



# MEDICAL EXAMINER'S ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2021

## Staff

Marcie Rosas, Medical Examiner  
Lynn Johnson, Chief Deputy Medical Examiner  
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Shaylee Dechow, Deputy Medical Examiner  
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Carrie Johnson, Deputy Medical Examiner  
Serena Krejchi, Deputy Medical Examiner  
Luke Miller, Deputy Medical Examiner  
Janelle Mitchell, Deputy Medical Examiner

## ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2021

### DUNN COUNTY MEDICAL EXAMINER'S OFFICE

#### A. Mission Statement:

- The mission of the Dunn County Medical Examiner's Office is to provide a voice for the deceased in terms of investigating and ultimately ruling on manner and cause of death. We are statutorily responsible to investigate any unexplained, unusual, or suspicious deaths. These include: accidents, homicides, suicides, deaths unattended by a physician, deaths following a medical intervention, deaths within 24 hours of admission to a health care facility, and deaths where the attending physician is unavailable or unwilling to sign the death certificate. We strive to provide a compassionate, complete, and accurate medicolegal investigation.

#### B. Summary of Responsibilities:

- The Dunn County Medical Examiner's Office is keenly aware of the tragedy that accompanies sudden and unexpected death. Our office realizes that each case represents an individual who is deeply missed by his/her loved ones. Our investigators are trained to deliver the news of death with compassion, empathy, courtesy, and professionalism. A thorough investigation into the circumstances of death, a complete postmortem examination, and necessary lab studies are conducted to determine cause and manner of death.

#### C. The Dunn County Medical Examiner's Office works diligently to:

- Promote and maintain the highest professional standards in the field of death investigation.
- Provide timely, accurate and legally defensible determinations as to cause of death.
- Issue death certificates for deaths investigated by this office.
- Conduct cremation investigations for all Dunn County and Eau Claire County deaths in which cremation is selected as a means of disposition.
- Protect the interests of deceased individuals, their loved ones, and the communities we serve.

#### D. Accomplishments in 2021:

- Our office continues to serve on the Eau Claire County Suicide Death Review Board, Child Death Review Board, and Overdose Review Board since our contract began with Eau Claire County in 2015. While these meetings were tabled in 2020 due to COVID-19, we

have now resumed meetings, virtually, and our office continues to provide data and tracking trends as part of an interdisciplinary team.

- Our department continues to be represented on the Wisconsin Coroners and Medical Examiners Association (WCMEA) board of directors. We maintain our roles as Two Year Trustee for myself and Member at Large for Lynn Johnson. This group has also suspended in-person meetings due to COVID-19 but we remain active in serving the field at the state level.
- We remain pleased with our department's retention. Our department was able to add another full-time Chief Deputy ME position, which will allow our office to continue to fulfill our mission statement, along with fulfilling all the ME office's clerical duties. In addition, we filled a position vacated by one of our staff transitioning to reserve status.
- In conjunction with local physicians, we continued to provide expert attestations to determine which community deaths could be referred to as official COVID-19 losses. Where indicated, post mortem testing for COVID-19 was carried out expediently and safely by our staff.
- Our office remained a primary public safety resource and a key agency participating in community-based COVID-19 team communications throughout the pandemic.
- We maintained our protocols to maximize individual safety and minimize contacts by completing cremation views virtually yet legally and respectfully with the cooperation of our funeral home partners.
- Our department has managed to meet our budget across both Dunn and Eau Claire counties this year despite many challenges.

#### E. Concerns:

- Deaths attributed to homicide, suicide, and drug overdoses have risen in both counties.
- A significant budget overage in autopsies and toxicology analysis occurred in 2021 due to the increase in the complexity of cases and drug-related cases. This increase has also led to an increase in transportation costs as decedents need to be transported to Ramsey County in Minnesota for all autopsies.
- Covid-19 continues to challenge our department in the death investigation process. Our office continues to maintain stringent adherence to the strictest precautionary measures and CDC guidelines while serving the decedent, decedent's family, law enforcement, and the community.
- Our risk of exposure to Covid-19 remains a daily challenge for our team.

#### F. Restraints:

- Our department's staffing needs remain unique and unlike any other county-based workforce. The desired skill sets for our employees are diverse, with many of our team working concurrently in their primary fields. Our shifts are 12 to 24 consecutive hours on call and require precise coordination amongst all our deputies and their employers. The onboarding process for new hires is lengthy. We continue to have an open position that has not been filled, in part due to the pandemic limitations. We continued to cover both counties 24/7 without interruption but this often meant that managers needed to take on

many extra shifts to accommodate employee outages. This is a department with strong potential to be critically understaffed at any given time, but we are very fortunate to have solid employee retention and team members who go above and beyond to meet our needs.

- Our staff continues to work remotely. This results in limited access to clerical resources and the law enforcement personnel we routinely collaborate with.

G. Goals and Objectives for 2022:

- Maintain the safety and health of our department while serving our communities.
- Resume the active search for qualified candidates to fill the part-time Deputy ME position that has remained open.
- Continue with educational goals via on-line and virtual based opportunities and in-person as soon as it is safe to do so.

H. Conclusion:

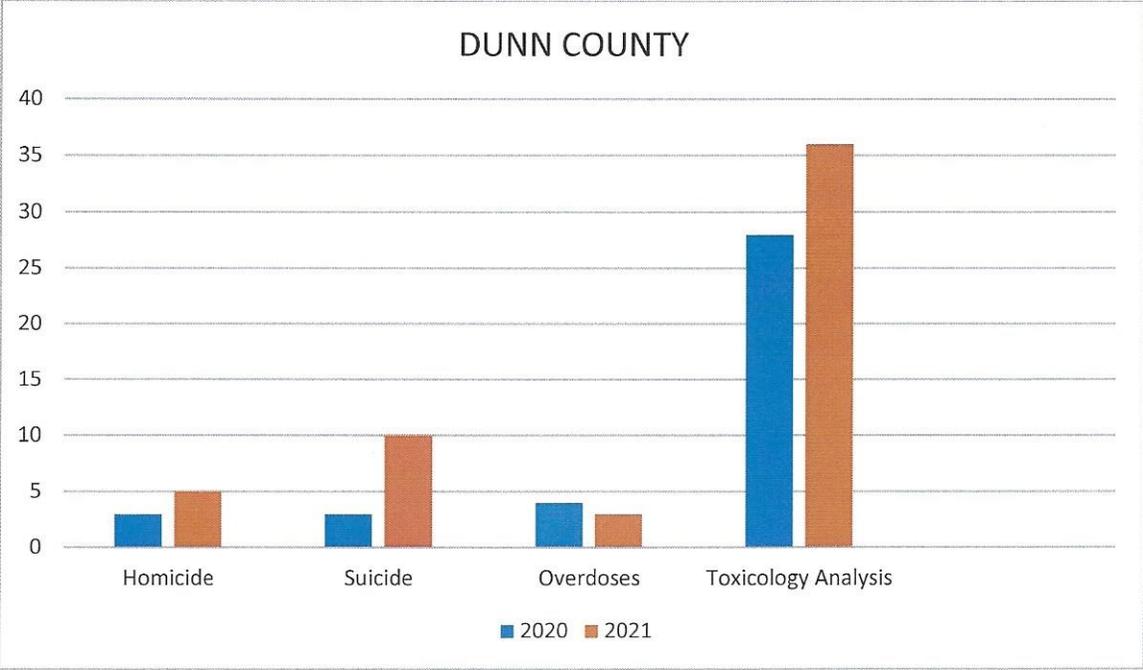
- The joint Dunn/Eau Claire County Medical Examiner's office continues to provide our counties with dedicated service and investigative skills.
- Our staff retention is strong and we continue to develop our strengths to serve our communities.

Respectfully Submitted,

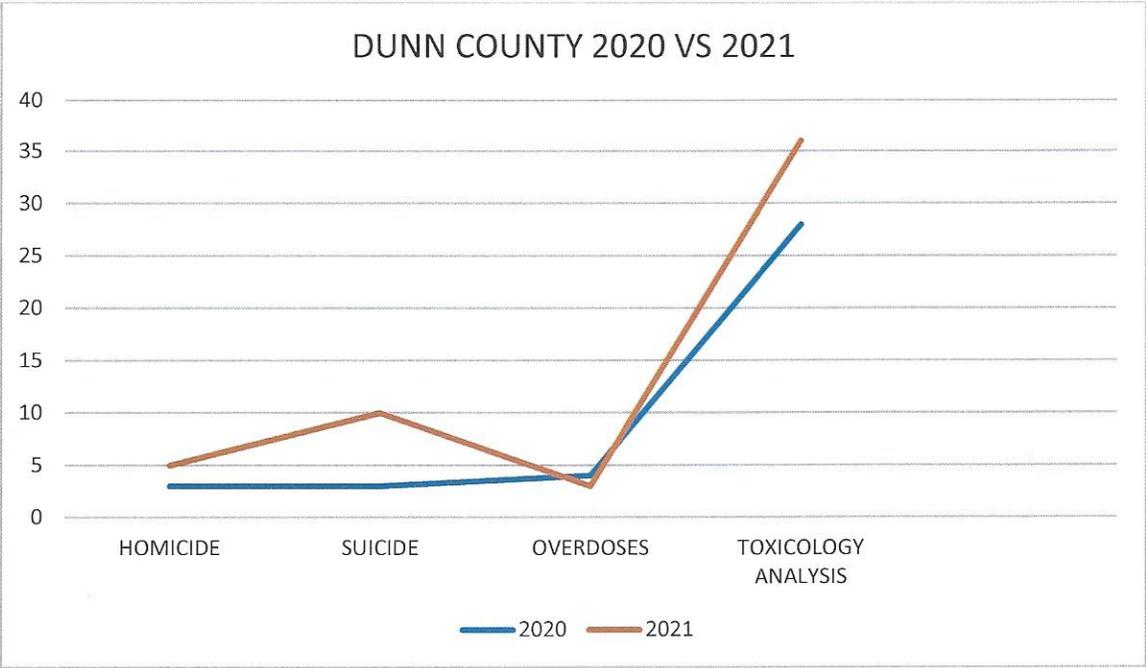
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Rosas', with a large, sweeping flourish above the name.

Marcie M. Rosas  
Dunn/Eau Claire Medical Examiner

Attachment



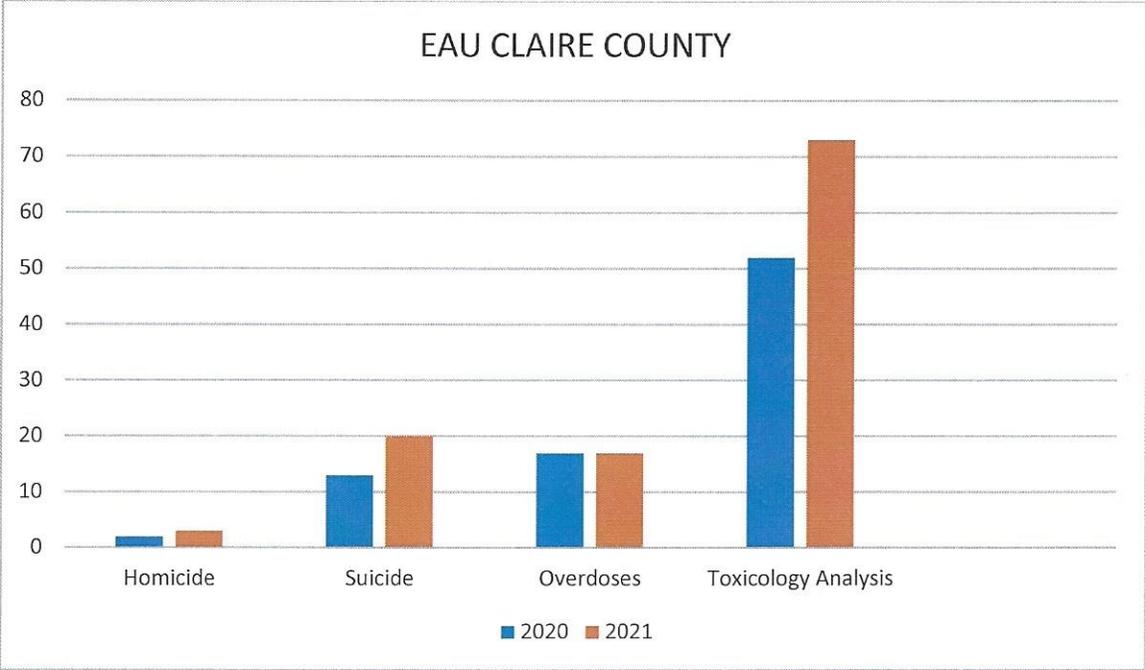
	2020	2021
<b>HOMICIDE</b>	3	5
<b>SUICIDE</b>	3	10
<b>OVERDOSES</b>	4	3
<b>TOXICOLOGY ANALYSIS</b>	28	36
<b>2021: 4 Autopsy and Toxicology results still pending</b>		



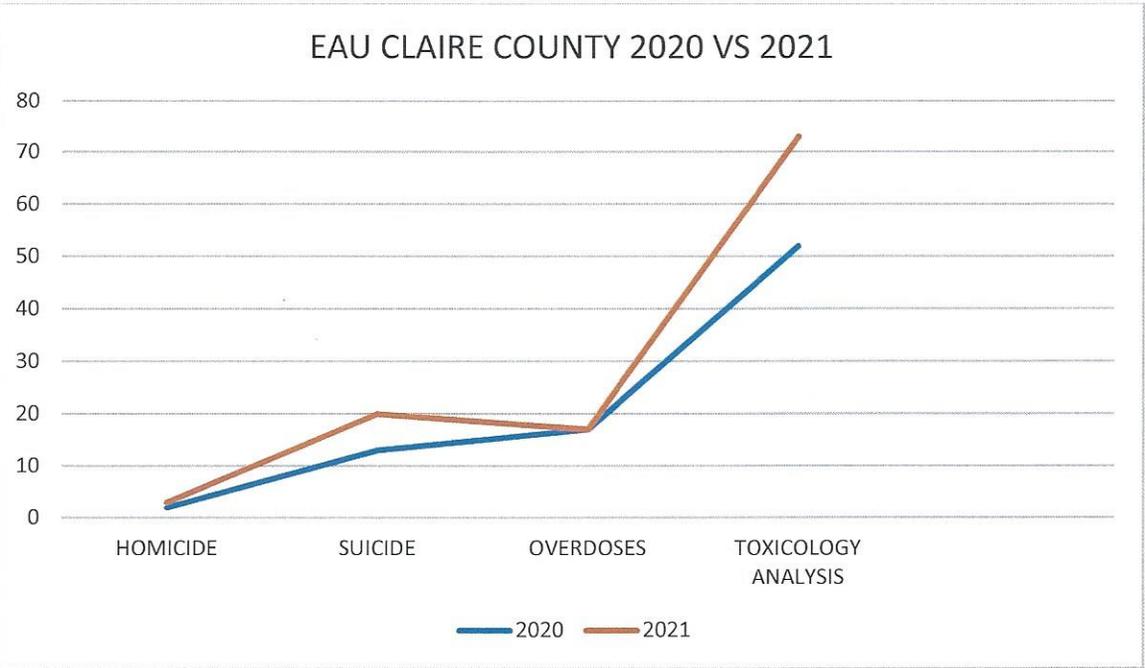
## DUNN COUNTY ME RECAP 2021

	MALE	FEMALE	TOT DEATHS	NATURAL	SUICIDE	UNDETERMINED	HOMICIDE	ACCIDENTAL								INVESTIGATION	CREMATION	BURIAL	Autopsy	UNCLAIMED BODY
								FALL	MVA	OD	DROWNING	INFANT	OTHER							
JAN	18	17	35	30	3	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	8	28	7	1	0	
FEB	12	8	20	17	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	5	17	3	2	0	
MAR	17	15	32	28	1	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	9	27	5	3	0	
APR	10	10	20	18	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	14	6	0	0	
MAY	4	11	15	14	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	4	12	3	2	0	
JUN	12	12	24	24	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	21	3	0	0	
JUL	15	10	25	22	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	6	21	4	0	0	
AUG	16	13	29	26	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	8	23	6	4	0	
SEP	14	10	24	19	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	8	16	8	4	0	
OCT	13	16	29	24	3	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	11	23	6	3	0	
NOV	12	18	30	28	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	4	20	10	2	0		
DEC	18	17	35	33	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	13	26	9	2	0		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>318</b>	<b>283</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>248</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>0</b>		

Note: 4 autopsy and toxicology results still pending



	2020	2021
<b>HOMICIDE</b>	2	3
<b>SUICIDE</b>	13	20
<b>OVERDOSES</b>	17	17
<b>TOXICOLOGY ANALYSIS</b>	52	74
<b>2021: 4 Autopsy and Toxicology results still pending</b>		



## EAU CLAIRE COUNTY ME RECAP 2021

	MALE	FEMALE	TOT DEATHS	NATURAL	SUICIDE	HOMICIDE	UNDETERMINED	ACCIDENTAL							REFERRAL	INVESTIGATION	CREMATION	BURIAL	Autopsy	UNCLAIMED BODY	ECPD	ECSO
								FALL	MVA	OD	DROWNING	INFANT	OTHER									
JAN	70	71	141	135	1	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	1	36	115	25	1	0	7	8	
FEB	58	56	114	108	0	1	0	1	0	3	0	0	0	1	24	88	25	5	1	10	4	
MAR	62	38	100	92	2	0	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	3	20	75	22	3	0	8	5	
APR	39	53	92	86	2	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	2	19	74	16	2	0	7	5	
MAY	40	57	97	89	0	0	0	1	2	2	0	0	0	3	18	69	25	3	0	9	5	
JUN	51	51	102	93	0	0	0	2	0	3	0	0	0	4	20	68	30	1	0	10	4	
JUL	66	50	116	107	4	1	1	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	23	94	22	5	0	9	4	
AUG	63	56	119	104	6	0	0	2	1	1	0	3	0	0	30	94	25	4	0	11	5	
SEP	61	70	131	123	0	0	0	1	2	1	0	2	0	0	25	113	18	4	2	9	3	
OCT	72	64	136	122	2	0	2	6	0	2	1	0	1	0	24	125	11	5	2	8	6	
NOV	64	65	129	117	2	1	1	3	0	2	0	0	1	2	18	109	18	2	0	7	4	
DEC	76	54	130	119	1	0	3	4	1	1	0	0	0	1	20	118	11	6	0	8	7	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>722</b>	<b>685</b>	<b>1407</b>	<b>1295</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>277</b>	<b>1142</b>	<b>248</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>5</b>			

Note: 4 autopsy and toxicology results still pending