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**Office of the Medical Examiner  
Lenawee County**

**Annual Report  
2022**

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

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Nate Rutkowski  
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Brooke Strong  
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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 2022, we continued to experience an increase in the number of death investigations, approximately 1 in every 3 county deaths. 58% of the deaths reported to our office occurred in persons aged 50 - 79 and 26% over that age. 55% of the 340 reported deaths occurred at home. 38% of deaths were selected for autopsy and further investigation, a slight rise from the previous year (37% in 2021). 78% of reported deaths were caused by disease, 19% by injury. 45 of all reported deaths were caused by accident, attributed most to drugs, vehicular crashes and falls. There were 28 drug-related deaths (caused exclusively or in part by an injected or ingested substance). Maintaining a national trend in recent years, fentanyl (a synthetic opioid many times more powerful than morphine) was included in the majority of drug-related deaths or was combined with heroin or other abused substances. Also significant were the 18 suicides, most by firearm or asphyxia. During the year, we wrote 160 death certificates and, in addition, reviewed 622 deaths for which a cremation authorization was signed.

In mid-2020, when Promedica moved to its new hospital buildings in Adrian Township, we began sharing the new morgue facility in Jackson County, which is large enough to accommodate all 3 counties. This move has proven satisfactory to the funeral directors serving the families of Lenawee and Hillsdale Counties, as well as those in Jackson County.

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.

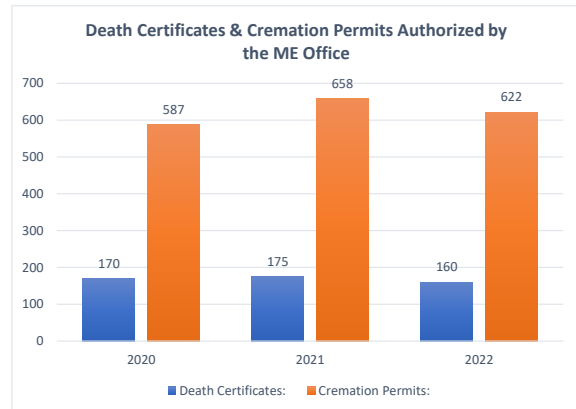
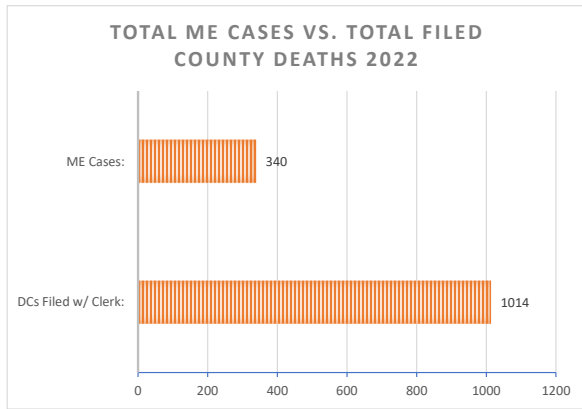
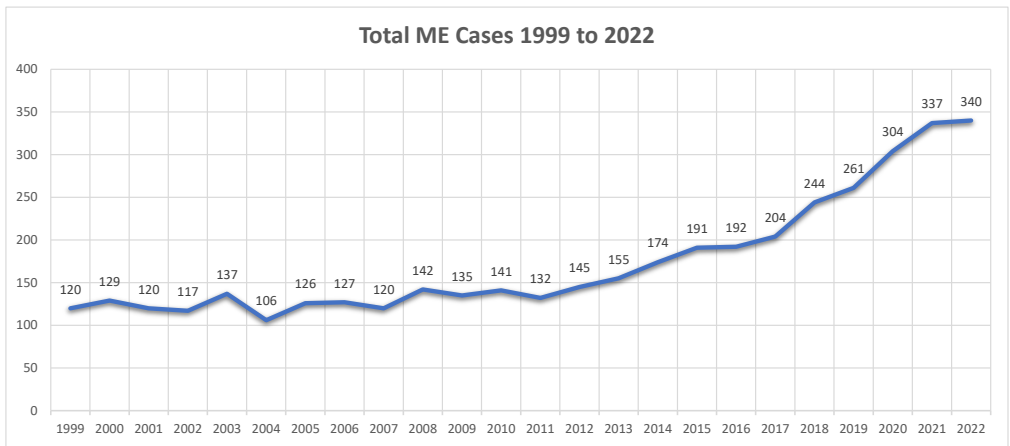
Office of the Medical Examiner

Overview of Medical Examiner Cases 2022

**Total Cases: 340\*** Male: 204 Female: 131

Autopsies: 129 Male: 87 Female: 42  
 Toxicology: 129

(\*Gender not determinable for 1 fetal death + 4 non-human specimens)



**Total Death Certificates and Cremation Permits signed:**

DCs Signed, No Autopsy: 31  
 Total DCs Signed: 160  
 Cremation Permits Signed: 622

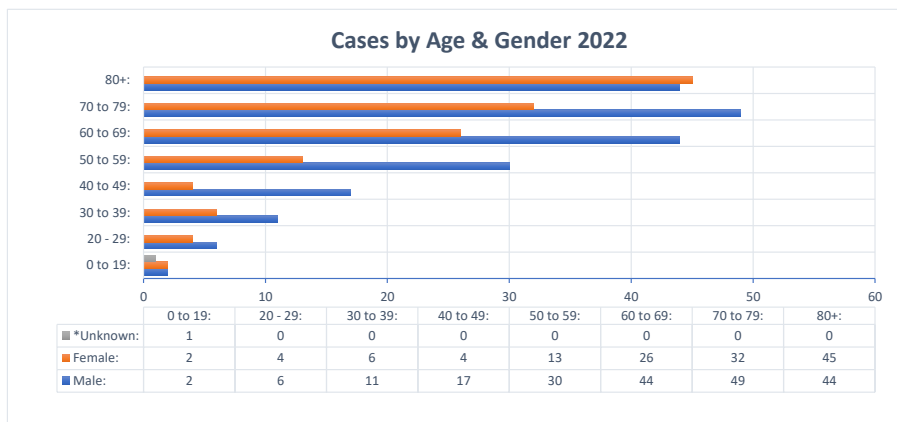
Lenawee County Medical Examiner  
 Overview of Cases 2022

**Cases by Age:**

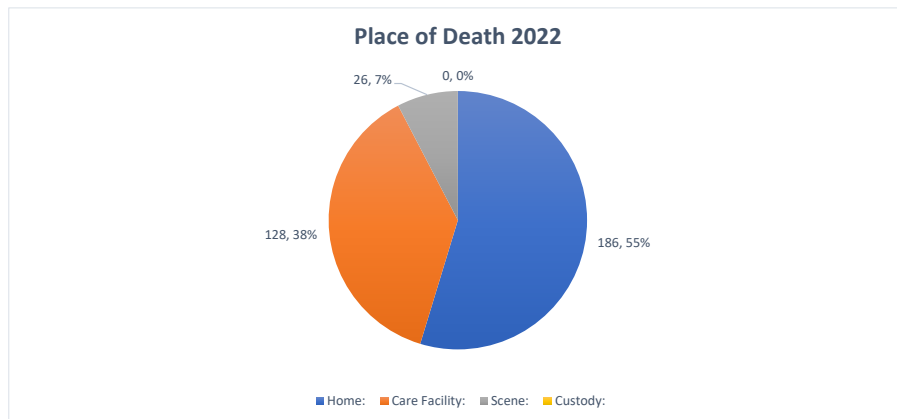
0 to 19:	5
20 to 29:	10
30 to 39:	17
40 to 49:	21
50 to 59:	43
60 to 69:	70
70 to 79:	81
80+:	89
<b>Total:</b>	<b>336</b>

**Place of Death:**

Total M.E. Deaths at Home:	186
Total M.E. Deaths at Care Facility:	128
Total M.E. Deaths at Scene:	26
Total M.E. Deaths Jail/Prison:	0
<b>Total:</b>	<b>340</b>

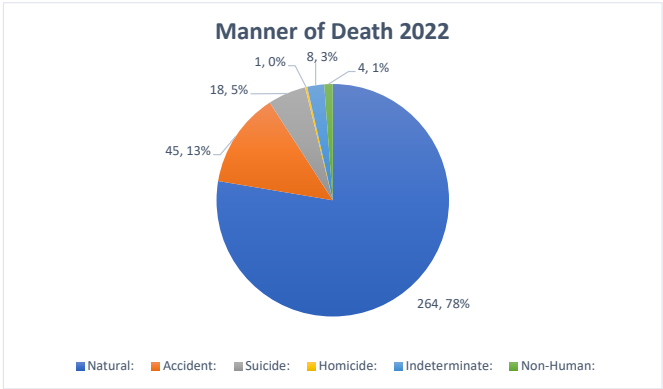


\*4 non-human specimens ( fetus = 1 unknown gender)



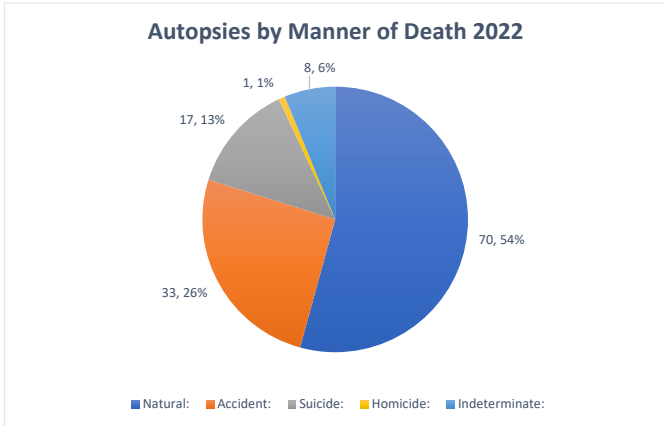
**Manners of Death:**

Natural:	264
Accident:	45
Suicide:	18
Homicide:	1
Indeterminate:	8
Non-Human:	4
<b>Total:</b>	<b>340</b>



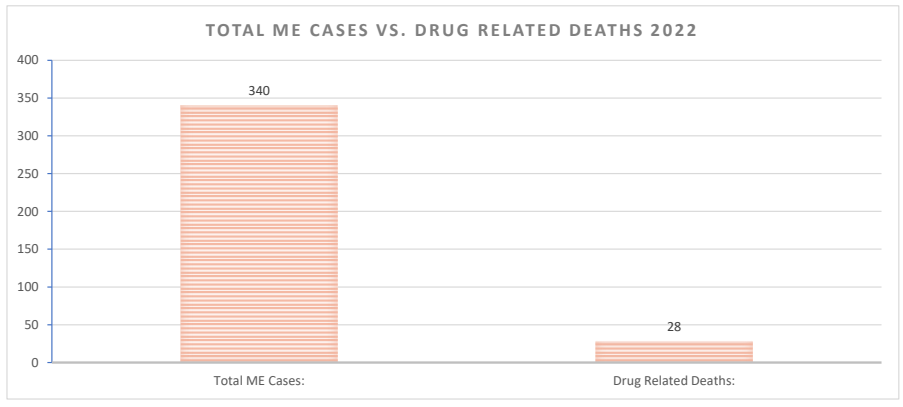
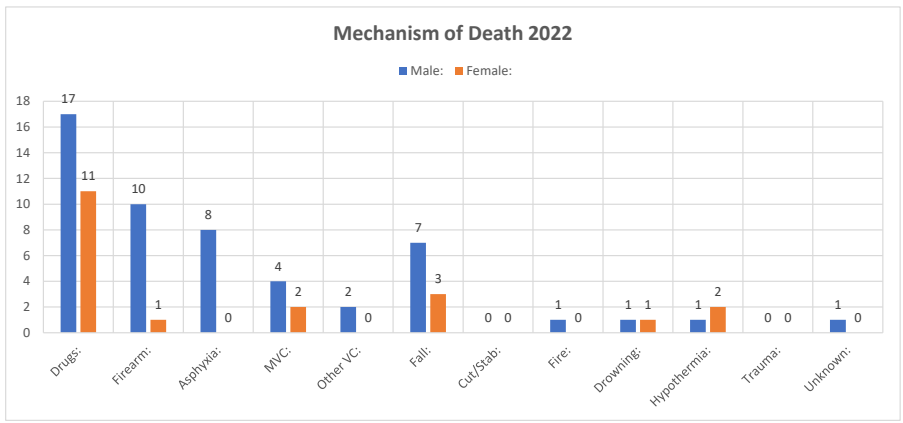
**Autopsies by Manners of Death:**

Natural:	70
Accident:	33
Suicide:	17
Homicide:	1
Indeterminate:	8
<b>Total:</b>	<b>129</b>



Lenawee County Medical Examiner  
 Overview of Cases 2022

Mechanism of Death:	Male:	Female:	
Drugs:	28	17	11
Firearm:	11	10	1
Asphyxia:	8	8	0
MVC:	6	4	2
Other VC:	2	2	0
Fall:	10	7	3
Cut/Stab:	0	0	0
Fire:	1	1	0
Drowning:	2	1	1
Hypothermia:	3	1	2
Other Trauma:	0	0	0
*Unknown:	1	1	0 <i>*(Advanced Decomposition)</i>
<b>Total:</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>20</b>



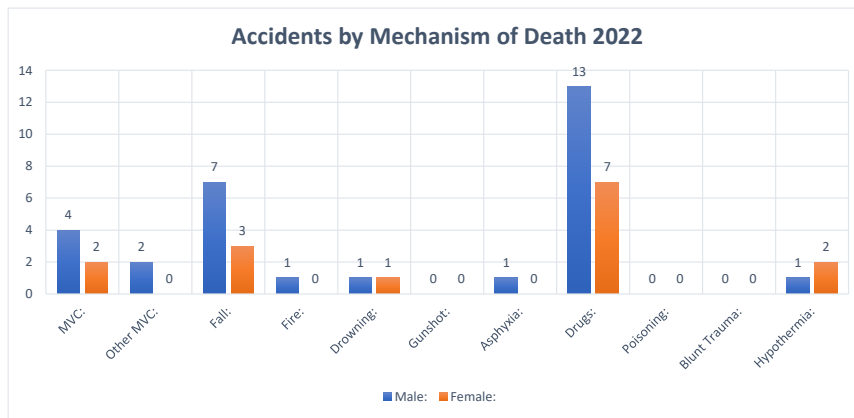
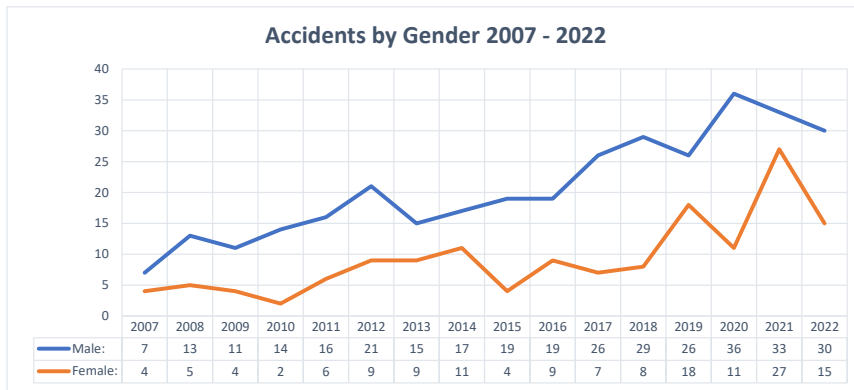
Lenawee County Medical Examiner  
 Overview of Cases 2022

**Accidents by Age and Gender:**

	Male:	Female:
0 - 9:	1	1
10 - 19:	0	0
20 - 29:	1	1
30 - 39:	5	1
40 - 49:	4	2
50 - 59:	5	3
60 - 69:	8	2
70 - 79:	1	2
80+:	5	3
<b>Total:</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>15</b>

**Accident by Mechanism of Death:**

MVC:	8
Other Vehicle:	0
Fall:	10
Fire:	1
Drowning:	2
Firearm:	0
Asphyxia:	1
Drug:	20
Blunt Trauma:	0
Hypothermia:	3
<b>Total:</b>	<b>45</b>





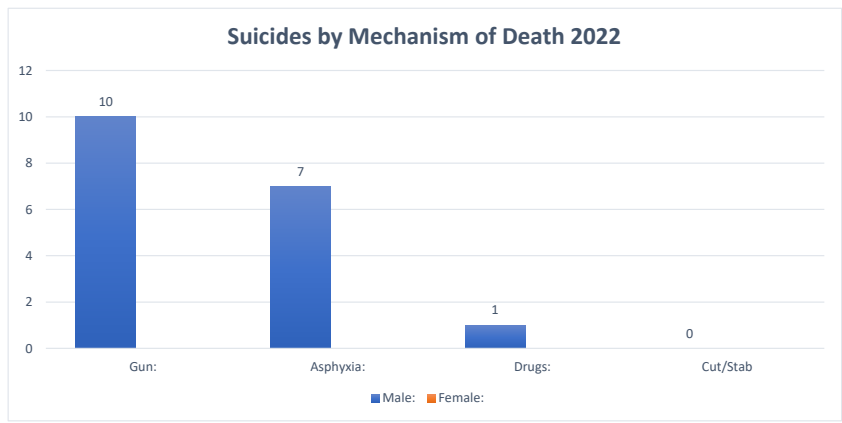
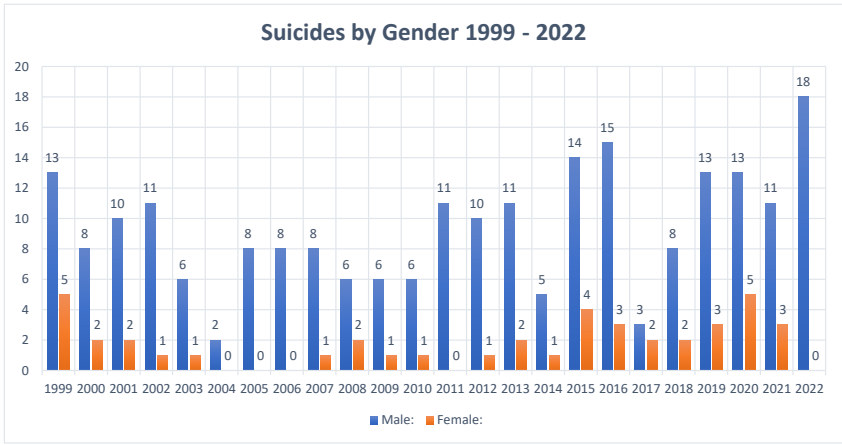
Lenawee County Medical Examiner  
 Overview of Cases 2022

**Suicides by Age and Gender:**

	Male:	Female:
0 - 9:	0	0
10 - 19:	1	0
20 - 29:	4	0
30 - 39:	3	0
40 - 49:	3	0
50 - 59:	2	0
60 - 69:	2	0
70 - 79:	0	0
80+:	3	0
<b>Total:</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>0</b>

**Suicide by Mechanism of Death:**

Firearm:	10
Asphyxia:	7
Drugs:	1
Cut/Stab:	0
Trauma:	0
<b>Total:</b>	<b>18</b>



Lenawee County Medical Examiner  
 Overview of Cases 2022

**Indeterminate Deaths:**

	Male:	Female:
0 - 19:	0	0
20 - 29:	0	1
30 - 39:	0	1
40 - 49:	1	1
50 - 59:	2	0
60 - 69:	1	1
70 - 79:	0	0
80+:	0	0
<b>Total:</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>

**Indeterminate by Mechanism of Death:**

Drugs:	7
SUID:	0
Trauma:	0
Unknown:	1
<b>Total:</b>	<b>8</b>

**Homicides:**

	Male:	Female:
0 - 19:	0	0
20 - 29:	0	1
30 - 39:	0	0
40 - 49:	0	0
50 - 59:	0	0
60 - 69:	0	0
70 - 79:	0	0
80+:	0	0
<b>Total:</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>

**Homicides by Mechanism of Death:**

Firearm:	1
Cut/Stab:	0
Asphyxia:	0
<b>Total:</b>	<b>1</b>

