



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**NEW ANALYSIS OF FBI DATA SHOWS FEDERAL CRIMINAL
BACKGROUND CHECK SYSTEM HAS BLOCKED THOUSANDS OF GUN
SALES TO DANGEROUS PEOPLE IN VERMONT**

[Analysis](#) by Everytown Shows More than 3,000 Blocked Gun Sales to Prohibited Purchasers, Including at least 356 to Domestic Abusers and 279 to Drug Offenders; But Loophole Remains for Criminals to Evade Background Check System

Share of Gun Background Check Denials For Drug Abuse Skyrockets, Tripling from 6% in 2008 to 18% in 2013

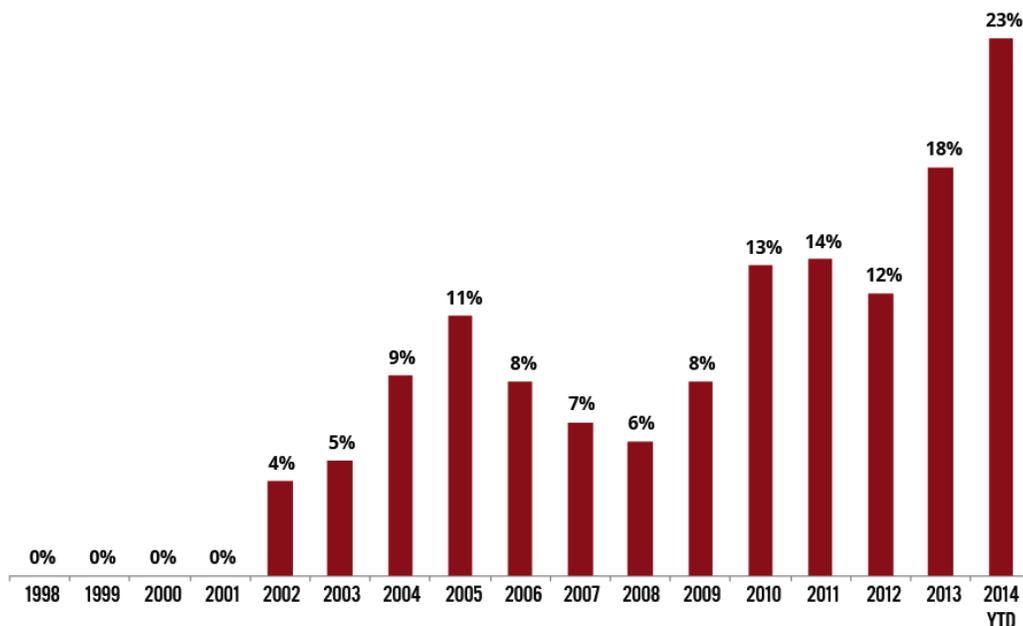
Today Everytown for Gun Safety released an [analysis](#) of new FBI data showing that the federal background check system is working in Vermont, blocking more than 3,000 gun sales to prohibited purchasers since 1998. These blocked sales include 279 gun sales to drug offenders, 356 to people convicted of domestic violence or subject to protection orders, and 983 sales to convicted felons.

But Everytown's analysis also provides evidence that criminals are increasingly evading these checks by purchasing guns in unlicensed sales. The share of gun purchases that were denied fell by nearly half between 2002 and 2013, suggesting that criminals may be seeking guns from unlicensed sellers — including transactions online and at gun shows, where background checks are not required — an easy way to sidestep the public safety measure aimed at keeping guns out of dangerous hands.

Drugs and Guns in Vermont

In light of the [dangerous connection](#) between guns and drugs in Vermont, illegal drug users and traffickers appear to be increasingly exploiting this loophole. Everytown's analysis shows that the share of background check denials for unlawful drug use tripled between 2008 and 2013, from 6 percent to 18 percent. Just last week, convicted opiate drug dealer Christopher Pappano was [arrested](#) at his home in Milton, where police found a .45 caliber pistol. As a convicted felon, Pappano is prohibited under federal law from purchasing or possessing firearms.

THE SHARE OF WOULD-BE GUN BUYERS THAT FAIL A BACKGROUND CHECK FOR DRUG USE HAS BEEN SKYROCKETING



Source: FBI data on total NICS background check denials in Vermont as of Sep. 9, 2014.

Domestic Violence and Guns in Vermont

There is a [deadly relationship](#) between guns and violence against women in Vermont. Over the last 20 years, half of all Vermont homicides were domestic violence related, and 56 percent of domestic violence homicides were committed with a firearm. The background check system has helped keep guns out of the hands of domestic abusers – since 1998, 356 domestic abusers convicted of domestic violence or subject to protection orders have been blocked from buying guns – but those same individuals can fail a background check at a licensed gun dealer, and then find guns online with no questions asked.

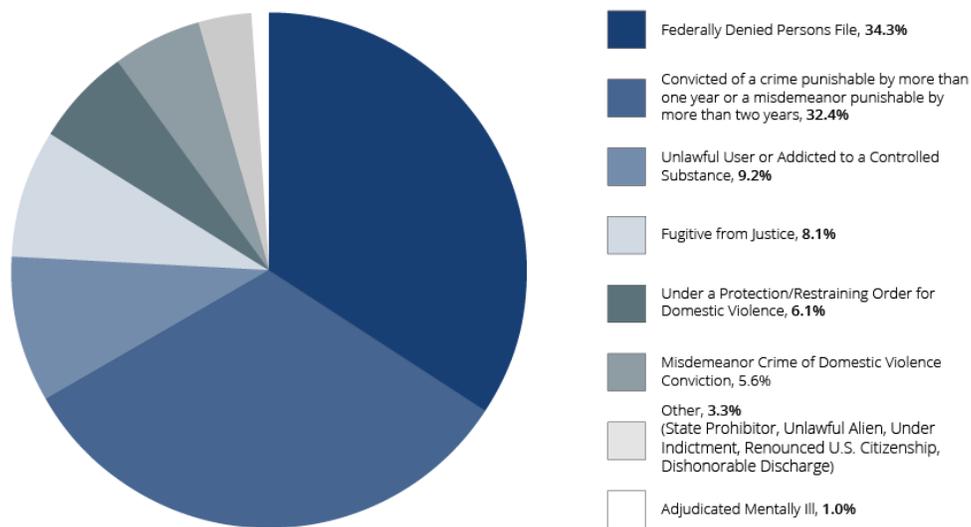
Background Checks

Since 1998, federal law has required licensed gun dealers to conduct a background check for every firearm purchase. Prospective gun buyers are screened against the FBI's National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS), which blocks gun sales to people deemed too dangerous to possess firearms under federal law—including felons, domestic abusers, and the dangerously mentally ill.¹

Details of the Analysis

Today's analysis from Everytown shows that since 1998 the federal background check system has blocked 3,034 gun sales to prohibited people in Vermont, including 983 gun sales to felons, 356 to domestic abusers, and 279 gun sales to unlawful drug offenders.² Between 1998 and 2013, the number of background checks conducted each year in Vermont has increased, reflecting an increase in the number of gun sales by licensed firearm dealers.

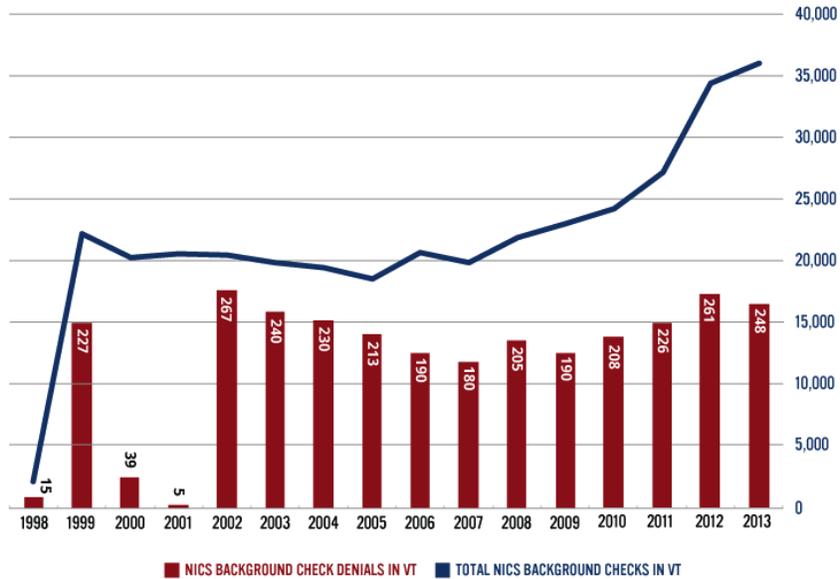
IN VERMONT, BACKGROUND CHECKS HAVE BLOCKED MORE THAN 3,000 GUN SALES



Source: FBI data on total NICS background check denials in Vermont as of Sep. 9, 2014.

But between 2002 and 2013, the share of total background checks that were denied fell by nearly half, from 1.2% to 0.7%. This is consistent with the hypothesis that criminals are increasingly aware that a background check will block them from buying guns at licensed dealers—and are seeking guns from unlicensed sellers online and at gun shows, where no background checks are required under current law. In a September 2013 investigation of illegal online gun sales, [Felon Seeks Firearm](#), Everytown found that one in 30 people seeking guns from unlicensed sellers on the national website Armslist.com had a criminal record or domestic violence history that prohibited gun ownership. This is nearly four times the share of people seeking firearms at licensed dealers who are prohibited and blocked by the background check system.

**MORE BACKGROUND CHECKS ARE CONDUCTED IN VERMONT THAN EVER BEFORE,
BUT THE SHARE OF CHECKS THAT ARE DENIED KEEPS FALLING**



Source: FBI data on NICS background checks and denials in Vermont, 1998-2013.

Method and Appendix — Full Data

Everytown obtained the data from the FBI through a Freedom of Information Act request and calculated the number of gun sales in Vermont that were denied between 1998 and 2014 by type and over time:

Criteria for prohibiting firearm ownership	Denials	Share of total
Federally Denied Persons File	1,039	34%
Convicted of a crime punishable by more than one year, such as murder, or a misdemeanor punishable by more than two years	983	32%
Unlawful User/Addicted to a Controlled Substance	279	9%
Fugitive from Justice	247	8%
Protection/Restraining Order	185	6%
Misdemeanor Crime of Domestic Violence Conviction	171	6%
State Prohibitor	45	1%
Adjudicated Mental Health	31	1%
Under Indictment/Information	27	1%
Illegal/Unlawful Alien	25	1%
Renounced U.S. Citizenship	1	0%

Dishonorable Discharge	1	0%
Total	3,034	

About Everytown for Gun Safety

Everytown is the largest gun violence prevention organization in the country with more than 2.5 million supporters and more than 40,000 donors including moms, mayors, survivors, and everyday Americans who are fighting for public safety measures that respect the Second Amendment and help save lives. At the core of Everytown are Mayors Against Illegal Guns and Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America, a grassroots movement of American mothers founded the day after the Sandy Hook tragedy. Learn more at www.everytown.org and follow us @Everytown

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¹ The FBI releases a monthly report of Federal denials nationwide but does not publicly release data for individual states or over time. Between the inception of the NICS system in 1998 and July 31, 2014, 1,123,342 gun sales were federally denied (<http://1.usa.gov/1veK3Ek>). In addition, between 1998 and 2010, state and local agencies issued a total of 945,915 denials, and it is estimated they have issued 225,000 denials in the three years since data was last released (<http://1.usa.gov/Z8vYsa>). Thus, a total of more than 2.3 million federal and state denials have been made since the NICS system was implemented.

² Everytown for Gun Safety analysis of FBI data, obtained February 12, 2014.