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2020 Summit County Deaths Breakdown by Manner and Cause of Death

There were a total of 78 deaths in Summit County in 2020

Natural - 52

Coronary Artery Disease- 16
Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease – 2
Congestive Heart Failure - 2
Lou Gehrig's Disease/ALS - 1
Bilateral Pulmonary Edema - 1
Respiratory failure – 1
Septic shock - 1
Hemorrhagic stroke – 2
Cancer -11
Sepsis – 1
Alzheimers – 1
Diabetes Type 2 – 2
Myocarditis – 1
Asphyxiation -1 (blocked tracheotomy tube)
Chronic alcoholism – 8
COVID-19 - 1

Accidental – 17

Multiple prescription overdose – 1
Overdose/duster – 1
Overdose/Kratom -2
Alcohol - 3
Blunt force trauma, - 3 skiers
Avalanche skier - 1
Blunt force trauma – motorcycle - 1
Fall – 1
Drowning – 3 (2 of these cases had a high BAC)
Bicycle crash - 1

Suicide- 9

Hanging/Asphyxiation -2
Gunshot wound – 5
Poly-drug overdose – 1
Asphyxiation by fire - 1

Transfers and Autopsies

There were 21 autopsies in 2020, compared to 27 in 2019.

There were 6 transfer-of-jurisdiction cases in 2020, compared to 9 in 2019, 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 78 deaths in 2020, 56 were Summit County residents, and 22 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.

Accidental deaths totaled 17, compared to 16 in 2019. Blunt force trauma injuries were the leading cause of accidental deaths which claimed the lives of 7 people. There were 3 accidental drownings in 2020 compared to 2 in 2019. Accidental overdoses increased from 5 in 2020 compared to 3 in 2019. There were 1 opioid related accidental overdose in 2020.

Snow-sports related deaths totaled 4 in 2020 and 4 in 2019. Of the 4 deaths, 3 were skiers and 1 was caught in an avalanche, he was also a skier.

Suicides totaled 9 in 2020, increased from 4 in 2019. There were 5 involving guns, 2 hangings, 1 polysubstance overdose and 1 suicide by fire.

Unfortunately with the COVID-19 pandemic, our suicide rates increased along with the national rate.

It is our observation that there were 8 chronic alcoholism natural disease process deaths in our county this year, which I believe to be another down-side of the pandemic, these people were isolated and did not seek medical or mental health services for their disease.

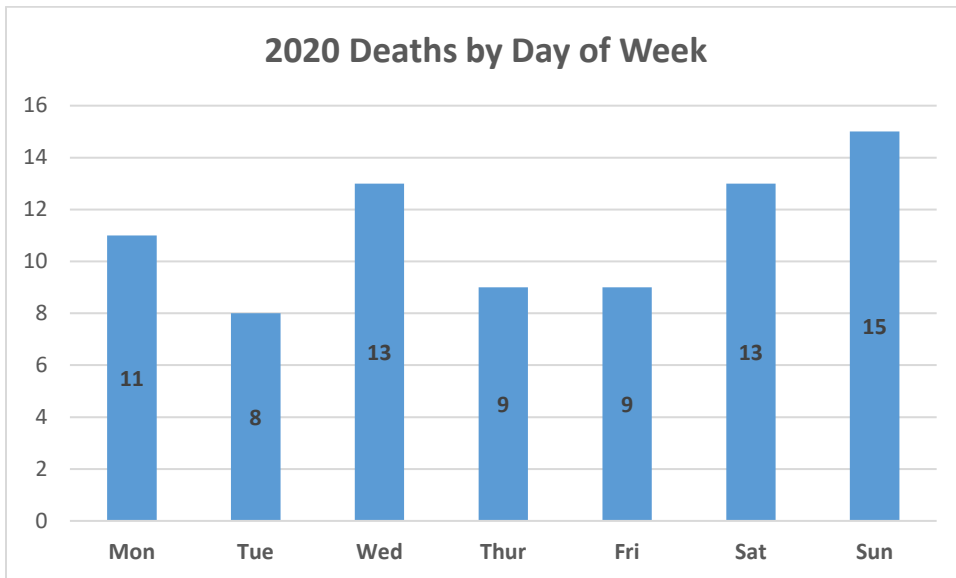
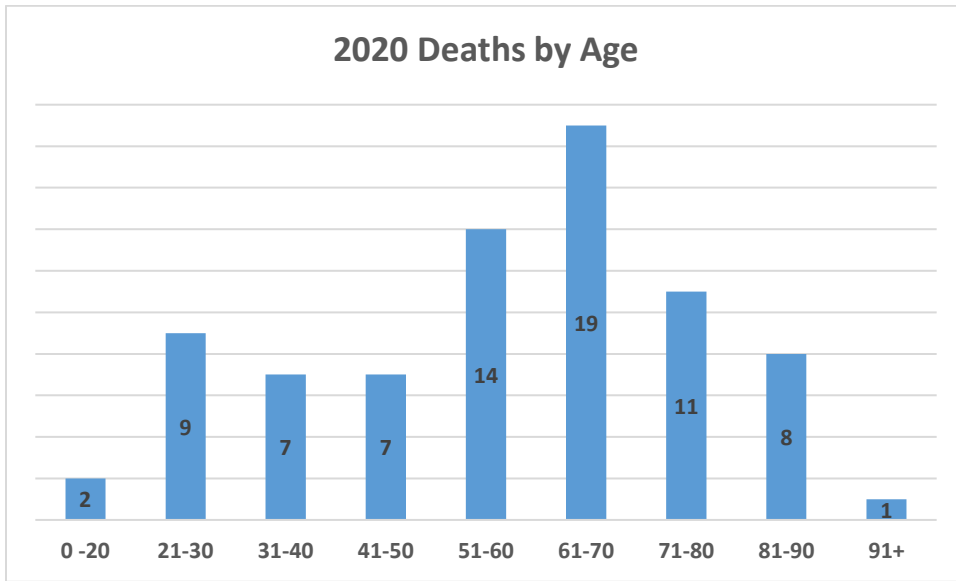
Again, as in previous years, alcohol and drugs continue to play a part in many deaths. Toxicology testing reveals that many decedents have alcohol and marijuana in their systems. In such cases, drugs and/or alcohol are not listed as a primary cause of death, but as a significant condition on the death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

Community Outreach Projects:

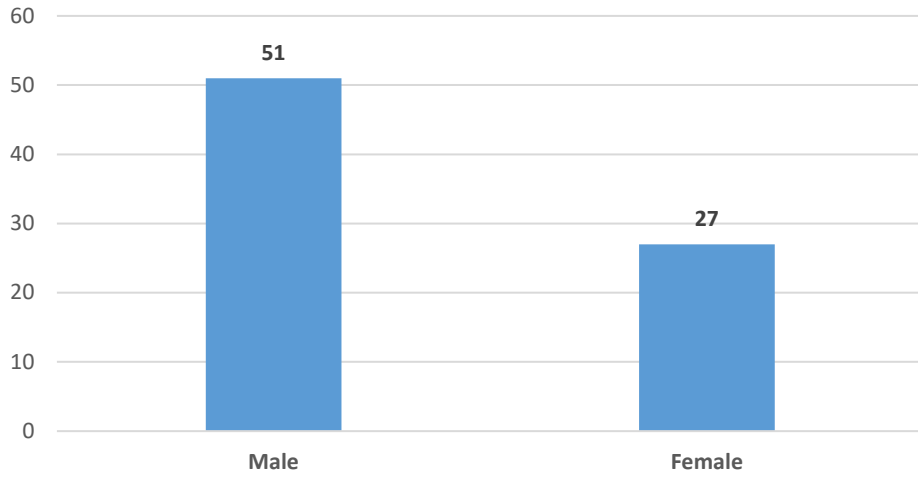
Unfortunately, we were not able to present at any Community Outreach events in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We hope to be able to resume our presentations in the county sooner rather than later.

We also hope to have the Coroner's Ball again in October 2021.

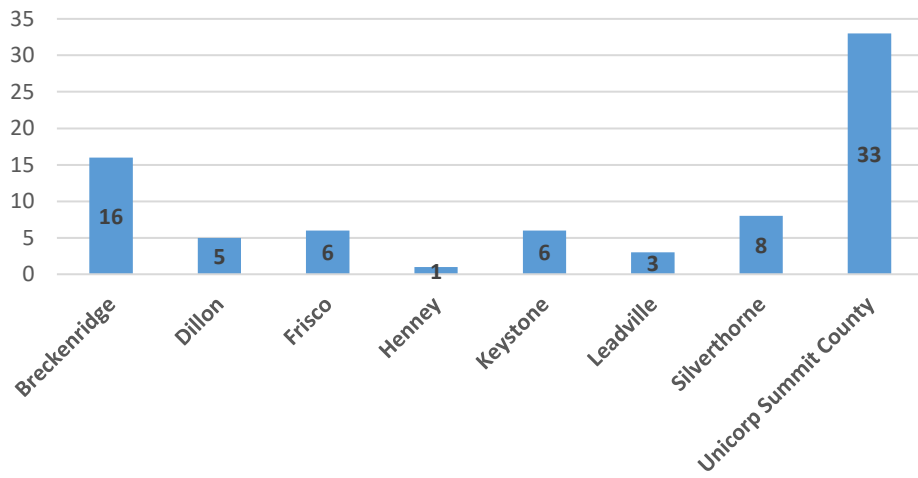
2020 SCOC DEATH STATS



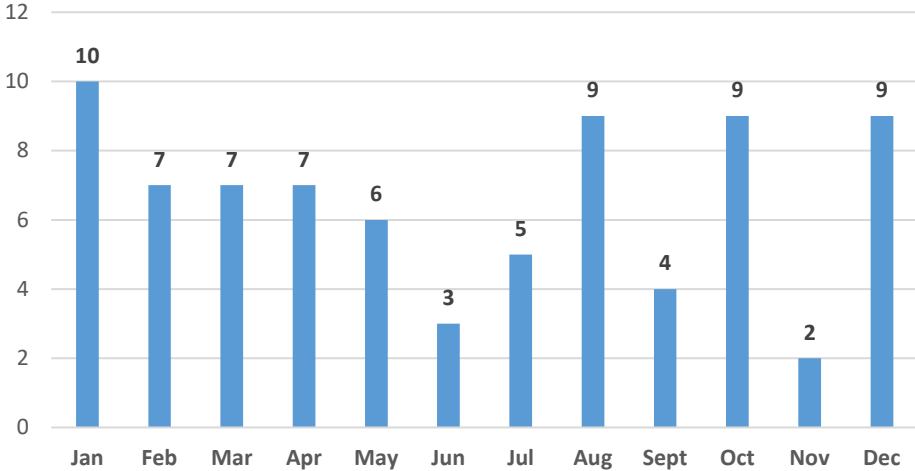
2020 Deaths by Gender



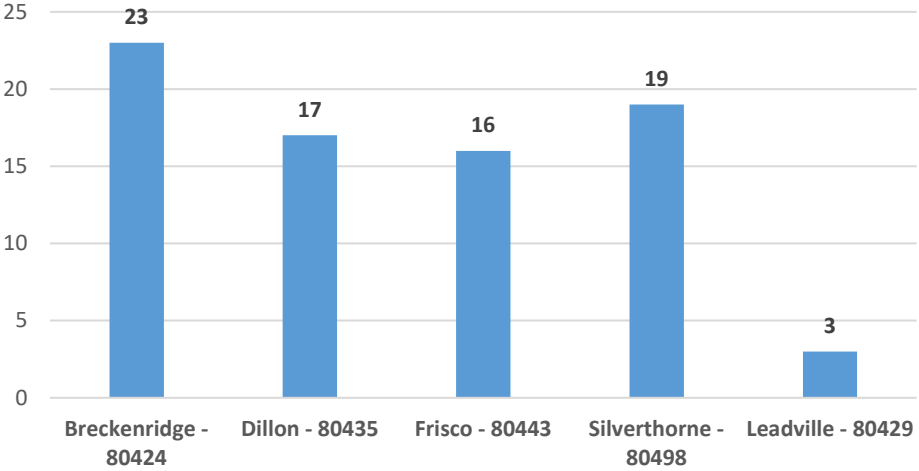
2020 Deaths by Jurisdiction



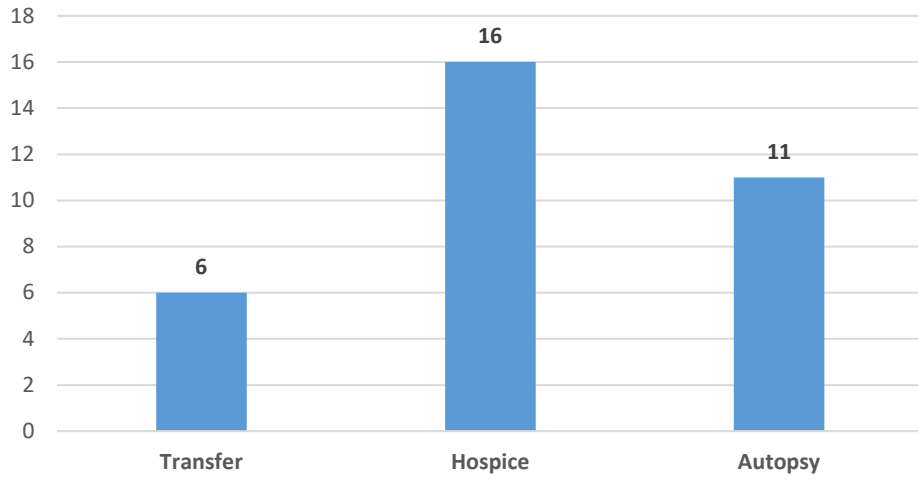
2020 Deaths by Month



2020 Deaths by Zip Code



2020 Autopsies, Hospice, & Transfer Cases



2020 Deaths by Manner

