




# **Lenawee County Medical Examiner's Office**

**Annual Report  
2015**



Compiled by  
**Lenawee County Medical Examiner's Office**

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## OFFICE OF THE LENAWEE COUNTY MEDICAL EXAMINER

To: Lenawee County Board of Commissioners and the  
Citizens of Lenawee County

The laws of the State of Michigan assign the responsibility for determining the cause and manner of unexpected deaths in each county to the medical examiner. The Lenawee County Medical Examiner upholds these laws and accepts this responsibility with full commitment to a consistent high quality service. Every reported death is investigated thoroughly, frequently with the cooperation of law enforcement agencies and health care personnel in Lenawee County. The results of these death investigations provide valuable information which is used in professional education and by the criminal justice system, public health department, families of the deceased and other concerned persons.

While the Medical Examiner and staff of investigators and support persons are primarily concerned with the circumstances surrounding unexpected deaths, our concern for the living is reflected in our regular reviews of all childhood deaths with concerned and involved state and county agencies, as well as our support for tissue and organ donations through the Gift of Life program to provide lifesaving specimens to those individuals waiting for a chance at normal living.

During 2015, we experienced a continuing increase in death investigations (approximately 1 in every 5 deaths) and foresee no reversal as our population increases. Approximately 78% of the deaths reported to our office occurred in persons over the age of 50 years. Of the 191 reported deaths, approximately half were selected for autopsy and further investigation. Most of our reported deaths occurred at home and approximately 70% of the reported deaths were attributed to disease rather than injury. Twelve percent of the remainder were caused by accident, a slight decrease from 2014. Eighteen reported deaths were suicides, tripling the number from the previous year; again, males outnumbered females and approximately half were by firearm. In addition, we also reviewed all deaths for which a cremation permit was requested.

Twenty-five deaths were drug-related (i.e. caused exclusively or in part by an injected or ingested substance), twice the number in 2013 and a 25% increase from 2014. Prescription drugs and heroin continue to be the most often abused.

The maintenance of a properly prepared and effective death investigation system necessarily involves periodic investigator recruitment and continuing education in forensic science. These regular efforts, along with the many requirements of our combined investigator activities, are coordinated by the individual investigators and by our dedicated support staff.

I want to thank the Lenawee County Board of Commissioners and the County Administration for their encouragement and support of this program, which enables the medical examiner staff to provide this necessary and valuable service to the citizens of Lenawee County. I submit this annual report to demonstrate the expanding scope and sophistication of this professional and continued cost-effective service. I take pride in the continued development of this office and welcome the opportunity to discuss any aspect of this report with you.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bader J. Cassin, M.D.

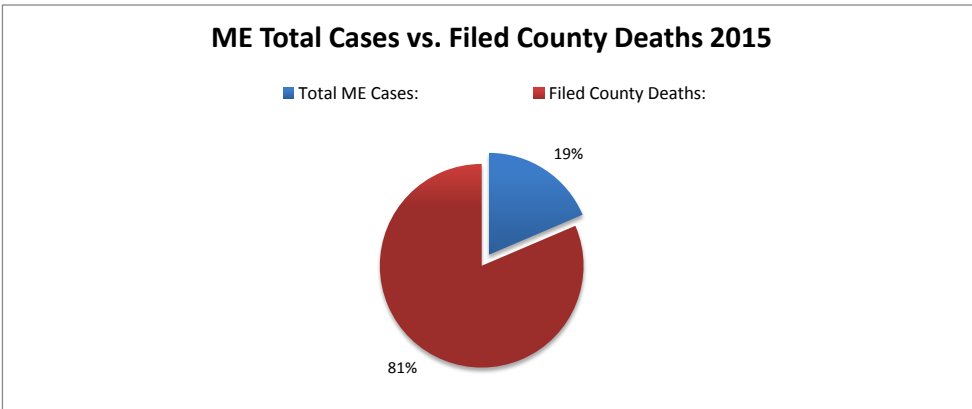
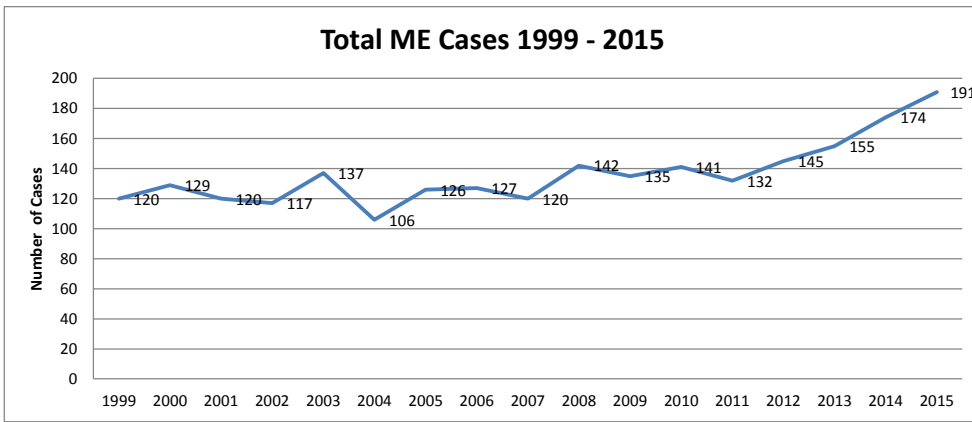
Office of the Medical Examiner

# Overview of Medical Examiner Cases 2015

**Total Cases: 191**      Male: 127      Female: 64

Autopsies: 96      Male: 71      Female: 25

Toxicology: 96



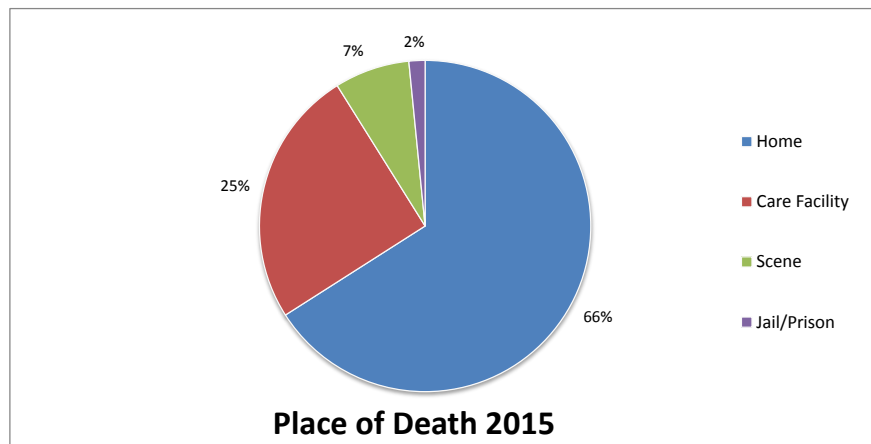
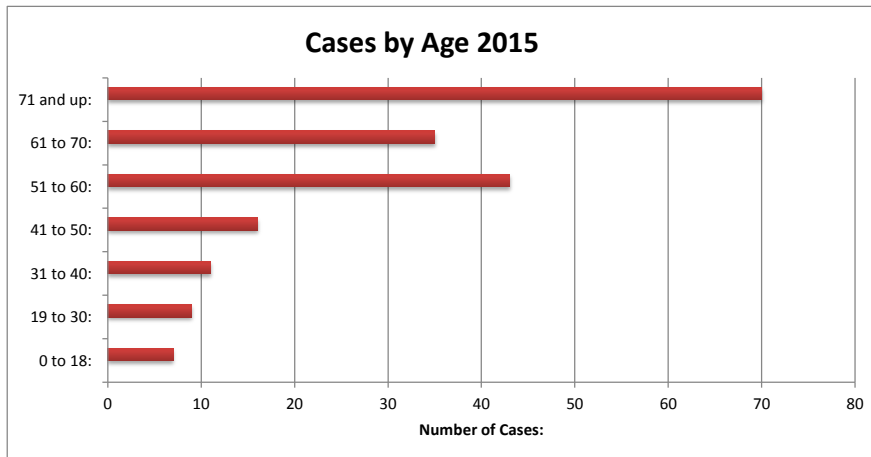
Lenawee County Medical Examiner  
 Overview of Cases 2015

**Cases by Age:**

|               |            |
|---------------|------------|
| 0 to 18:      | 7          |
| 19 to 30:     | 9          |
| 31 to 40:     | 11         |
| 41 to 50:     | 16         |
| 51 to 60:     | 43         |
| 61 to 70:     | 35         |
| 71 and up:    | 70         |
| <b>Total:</b> | <b>191</b> |

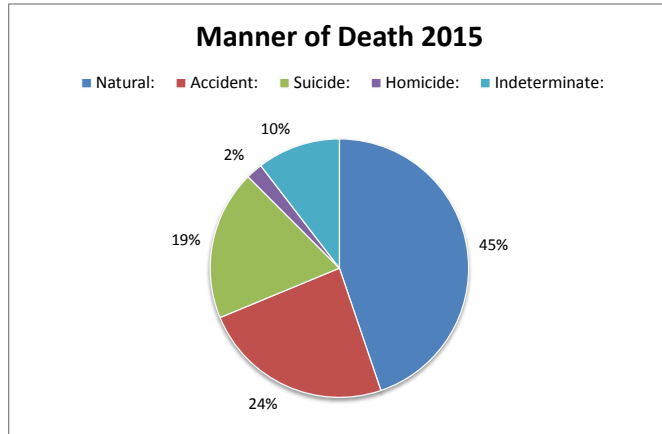
**Place of Death:**

|                                     |            |
|-------------------------------------|------------|
| Total M.E. Deaths at Home:          | 126        |
| Total M.E. Deaths at Care Facility: | 48         |
| Total M.E. Deaths at Scene:         | 14         |
| Total M.E. Deaths Jail/Prison:      | 3          |
| <b>Total:</b>                       | <b>191</b> |



**Manners of Death:**

|                |            |
|----------------|------------|
| Natural:       | 138        |
| Accident:      | 23         |
| Suicide:       | 18         |
| Homicide:      | 2          |
| Indeterminate: | 10         |
| <b>Total:</b>  | <b>191</b> |

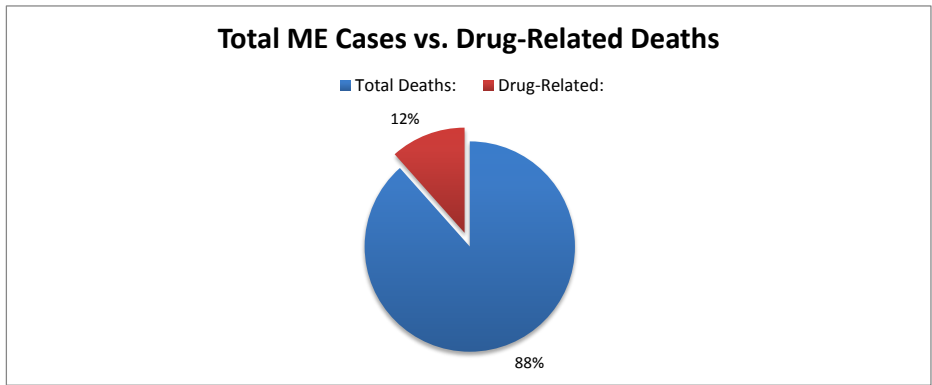
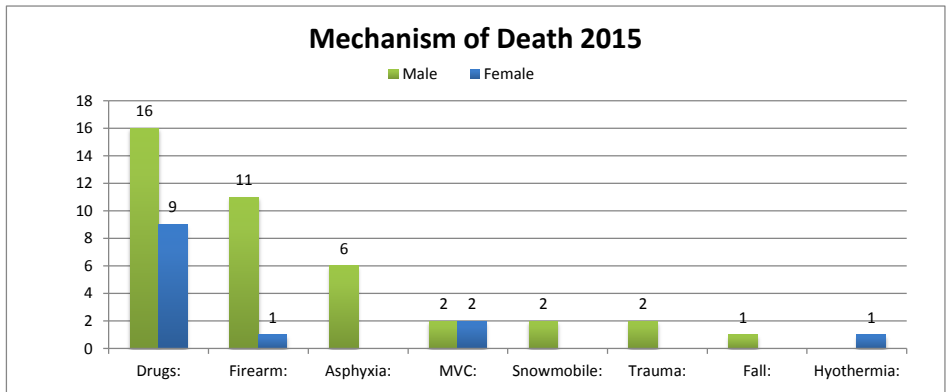


**Autopsies by Manners of Death:**

|                |           |
|----------------|-----------|
| Natural:       | 43        |
| Accident:      | 23        |
| Suicide:       | 18        |
| Homicide:      | 2         |
| Indeterminate: | 10        |
| <b>Total:</b>  | <b>96</b> |

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 Overview of Cases 2015

| Mechanism of Death: | Male:     | Female:   |
|---------------------|-----------|-----------|
| Drugs:              | 25        | 9         |
| Firearm:            | 12        | 1         |
| Asphyxia:           | 6         | 0         |
| MVC:                | 4         | 2         |
| Snowmobile:         | 2         | 0         |
| Trauma:             | 2         | 0         |
| Fall:               | 1         | 0         |
| Hypothermia:        | 1         | 1         |
| <b>Total:</b>       | <b>53</b> | <b>13</b> |



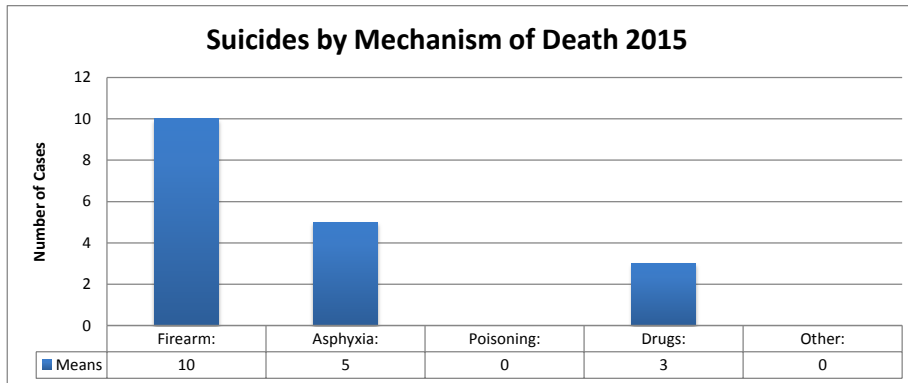
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**Suicides by Age and Gender:**

|               | Male:     | Female:  |
|---------------|-----------|----------|
| 0 to 20:      | 2         | 0        |
| 21 to 40:     | 6         | 0        |
| 41 to 60:     | 3         | 3        |
| 60 and up:    | 3         | 1        |
| <b>Total:</b> | <b>14</b> | <b>4</b> |

**Suicide by Mechanism of Death:**

|               |           |
|---------------|-----------|
| Firearm:      | 10        |
| Asphyxia:     | 5         |
| Poisoning:    | 0         |
| Drugs:        | 3         |
| Other:        | 0         |
| <b>Total:</b> | <b>18</b> |





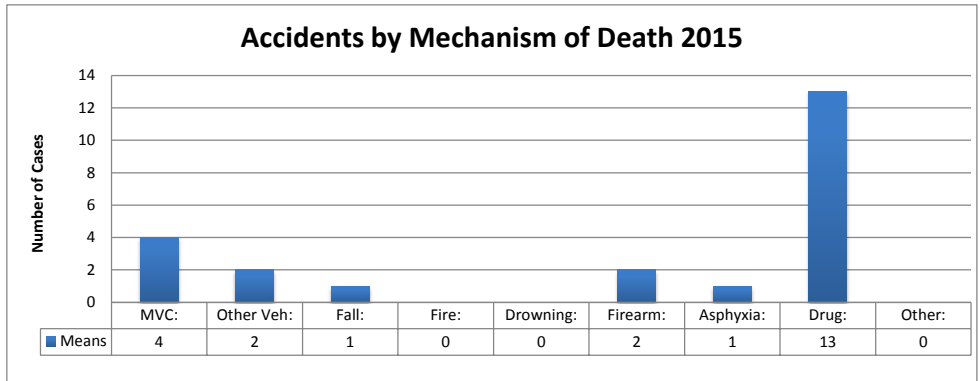
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**Accidents by Age and Gender:**

|               | Male:     | Female:  |
|---------------|-----------|----------|
| 0 to 20:      | 3         | 0        |
| 21 to 40:     | 5         | 2        |
| 41 to 60:     | 9         | 2        |
| 60 and up:    | 2         | 0        |
| <b>Total:</b> | <b>19</b> | <b>4</b> |

**Accident by Mechanism of Death:**

|               |           |
|---------------|-----------|
| MVC:          | 4         |
| Snowmobile:   | 2         |
| Fall:         | 1         |
| Fire:         | 0         |
| Drowning:     | 0         |
| Firearm:      | 2         |
| Asphyxia:     | 1         |
| Drug:         | 13        |
| Other:        | 0         |
| <b>Total:</b> | <b>23</b> |



**Indeterminate Deaths:**

|               | Male:    | Female:  |
|---------------|----------|----------|
| 0 - 20:       | 0        | 0        |
| 21 - 40:      | 1        | 0        |
| 41 - 60:      | 2        | 5        |
| 60 and up:    | 2        | 0        |
| <b>Total:</b> | <b>5</b> | <b>5</b> |

**Indeterminate By Mechanism of Death:**

|               |           |
|---------------|-----------|
| Drugs:        | 9         |
| Infant Death: | 0         |
| Hypothermia:  | 1         |
| <b>Total:</b> | <b>10</b> |