



# **Madison County Coroner's Office releases drug-related death statistics**

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EDWARDSVILLE - The Madison County Coroner's Office released drug-related death statistics for 2017 today.

"The investigation of drug related deaths continued to keep the Madison County Coroner's Office busy during 2017," Madison County Coroner Steve Nonn said. "Although tests remain pending in some cases, it is believed that 87 people will have lost their lives last year in Madison County due to the scourge of drug abuse.

"This past year will be the second highest number of overdose deaths since 2014 when 91 people died. Also, for the first time, fentanyl overdoses outnumbered heroin overdose deaths." Nonn noted that the statistics reflects only those who died within the geographic boundaries of Madison County.

The coroner reported that the New Year did not start off any better with two suspected drug overdose deaths already reported in 2018.

"This year's statistics in Madison County reflects what is going on nationwide as the United States is in the midst of an opioid overdose epidemic," Nonn said. "64,000 people died from drug overdoses in 2016 with approximately three-fourths of these deaths (48,000) attributed to opioids, including prescription opioids, heroin and fentanyl as reported by the Center for Disease Control. In 2016, drug overdoses killed more Americans than in the Vietnam War," said Coroner Stephen Nonn.

National statistics are not yet available for 2017 but is predicted to be even higher than in 2016.

As of December 31, 2017, the breakdown of drug-related death investigations undertaken by the Madison County Coroner's Office include:

**Heroin:** Total 21

Confirmed: 4

Pending: 17

**Fentanyl & Heroin Combination:** Total 11

Confirmed: 11

**Fentanyl:** Total 22

Confirmed: 18

Pending: 4

**Fentanyl & Methamphetamine:** Total 4

Confirmed: 4

Pending: 0

**Methamphetamine:** Total 1

Confirmed: 1

Pending: 0

**Prescription Opioid:** Total 9

Confirmed: 9

Pending: 0

**Prescription(non-opioid):** Total 13

Confirmed: 5

Pending: 7

**Other Illicit:** Total 3

Confirmed: 2 (Cocaine Use)

Pending: 1 (Cocaine Use)

**Alcohol: Total 1**

Confirmed: 1

Pending: 0

Deaths: Associated to prescription drugs: Total 1

Confirmed: 1 – **Septic Shock / Pneumonia / Other conditions: Opiate, Benzodiazepine and Amphetamine Intoxication**

Pending: 0

Death Associated with Fentanyl: Total 1

Confirmed: 1 – **Positional Asphyxia due to Fentanyl Intoxication**

Pending: 0

“It is to say the least, disappointing to see the fentanyl and heroin numbers rising as they did”, said Coroner Nonn. "We will continue with our drug take-back days that are held in conjunction with Sheriff John Lakin and the State’s Attorney Tom Gibbons as well as our public presentations and participation in the Partnership for Drug Free Communities. Hopefully, we can plant seeds today that will bear fruit tomorrow.”

In the State of Illinois, there is a recently instituted 24/7 Helpline for the opioid epidemic at 1-833-2FINDHELP

In overall agency operations during 2017, the Madison County Coroner’s Office generated reports on 2,677 cases of which 2,167 resulted in the case being cleared as an anticipated death or where the decedent’s physician could certify the death as a natural, medical event.

Coroner’s investigations with subsequent issuance of the death certificate by Coroner Nonn was present in 470 cases. These cases categorized by the manner of death are:

**Natural Causes: 218**

**Accident: 134**

**Suicide: 43**

**Homicide: 8**

**Pending cases: 67**

40 remaining miscellaneous case reports reflect assistance to other law enforcement agencies, death notifications for out of area police and coroners, cases that are determined to be non-human bones and remains, and other assistance provided to area coroners.