

Laws force police to put guns back on the street

By Blake Ellis and Melanie Hicken, CNNMoney

Every year, police officers seize tens of thousands of rifles, shotguns, machine guns and other firearms from criminals across the country. While many agencies destroy these weapons, a growing number of police departments are selling them instead.

And it's not always by choice.

Since 2009, at least 11 states have passed laws that either encourage or require police departments to sell seized or recovered guns – with some banning police from destroying guns altogether, according to an exclusive CNNMoney analysis of state laws.

Behind this trend are powerful special interests like the National Rifle Association, which argues that the fear of these guns getting into the hands of criminals is “absurd” and part of an anti-gun agenda.

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