



OFFICE OF THE CORONER Regan Wood - Coroner

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## 2018 Summit County Deaths Breakdown by Manner and Cause of Death

There were a total of 77 deaths in Summit County in 2018.

### **Natural - 52**

Cardiac related- 34

- a. coronary artery disease – 28
- b. congestive heart failure – 2
- c. complications from mitral valve prolapse -1
- d. myocardial infarction -1
- e. cardiomegaly – 2

Pulmonary embolism: 1

Hepatic failure – 1

Diabetic complications – 2

ALS – 1

High Altitude Pulmonary Edema -1

Respiratory failure – 1

Influenza – 1

Sepsis – 2

Hemorrhagic stroke – 1

Blau Syndrome - 1

Cancer: 6

### **Accidental - 13**

Overdose/opiates – 1

Multiple prescription overdose - 1

Blunt force trauma, ski related: 4 skiers

Avalanche - 1

Automobile vs Pedestrian – 1

Respiratory arrest/TBI – ski accident - 1

MDA toxicity – 1

Fall – 2 (both hiking accidents)

Choking - 1

### **Suicide- 12**

Overdose – multiple prescriptions – 1

Overdose – opiates - 1

Hanging/Asphyxiation -3

Gunshot wound: 7

**Hospice – 8** (these are captured under natural deaths)

## **Transfers and Autopsies**

There were 24 autopsies in 2018, compared to 17 in 2017.

- There were 4 transfer-of-jurisdiction cases in 2018, compared to 4 in 2017, meaning that the original incident causing the death occurred in Summit County but the death occurred in another county, following transport out of Summit to a facility in the Denver area for treatment.

## **Trends and Observations**

The Colorado population continues to grow, the economy is strong, and people are traveling to Summit County in high numbers, which is reflected in activity levels by our office.

Of the 77 deaths in 2018, 40 were Summit County residents, and 37 were from out of the county, state or country. The cause of death for the majority of visitors remains cardiac related; our high altitude can be very hard on the body, especially if there is an underlying undiagnosed cardiac condition.

As in previous years, the most common manner of death remains natural, with cardiac leading in cause.

Of the 8 hospice cases, 6 were cancer related, one was hepatic failure and the other valvular heart disease and the other was due to congestive heart failure.

Accidental deaths totaled 13, compared to 12 last in 2017. The leading cause this year was skier deaths which claimed the lives of 4 people. Accidental overdoses increased from 1 in 2017 to 3 in 2018. There was only one opiate related death in 2018.

I believe the countywide awareness campaigns around this issue had a positive effect on our accidental overdose numbers.

Snow-sports related deaths totaled 6 in 2018. Of the 6 deaths, 5 were skiers and 1 was a snowmobiler who died in an avalanche.

Suicides totaled 12 in 2018, increased from 5 in 2017. The leading cause continues to be gunshot wounds which was the cause of death in 7 of the suicides.

As in previous years, alcohol and drugs continue to play a part in many deaths. Toxicology testing reveals that many decedents have alcohol and marijuana in their systems. In such cases, drugs and/or alcohol are not listed as a primary cause of death, but as a significant condition on the death certificate.

## **Community Outreach Projects:**

The Summit County Coroner's Office continued to provide outreach and education to the community in 2018 through the following events:

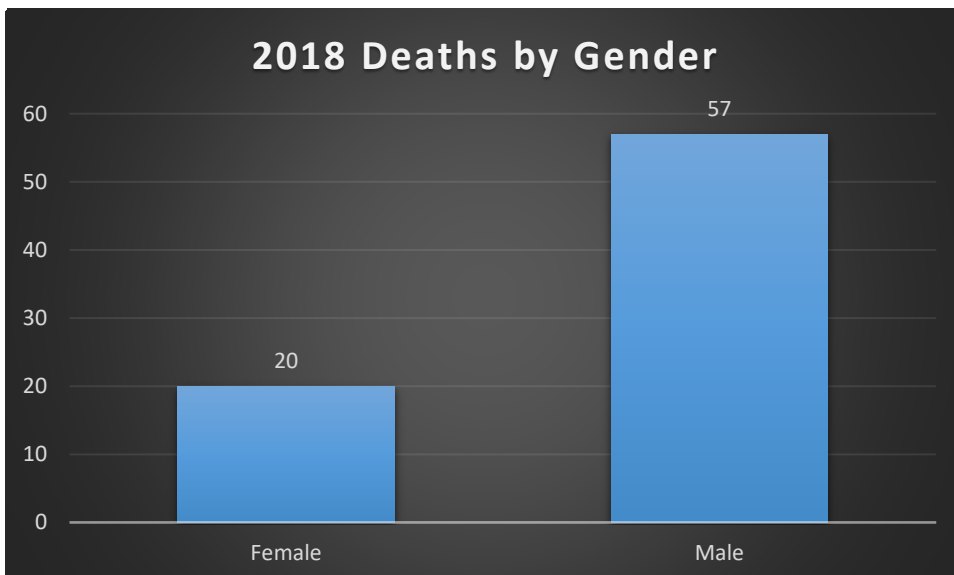
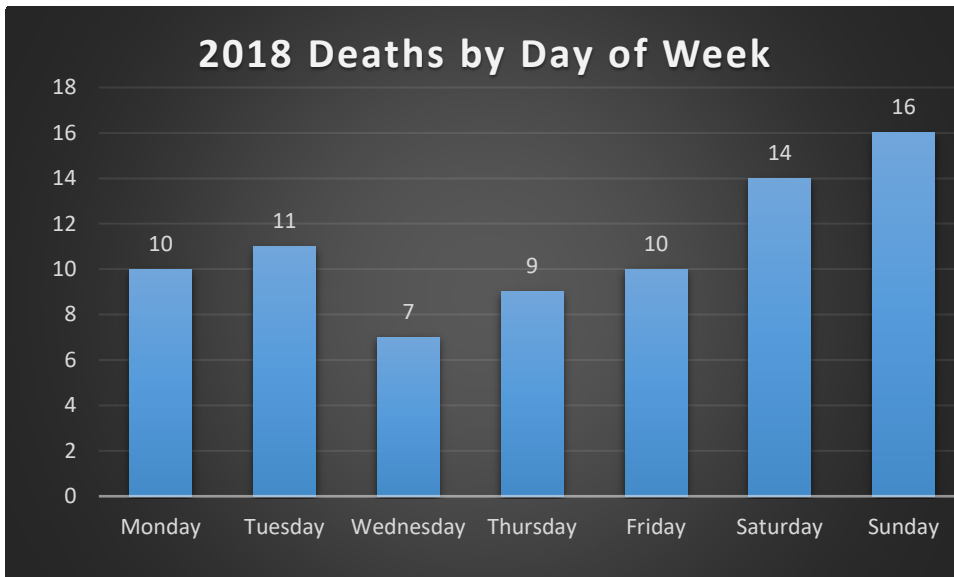
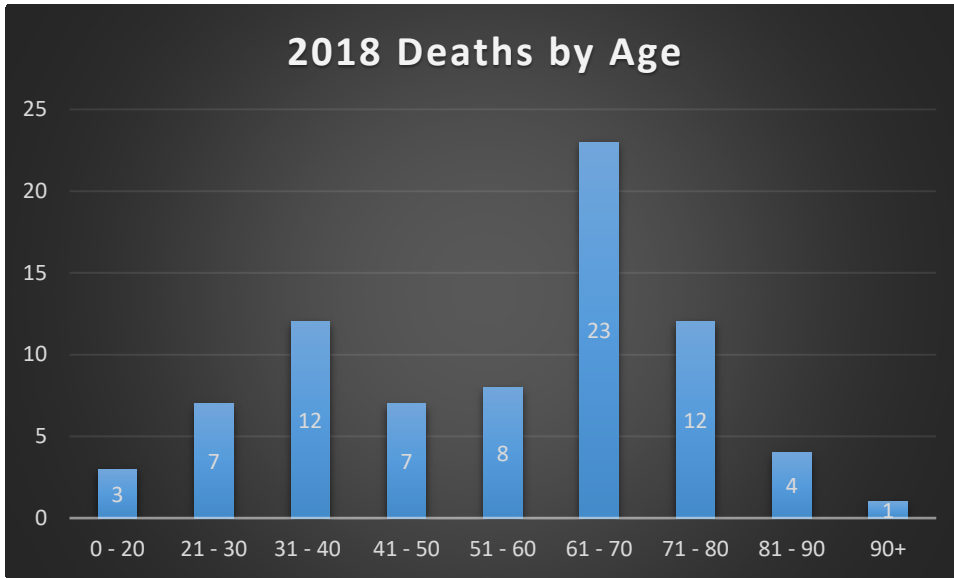
Death investigation 101 was presented to staff at the Summit County Sheriff's Office and the Breckenridge Police Department. There were 80 people in attendance.

Summit High School – Criminal Justice class, presentation on death investigation and coroner office duties. We present in twice a school year to this class. We also did 4 presentations to local Emergency medical Services and nursing students.

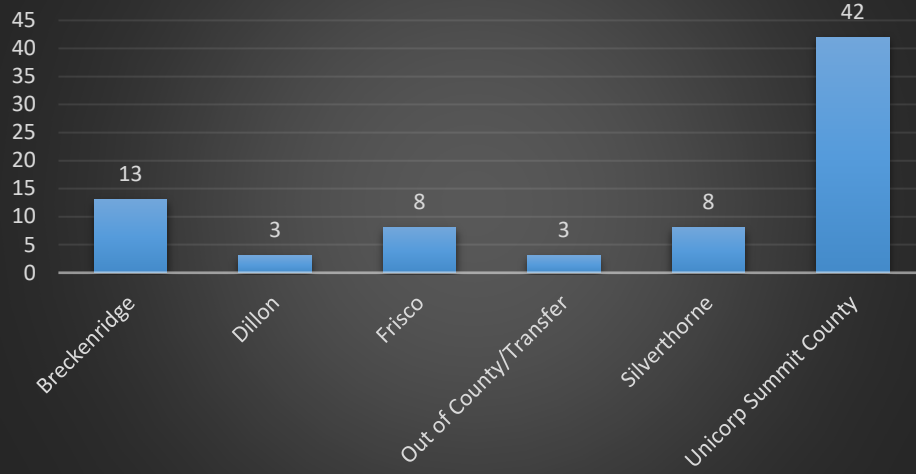
Summit Middle School – STEM classes, presentation on death investigation and coroner office duties. Provided information on how to pursue a degree in the forensic sciences.

Colorado Mountain College – Death and Dying class, presentation on death investigation and coroner office duties. We present twice a school year to this class.

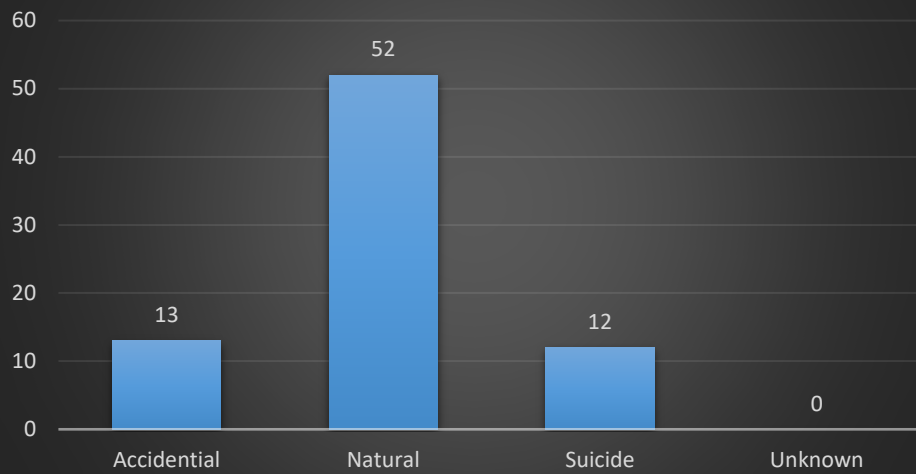
# 2018 SCOC DEATH STATS



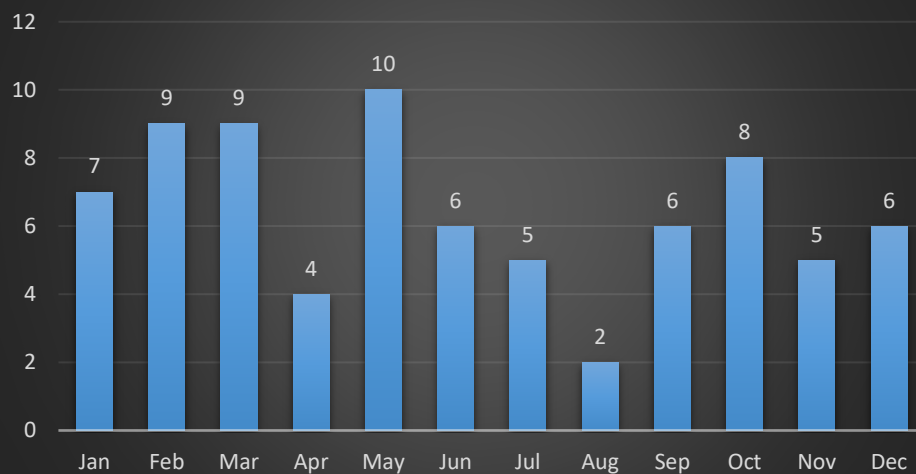
## 2018 Deaths by Jurisdiction



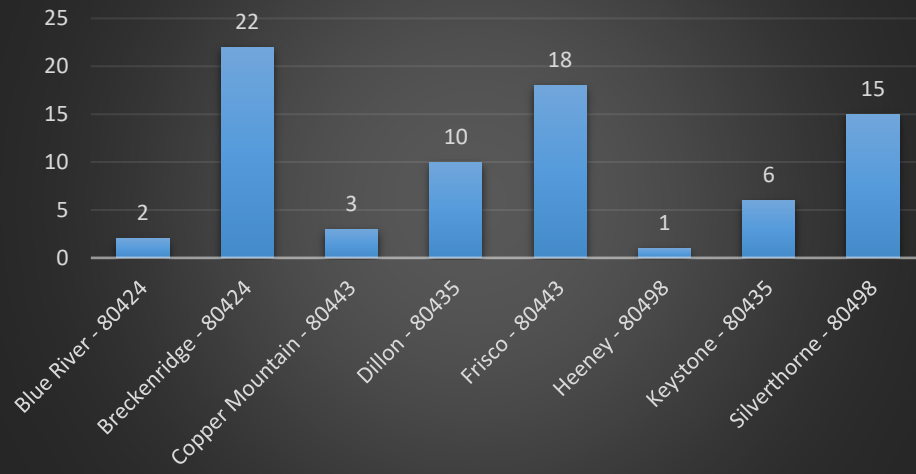
## 2018 Deaths by Manner



## 2018 Deaths by Month



## 2018 Deaths by Zip Code



## 2018 Autopsies, Hospice, & Transfer Cases

