

# SUMMIT COUNTY CORONER CASES for the YEAR of 2013

## Manner of Death:

**Natural = 58**

Heart failure = 39  
 Respiratory failure = 8  
 Seizure = 2  
 CVA = 4  
 Alcohol abuse = 3  
 Dementia = 2

(Cancers associated with the above: metastatic melanoma X 2, lung X 4, esophageal, prostate, gastric, pancreatic X3, breast, leukemia, glioblastoma)

**Accidental = 12**

Ski v. Tree = 4  
 Fell from horse=1  
 Alcohol Toxicity = 1  
 Overdose = 3 (methadone, codeine, morphine)  
 Motor Vehicle Crash = 1  
 Smoke inhalation/carbon monoxide toxicity = 1  
 Drowning in a bath tub = 1

**Suicide = 8** (7gsw, 1 ligature)

**Homicide = 0**

**Undetermined = 0**

**Autopsies = 16**

**Transfer of jurisdiction = 8**

**Hospice = 21**

**DNR = 2**

### Cases By Month Breakdown

Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Ap	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	C#	a
2003	7	3 <sup>10</sup>	8 <sup>18</sup>	6 <sup>24</sup>	3 <sup>27</sup>	0 <sup>27</sup>	6 <sup>33</sup>	3 <sup>36</sup>	2 <sup>38</sup>	2 <sup>40</sup>	4 <sup>44</sup>	3	47	25
2004	5	2 <sup>7</sup>	13 <sup>20</sup>	3 <sup>23</sup>	2 <sup>25</sup>	2 <sup>27</sup>	5 <sup>32</sup>	3 <sup>35</sup>	3 <sup>38</sup>	5 <sup>44</sup>	2 <sup>45</sup>	5	50	18
2005	9	5 <sup>14</sup>	5 <sup>19</sup>	2 <sup>21</sup>	3 <sup>24</sup>	3 <sup>27</sup>	5 <sup>32</sup>	3 <sup>35</sup>	1 <sup>36</sup>	5 <sup>41</sup>	4 <sup>45</sup>	5	50	13
2006	11	8 <sup>19</sup>	8 <sup>27</sup>	2 <sup>29</sup>	3 <sup>32</sup>	6 <sup>38</sup>	8 <sup>46</sup>	4 <sup>50</sup>	5 <sup>55</sup>	5 <sup>60</sup>	3 <sup>63</sup>	7	70	25
2007	5	5 <sup>10</sup>	3 <sup>13</sup>	3 <sup>16</sup>	1 <sup>17</sup>	3 <sup>20</sup>	4 <sup>24</sup>	4 <sup>28</sup>	5 <sup>33</sup>	1 <sup>34</sup>	2 <sup>36</sup>	6	42	13
2008	8	7 <sup>15</sup>	4 <sup>13</sup>	7 <sup>24</sup>	3 <sup>29</sup>	3 <sup>32</sup>	4 <sup>36</sup>	3 <sup>39</sup>	4 <sup>43</sup>	4 <sup>47</sup>	2 <sup>49</sup>	7	63	14
2009	8	5 <sup>13</sup>	6 <sup>19</sup>	5 <sup>24</sup>	4 <sup>28</sup>	4 <sup>32</sup>	6 <sup>38</sup>	10 <sup>48</sup>	7 <sup>55</sup>	5 <sup>60</sup>	3 <sup>63</sup>	5	68	13
2010	4	6 <sup>10</sup>	9 <sup>19</sup>	4 <sup>23</sup>	3 <sup>26</sup>	4 <sup>30</sup>	6 <sup>36</sup>	3 <sup>39</sup>	5 <sup>44</sup>	4 <sup>48</sup>	3 <sup>51</sup>	4	55	7
2011	6	7 <sup>13</sup>	5 <sup>18</sup>	3 <sup>21</sup>	7 <sup>28</sup>	6 <sup>34</sup>	9 <sup>43</sup>	2 <sup>45</sup>	3 <sup>48</sup>	3 <sup>51</sup>	2 <sup>53</sup>	3	56	10
2012	10	10	7	4	8	1	3	3	4	5	3	3	61	14
2013	10	10	3	6	4	5	6	4	5	4	7	12	76	16
AUT	3	1	1	2	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	3	16	

AUT = Number of Autopsies by month

<u>Gender of decedent</u>	Male (58)	Female (18)
Natural	40	16
Accidental	11	1
Suicide	7	1
Homicide	0	0

<u>Average Age of decedent</u>	<u>Average Age of Hospice decedent</u>
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Male:	53 years (range 0-96)	73years (range 43-96)
Female:	65.8 years (range 20-92)	77.7 years (range 56-92)

**Residency of decedent**

Summit County 52 (68%)  
Colorado 6 (8%)  
Remainder 18 (24%)

<u>Snow sport deaths</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2008</u>
Skier Deaths (% of total deaths)	4 (5%)	8 (13%)	5 (9%)	2 (4%)	1 (2%)	8 (13%)
Snowboarder	0	1 (2%)	1 (2%)	3 (5%)	2 (4%)	3 (5%)
Combined skier and snowboarder	4(5%)	9 (15%)	6 (11%)	5 (9%)	3 (6%)	11 (18%)

<u>Helmet usage</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2008</u>
Decedent skiers wearing helmets	2 (50%)	5(62%)	2(40%)	1(50%)	0	5(62%)
Decedent snowboarders	0	1	1	2(67%)	1(50%)	1(33%)

<u>Deaths by ski area</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2007</u>
A-Basin	0	0	2	0	0	2	0
Breckenridge	1	0	2	1	3	2	3
Copper Mountain	1	3	0	3	0	0	1
Keystone	2	5	2	1	0	7	1

<u>Motor vehicle crash deaths</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2008</u>
Number of deaths	1	3	8	5	5	4
Number of decedents using seatbelt	0	1	2	3	4	1
Alcohol involvement	0	1	2	1	1	2

## TRENDS/COMMENTS

2013 was a record year for total number of deaths in Summit County. In 2013, deaths totaled 76 as compared to a previous 10 year average of 56.2/year.

The biggest contributing factor to the increase total number of deaths was Bristlecone Hospice, whose patients comprised 29% (22/76) of all death in Summit County in 2013; as compared to 9% (6/61) of all death in 2012. Cancers caused or contributed to 14 deaths.

The predominate cause of death in Summit County was heart failure. It was reported in 67% of natural deaths in Summit County.

In 2013, a greater number of the decedents were Summit County residents 52 (68%) verses 33 (54%) in 2012. This number may be inflated because all 22 of the Hospice decedents were Summit County residents.

The majority of all deaths occurred in unincorporated Summit County. Of the municipalities, Breckenridge reported the most followed closely by the other towns. 18 decedents were visiting from 14 different states. No decedents were determined to be homeless.

Suicides increased from 6 in 2012 to 8 in 2013, however the suicide rate of 10% (of all death) remained essentially unchanged. Self-inflicted gunshot wounds accounted for 7 of the suicides in 2013; of them 6 were male with an average age of 37 years. The 1 female was 61 years old. All were Summit County residents. 5 suicides were on a Sunday, 3 were on a Tuesday.

Accidental deaths significantly decreased. Accidental death rate was 15.8% in 2013 vs 32.8% in 2012. In 2013, 11 of the 12 decedents from accidental deaths were male with an average age of 35 years. The 1 female was 20 years old.

Death is unpredictable. However more deaths were reported in the cold weather months. Death was distributed fairly evenly over the days of the week. Regarding the time of death, in 2013 the majority (62%) died in the PM.

Alcohol was the directly caused 3 deaths and was a contributing factor in 5 other deaths including 3 suicides. Alcohol played a role in 11% of all deaths for 2013 vs 13% of all deaths for 2012.

Opiate derivatives directly caused 3 deaths in 2013. The drugs included methadone, morphine, and codeine.

Snow sport related death significantly declined from 9 deaths in 2012 to 4 in 2013. All were skiers, 3 male and 1 female. Helmets were not worn by 2 of the males.

2013 reported 1 death (unbelted) from motor vehicle crashes (a decrease from 3 in 2012).

Using raw numbers, I have attempted to identify trends by comparison to data collected from previous years. Given the relatively small sample size number of deaths in Summit County, it is problematic to draw definitive conclusions regarding death in Summit County. However it is encouraging that death from accidents, snow sports and motor vehicle crashes all decreased in 2013.

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