



## **2017 Greene County Coroner's Office Annual Report**

To the Citizens of Greene County:

The responsibility of determining the cause and manner of unexpected deaths in Greene County is one that the Coroner's Office staff takes very seriously. The results of these investigations provide valuable information, which is used by the criminal justice system, families of the deceased, public health personnel and other concerned parties.

The National Association of Medical Examiners (NAME) has accredited the Greene County Coroner's Office since 2000. This achievement is the result of years of work by our entire staff. We are one of only six Coroner's Offices in Ohio to be accredited. We are very proud of this accomplishment.

In 2017, there were 1193 deaths in Greene County. The Greene County Coroner's Office was contacted regarding 912 of these deaths. Autopsies were required for 170 of these cases, 24 were without a medical doctor and 3 deaths investigations occurred out of the county. The workload of Coroner cases has **increased 23.8%** since 2013. The Greene County Coroner's Office continues to provide services that adhere to the high professional standards demanded by NAME.

Most people believe the Coroner's Office is primarily concerned with the circumstances surrounding death. Our office is equally concerned with the preservation of life. The entire staff spends many hours with the Child Death Review Team to examine all types of data related to the death of children under the age of 18 in our county. We are an active member of the Greene County Suicide Prevention Coalition; participate in mock accidents at local high schools; and speak at high school health classes.

On behalf of the Greene County Coroner's Office, I would like to thank the local fire and emergency medical service squads and law enforcement as well as the local hospitals and nursing home personnel for their excellent support and cooperation, which enables us to provide this necessary service to the people of Greene County. I also wish to express my heartfelt thanks to the excellent staff of the Greene County Coroner's Office who keep our program running very efficiently. It is my pleasure to present the Greene County Coroner's Office 2017 Annual Report.

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin L. Sharrett, M.D.  
Coroner of Greene County



## **Office of the Greene County Coroner**

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### **Coroner's Office Personnel**

Kevin L. Sharrett, M.D.  
Greene County Coroner

William L. Harden  
Administrator/Investigator

Jean Harner, R.N.  
Administrative Assistant

John Turner  
Chief Investigator

Carl Day  
Investigator

### **Coroner & Staff**

The National Association of Medical Examiners accredits the Coroner's Office.

Dr. Sharrett and his staff are required to attend the semi-annual training sessions conducted by the Ohio State Coroner's Association.

## **Mission Statement**

The Mission of the Greene County Coroner Office is to investigate and determine the cause and manner of death due to an accident, homicide, suicide, or sudden/unexplained deaths when a person who was in apparent good health dies.

Procedures that are used to conclude the investigation may include autopsies, testing for toxicological substances in the body, histological examinations from tissues samples for the presence of disease, trauma, or irregularities of the body or scene that may have contributed to the death.

Ohio Law requires that the cost of the autopsy shall be paid by the county in which an injury that caused the death occurred, even though they died in another county. In 2017, there were three of those types of deaths.

The Greene County Coroner's Office utilizes the Montgomery County Coroner's Office to perform forensic autopsies, which includes a fully accredited crime laboratory. Forensic anthropologists and odontologists serve as consultants as needed. The Montgomery County Coroner's Office is also accredited by NAME.

## **Reportable Deaths to the Coroner**

Chapter 313 of the Ohio Revised Code defines the qualifications, duties and records of the Coroner. It also defines the deaths that require notification to the Coroner. Not all deaths referred to the Coroner for investigation result in an autopsy.

### **Types of Deaths Reportable to the Coroner**

1. Sudden and unexpected deaths, medical procedure deaths, occupational deaths, no medical history.
2. Violent deaths such as homicide, suicide, gunshot, stabbing etc.
3. Accidental deaths such as motor vehicle crash, burns, drowning, falls, drug overdose/abuse; other recent or past trauma.
4. Any suspicious circumstances surrounding a death.
5. Death of a person in the custody or control of a law enforcement agency.

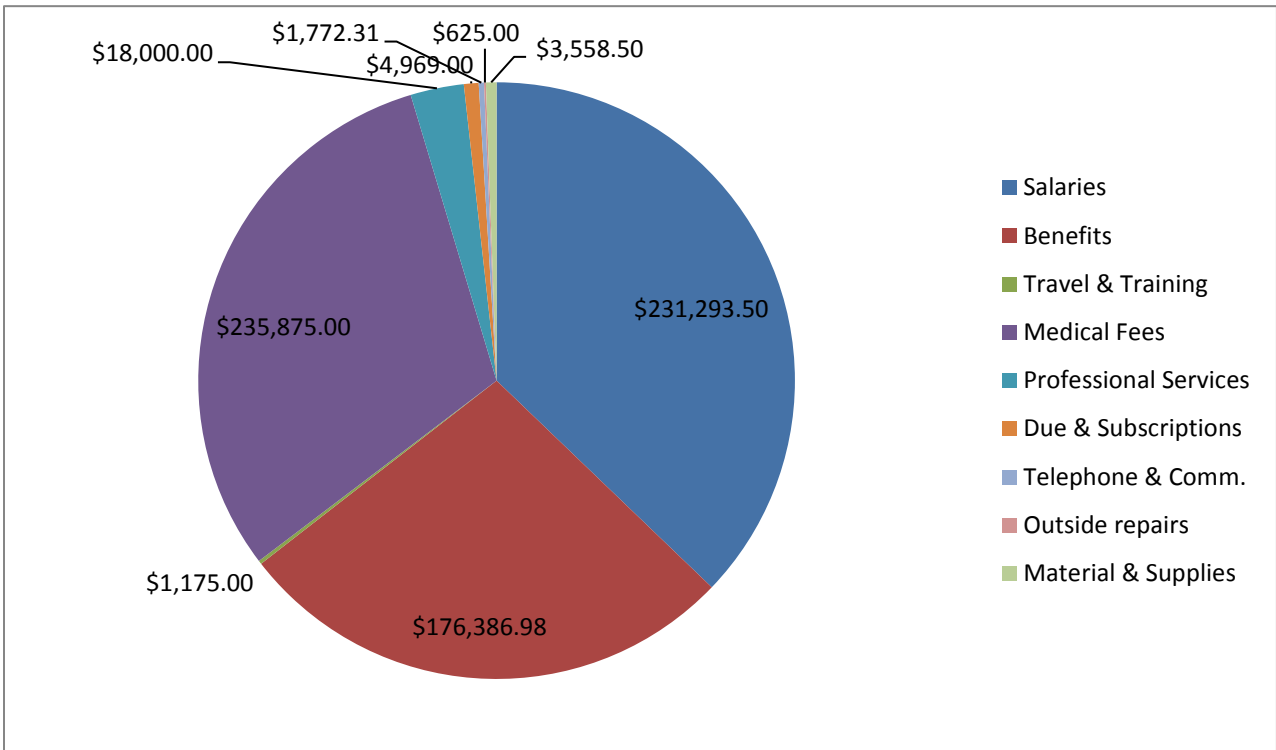
### **Types of Coroners Cases for Which Autopsy is usually ordered?**

1. Sudden and unexpected death when the coroner believes there is insufficient medical history.
2. Violent deaths of all types such as homicide, suicide, gunshot, etc.
3. Accidental deaths of all types. If the victim has been hospitalized for a length of time, it is the Coroner's decision to order an autopsy.
4. Suspicious circumstance surrounding death, including unidentified bodies.
5. Death of a person in the custody or control of a law enforcement agency.
6. Sudden infant deaths and deaths of children 18 and under without significant medical history.
7. An autopsy may be ordered at the discretion of the Coroner if the cause of death cannot be determined by the attending physician.

**Table 1: 2017 Budget – Greene County Coroner’s Office**

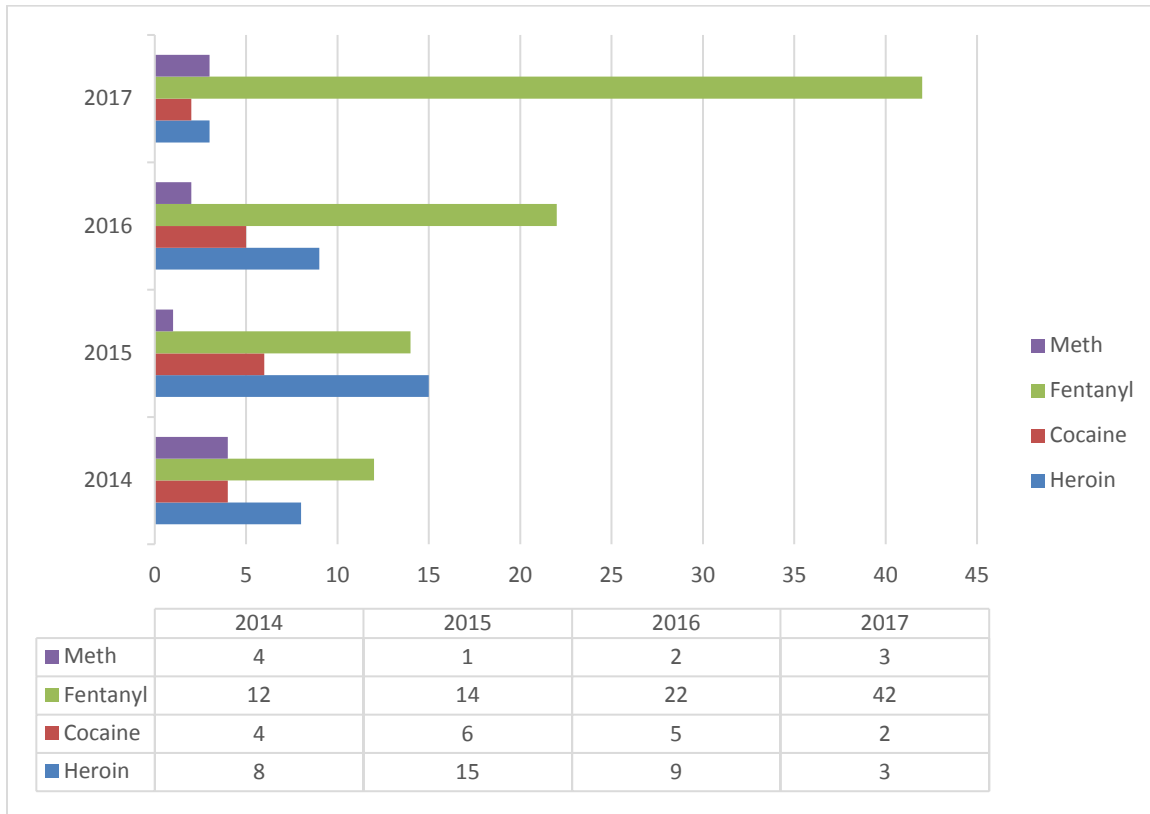
The Greene County Coroner’s 2017 appropriated budget was \$ 628,516.78 a supplemental budget amount of \$ 45,138.51 was added to the budget, which increased the overall appropriation amount total to \$ 673,655.29. This increase was awarded late in the year due to the number of autopsies/cases files.

Salaries	231,293.50
Benefits	176,386.98
Travel & Training	1,175.00
Medical Fees	235,875.00
Professional Services	18,000.00
Due & Subscriptions	4,969.00
Telephone & Comm.	1,772.31
Outside repairs	625
Material & Supplies	3,558.50
Total	<u>673,655.29</u>

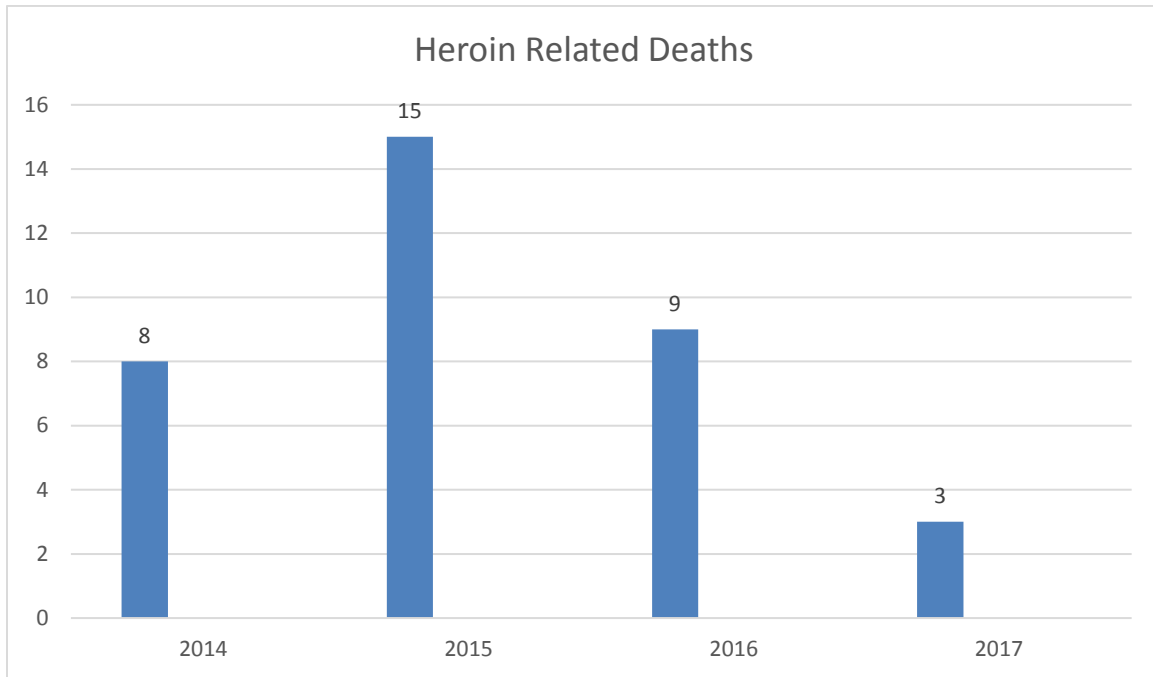


## Table 2: Drug Overdoses

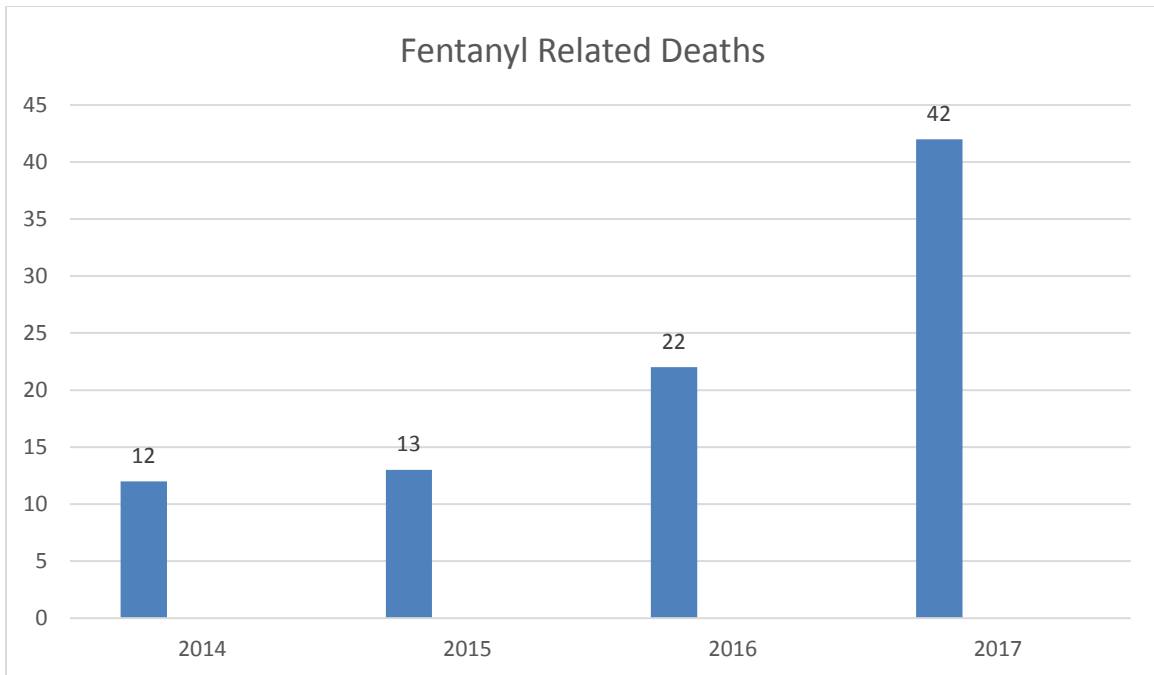
There were 53 deaths due to drug overdose in 2017. The Coroner ruled all 53 deaths as accidents. Total drug deaths are currently the highest in the past decade. Many have died under the influence of a combination of drugs, and it is often hard to categorize them. In order to demonstrate the increasing deaths from heroin, cocaine, fentanyl, carfentanil below is a chart.



**Table 3:**

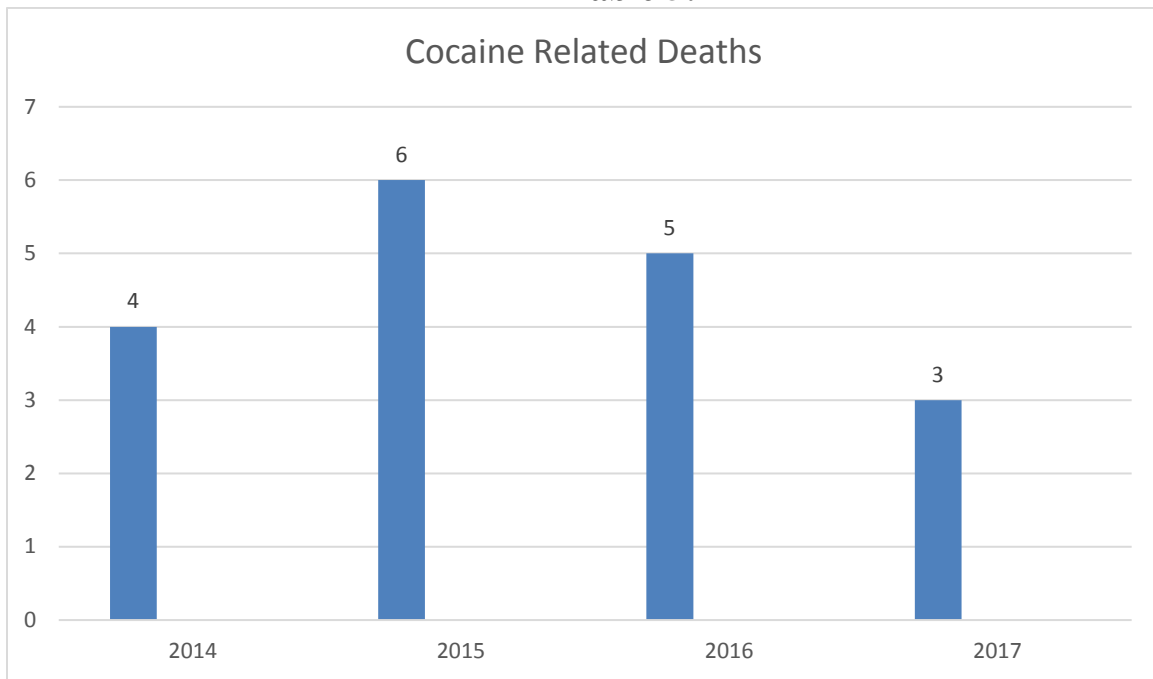


**Table 4:**

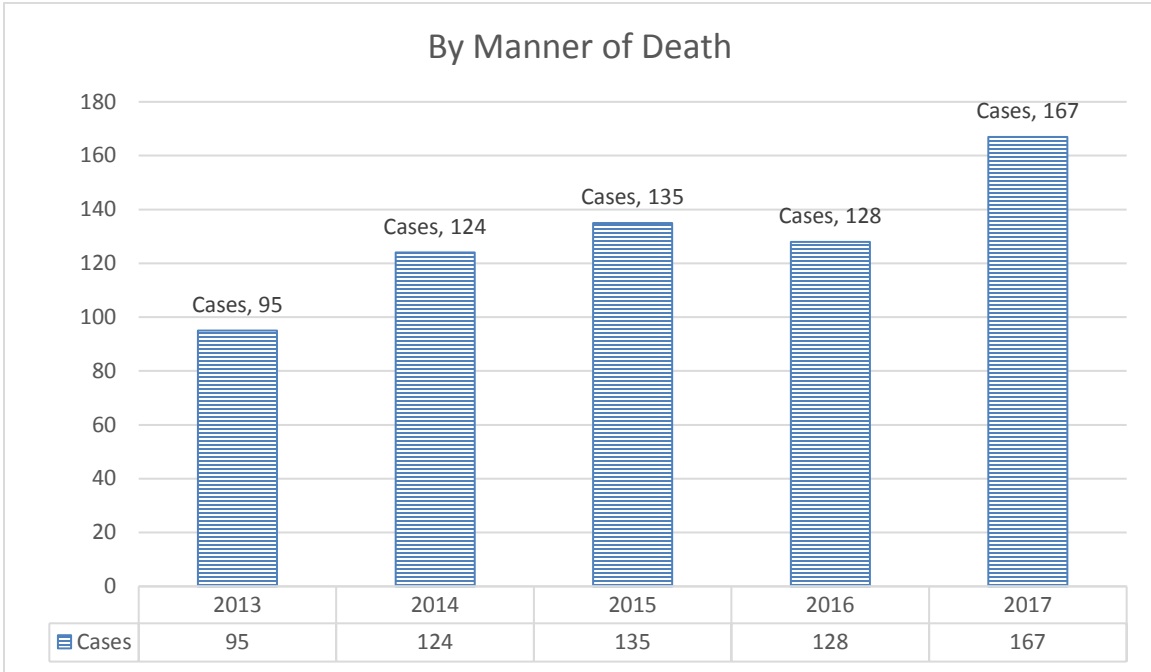




**Table 5:**



**Table 6:**



In 2017, there were 1193 deaths in Greene County. The Coroner Office was contacted regarding 912 of these deaths (76.5%). Only 167 cases were accepted for full investigation, while 745 were declined because they did not fall within the requirements for a full investigation by the Coroner's office. The declined cases did however receive a preliminary examination.

Tables 7 and 8 compare the total cases and with autopsy percentages from 2013-2017

**Table 7: Total County Deaths and Coroner Notifications, 2013-2017**

<b>Years</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>
<b>Total Deaths</b>	<b>909</b>	<b>986</b>	<b>1069</b>	<b>935</b>	<b>1193</b>
<b>Coroner Notified</b>	<b>635</b>	<b>733</b>	<b>764</b>	<b>745</b>	<b>912</b>
<b>Percentage</b>	<b>69.9%</b>	<b>74.3%</b>	<b>71.5%</b>	<b>79.7%</b>	<b>76.5</b>

**Table 8: Coroner Cases with Autopsy, 2013-2017**

<b>Year</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>
<b>Number of cases reported</b>	<b>635</b>	<b>733</b>	<b>764</b>	<b>745</b>	<b>912</b>
<b>Number of Autopsies</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>143</b>
<b>Percentage of Autopsies</b>	<b>13.5</b>	<b>14.7%</b>	<b>14.0%</b>	<b>15.4%</b>	<b>15.7%</b>
<b>Additional Autopsies</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>

There are five **Manners of Death**: Natural, Accident, Homicide, Suicide and Undetermined. Tables 9 and 10 compare the total cases and percentages of each manner from 2013-2017. Included is a breakdown of the Accident Manner to show deaths from motor Vehicle Accidents.

**Table 9: Coroner Cases by Manner of Death 2013-2017**

<b>Year</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>
<b>Natural</b>	37	51	44	47	56
<b>Accident</b>	25	42	42	36	52
<b>*Traffic</b>	3	5	11	6	16
<b>*Drowning/etc.</b>		4	9	9	13
<b>Suicide</b>	22	17	27	21	25
<b>Homicide</b>	4	2	2	4	3
<b>Undetermined</b>	4	3	3	5	5
<b>Total</b>	95	124	135	128	170

**Table 10: Percentage of Coroner Cases by Manner of Death, 2013-2017**

<b>Year</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>
<b>Natural</b>	38.9%	41.1%	32.6%	36.7%	33.0%
<b>Accident</b>	26.3%	37.1%	37.8%	35.9%	30.5%
<b>*Traffic</b>	3.2%	4.0%	8.1%	4.6%	9.4%
<b>Suicide</b>	23.2%	13.7%	20%	16.4%	14.7%
<b>Homicide</b>	4.2%	1.6%	1.5%	3.1%	1.7%
<b>Undetermined</b>	4.2%	2.4%	0%	3.9%	2.9%

**\*Percentage totals may vary due to rounding.**

**Table 11: Cause of Death for Greene County Cases 2017**

Cause of Death	Accident	Homicide	Suicide	Natural	Undetermined	Total
Asphyxia						
Blunt Force Trauma						
MV Crash	16					16
Fall	1					1
Plane Crash						
Carbon Monoxide Poisoning	2					2
Blood Disorders				1		1
Pneumonia				1		1
Ethanol Abuse	2			2		4
Renal Failure				1		1
Congenital / Lungs				2		2
Hernia				1		1
Ulcer				1		1
Seizure				2		2
Cardiovascular Disease	2			39		41
Choking						
Dementia	1					1
Diabetes Mellitus				1		1
Drug Abuse			2			2
Oxycodone	1					1
Morphine	2					2
Acryl fentanyl	3					3
Cocaine	1					1
Methadone	1					1
Methamphetamine	3					3
Carfentanil	15					15
Heroin	2					2
Fentanyl	25					25
Gunshot Wound		3	15			18
Hanging			8			8
Malignancy						
Products of Combustion						
Pulmonary Embolus	1					1
Respiratory Disease				3		3
Seizure Disorder						
Sepsis				2		2
Stab Wounds						

Hematoma	1					1
Rip fracture	2					2
Drowning	1					1
Strangulation						
Undetermined					5	5
Unsafe Sleep (Infant)						
Other						
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>170</b>

In 2017 there were 170 Coroner Cases of these case's 143 were autopsies, 24 were sign outs and three were joint investigations with Montgomery County Coroner Office. The leading cause of death was Cardiovascular Disease. Fentanyl was the second leading deaths.

Tables 12 and 13 break down demographic by gender, age, and race for each manner of death in 2017

**Table 12: Manner of Death by Age and Gender 2017**

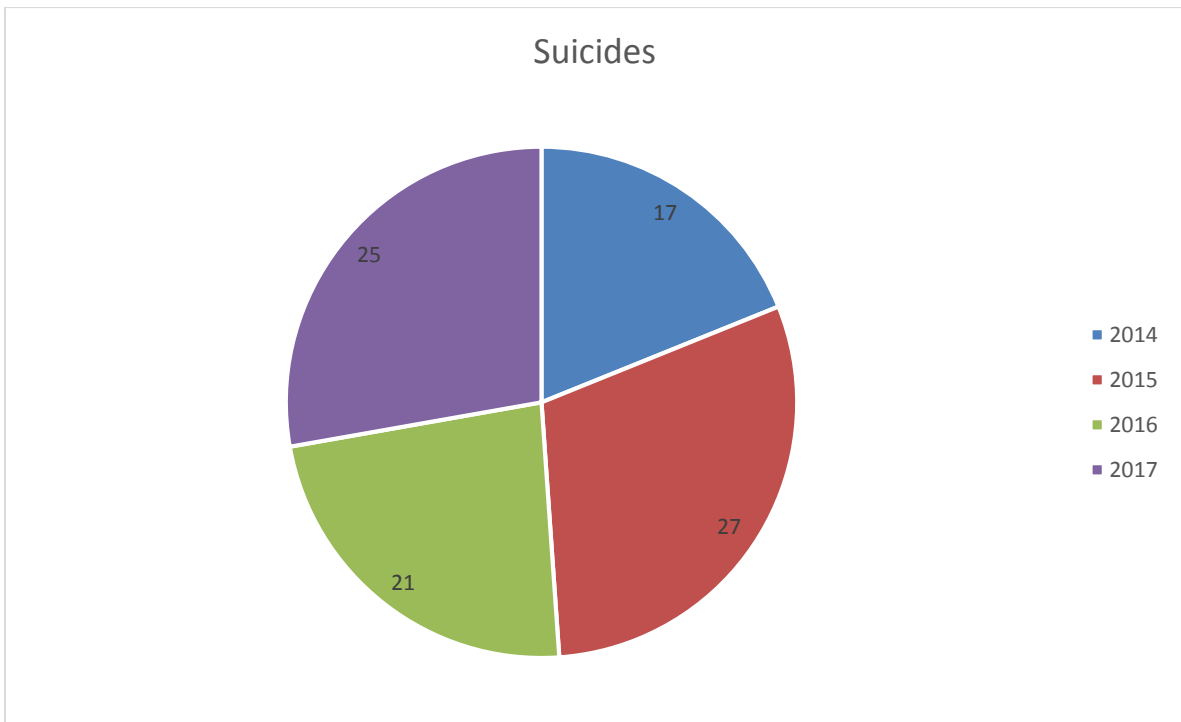
	<b>&lt;18 Years</b>	<b>18-40 Yrs.</b>	<b>41-64 Yrs.</b>	<b>65+ Yrs.</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>
Natural	1	3	32	20	17	20
Accident	3	36	32	10	50	31
Suicide	1	11	9	4	22	3
Homicide	0	1	1	1	1	2
Undetermined	2	2	1	0	3	2

**Table 13: Manner of Death by Race /Ethnicity – 2017**

	<b>White</b>	<b>Black</b>	<b>Hispanic</b>	<b>Other</b>
Natural	53	3		
Accident	75	5		1
Suicide	23	1		1
Homicide	2	1		
Undetermined	4			1

### Table 14: Suicides

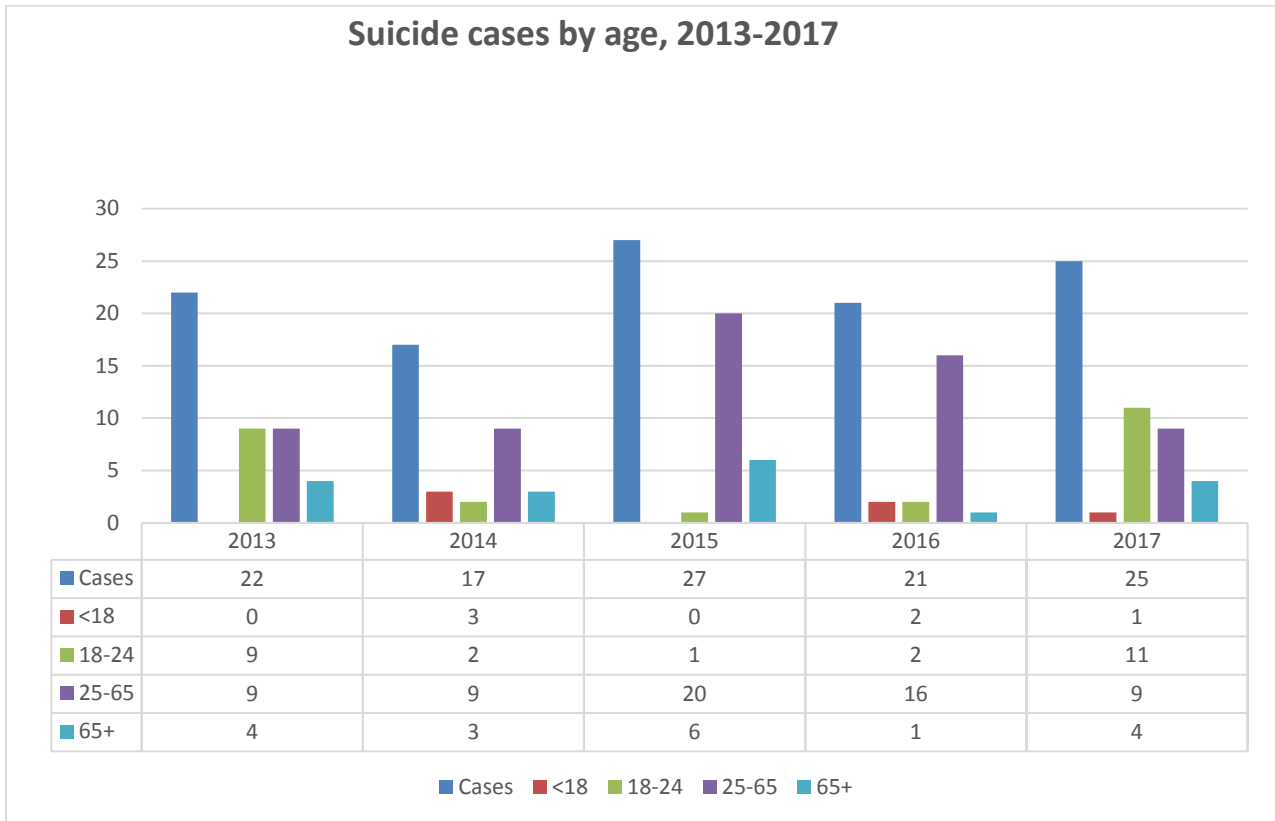
In 2017, there were 25 suicides deaths. Fifteen with a handgun, seven hanging, two drugs abuse and one suffocation. Three factors that are common in suicide deaths: (1) prior attempts or threats, (2) history of alcohol or drug abuse, (3) history of depressions or other mental health illness.





There have been 112 suicides in Greene County for the years 2013-2017. Tables 15 thru 18 break down these suicides by age, race, gender, and method.

**Table 15:**



**Table 16: Suicide Cases by Race, 2013-2017**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Cases</b>	<b>White (%)</b>	<b>Black (%)</b>	<b>Hispanic</b>	<b>Other</b>
2013	22	22 (100)	0	0	0
2014	17	15 (88.2)	1 (5.9)	0	0
2015	27	24 (88.9)	2 (7.4)	1 (3.7)	0
2016	21	20 (95.2)	1 (4.7)	0	0
2017	25	23	1		1

**Table 17: Suicide Cases by Gender, 2013-2017**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Cases</b>	<b>Male (%)</b>	<b>Female (%)</b>
2013	22	16 (72.7)	6 (27.3)
2014	17	14 (82.3)	3 (17.6)
2015	27	22 (81.5)	5 (18.5)
2016	21	17(80.9)	4(19)
2017	25	22	3

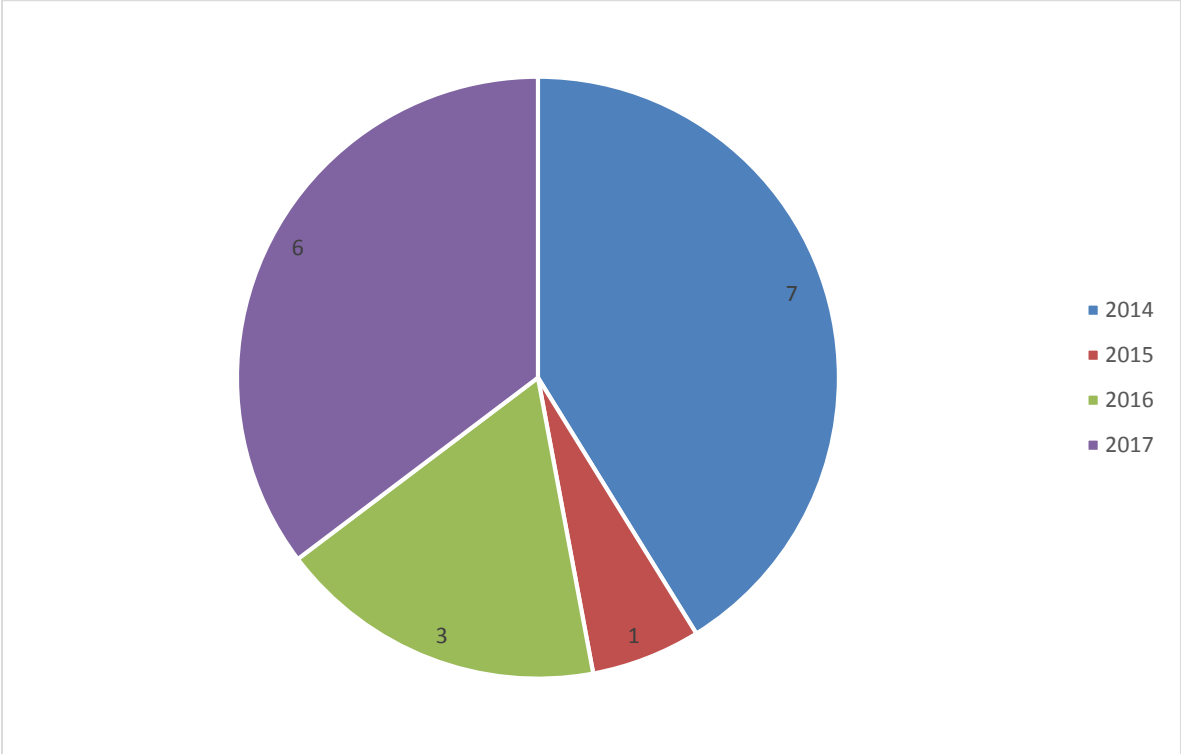
\*Percentage totals may vary due to rounding.

**Table 18: Suicide Cases by Method Used, 2013-2017**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Cases</b>	<b>Gun</b>	<b>Hanging</b>	<b>Drug OD</b>	<b>CO</b>	<b>Cutting</b>	<b>Other</b>
2013	22	12	4	5	1	0	0
2014	17	11	6	0	0	0	0
2015	27	12	9	4	1	0	1
2016	21	11	5	3	0	1	1
2017	25	15	8	2	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>

**Table 19: Child Fatalities**

In 2017, six child fatalities (<18 years old) fell under the jurisdiction of the Greene County Coroner’s Office. These numbers are typically low since children, who are unresponsive, are transported to Dayton Children’s Hospital, where they are pronounced dead. Dayton Children’s Hospital fall under Montgomery County jurisdiction.



## OHIO CHILD FATALITY

The Greene County Coroner's Office annually conducts a Child Fatality Review Board meeting for Greene County. Ohio Revised Code 307.624 mandates this confidential meeting. The committee reviewed 16 cases of child deaths under 18 years old.

## COMMUNITY EDUCATION

The Coroner's Office goal is to raise awareness through education, community training, and prevention activities. We collaborate with various organizations within the community, as well as provide training to these organizations on the duties and responsibilities of the coroner's office.

The Greene Co. Coroner's office is an active member of the Greene County Suicide Prevention Coalition under the under the auspices of the Mental Health and Recovery Board of Clark, Greene, and Madison counties. The Coroner's Office provides assistance and works closely with Tissue Bank of Montgomery County, Victim Service advocates of the Greene County, Beavercreek, Xenia and Fairborn Municipal Prosecutor's offices. The Coroner's Office also works closely with organ donor organizations such as the Community Blood and Tissue of Dayton and Life Connections of Miami Valley.

### **The following is a list of trainings/presentations/reviews conducted to various organization in 2017:**

January 12 <sup>th</sup>	Opiate Overdose Death Training
January 25 <sup>th</sup>	Tissue Bank Referrals Meeting
February 2-3 <sup>rd</sup>	ISO/IEC 17020 Accreditation Training
February 9 <sup>th</sup>	Child Fatality Review Annual Board meeting
February 16 <sup>th</sup>	EMS Symposium / for Kettering Heath Network
April 7 <sup>th</sup>	Assisted with Xenia High School Mock Crash Reenactment
April 21 <sup>st</sup>	Assisted with Greenview High School Mock Crash Reenactment
April 25 <sup>th</sup>	Training at Fairborn Fire Dept.
May 11 <sup>th</sup> -13 <sup>th</sup>	Coroner Sharrett and Investigators Harden & Day attended a 3-day statewide annual coroner's conference/training.
May 15-16 <sup>th</sup>	Greene County Coroner Office Accreditation
May 21 <sup>st</sup>	Training conducted for nurses at Miami Valley Hospital on Coroner's duties.
August 9 <sup>th</sup>	Meeting with Union County for them to be accredited
July 21 <sup>st</sup>	Update training conducted for Hospice of Dayton
Sept. 21 <sup>st</sup> and 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Office employees' received required update training on "Ohio Sunshine" Public Record Laws

Sept. 28<sup>th</sup>  
Oct. 19<sup>th</sup>

Assisted with Bellbrook High School Mock Crash Reenactment  
Coroner Sharrett and Investigators Harden & Turner attended SW  
Coroner's conference in Dayton, OH

Oct. 27<sup>th</sup>

Officials Symposium / Opiate Epidemic Training for Greene Co.