

Newberry County Coroner



2021 Annual Report

Newberry County Coroner's Office
550 Wilson Road
Newberry, 29108

Last Revised: April 19, 2022

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Message to Newberry County Council and Citizens of Newberry County

The Newberry County Coroner's Office investigates sudden, violent, unexpected, and suspicious deaths that occur in Newberry County. The Office of the Coroner certifies death after investigation and postmortem examination and issues the death certificate as required by law. Complete findings of the death investigation are distributed to families and law enforcement agencies as appropriate.

The main duty of this office is to determine the cause and manner of death, and certify deaths that are reported to the Coroner's Office. The cause of death is the disease process or injury that resulted in death. There are thousands of diseases and injuries that may result in death. The manner of death is a classification in which a determination is made regarding whether the death resulted from natural causes, homicide, suicide, or an accident. On occasion, the manner of death is classified as indeterminate.

Information collected during the investigation helps clarify the circumstances, such as the sequence of events prior to death. Evidence collected during an investigation and/or postmortem examination may help lead to the arrest or successful conviction of a suspect in a homicide case. Because deaths occur around the clock, Coroner staff members are available 24 hours a day, 365 days per year.

With the skill and experience of the coroner investigators and board-certified forensic pathologists, we believe the quality of death investigations in Newberry County are among the best in the State. The death scene investigation reports filed by the investigators are very thorough and supply comprehensive information to the coroners.

I, along with my appointed Deputy Coroner's, also extend our duties to the living by answering questions and addressing concerns regarding deaths within the county. Coroner investigators frequently make personal contact with family members of a deceased and assist them by providing appropriate answers regarding the circumstances of the death. Coroner investigators are supplied with a pamphlet for distribution to families. The information provides answers to common questions and facts about autopsies and provides resource information pertaining to grief counseling and various other services that may be available to them.

In 2019 our office contributed significant input toward the implementation of a web-based death investigation report system. After aiding Occupational Research and Assessment, Inc. of Big Rapids, Michigan, the Medicolegal Death Investigation Log or MDI Log was launched in July of 2019. MDI Log is a comprehensive investigative report/database system that enables the coroner to review death scene investigation information from a secure internet site any time of the day. MDI Log also allows the coroner's office to share important data with outside agencies such as NMS toxicology lab, Newberry Pathology Group, and South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SC-DHEC) regarding violent and drug related deaths. MDI Log enables Coroner Investigators to submit death scene investigation reports via the Internet in an efficient manner. MDI Log has evolved to become a valuable tool for our office, and it is now available to Coroner offices across the country.

We extend our sincere gratitude to the Newberry County Council for their support of the coroner program and the services we provide to the citizens of the Newberry County.

Coroner Laura G. Kneece, MPA, F-ABMDI

Newberry County Coroner Office Staff

Laura Kneece, MPA, F-ABMDI
Coroner

Rebecca Tarver
Deputy Coroner

Cindy Lindler
Deputy Coroner

Adam Neeley
Deputy Coroner

Volunteer Staff
Attorney/DC Ray Lord
Ret. DC Ann Neeley

Types of Deaths Reportable to the Medical Examiner

The South Carolina state statute section 17-5-530, Duty to notify coroner's or medical examiner's office of certain deaths and stillbirths; inquiry; findings; notification of next-of kin; consent for certain actions. The coroner has the authority under these acts to order an autopsy at any time it is deemed necessary to determine or confirm the cause and manner of death.

Deaths Reportable to the Coroner's Office:

If a person dies:

- (a) as a result of violence**
- (b) as a result of apparent suicide**
- (c) when in apparent good health**
- (d) when unattended by a physician**
- (e) in any suspicious or unusual manner**
- (f) as a result of stillbirth when unattended by a physician; or**
- (g) in a health care facility, as defined in Section 44-7-130(10) other than nursing homes, within twenty-four hours of entering a health care facility or within twenty-four hours after having undergone an invasive surgical procedure at the health care facility;**

The Coroner would generally order an autopsy for any of the reportable deaths listed above.

Newberry County Coroner Cases

Population	38,012
Cases Reported to Medical Examiner	431
A. Number of deaths certified after postmortem examination	55
1. Number of Medical Examiner Cases with Complete Autopsy	49
2. Number of Medical Examiner Cases with External Examination	3
3. Number of Medical Examiner Cases with Limited Examination	3
B. Number of deaths certified without postmortem examination	113
C. Number of deaths not certified by Medical Examiner's Office after investigation	318

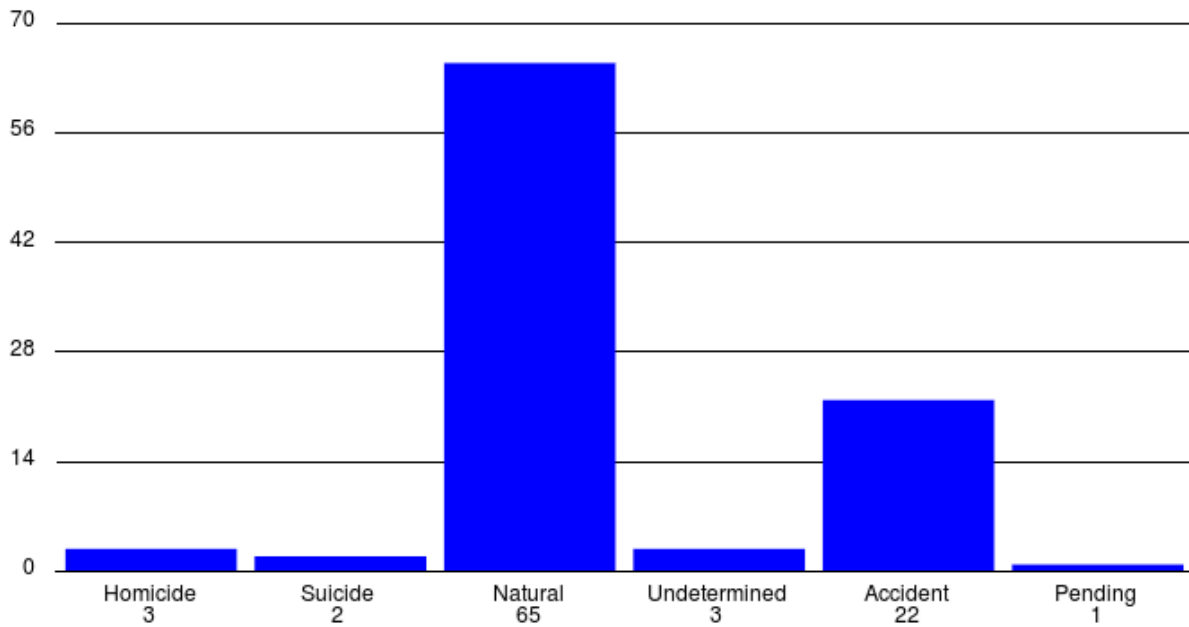
Definitions

Full Autopsy: A complete external and internal examination of a decedent

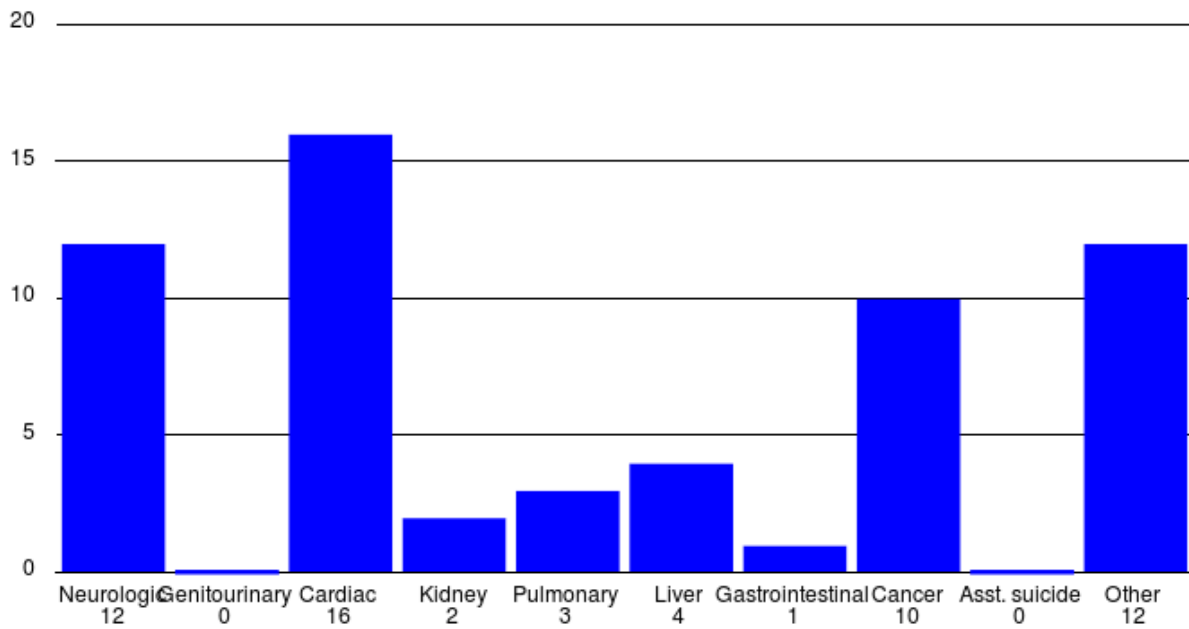
Limited Examination: An examination which is focused on a specific organ or region of the body, i.e., heart. The limited examination also includes an external examination.

External Examination: An examination of the exterior of a decedent.

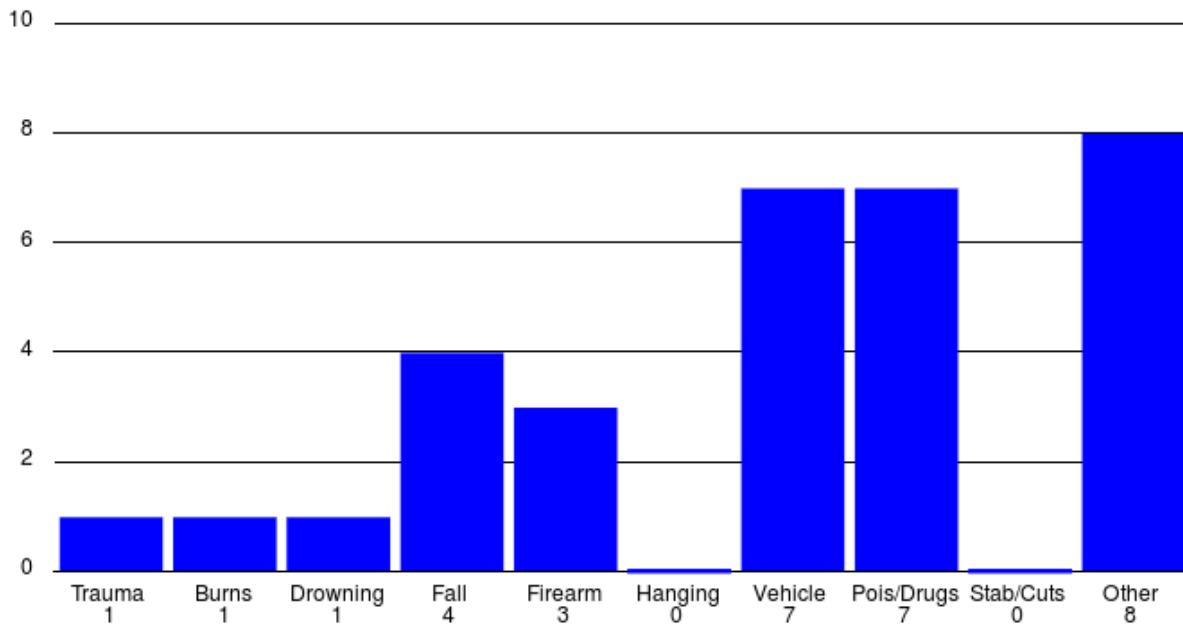
Manner of Death by Postmortem Examination



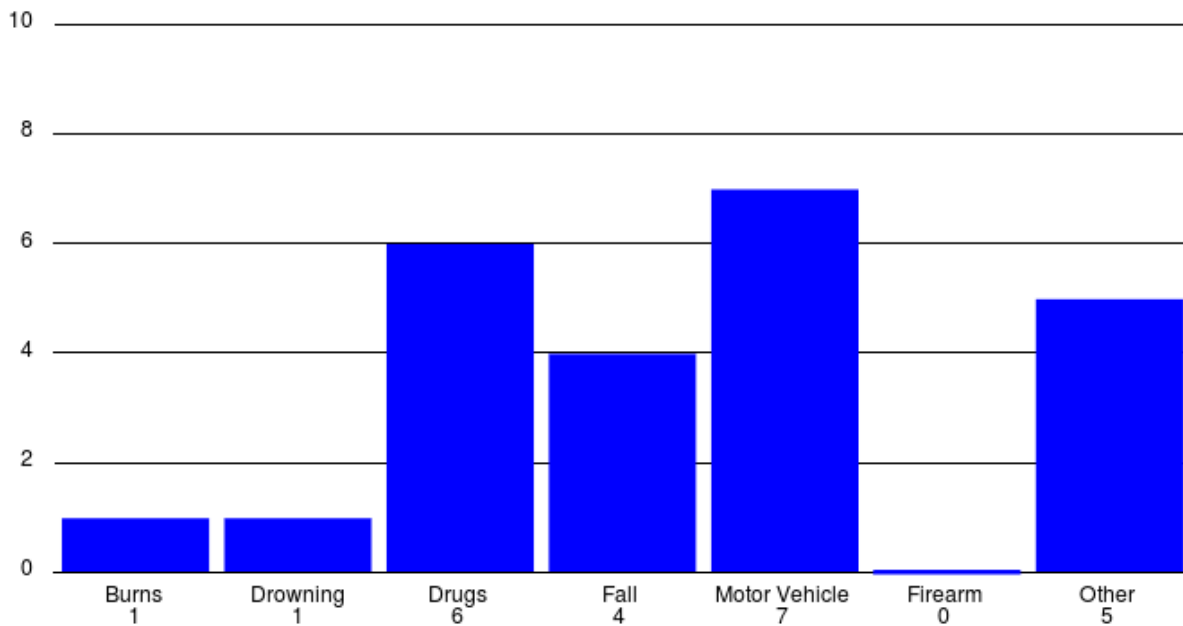
Deaths by Natural Causes



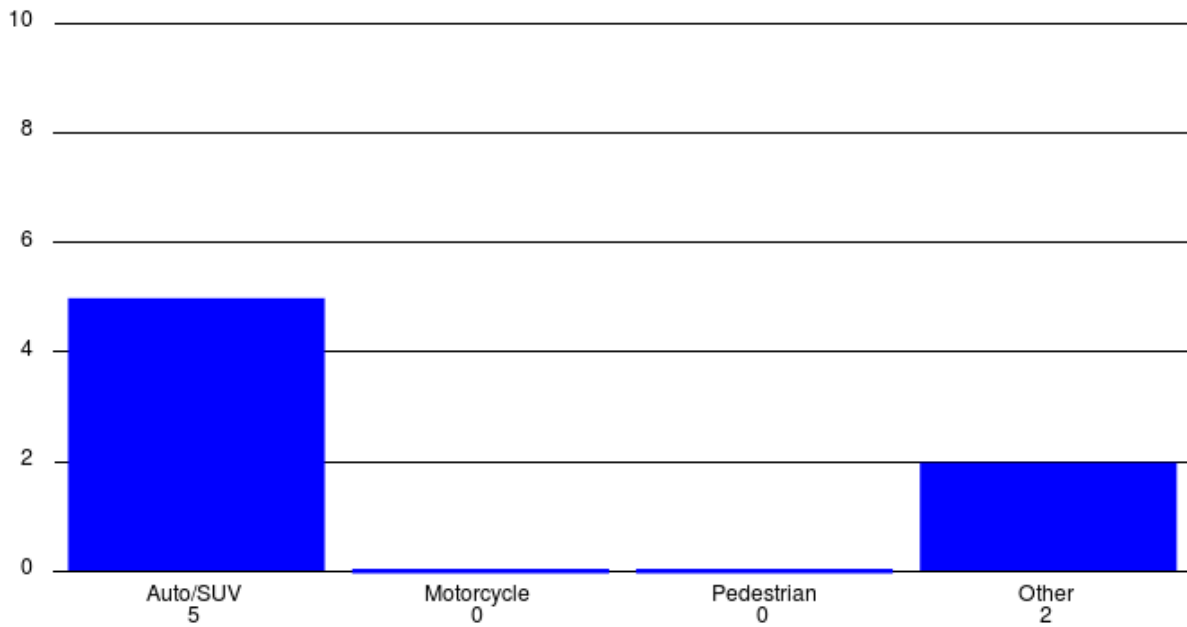
Deaths by Unnatural Causes



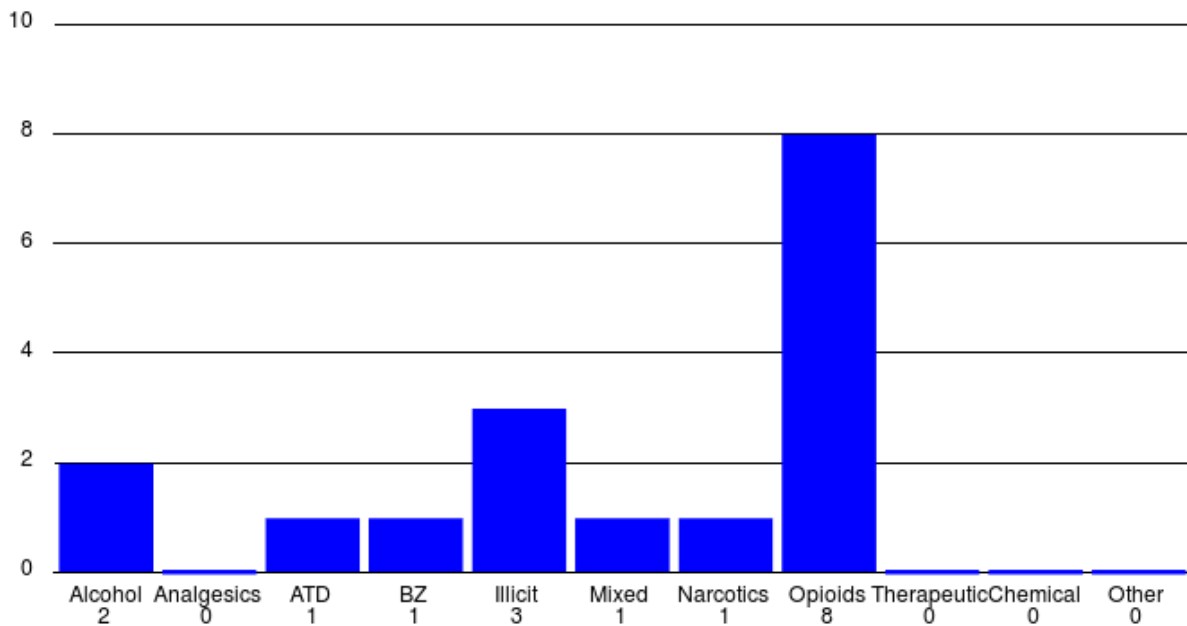
Accidental Deaths by Type



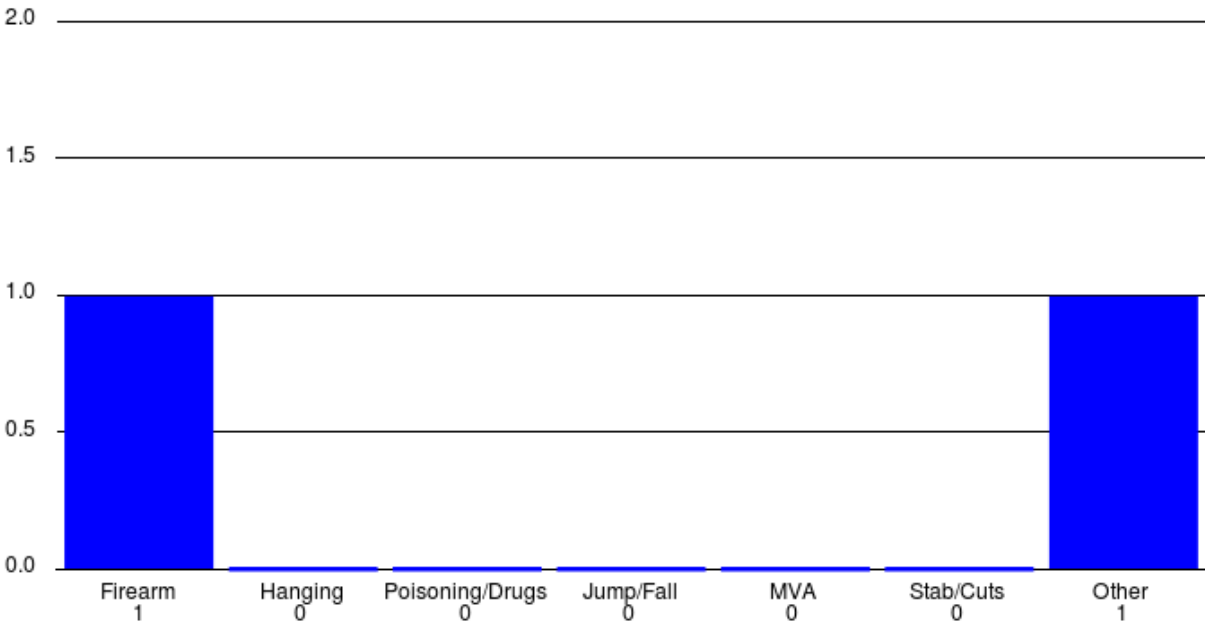
Accidental Deaths - Motor Vehicle Crashes



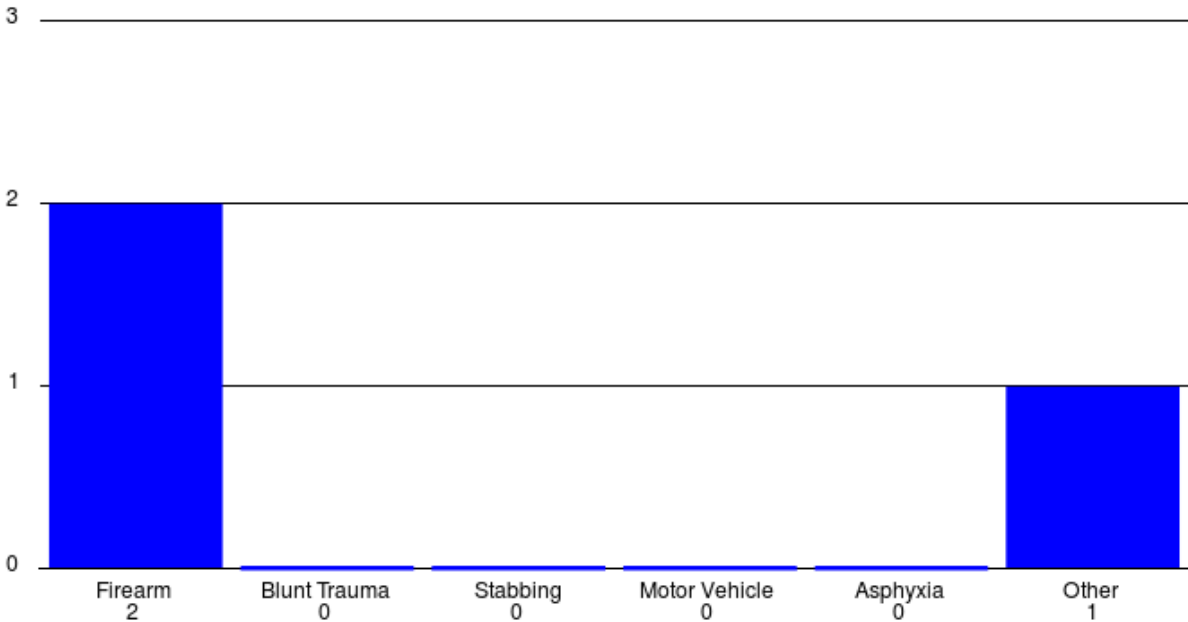
Drugs Contributing to Cause of Death



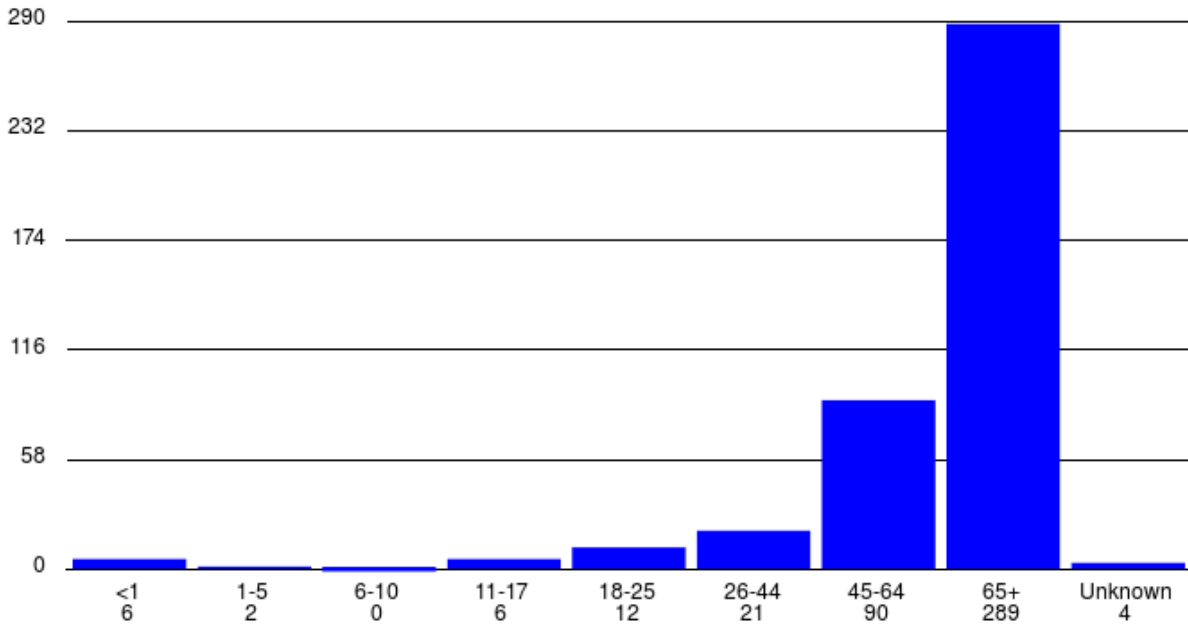
Suicide by Means



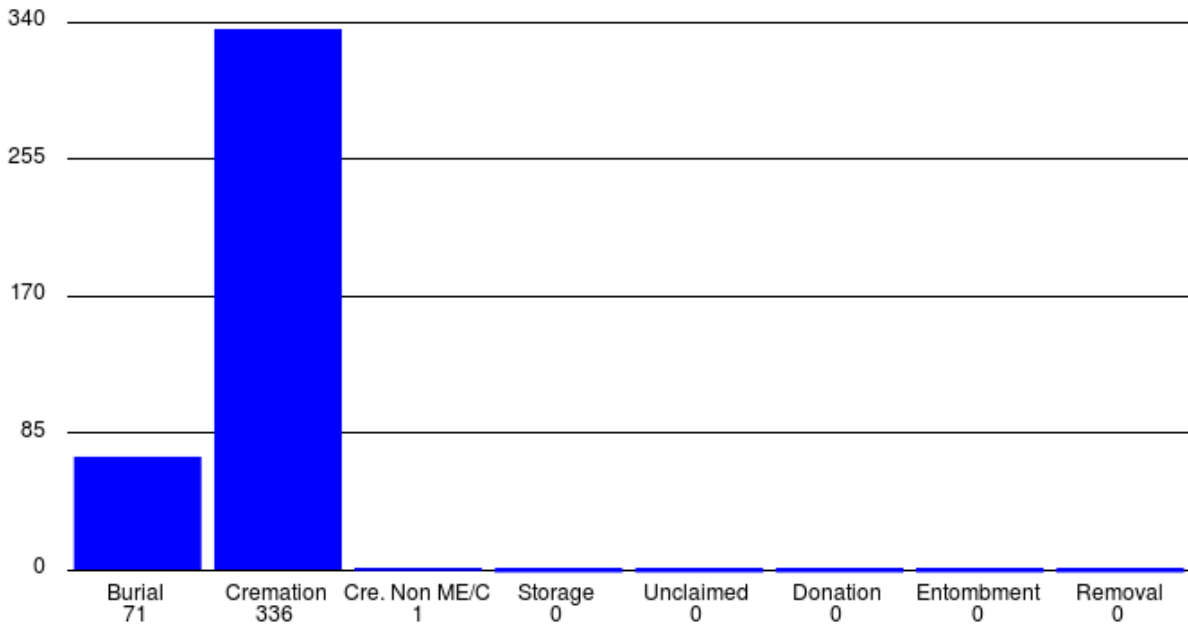
Homicide Deaths



Deaths by Age Group



Permit required for cremation



South Carolina state statute section 17-5-600, When the body of any dead person who died in the county is to be cremated, the person who has requested the cremation must secure a permit for the cremation from the

coroner or deputy coroner. A person who willfully failed to secure a permit for cremation is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, must be fined not less than twenty dollars and not more than five hundred dollars. A permit for cremation promptly must be acted upon by the coroner.