

County of Santa Clara

Medical Examiner-Coroner
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MEDICAL EXAMINER - CORONER
COUNTY OF SANTA CLARA



TO: Honorable Board of Supervisors
Jeffrey V. Smith, County Executive

FROM: Michelle A. Jordan MD, Chief Medical Examiner-Coroner *mag.*

SUBJECT: Off-Agenda Report: Number 35
Updated Information on Medical Examiner-Coroner Death Notices

DATE: February 14, 2023

The weekly number of deaths are provided in continuation from the prior reports (see data tables below).

Fentanyl fatalities from Jan 1, 2015 – January 31, 2023

Year	Count of Decedent	
2015	9	
2016	13	
2017	16*	*(1 case=San Benito)
2018	12*	*(1 case=San Benito)
2019	29*	*(2 case=San Benito)
2020	90*	*(2 case=San Benito)
2021	136*	*(4 case=San Benito)
2022	138*	*(3 case=San Benito)
2023	0	
Total	443*	

**Not all drug related deaths are closed in our system and this number will increase as we continue to certify deaths and close cases. Cases examined in late 2022 are expected to close in early months of 2023.

FENTANYL FATALITIES CONTINUE

WARNING – USING METHAMPHETAMINE AND FENTANYL TOGETHER CAN BE DEADLY:

Fentanyl continues to take many lives in Santa Clara County. The number of fentanyl deaths recorded in 2022 by the Medical Examiner-Coroner has now surpassed the number of fatalities for 2021 and prior years. The Medical Examiner-Coroner does not foresee this trend decreasing. In fact, the Medical Examiner-Coroner is closely monitoring for the emergence of other drugs to include xylazine (street name Tranq) which does not respond to Narcan. Most fentanyl drug deaths in Santa Clara County continue to involve fentanyl combined with other drugs, including methamphetamine. We continue to certify deaths due to combined methamphetamine and

fentanyl. The Medical Examiner-Coroner cautions against using methamphetamine and fentanyl together (“speedballing”) as this can be deadly.

Fentanyl is an extremely potent opioid which can cause death at small doses (up to 80-100X more potent than morphine). Fentanyl is found in pills illegally sold and purchased on the streets which we term “fake pills”. Fentanyl is also available in powder form and can be mixed with other deadly drugs (i.e., cocaine, methamphetamine). As we are aware, Fentanyl is now available as a candy form in multiple colors. Fentanyl can be ingested, smoked, injected and/or snorted. Continued education and widespread messaging regarding the dangers of Fentanyl, particularly using methamphetamine and fentanyl together, is strongly encouraged.

For more detailed information of drug fatalities in Santa Clara County, please visit our data dashboard:

[ME-C Data Dashboard - Office of the Medical Examiner-Coroner - County of Santa Clara \(sccgov.org\)](https://sccgov.org)

KRATOM:

The Medical Examiner-Coroner has certified deaths with mitragynine, the active ingredient found in Kratom. Kratom is an herbal extract that has both opioid-like and stimulant-like effects depending on the dose. Kratom is not regulated by the FDA. The Medical Examiner-Coroner cautions against the use of Kratom since Kratom can interact with other drugs, such as antidepressants, opioids, or alcohol, and can cause serious adverse reactions or overdose.

COVID-19:

The ME-C is closely monitoring deaths due to COVID-19. This off-agenda report incorporates revised COVID-19 death statistics since the last report to incorporate prior pending and open cases which have since closed.

INCREASED CASELOAD HANDLED BY ME-C:

The number of cases examined by the ME-C has increased since 2019 (*please see below*). Although the number of deaths has slowed in 2022 when compared to last year, the number of deaths examined by the ME-C has remained consistently higher in 2022 when compared to 2019 numbers. As predicted and reflected in our numbers for January 2023, caseload exceeded numbers recorded in January 2019 and 2020.

Summary tables are provided for your convenience:

Count of Decedent					
Month	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Jan	364	353	965	528	399
Feb	303	354	543	470	
Mar	325	405	421	375	
Apr	275	441	317	321	
May	288	360	345	381	
Jun	287	334	300	353	
Jul	258	339	313	422	
Aug	304	398	376	345	
Sep	256	391	429	368	
Oct	322	343	396	362	
Nov	286	432	363	416	
Dec	341	845	424	508	
Grand Total	3609	4995	5192	4861	399

Weekly Case		Weekly Case		Weekly Case		Weekly Case		Weekly Case	
Week	2019	Week	2020	Week	2021	Week	2022	Week	2023
1/14 - 1/5	63	1/1 - 1/4	45	1/1 - 1/2	73	1/1	13	1/1 - 1/7	101
1/6 - 1/12	87	1/5 - 1/11	83	1/3 - 1/9	223	1/2 - 1/8	103	1/8 - 1/14	82
1/13 - 1/19	85	1/12 - 1/18	80	1/10 - 1/16	245	1/9 - 1/15	106	1/15 - 1/21	90
1/20 - 1/26	74	1/19 - 1/25	81	1/17 - 1/23	210	1/16 - 1/22	139	1/15 - 1/28	89
1/27 - 2/2	76	1/26 - 2/1	76	1/24 - 1/30	186	1/23 - 1/29	131	1/29 - 1/31	37
2/3 - 2/9	60	2/2 - 2/8	94	1/31 - 2/6	172	1/30 - 2/5	133	Grand Total	399
2/10 - 2/16	83	2/9 - 2/15	85	2/7 - 2/13	159	2/6 - 2/12	122		
2/17 - 2/23	87	2/16 - 2/22	84	2/14 - 2/20	129	2/13 - 2/19	115		
2/24 - 3/2	80	2/23 - 2/29	79	2/21 - 2/27	104	2/20 - 2/26	113		
3/3 - 3/9	68	3/1 - 3/7	84	2/28 - 3/6	81	2/27 - 3/5	89		
3/10 - 3/16	76	3/8 - 3/14	82	3/7 - 3/13	111	3/6 - 3/12	89		
3/17 - 3/23	80	3/15 - 3/21	97	3/14 - 3/20	73	3/13 - 3/19	78		
3/24 - 3/30	66	3/22 - 3/28	98	3/21 - 3/27	120	3/20 - 3/26	76		
3/31 - 4/6	55	3/29 - 4/4	100	3/28 - 4/3	71	3/27 - 4/2	88		
4/7 - 4/13	81	4/5 - 4/11	125	4/4 - 4/10	69	4/3 - 4/9	79		
4/14 - 4/20	62	4/12 - 4/18	109	4/11 - 4/17	78	4/10 - 4/16	77		
4/21 - 4/27	60	4/19 - 4/25	86	4/18 - 4/24	77	4/17 - 4/23	66		
4/28 - 5/4	56	4/26 - 5/2	85	4/25 - 5/1	78	4/24 - 4/30	77		
5/5 - 5/11	51	5/3 - 5/9	99	5/2 - 5/8	83	5/1 - 5/7	73		
5/12 - 5/18	61	5/10 - 5/16	72	5/9 - 5/15	61	5/8 - 5/14	100		
5/19 - 5/25	86	5/17 - 5/23	70	5/16 - 5/22	76	5/15 - 5/21	74		
5/26 - 6/1	67	5/24 - 5/30	86	5/23 - 5/29	87	5/22 - 5/28	89		
6/2 - 6/8	67	5/31 - 6/6	84	5/30 - 6/5	63	5/29 - 6/4	92		
6/9 - 6/15	68	6/7 - 6/13	66	6/6 - 6/12	75	6/5 - 6/11	78		
6/16 - 6/22	63	6/14 - 6/20	76	6/13 - 6/19	86	6/12 - 6/18	78		
6/23 - 6/29	75	6/21 - 6/27	81	6/20 - 6/26	68	6/19 - 6/25	78		
6/30 - 7/6	55	6/28 - 7/4	76	6/27 - 7/3	55	6/26 - 7/2	107		
7/7 - 7/13	61	7/5 - 7/11	74	7/4 - 7/10	70	7/3 - 7/9	82		
7/14 - 7/20	58	7/12 - 7/18	84	7/11 - 7/17	69	7/10 - 7/16	104		
7/21 - 7/27	57	7/19 - 7/25	81	7/18 - 7/24	72	7/17 - 7/23	92		
7/28 - 8/3	59	7/26 - 8/1	78	7/25 - 7/31	80	7/24 - 7/30	94		
8/4 - 8/10	63	8/2 - 8/8	68	8/1 - 8/7	84	7/31 - 8/6	94		
8/11 - 8/17	66	8/9 - 8/15	84	8/8 - 8/14	82	8/7 - 8/13	71		
8/18 - 8/24	69	8/16 - 8/22	106	8/15 - 8/21	76	8/14 - 8/20	77		
8/25 - 8/31	79	8/23 - 8/29	93	8/22 - 8/28	97	8/21 - 8/27	77		
9/1 - 9/7	46	8/30 - 9/5	92	8/29 - 9/4	88	8/28 - 9/3	79		
9/8 - 9/14	65	9/6 - 9/12	92	9/5 - 9/11	115	9/4 - 9/10	95		
9/15 - 9/21	60	9/13 - 9/19	106	9/12 - 9/18	106	9/11 - 9/17	79		
9/22 - 9/28	71	9/20 - 9/26	82	9/19 - 9/25	93	9/18 - 9/24	78		
9/29 - 10/5	64	9/27 - 10/3	83	9/26 - 10/2	87	9/25 - 10/1	85		
10/6 - 10/12	56	10/4 - 10/10	65	10/3 - 10/9	98	10/2 - 10/8	82		
10/13 - 10/19	88	10/11 - 10/17	75	10/10 - 10/16	85	10/9 - 10/15	78		
10/20 - 10/26	75	10/18 - 10/24	81	10/17 - 10/23	94	10/16 - 10/22	86		
10/27 - 11/2	68	10/25 - 10/31	91	10/24 - 10/30	86	10/23 - 10/29	81		
11/3 - 11/9	78	11/1 - 11/7	88	10/31 - 11/6	74	10/30 - 11/5	110		
11/10 - 11/16	58	11/8 - 11/14	83	11/7 - 11/13	102	11/6 - 11/12	84		
11/17 - 11/23	55	11/15 - 11/21	123	11/14 - 11/20	80	11/13 - 11/19	111		
11/24 - 11/30	80	11/22 - 11/28	103	11/21 - 11/27	81	11/20 - 11/26	98		
12/1 - 12/7	103	11/29 - 12/5	113	11/28 - 12/4	84	11/27 - 12/3	97		
12/8 - 12/14	62	12/6 - 12/12	160	12/5 - 12/11	93	12/4 - 12/10	117		
12/15 - 12/21	68	12/13 - 12/19	195	12/12 - 12/18	99	12/11 - 12/17	112		
12/22 - 12/28	72	12/20 - 12/26	236	12/19 - 12/25	110	12/18 - 12/24	110		
12/29 - 12/31	36	12/27 - 12/31	176	12/26 - 12/31	74	12/25 - 12/31	125		
Grand Total	3609	Grand Total	4995	Grand Total	5192	Grand Total	4861		

Weekly Cases		Weekly Cases		Weekly Cases		Weekly Cases	
COVID-19	2020	COVID-19	2021	COVID-19	2022	COVID-19	2023
1/1-4	0	1/1-2	51	1/1	2	1/1 - 1/7	20
1/5-11	0	1/3-9	136	1/2-8	25	1/8 - 1/14	15
1/12-18	0	1/10-16	152	1/9-15	32	1/15 - 1/21	16
1/19-25	0	1/17-23	130	1/16-22	60	1/15 - 1/28	12
1/26-2/1	0	1/24-30	100	1/23-29	58	1/29 - 1/31	2
2/2-8	1	1/31-2/6	93	1/30-2/5	45	Grand Total	65
2/9-15	0	2/7-13	65	2/6-12	39		
2/16-22	1	2/14-20	47	2/13-19	35		
2/23-29	0	2/21-27	35	2/20-26	31		
3/1-7	1	2/28-3/6	22	2/27-3/5	15		
3/8-14	3	3/7-13	23	3/6-12	22		
3/15-21	11	3/14-20	11	3/13-19	4		
3/22-28	19	3/21-27	12	3/20-26	11		
3/29-4/4	14	3/28-4/3	10	3/27-4/2	11		
4/5-11	20	4/4-10	14	4/3-9	1		
4/12-18	27	4/11-17	4	4/10-16	9		
4/19-25	16	4/18-24	5	4/17-23	5		
4/26-5/2	15	4/25-5/1	6	4/24-30	8		
5/3-9	10	5/2-8	8	5/1-5/7	2		
5/10-16	7	5/9-15	2	5/8-5/14	10		
5/17-23	1	5/16-22	3	5/15-5/21	8		
5/21-30	2	5/23-29	2	5/22-5/28	17		
5/31-6/6	7	5/30-6/5	2	5/29-6/4	12		
6/7-13	3	6/6-6/12	6	6/5-11	14		
6/14-20	1	6/13-19	3	6/12-18	18		
6/21-27	5	6/20-6/26	3	6/19-25	15		
6/28-7/4	7	6/27-7/3	2	6/26-7/2	22		
7/5-11	12	7/4-10	2	7/3-9	18		
7/12-18	15	7/11-17	3	7/10-16	24		
7/19-25	12	7/18-24	6	7/17-23	27		
7/26-8/1	15	7/25-31	6	7/24-30	22		
8/2-8	9	8/1-7	4	7/31-8/6	36		
8/9-15	12	8/8-14	14	8/7-13	15		
8/16-22	19	8/15-21	15	8/14-20	17		
8/23-29	21	8/22-28	23	8/21-27	8		
8/30-9/5	12	8/29-9/4	21	8/28-9/3	14		
9/6-12	14	9/5-11	31	9/4-10	16		
9/13-19	20	9/12-18	25	9/11-17	12		
9/20-26	13	9/19-25	11	9/18-24	10		
9/27-10/3	15	9/26-10/2	11	9/25-10/1	11		
10/4-10	12	10/3-9	14	10/2-8	11		
10/11-17	10	10/10-16	9	10/9-15	6		
10/18-24	16	10/17-23	11	10/16-22	5		
10/25-31	10	10/24-30	11	10/23-29	7		
11/1-7	20	10/31-11/6	11	10/30-11/5	11		
11/8-14	11	11/7-13	14	11/6-11/12	9		
11/15-21	22	11/14-20	12	11/13-11/19	13		
11/22-28	22	11/14-27	10	11/20-11/26	12		
11/29-12/5	45	11/28-12/4	17	11/27 - 12/3	14		
12/6-12	73	12/5-11	8	12/4 - 10	23		
12/13-19	108	12/12-18	7	12/11 - 17	18		
12/20-26	140	12/19-25	16	12/18 - 24	15		
12/27-31	117	12/26-31	9	12/25 - 31	20		
Grand Total	966	Grand Total	1268	Grand Total	925		

cc: Chief Board Aides

James Williams, County Counsel

Greta Hansen, Chief Operating Officer

Tiffany Lennear, Clerk of the Board of Supervisors

Mary Ann Barrous, Agenda Review Administrator