

# COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY

## JUSTICE & PUBLIC SAFETY CABINET



## 2014 Overdose Fatality Report

KENTUCKY OFFICE OF DRUG CONTROL POLICY

J. Michael Brown, Secretary  
Justice & Public Safety Cabinet

Van Ingram, Executive Director  
Office of Drug Control Policy

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## Introduction

Substance abuse, particularly the diversion and abuse of prescription drugs as well as heroin is one of the most critical public health and safety issues facing Kentucky. Over the past decade, the number of Kentuckians who die from drug overdoses has steadily climbed to more than 1,000 each year, exacting a devastating toll on families, communities, social services and economic stability and growth.

In an effort to reverse the trend, the Commonwealth has implemented a number of program and policy initiatives, including but not limited to the statewide use of prescription drug monitoring programs, expanded availability of substance abuse treatment opportunities, and the enactment of laws (House Bill 1 from the 2012 Special Session and House Bill 217 from the 2013 Regular Session) specifically addressing the availability of prescription medications.

HB 1 mandates that the Office of Drug Control Policy, in cooperation with the Kentucky Medical Examiner's Office, prepare and publish an annual public report to the Secretary of the Justice and Public Safety Cabinet to include:

- (1) The number of drug-related deaths;
- (2) The decedent's age, race, and gender but not his or her name or address;
- (3) The counties in which those deaths occurred;
- (4) The scientific, trade, or generic names of the drugs involved; and
- (5) The method by which the drugs were obtained, when available.

This report was compiled utilizing data from the Kentucky Medical Examiner's Office, the Kentucky Injury Prevention & Research Center, (KIPRC) and the Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics. (OVS)

Highlights of the 2014 findings include:

- **Kentucky overdose fatalities increased in 2014. Overdose deaths of Kentucky residents regardless of where the death occurred and non-residents that died in Kentucky numbered 1087 as tabulated by June 2015, compared to 1010 overdose deaths counted in the 2013 report.<sup>1</sup>**

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<sup>1</sup> Number of 2014 known overdose deaths as of June, 2015. A small number of overdose deaths may still be reported for the previous year after this date. For comparison purposes, the 2012 Overdose Fatality Report indicated 1004 deaths; by the end of 2013, the final number of overdose deaths for 2012 was 1070.

- Autopsied overdose deaths attributed to the use of heroin stayed relatively constant from 2013 to 2014.
- Jefferson County had the most overdose deaths of any county, with 204.
- The largest increase in overdose fatalities occurred in Fayette County up 26 with 112 deaths in 2014 compared to 86 in 2013. Jefferson 204 up 12 from 2013, Campbell, Madison and Boone were up 11 in 2014.
- The largest decrease occurred in Bell County, with 15 fewer fatalities in 2014 than 2013 (26 versus 11, respectively). Other counties with significant declines in 2014 include Daviess County (14 fewer), Hopkins County (12 fewer), and Harlan County (6 fewer)
- Overdose deaths in some Kentucky counties, when compared by 100,000 population, 2014 data, showed high rates. The top 7 counties by overdose deaths per 100,000 people for 2014 are:

|                  |      |     |         |
|------------------|------|-----|---------|
| Floyd County     | 55.1 | per | 100,000 |
| Pike County      | 50.8 | per | 100,000 |
| Campbell County  | 47.9 | per | 100,000 |
| Kenton County    | 43.3 | per | 100,000 |
| Boone County     | 38.0 | per | 100,000 |
| Fayette County   | 36.6 | per | 100,000 |
| McCracken County | 30.6 | per | 100,000 |

*\*Rates based on fewer than 20 events are considered statistically unreliable and were not calculated.*

A review of cases autopsied by the Kentucky Medical Examiner's Office indicates that in 2014:

- Morphine was the most detected controlled substance in overdose deaths, present in 40.88% of all autopsied cases.
- Cannabinoids was next at 35.72%, followed by 6 monoacetylmorphine (heroin) at 28.81%, Ethanol 28.18% Alprazolam 26.79% hydrocodone at 21.01%, and oxycodone at 19.12%
- The youngest overdose fatality was <1 years old, and the oldest was 80 years old.
- The top five counties for heroin detected in overdose deaths using data from the Kentucky Medical Examiner and coroner reports are:

|                     |     |
|---------------------|-----|
| 1) Jefferson County | 105 |
| 2) Fayette County   | 35  |
| 3) Kenton County    | 26  |
| 4) Campbell County  | 15  |
| 5) Boone County     | 14  |

## Overdose Deaths by County

The following chart lists the number of drug overdose deaths by county for 2012 and 2013 and 2014.

Information provided by the Kentucky Injury Prevention & Research Center and the Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics

*\*Please note: The Office of Vital Statistics does not report an exact number if county deaths are less than 5 persons and does not calculate per capita for less than 20.*

| County of death     | Number of deaths due to drug overdose |      |      | 2014 county population | Drug overdose deaths in the county per 100,000 county residents in 2014* |
|---------------------|---------------------------------------|------|------|------------------------|--|
|                     | 2012                                  | 2013 | 2014 |                        |  |
| Adair County        | <5                                    | 5    | 5    | 19,204                 | Not calculated   |
| Allen County        | <5                                    | <5   | 5    | 20,384                 | Not calculated   |
| Anderson County     | 5                                     | 5    | <5   | 21,888                 | Not calculated   |
| Ballard County      | 0                                     | 0    | 0    | 8,240                  | 0  |
| Barren County       | 5                                     | 9    | <5   | 43,148                 | Not calculated   |
| Bath County         | <5                                    | <5   | <5   | 12,206                 | Not calculated   |
| Bell County         | 15                                    | 26   | 11   | 27,778                 | Not calculated   |
| Boone County        | 34                                    | 36   | 48   | 126,413                | 38   |
| Bourbon County      | <5                                    | 5    | <5   | 19,972                 | Not calculated   |
| Boyd County         | 12                                    | 9    | 13   | 48,832                 | Not calculated   |
| Boyle County        | <5                                    | <5   | <5   | 29,706                 | Not calculated   |
| Bracken County      | 0                                     | <5   | 0    | 8,406                  | 0  |
| Breathitt County    | 9                                     | 6    | 8    | 13,409                 | Not calculated   |
| Breckinridge County | <5                                    | <5   | 0    | 19,888                 | 0  |
| Bullitt County      | 18                                    | 14   | 22   | 77,955                 | 28.2   |
| Butler County       | <5                                    | <5   | 0    | 12,875                 | 0  |
| Caldwell County     | 0                                     | 0    | <5   | 12,725                 | Not calculated   |
| Calloway County     | <5                                    | 5    | <5   | 38,282                 | Not calculated   |
| Campbell County     | 55                                    | 33   | 44   | 91,833                 | 47.9   |
| Carlisle County     | 0                                     | <5   | 0    | 4,978                  | 0  |
| Carroll County      | <5                                    | <5   | 7    | 10,815                 | Not calculated   |
| Carter County       | <5                                    | <5   | <5   | 27,223                 | Not calculated   |
| Casey County        | <5                                    | <5   | 6    | 15,891                 | Not calculated   |
| Christian County    | 6                                     | 9    | <5   | 74,250                 | Not calculated   |
| Clark County        | 19                                    | 9    | 10   | 35,758                 | Not calculated   |

| County of death   | Number of deaths due to drug overdose |     |     | 2014 county population | Drug overdose deaths in the county per 100,000 county residents in |
|-------------------|---------------------------------------|-----|-----|------------------------|--|
|                   |                                       |     |     |                        |  |
| Clay County       | 9                                     | 9   | <5  | 21,147                 | Not calculated   |
| Clinton County    | 10                                    | 5   | <5  | 10,165                 | Not calculated   |
| Crittenden County | <5                                    | <5  | <5  | 9,224                  | Not calculated   |
| Cumberland County | <5                                    | <5  | <5  | 6,745                  | Not calculated   |
| Daviess County    | 14                                    | 25  | 11  | 98,275                 | Not calculated   |
| Edmonson County   | 5                                     | <5  | 0   | 12,013                 | 0  |
| Elliott County    | <5                                    | <5  | <5  | 7,672                  | Not calculated   |
| Estill County     | 8                                     | 6   | 8   | 14,447                 | Not calculated   |
| Fayette County    | 74                                    | 86  | 112 | 310,797                | 36   |
| Fleming County    | 0                                     | 6   | <5  | 14,545                 | Not calculated   |
| Floyd County      | 18                                    | 17  | 21  | 38,108                 | 55.1   |
| Franklin County   | 5                                     | 15  | 10  | 49,880                 | Not calculated   |
| Fulton County     | <5                                    | 0   | 0   | 6,265                  | 0  |
| Gallatin County   | <5                                    | <5  | <5  | 8,589                  | Not calculated   |
| Garrard County    | <5                                    | <5  | <5  | 16,858                 | Not calculated   |
| Grant County      | 13                                    | 8   | 13  | 24,875                 | Not calculated   |
| Graves County     | 7                                     | 5   | <5  | 37,618                 | Not calculated   |
| Grayson County    | 9                                     | 6   | 8   | 26,194                 | Not calculated   |
| Green County      | <5                                    | <5  | <5  | 11,043                 | Not calculated   |
| Greenup County    | 5                                     | 11  | 9   | 36,308                 | Not calculated   |
| Hancock County    | <5                                    | 0   | <5  | 8,753                  | Not calculated   |
| Hardin County     | 10                                    | 9   | 18  | 108,266                | Not calculated   |
| Harlan County     | 12                                    | 12  | 6   | 28,163                 | Not calculated   |
| Harrison County   | <5                                    | 5   | 6   | 18,592                 | Not calculated   |
| Hart County       | <5                                    | <5  | <5  | 18,597                 | Not calculated   |
| Henderson County  | 7                                     | 6   | 5   | 46,467                 | Not calculated   |
| Henry County      | 0                                     | 0   | <5  | 15,572                 | Not calculated   |
| Hickman County    | 0                                     | 0   | 0   | 4,734                  | 0  |
| Hopkins County    | 5                                     | 20  | 8   | 46,376                 | Not calculated   |
| Jackson County    | 0                                     | 0   | 0   | 13,289                 | 0  |
| Jefferson County  | 192                                   | 192 | 204 | 760,026                | 26.8   |
| Jessamine County  | 6                                     | <5  | 8   | 50,815                 | Not calculated   |
| Johnson County    | 9                                     | 7   | <5  | 23,262                 | Not calculated   |
| Kenton County     | 59                                    | 65  | 71  | 163,929                | 43.3   |
| Knott County      | 10                                    | <5  | 7   | 15,892                 | Not calculated   |
| Knox County       | 13                                    | 7   | <5  | 31,798                 | Not calculated   |
| Larue County      | 0                                     | <5  | <5  | 14,180                 | Not calculated   |

| County of death   | Number of deaths due to drug overdose |    |    | 2014 county population | Drug overdose deaths in the county per 100,000 county residents in |
|-------------------|---------------------------------------|----|----|------------------------|--|
|                   |                                       |    |    |                        |  |
| Laurel County     | 19                                    | 6  | 18 | 60,015                 | Not calculated   |
| Lawrence County   | 8                                     | 5  | 5  | 15,804                 | Not calculated   |
| Lee County        | 0                                     | <5 | <5 | 7,594                  | Not calculated   |
| Leslie County     | 8                                     | <5 | 9  | 10,918                 | Not calculated   |
| Letcher County    | 11                                    | 9  | <5 | 23,359                 | Not calculated   |
| Lewis County      | <5                                    | 0  | <5 | 13,880                 | Not calculated   |
| Lincoln County    | 8                                     | <5 | <5 | 24,445                 | Not calculated   |
| Livingston County | <5                                    | <5 | <5 | 9,359                  | Not calculated   |
| Logan County      | <5                                    | <5 | 5  | 26,867                 | Not calculated   |
| Lyon County       | <5                                    | <5 | 0  | 8,430                  | 0  |
| McCracken County  | 21                                    | 18 | 20 | 65,316                 | 30.6   |
| McCreary County   | <5                                    | <5 | 0  | 17,863                 | 0  |
| McLean County     | <5                                    | <5 | 0  | 9,478                  | 0  |
| Madison County    | 21                                    | 12 | 23 | 87,340                 | 26.3   |
| Magoffin County   | <5                                    | <5 | <5 | 12,913                 | Not calculated   |
| Marion County     | 6                                     | <5 | <5 | 20,007                 | Not calculated   |
| Marshall County   | 6                                     | 9  | 12 | 30,953                 | Not calculated   |
| Martin County     | 5                                     | <5 | <5 | 12,537                 | Not calculated   |
| Mason County      | 6                                     | <5 | 6  | 17,166                 | Not calculated   |
| Meade County      | <5                                    | <5 | 5  | 29,139                 | Not calculated   |
| Menifee County    | 0                                     | 0  | 0  | 6,287                  | 0  |
| Mercer County     | <5                                    | <5 | 5  | 21,319                 | Not calculated   |
| Metcalfe County   | 0                                     | 0  | 0  | 9,990                  | 0  |
| Monroe County     | <5                                    | <5 | <5 | 10,704                 | Not calculated   |
| Montgomery County | <5                                    | <5 | 12 | 27,474                 | Not calculated   |
| Morgan County     | <5                                    | 0  | 0  | 13,303                 | 0  |
| Muhlenberg County | <5                                    | 7  | 9  | 31,207                 | Not calculated   |
| Nelson County     | 5                                     | 6  | 6  | 44,812                 | Not calculated   |
| Nicholas County   | <5                                    | <5 | 0  | 7,041                  | 0  |
| Ohio County       | 5                                     | 7  | <5 | 23,977                 | Not calculated   |
| Oldham County     | 5                                     | <5 | <5 | 63,490                 | Not calculated   |
| Owen County       | <5                                    | <5 | 6  | 10,645                 | Not calculated   |
| Owsley County     | <5                                    | <5 | <5 | 4,508                  | Not calculated   |
| Pendleton County  | <5                                    | <5 | <5 | 14,493                 | Not calculated   |
| Perry County      | 18                                    | 12 | 15 | 27,597                 | Not calculated   |
| Pike County       | 32                                    | 24 | 32 | 63,034                 | 50.8   |

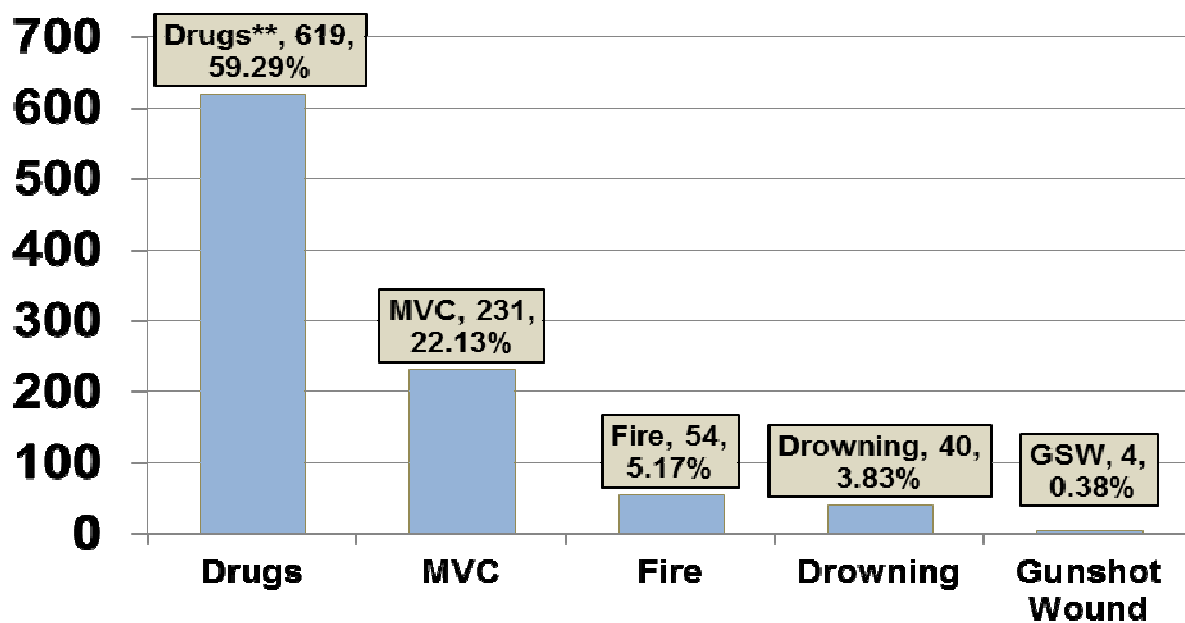


| County of death   | Number of deaths due to drug overdose |    |    | 2014 county population | Drug overdose deaths in the county per 100,000 county residents in |
|-------------------|---------------------------------------|----|----|------------------------|--|
|                   |                                       |    |    |                        |  |
| Powell County     | 8                                     | 5  | 9  | 12,434                 | Not calculated   |
| Pulaski County    | 17                                    | 13 | 10 | 63,825                 | Not calculated   |
| Robertson County  | 0                                     | 0  | 0  | 2,197                  | 0  |
| Rockcastle County | 5                                     | <5 | <5 | 16,826                 | Not calculated   |
| Rowan County      | 6                                     | 6  | 5  | 23,655                 | Not calculated   |
| Russell County    | 8                                     | <5 | 13 | 17,774                 | Not calculated   |
| Scott County      | 11                                    | <5 | 5  | 51,284                 | Not calculated   |
| Shelby County     | <5                                    | <5 | 9  | 44,875                 | Not calculated   |
| Simpson County    | <5                                    | <5 | 0  | 17,826                 | 0  |
| Spencer County    | 0                                     | <5 | <5 | 17,668                 | Not calculated   |
| Taylor County     | 9                                     | 8  | 0  | 25,257                 | 0  |
| Todd County       | <5                                    | <5 | <5 | 12,520                 | Not calculated   |
| Trigg County      | <5                                    | <5 | <5 | 14,142                 | Not calculated   |
| Trimble County    | <5                                    | <5 | <5 | 8,786                  | Not calculated   |
| Union County      | 6                                     | 5  | 6  | 15,165                 | Not calculated   |
| Warren County     | 18                                    | 20 | 18 | 120,460                | Not calculated   |
| Washington County | 0                                     | 0  | <5 | 11,959                 | Not calculated   |
| Wayne County      | <5                                    | <5 | <5 | 20,486                 | Not calculated   |
| Webster County    | 0                                     | <5 | <5 | 13,236                 | Not calculated   |
| Whitley County    | 22                                    | 13 | 13 | 35,503                 | Not calculated   |
| Wolfe County      | <5                                    | <5 | <5 | 7,214                  | Not calculated   |
| Woodford County   | <5                                    | 5  | <5 | 25,563                 | Not calculated   |

\* Rates based on fewer than 20 events are considered statistically unreliable and were not calculated



## 2014 Statewide Accidents by Major Causes of Death Figure 8



\*2014 Office of the Kentucky State Medical Examiner Annual Report

\*\*Only Major Categories of accidents are illustrated

\*\*\* Drug Related with manner of death other than "accident" are not included in above totals

| <b>2014 STATEWIDE MEDICAL EXAMINER DRUG RELATED DEATHS</b> |              |                   |
|--|--------------|-------------------|
| <b>Table 4</b>   |              |                   |
| <b>Manner</b>  | <b>Total</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
| Accidents  | 619          | 77.86%            |
| Homicides  | 2            | 0.25%             |
| Suicides   | 40           | 5.03%             |
| Undetermined   | 41           | 5.16%             |
| Insufficient Information                                   | 6            | 0.75%             |
| Complications of Chronic Use                               | 87           | 10.94%            |
| <b>TOTAL</b>   | <b>795</b>   | <b>100%</b>       |

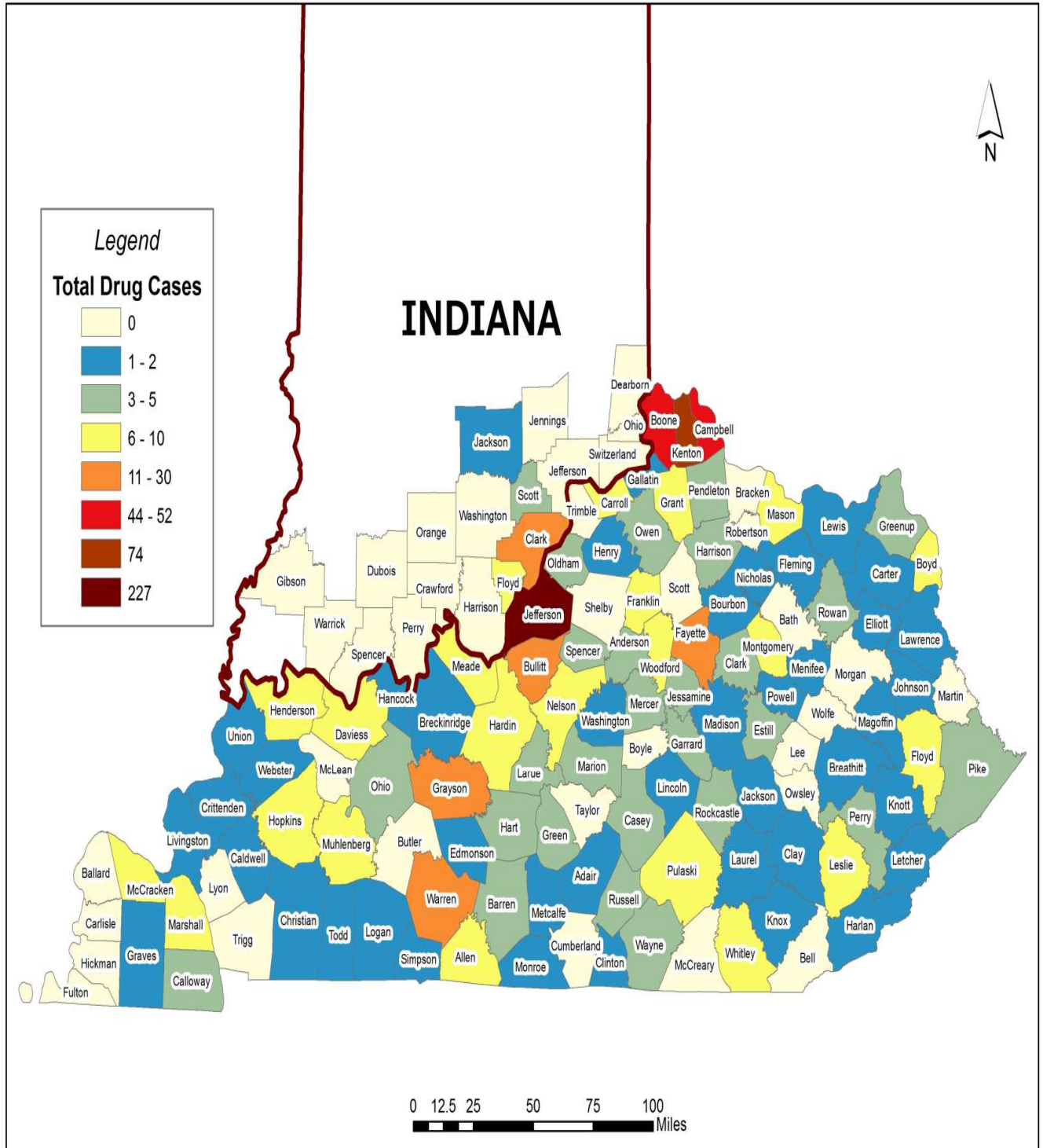
| <b>2014 STATEWIDE MEDICAL EXAMINER DRUG RELATED DEATHS CONTAINING HEROIN</b> |              |                   |
|--|--------------|-------------------|
| <b>Table 5</b>   |              |                   |
| <b>Manner</b>  | <b>Total</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
| Accidents  | 219          | 93.99%            |
| Suicides   | 4            | 1.72%             |
| Undetermined   | 9            | 3.86%             |
| Insufficient Information   | 1            | 0.43%             |
| <b>TOTAL</b>   | <b>233</b>   | <b>100%</b>       |

\*\*2014 Office of the Kentucky State Medical Examiner Annual Report

**Statewide Drug Related Deaths Sent for Autopsy  
by  
Locality of Death, 2014**

**Figure 12**

**2014 Kentucky Office of the State Medical Examiner Annual Report**

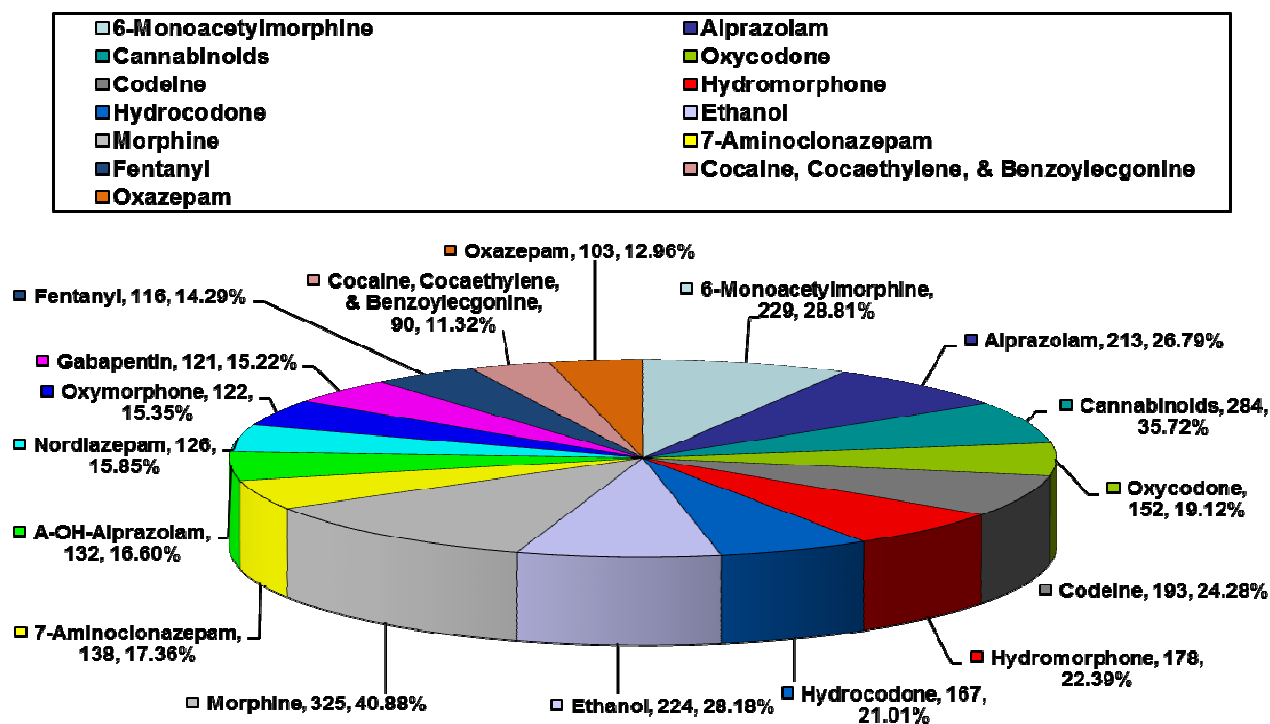


## 2014 Statewide Most Frequently Detected Drugs in Drug Related Death Victims

**Figure 14**

Total = 795\*

\*Includes Indiana



\*Morphine represents true drug and/or metabolite of Heroin: Heroin is known in 233 statewide cases

⊠Detected drugs were found in blood, urine, and/or vitreous fluids.

\*Total Percentages >100% due to more than 1 drug being present in many decedents

§This figure delineates only drugs occurring ≥100 other than Cocaine, Cocaethylene & Benzoylcegonine.

| 2014 STATEWIDE MEDICAL EXAMINER TOP 5 DRUGS IN DRUG RELATED DEATHS |       |            |
|--|-------|------------|
| Table 6  |       |            |
| Drug   | Total | Percentage |
| Morphine   | 325   | 40.88%     |
| Cannabinoids   | 284   | 35.72%     |
| 6-Monoacetylmorphine   | 229   | 28.81%     |
| Ethanol  | 224   | 28.18%     |
| Alprazolam   | 213   | 26.79%     |

\*\*2014 Kentucky Office of the State Medical Examiner Annual Report