



**Office of the Medical Examiner
Lenawee County**

**Annual Report
2020**



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 2020, We experienced a substantial increase in all county deaths with a continued increase in our death investigations, again approximately 3 in every 10 county deaths. 85% of the deaths reported to our office occurred in persons over the age of 50 and 49% in persons over the age of 70. 59% of the 303 reported deaths occurred at home. 41% of those reported were selected for autopsy and further investigation. 50% of these were caused by disease, 50% by injury. 15% of all reported deaths (38% of all autopsies) were caused by accident, a continued rise over the years. This was primarily a result of 21 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 more times powerful than morphine) was included in the majority of drug-related deaths and was combined with heroin or other abuse substances. Another significant increase were the 18 suicides, all by firearm, asphyxia or drugs. During the year, we wrote 170 death certificates and, in addition reviewed 587 deaths for which 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,

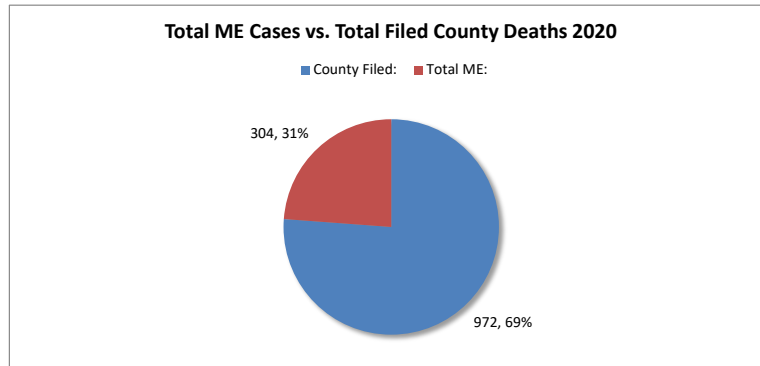
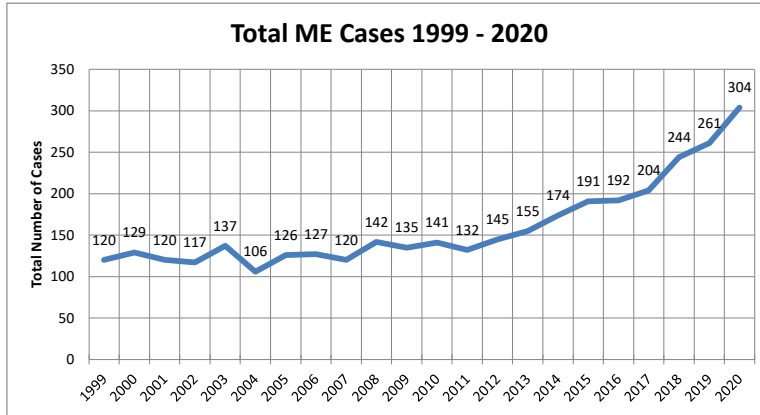
Bader J. Cassin, M.D.

Office of the Medical Examiner

Overview of Medical Examiner Cases 2020

Total Cases: 304* Male: 200 Female: 102

Autopsies: 125 Male: 100 Female: 24
 Toxicology: 125 (*1 case Gender Unknown/1 Case Non-Human)



Total Death Certificates and Cremation Permits signed:

DCs Signed, No Autopsy: 45
 Total DCs Signed: 170
 Cremation Permits Signed: 587

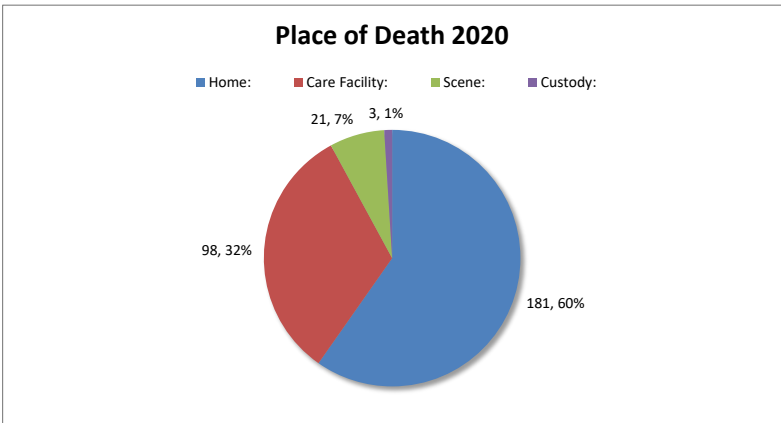
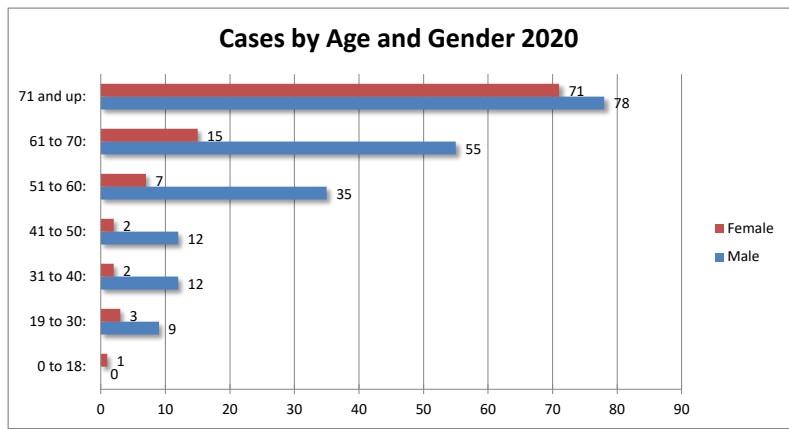
Lenawee County Medical Examiner
 Overview of Cases 2020

Cases by Age:

0 to 18:	2
19 to 30:	12
31 to 40:	14
41 to 50:	14
51 to 60:	42
61 to 70:	70
71 and up:	149
Total:	303

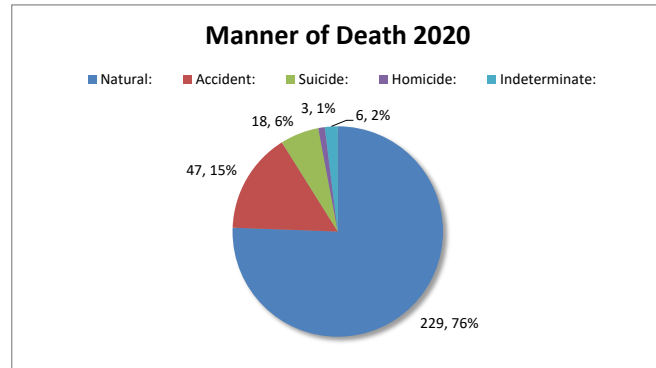
Place of Death:

Total M.E. Deaths at Home:	181
Total M.E. Deaths at Care Facility:	98
Total M.E. Deaths at Scene:	21
Total M.E. Deaths Jail/Prison:	3
Total:	303



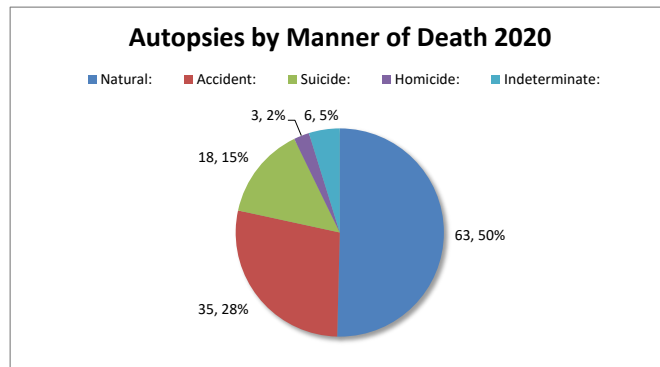
Manners of Death:

Natural:	229
Accident:	47
Suicide:	18
Homicide:	3
Indeterminate:	6
Non-Human:	1
Total:	304



Autopsies by Manners of Death:

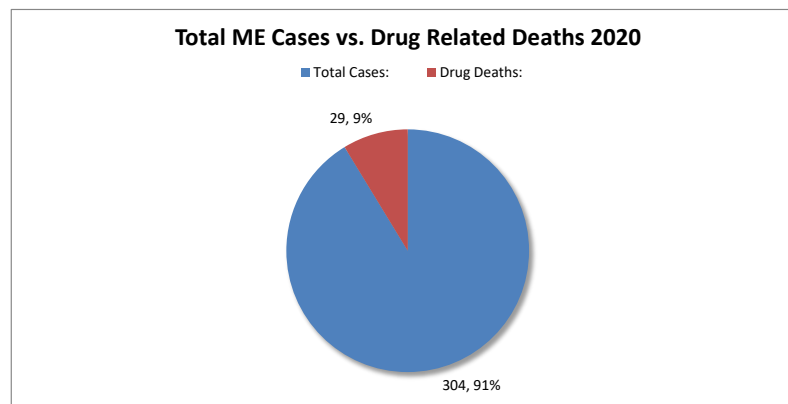
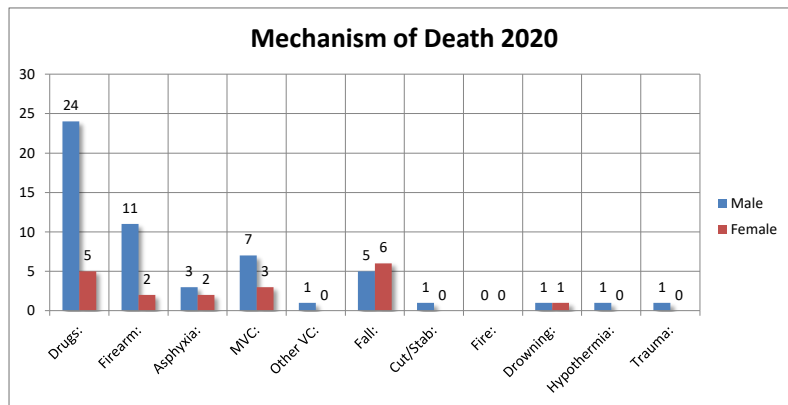
Natural:	62
Accident:	35
Suicide:	18
Homicide:	3
Indeterminate:	6
Total:	124



Lenawee County Medical Examiner
 Overview of Cases 2020

Mechanism of Death: Male: Female:

Drugs:	29	24	5
Firearm:	13	11	2
Asphyxia:	5	3	2
MVC:	10	7	3
Other VC:	1	1	0
Fall:	11	5	6
Cut/Stab:	1	1	0
Fire:	0	0	0
Drowning:	2	1	1
Hypothermia:	1	1	0
Other Trauma:	1	1	0
Total:	74	55	19



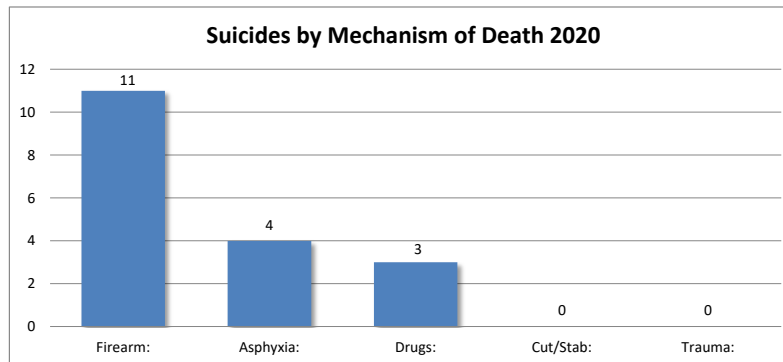
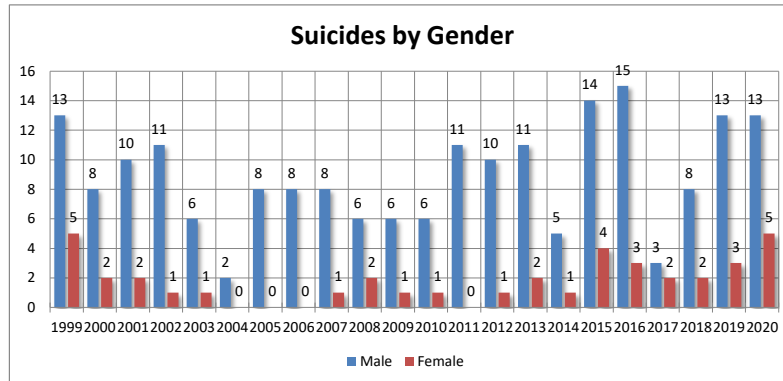
Lenawee County Medical Examiner
 Overview of Cases 2020

Suicides by Age and Gender:

	Male:	Female:
0 - 9:	0	0
10 - 19:	0	1
20 - 29:	1	1
30 - 39:	4	1
40 - 49:	1	0
50 - 59:	2	0
60 - 69:	0	1
70+:	5	1
Total:	13	5

Suicide by Mechanism of Death:

Firearm:	11
Asphyxia:	4
Drugs:	3
Cut/Stab:	0
Trauma:	0
Total:	18



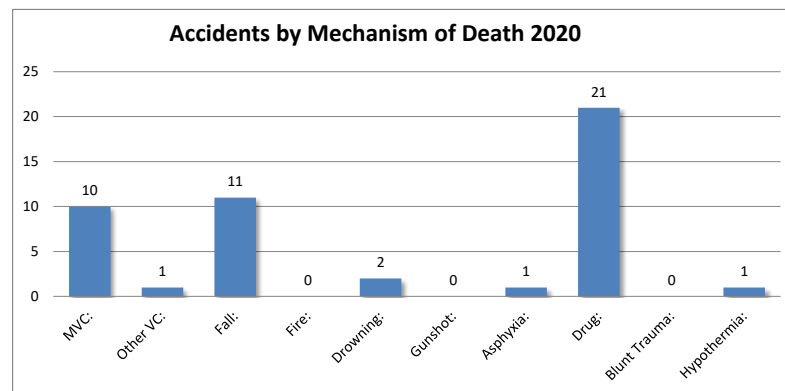
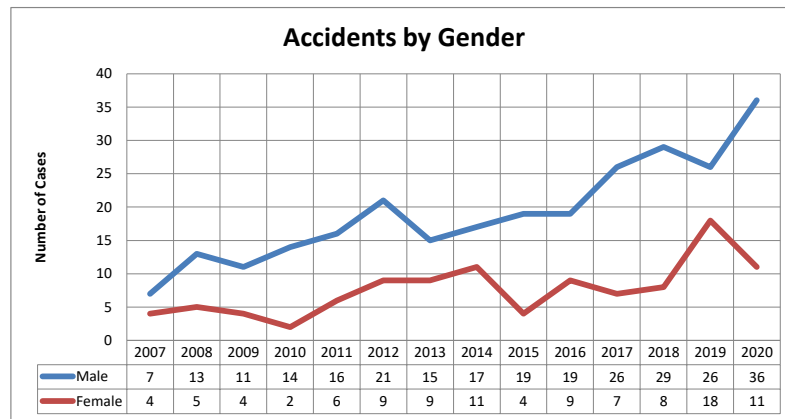
Lenawee County Medical Examiner
 Overview of Cases 2020

Accidents by Age and Gender:

	Male:	Female:
0 - 9:	0	0
10 - 19:	0	0
20 - 29:	6	1
30 - 39:	5	1
40 - 49:	5	0
50 - 59:	10	2
60 - 69:	5	0
70+:	6	6
Total:	37	10

Accident by Mechanism of Death:

MVC:	10
Other Vehicle:	1
Fall:	11
Fire:	0
Drowning:	2
Firearm:	0
Asphyxia:	1
Drug:	21
Blunt Trauma:	0
Hypothermia:	1
Total:	47



Lenawee County Medical Examiner
 Overview of Cases 2020

Indeterminate Deaths:

	Male:	Female:
0 - 19:	0	0
20 - 29:	0	0
30 - 39:	0	0
40 - 49:	0	1
50 - 59:	2	0
60 - 69:	2	1
70+:	0	0
Total:	4	2

Indeterminate by Mechanism of Death:

Drugs:	5
SUID:	0
Trauma:	1
Total:	6

Homicides:

	Male:	Female:
0 - 19:	0	0
20 - 29:	1	0
30 - 39:	0	0
40 - 49:	0	0
50 - 59:	0	0
60 - 69:	0	0
70+:	1	1
Total:	2	1

Homicides by Mechanism of Death:

Firearm:	2
Cut/Stab:	1
Other:	0
Total:	3

