

## **OAKLAND Police collect more than 1,000 weapons ( But Police Chief Admits Gun Buy Backs Do Not Have Much Impact on Crime. )**

Carolyn Jones, Chronicle Staff Writer February 10, 2008  
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Soon after Oakland streets again exploded in violence, police collected more than 1,000 handguns and assault weapons Saturday in three no-questions-asked buyback events.



Sen. Don Perata

**State Senate President Pro Tem Don Perata, D-Oakland**, who was carjacked at gunpoint Dec. 29 in North Oakland, **was the first to surrender a gun.** He gave police the handgun he bought 15 years ago after receiving death threats during his fight to ban assault weapons.

**"There's too many damn guns in our society, and they're too easy to get," he said** at the buyback event at Allen Temple in East Oakland. **"The fact is, if I had reached for that gun when I was being carjacked, I'd be dead right now.** There's too many people out there with nothing to lose."

Oakland police paid \$250 for every gun that was surrendered. Organizers collected more than three times the number of guns they expected and planned to give them to the Crucible, an Oakland industrial arts studio, to be melted down and sculpted into a peace monument. **The buybacks came on the heels of an especially bloody stretch in Oakland, in which three people were killed and several injured in five shootings in roughly 16 hours. Violent crime is slightly higher than it was a year ago,** Oakland Police Chief Wayne Tucker said Saturday.

**Gun buybacks don't seem to have much impact on crime rates, but fewer guns on the street is undeniably a good thing, Tucker said.** "Guns do kill people," he said. "So we're happy to get as many guns out of Oakland as we can."

For **Gloria Garner, who lives down the block from Allen Temple**, the gun buyback was a welcome sight. "They need to turn them all in," she said. "I know they just turn the guns in because they want the money, but we have too many killings in Oakland, California. **We need to get rid of all the guns.**" Noel Deleon of San Lorenzo brought three handguns to the buyback event. He had planned to sell them on eBay, but didn't want them to end up in the hands of criminals. "I just don't need them anymore," he said. "It's a relief to get rid of them." **The Rev. J. Alfred Smith Sr. of Allen Temple said he supports gun buybacks, but would like to see more attention paid to what he calls the root causes of violence: unemployment, poor schools and depressed neighborhoods.** "If we can keep one gun off the street, that's good, but **I don't know if this solves the real problem,**" he said. "So it's both good and bad, but that's life."

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