline larcenies (54.9%) involve thefts between \$3.01 - \$9.01.

	<u>1973</u>	<u>1974</u>	<u>1975</u>	<u>Jan-Jun</u> <u>1976</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
\$ 0 - .99	1	1	1	1	4
1.00 - 3.00	12	14	39	20	85
3.01 - 6.00	13	35	66	34	148
6. -0 - 9.00	8	13	71	40	132
9.01 - 12.00	1	21	40	13	75
12.00 - 15.00		2	7	4	13
15.01 - 18.00			5	1	6
18.01 - 21.00		1	1		2
21.01+	4	8	18	8	38
Unknown	2	2	1	2	7
TOTAL	41	97	249	123	510

(h.) Major Victim Response

In order to obtain some insight into the problems and policies of business experiencing gasoline thefts the department's police planner contacted the major victim in Gwinnett County, Mumford, Inc. Interviews were held with the Director of Petroleum Operations and the Petroleum Sales Manager of the company in August.

The Petroleum Sales Manager advised that the current equipment used generally consisted of a three position switch located in a console near the store manager at each convenience market. An analysis of blue prints of a typical site (685 Scenic Highway) revealed that the control panel is located

approximately 85 feet from the check-out counter in this particular instance. Appendix B presents the site layout for this store. The store manager does not enjoy a totally unobstructed view of the 14 foot x 5 foot pump island because of a brick wall in the front of the store. According to the Petroleum Sales Manager the switch to the pumps is left off until a customer pulls up and notifies the store manager that he desires to purchase gas via either an intercom or buzzer system. The switch to the pumps is turned on. Customers in the store could prohibit full attention by the clerk or manager as to what is happening at the pump island.

The Director of Petroleum Operations advised that the company was primarily concerned with excessive drive-off losses rather than the minimal amount they felt they were experiencing. He stated that there were eight Mumford stores in Gwinnett County and that the pump islands at these stores averaged approximately 30,000 gallons of gasoline sales per month. In sum, these stores pumped approximately 1,440,000 gallons during the first six months of 1976 and they felt that a loss of approximately 608 gallons (.042% of sales) was not excessive. When asked about a "pre-pay system" wherein the customer pays before pumping his gas, both managers felt that this procedure would be appropriate for high loss locations but not all stores. It was their view that initiation of such a system would reduce gasoline sales and be expensive in terms of customer good will.

Both managers were asked about the company policy to be followed by store employees in the event of a gasoline drive-off. The Director of Petroleum Operations stated that there was

certain information they were required to obtain or the loss would be deducted from their checks. Appendix C is the form used by the company for this purpose. When queried about a reluctance of some managers to prosecute these thefts it was determined that neither supervisors or store managers have the authority to take out warrants for drive-off gasoline thefts or in shoplifting incidents. It was stated that a determination as to the prosecutability of such cases would be made by the Security Department rather than those involved because of the fear of a civil suit against the company. It was stated that authority for taking out warrants could, on occasion, be obtained via telephone from the Security Department.

The next question concerned the need for a police response especially in light of the facts just enumerated. The Director of Petroleum Operations stated that the police were needed to apprehend the individual and return him to the scene where Munford Security personnel could make an evaluation as to the prosecutability of the theft.

Plans are under way for another convenience store with gasoline service at Beaver Run Road and Buford Highway.

(i.) Police Service Costs

In order to determine the expense of a police unit responding to a gasoline theft call we have to examine the time it takes to service such a call, on an average. All 1976 gasoline theft reports were extracted and an examination made of the time card attached to the report to determine the length of time it takes a police officer to travel such a call, make an investigation and report

back into service. Of the 123 incidents in 1976 nineteen time cards were not available. From January - June, 1976, 34.6 hours were used by police officers in answering 104 gasoline larceny incidents. Multiplying this figure times Step A of Range 27 (a beginning police officer) you find that these calls cost approximately \$156.00 of police time. Adding in an average time of twenty minutes per call for the previously mentioned nineteen incidents you find that an additional cost of approximately \$28.17 in police time is incurred. The total cost of answering these calls is approximately \$184.17. Assuming that it takes a uniform officer approximately 10 minutes to write a report on the gasoline theft incident you find that an additional county police cost of \$91.23 is added to the \$184.17 response time cost providing a total cost so far of \$275.40. After the uniform officer makes his report it is forwarded to detectives for case followup and supplemental reports if needed. Assuming that it takes 10 minutes of an investigator's time to recontact the victim, determine if any additional information exists and then closing the case based on his followup you find that an additional police service cost has been incurred (10 minutes x 123 incidents - 60 = 20.50 hours/minutes) of \$95.12 (\$4.64 x 20.50). These cost calculations do not include the following:

- (a) report filing time
- (b) victim card typing
- (c) Supplemental report preparation
- (d) gasoline and oil costs for vehicles answering such calls
- (e) supervisory administrative costs

In sum, the Gwinnett County Police Department and the taxpayers are incurring a cost of police service approximately

equal to that of the gas stolen in these larcenies. In addition, it is highly unlikely that the victim will prosecute any apprehended offender because of possible civil actions arising out of false arrests and the low loss cost compared to the gasoline volumes sold. In other words, it is not worth it in terms of company goodwill and business for the businesses involved to press in court these types of theft.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Some alternatives to the costly provision of a police car to each and every gasoline larceny are available at a much cheaper cost. The first possibility would be to take such reports over the telephone from the complainant. This could be accomplished by having the report taken by a record clerk or a detective. Some training for the records clerks would be required but it would eliminate removal of a car from a zone to take this type of report. Another possibility might be to have the report taken by a Uniform Division supervisor rather than a beat car since they are back-up cars normally.

A second alternate requiring county commission action would be to require of any and all future convenience stores located in Gwinnett County, dispensing gasoline, to initiate a "pre-pay system" of gasoline dispensing. This means the pumps would remain locked until the customer had paid for the amount of gas he intended to pump. Normally this is only utilized in high "drive-off" locations. A penalty attached to the zoning code for non-compliance would be feasible.

A third alternative might involve the requiring of an attendant at all such convenience store dispensing locations at all times.

Such an arrangement would probably not be cost-effective for a convenience store.

A fourth alternative might involve the banning of gasoline dispensing at a convenience food store location because of the high risk to the customer as a result of an explosion. This might require commission action in amending the construction or fire code ordinances.

Since managers now have no authority from the parent company (in the case of Munford, Inc.) to prosecute local drive-off thieves it might be possible as alternative five to suggest a revision to existing corporate policy. By only requiring that a clerk or manager report the theft to police so that he won't have to pay the loss out of his pocket is ridiculous. Clerks or managers could create fictitious descriptions and waste valuable police time and patrol effort. If they were given authority by the company to prosecute those thefts in which a perpetrator was apprehended a more effective deterrent might be effectuated. This might eliminate bogus theft reports.

Alternative six would involve the stakeout of existing high theft locations on a selective basis to determine whether or not such losses are actually occurring. If police officers saw no effort by the clerk or manager at the time of the theft then it would be assumed that he was filing a false report and he could be prosecuted for it. If this were accomplished it would not take long for the word to get around to the companies involved that it will be necessary for them to adhere to a more rigid personnel discipline system in such cases.

It is recommended that a screening system be set up by the Police Department similar to that envisioned in alternative one.

Such a system would necessitate one additional records clerk or detective assigned solely to this purpose. In addition this employee's workload would include all vandalism, mailbox and paper box thefts, obscene phone calls and missing persons cases. All other alternatives mentioned have either one or more immediate economic or personnel drawbacks and it is felt that the course of action here recommended would be the most beneficial to Gwinnett County in the future. Copies of this report should be given to executives of each convenience store chain and each convenience store manager doing business in Gwinnett County.

APPENDIX A

AVERAGE TIME

PER GASOLINE

LARCENY

CALL*
(1976)

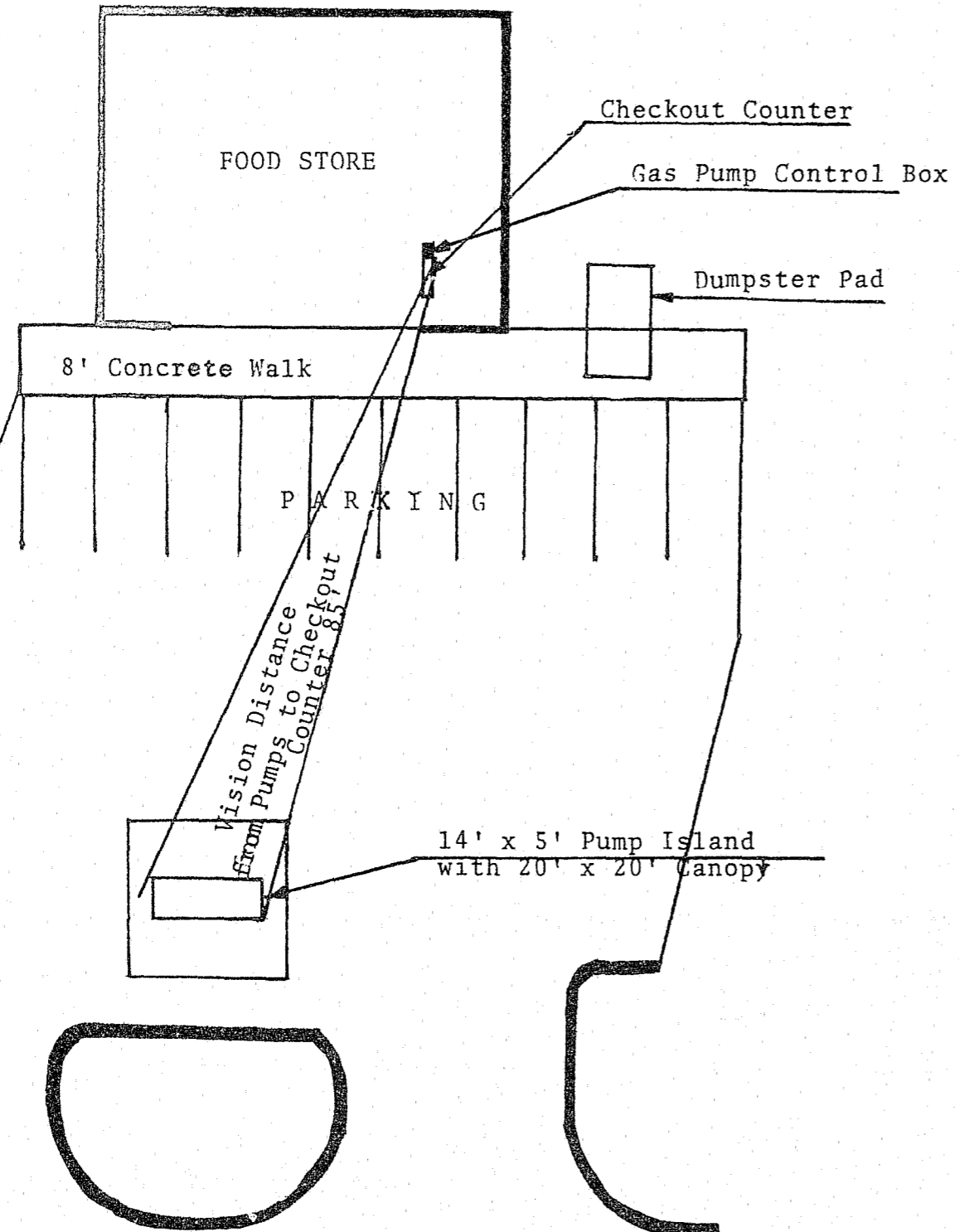
<u>Time Range</u>	<u>Number</u>
0 - 5 Minutes	1
6 - 10 Minutes	11
11 - 15 Minutes	21
16 - 20 Minutes	28
21 - 25 Minutes	14
26 - 30 Minutes	13
31 - 40 Minutes	1
41 - 45 Minutes	1
46+ Minutes	1
No Time Card	<u>19</u>
TOTAL	123

* Call answering service time only, does not
include report preparation.

APPENDIX B

COMPANY: MUNFORD, INC.

LOCATION: 685 Scenic Highway
Lawrenceville, Georgia



STORE # _____

Attn: All Self-Service Gas/Food Stores

The below information will be turned in at the end of the week regarding all gasoline Drive-Offs.

Date & Time _____

Amount of Drive-Off _____

Spoke to Deputy _____ in the Highway Patrol Division/
Sheriff's Department, at _____

Description of Vehicle:

Year & Make _____

License Number _____

Description of Person(s):

Manager on Duty,

NOTE: If this is not accomplished, you will pay for the gas drive-off via money order made out to MUNFORD, INC.

Form 2764 - G

END