



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

**Annual Report  
2017**



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

Bader J. Cassin, MD  
**Chief Medical Examiner**

Sarah Palmani  
**Office Manager**

**Investigators**  
Linda Hastings  
Ryan Hlavka  
Dan Myers  
Dave Nowland  
Don Spieldenner  
Rick Stanke  
Steward Szczepanski  
Corinne Tipton  
Jeff White

## 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 2017, we experienced a continued slight increase in death investigations, approximately 1 in every 4 county deaths. 82% of the deaths reported to our office occurred in persons over the age of 50. Of the 204 reported deaths, 40% were selected for autopsy and further investigation. 50% of our reported deaths occurred at home and were caused nearly equally by either disease or injury. 16% of reported deaths were caused by accident, a progressive rise over the years. This was in spite of a drop in drug-related deaths to 12 (caused exclusively or in part by an injected or ingested substance). Another significant statistical improvement was in the number of suicides (all by firearm or asphyxia), the lowest in 14 years. During the year we wrote 102 death certificates and, in addition, reviewed 463 deaths for which a cremation permit was requested.

Inquiries from neighboring Hillsdale County led to the development of a cooperative agreement with Lenawee County which instituted in August a death investigation system in that county by sharing our experience and resources. This relationship is now providing a professional presence in Hillsdale County and is benefiting both counties.

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,

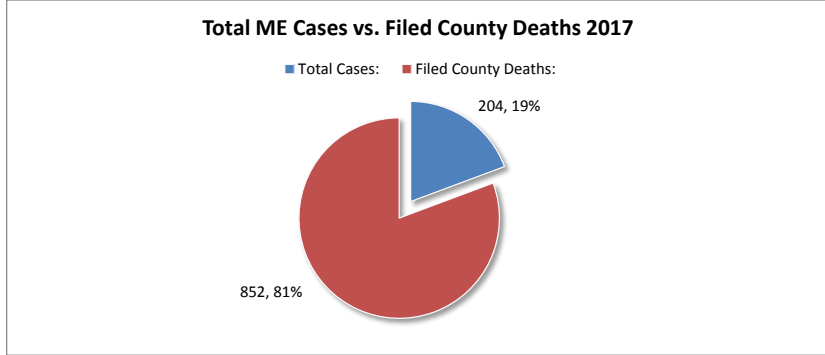
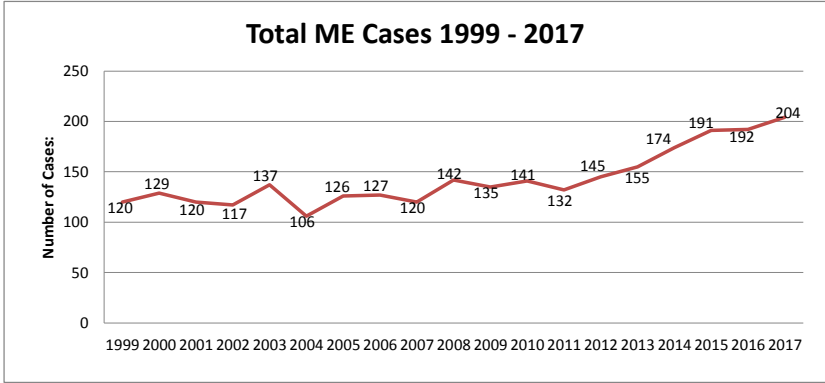
Bader J. Cassin, M.D.

Office of the Medical Examiner

Overview of Medical Examiner Cases 2017

**Total Cases: 204**      Male: 122      Female: 82

Autopsies: 83      Male: 56      Female: 27  
Toxicology: 83



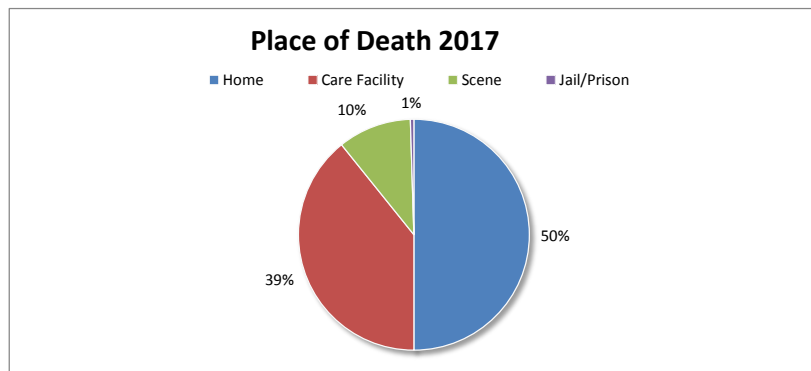
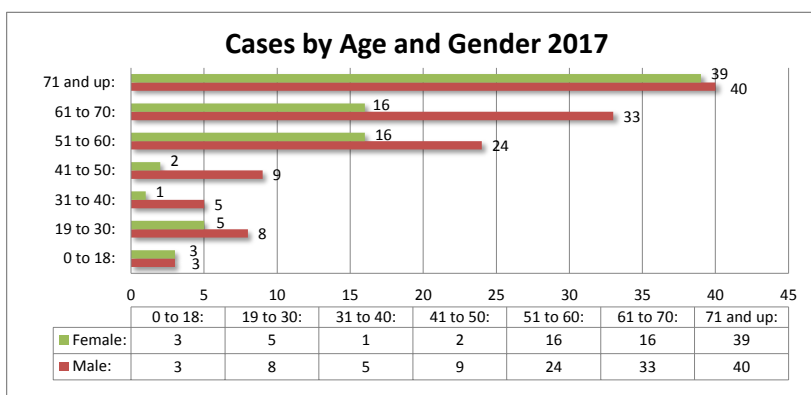
Lenawee County Medical Examiner  
 Overview of Cases 2017

**Cases by Age:**

0 to 18:	6
19 to 30:	13
31 to 40:	6
41 to 50:	11
51 to 60:	40
61 to 70:	49
71 and up:	79
<b>Total:</b>	<b>204</b>

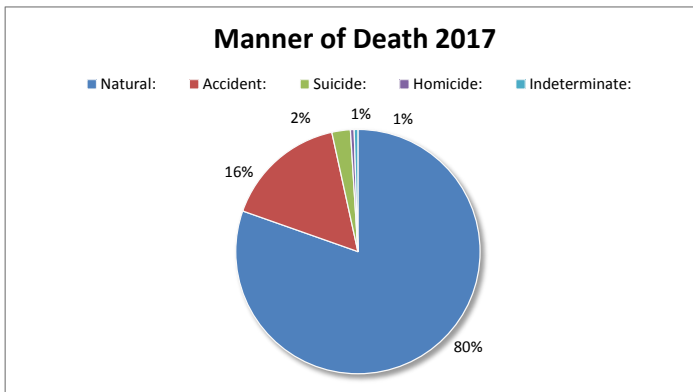
**Place of Death:**

Total M.E. Deaths at Home:	102
Total M.E. Deaths at Care Facility:	80
Total M.E. Deaths at Scene:	21
Total M.E. Deaths Jail/Prison:	1
<b>Total:</b>	<b>204</b>



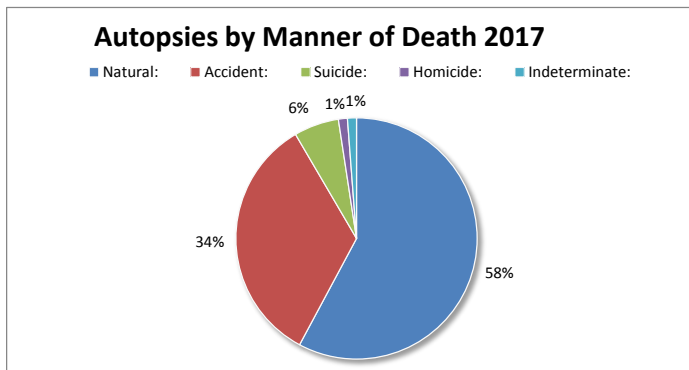
**Manners of Death:**

Natural:	164
Accident:	33
Suicide:	5
Homicide:	1
Indeterminate:	1
<b>Total:</b>	<b>204</b>



**Autopsies by Manners of Death:**

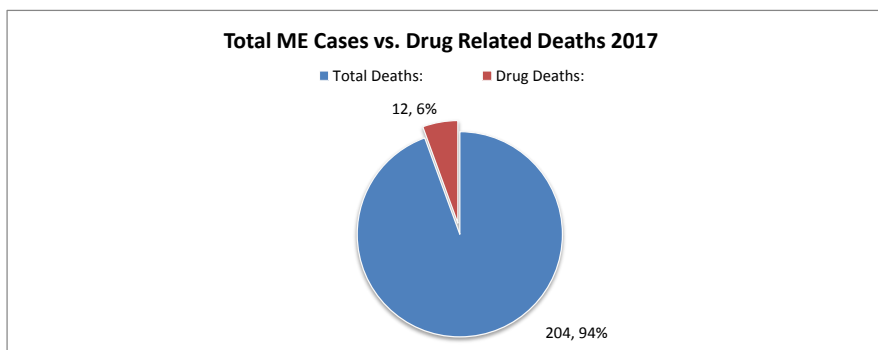
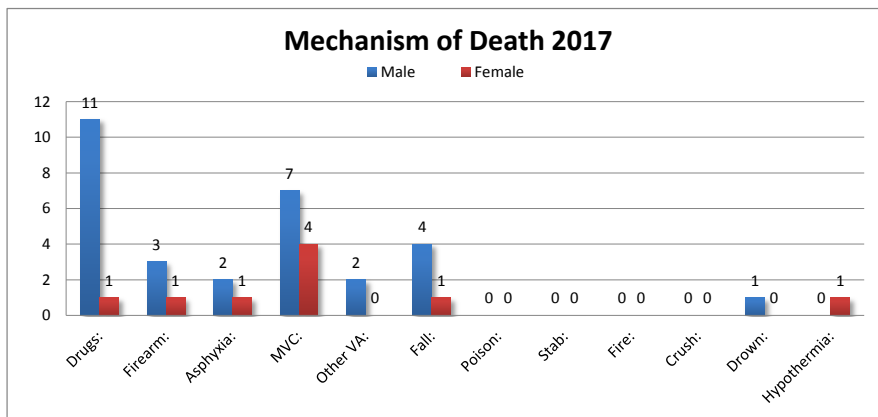
Natural:	48
Accident:	28
Suicide:	5
Homicide:	1
Indeterminate:	1
<b>Total:</b>	<b>83</b>



Lenawee County Medical Examiner  
 Overview of Cases 2017

**Mechanism of Death:      Male:      Female:**

Drugs:	12	11	1
Firearm:	4	3	1
Asphyxia:	3	2	1
MVC:	11	7	4
Other VC:	2	2	0
Fall:	5	4	1
Poison:	0	0	0
Stab:	0	0	0
Fire:	0	0	0
Crushing Injuries:	0	0	0
Drowning:	1	1	0
Hypothermia:	1	0	1
<b>Total:</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>9</b>



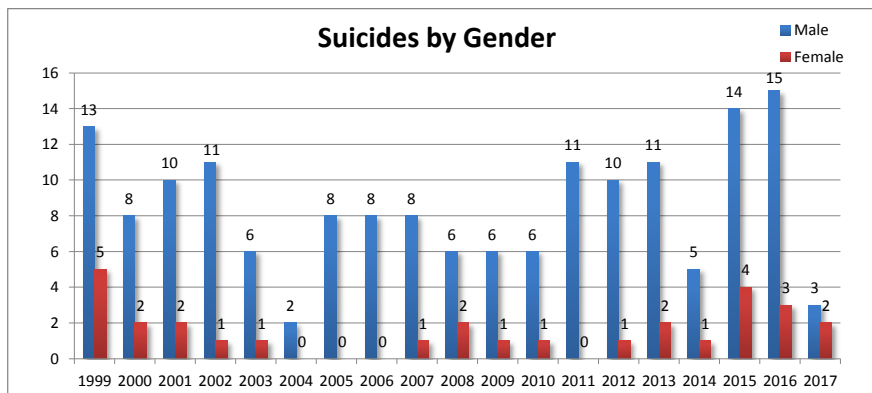
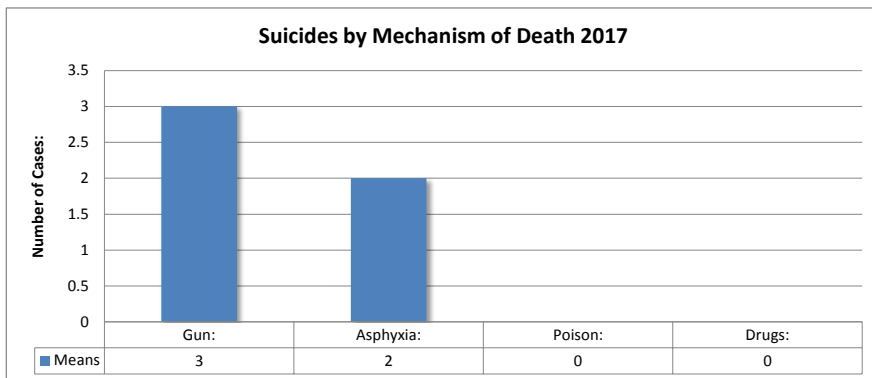
Lenawee County Medical Examiner  
 Overview of Cases 2017

**Suicides by Age and Gender:**

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

**Suicide by Mechanism of Death:**

Firearm:	3
Asphyxia:	2
Poisoning:	0
Drugs:	0
Other:	0
<b>Total:</b>	<b>5</b>





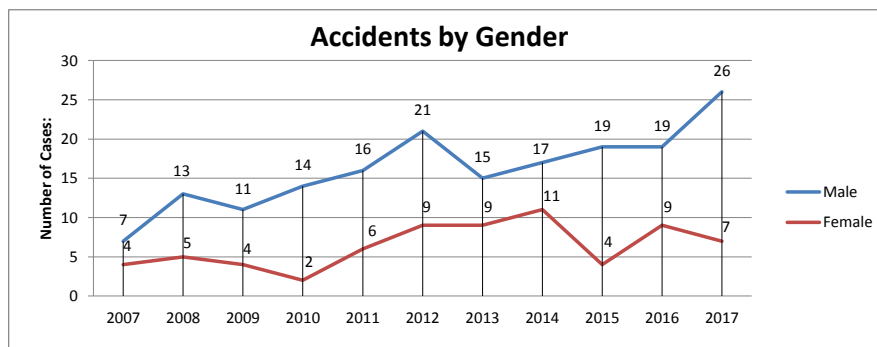
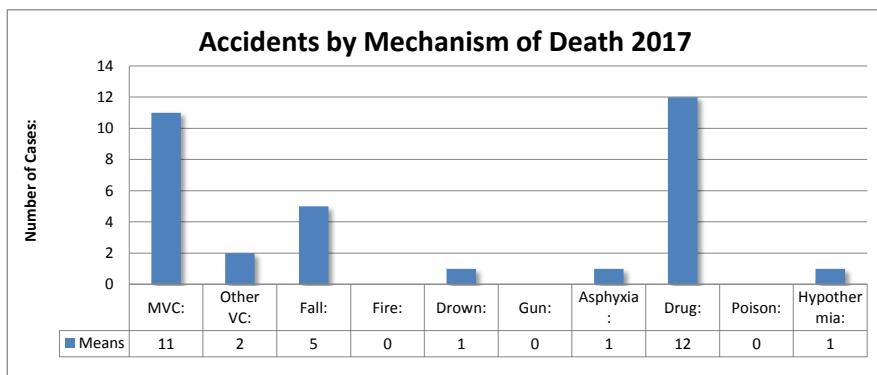
Lenawee County Medical Examiner  
 Overview of Cases 2017

**Accidents by Age and Gender:**

	Male:	Female:
0 to 20:	3	1
21 to 40:	8	3
41 to 60:	8	1
60 and up:	7	2
<b>Total:</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>7</b>

**Accident by Mechanism of Death:**

MVC:	11
Other Vehicle:	2
Fall:	5
Fire:	0
Drowning:	1
Firearm:	0
Asphyxia:	1
Drug:	12
Poisoning:	0
Hypothermia:	1
<b>Total:</b>	<b>33</b>



Lenawee County Medical Examiner  
 Overview of Cases 2017

**Indeterminate Deaths:**

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

**Indeterminate By Mechanism of Death:**

Drugs:	0
Infant Death:	1
Other:	0
<b>Total:</b>	<b>1</b>

