

Firearm Deaths in Utah

Utah vs. U.S.

Over the last decade, the Utah and U.S. firearm-related death rate was relatively the same. However, since 2010, the Utah rate has increased 15.4% compared to an increase of 1.0% in the U.S. (Figure 1) This difference is likely due to the increase in Utah's suicide rate over the past five years.

Preliminary data show that 330 Utah residents died as a result of a firearm in 2012, an increase of 8.2% from 2011. As of mid-March 2013, 64 Utah residents have died as a result of a firearm this year. The majority of firearm-related deaths in Utah are the result of suicide (Figure 2).

Figure 1: Rate of firearm-related deaths per 100,000 population by year, Utah and U.S., 2000-2011 (age-adjusted)

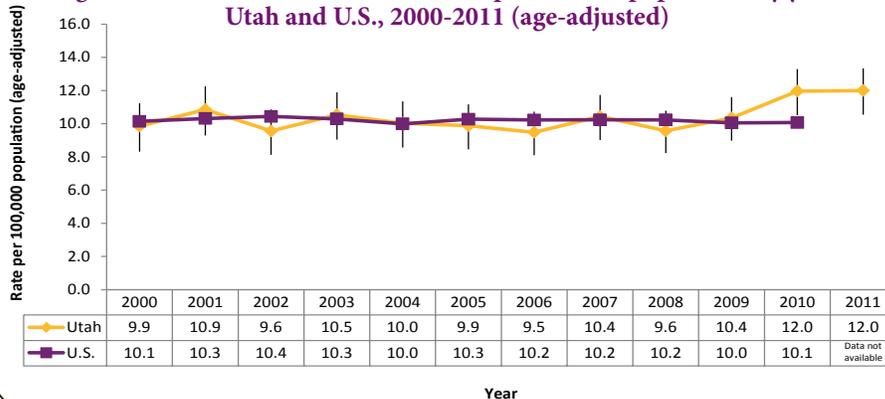
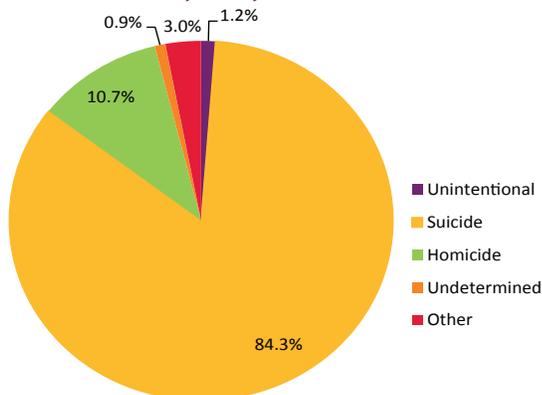


Figure 2: Percentage of firearm-related deaths by intent, Utah, 2007-2011



Utah has had a higher prevalence of high school students reporting that they carried a gun at least one day in the past month compared to the U.S. since 2005¹.

Firearms and Domestic Violence²

According to the Domestic Violence Fatalities in Utah report, from 2003-2008:

- One out of three adult homicides in Utah were domestic violence-related, 67.8% were due to firearms.
- One-third of the domestic violence perpetrators committed suicide after committing the homicide, with 93% using a firearm to commit suicide. Of these, 70.4% were perpetrators of interpersonal violence within the past month and 18.5% were diagnosed with a mental illness.

According to one study³, firearms were the major weapon type used in intimate partner homicides in the United States. Women who were threatened or assaulted with a gun or other weapon were 20 times more likely than other women to be murdered⁴.

According to National Studies

According to the Harvard School of Public Health⁵:

- High-gun ownership states (WY, SD, AK, WV, MT, AR, MS, ID, ND, AL, KY, WI, LA, TN, UT) have higher firearm suicide rates compared to low-gun ownership states (HI, MA, RI, NJ, CT, NY), even though non-firearm suicides were about equal⁶. (Note that these studies controlled

for state-level measures of mental illness, drug and alcohol abuse, and other factors associated with suicide)

- Multiple studies show individuals who died by suicide compared to those who did not were more likely to live in homes with guns.
- Firearm access is a risk factor for suicide for both older (>15 years) and younger adolescents and for both males and females⁷.

Concealed Firearm Permits in Utah

According to the Utah Department of Public Safety⁸:

- Concealed Firearm Permit (CFP) classes provide some familiarization with firearms and explanations and discussions of applicable state and federal laws.
- The CFP application includes ongoing background checks in order to obtain and keep the permit whereas buying a gun only requires passing a background check at the time of purchase.
- Without the CFP application process, concealed gun carriers may not know if they are legally qualified to lawfully conceal a weapon. Applicant must be 21 years of age and show “proof of good character.” Proof of good character is defined whereas the applicant:
 - o has not been convicted of a felony;
 - o has not been convicted of any crime of violence;
 - o has not been convicted of any offense involving the use of alcohol;
 - o has not been convicted of any offenses involving the unlawful use of narcotics or other controlled substances;
 - o has not been convicted of any offenses involving moral turpitude;
 - o has not been convicted of any offense involving domestic violence;
 - o has not been adjudicated by a court of a state or of the United States as mentally incompetent, unless the adjudication has been withdrawn or reversed.

Last updated: March 19, 2013

References

1 Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 1999-2011

2 4 Domestic Violence Fatalities in Utah, 2003-2008. Utah Department of Health, Violence and Injury Prevention Program.

Available from: URL: <http://www.health.utah.gov/vipp/pdf/DomesticViolence/2003-2008%20Report.pdf>

3 Paulozzi LJ, Saltzman LA, Thompson MJ, Holmgren P. Surveillance for homicide among intimate partners – United States, 1981-1998. CDC Surveillance Summaries 2001;50(SS-3):1-16

4 Assessing Risk Factors for Intimate partner Homicide. Available from: URL: <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/topics/crime/intimate-partner-violence/murder-suicide.htm>

5 <http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/means-matter/means-matter/risk/>

6 Miller M, Lippmann SJ, Azrael D, Hemenway D. Household firearm ownership and rates of suicide across the 50 United States. J Trauma. 2007 Apr;62(4):1029-34

7 Brent DA, Baugher M, Bridge J, Chen T, Chiappetta L. Age- and sex-related risk factors for adolescent suicide. Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry. 1999; 38(12):1497-505

8 <http://publicsafety.utah.gov/bci/CFnewapp.html>

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VIPP is a trusted and comprehensive resource for data and technical assistance related to violence and injury. This information helps promote partnerships and programs to prevent injuries and improve public health.

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