

SHOTGUN IS FAVORED WEAPON FOR MANY KILLERS IN STATE

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A **shotgun** is not the ideal murder **weapon**. It's large, clumsy and has a short range.

But in Michigan, dozens of killers each year reach for **weapons** such as the Maverick 12-gauge pump used by Allen Griffin Jr. in Tuesday's deadly rampage in Detroit. In fact, killers in Michigan are almost twice as likely as those nationwide to use a **shotgun**, according to a Free Press computer analysis of Federal Bureau of Investigation crime records.

Shotguns were used in 11.3 percent of 1995 homicides involving firearms in Michigan, compared to 6.7 percent of such homicides nationally.

Michigan had 64 **shotgun** slayings in 1995, the latest year for which numbers are available. Among states with more than 10 gun-related killings that year, Michigan ranked ninth in percentage of firearm homicides in which a **shotgun** was used. Idaho ranked first with 19.2 percent.

To buy a **shotgun**, you must be 21 and fill out a form, said Detroit Police Officer Allene Ray. The seller keeps the form. There are no background checks; federal law requires them for people who buy handguns.

Mark Flanary of Flanary's Guns in Garden City said **shotgun** sales make up 50 percent of his business. Most of his customers buy them for self-defense, he said.

"It's been a busy year so far," he said. "We've sold more than usual."

Kim Geake, owner of Geake Sporting Goods in Ferndale, said most of his customers buy **shotguns** for hunting. They're versatile and can be used closer to town because of their limited range of 35-50 feet, he said. A new **shotgun** can cost \$100 on up.

"You shoot a rifle in this state and the bullet could come down a mile away," he said. "**Shotguns** are a more universal piece as far as hunting goes."

Gun deaths in Michigan

According to interim reports by the Federal Bureau of Investigations, **shotgun** use in Michigan murders was almost double the national average in 1995 and more than double if cases where the gun was unusual or unknown are thrown out. Guns were involved in 69 percent of murders nationwide and 72 percent of murders in Michigan in 1995.

National

Total homicides involving guns 13579

Involving **shotguns** 907 (6.7 percent)

Involving handguns 11186 (82.4 percent)

Involving rifles 604 (4.4 percent)

Involving other/unknown guns 882 (6.5 percent)

Michigan

Total homicides involving guns 567

Involving **shotguns** 64 (11.3 percent)

Involving handguns 295 (52.0 percent)

Involving rifles 39 (6.9 percent)

Involving other/unknown guns 169 (29.8 percent)

Source: FBI 1995 Interim Supplemental Homicide Report, computer analysis by Heather Newman

Caption: Chart RICK NEASE/Detroit Free Press

Memo: CORRECTION RAN March 14, 1997

getting it straight

* A Local News article about **shotguns** Thursday incorrectly

reported the gun's range, which averages 35-50 yards.

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