

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

SUBJECT: Off-Agenda Report: Number 37
Updated Information on Medical Examiner-Coroner Death Notices

DATE: April 17, 2023

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

Fentanyl fatalities from Jan 1, 2015 – March 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	156*	*(3 case=San Benito)
2023	9*	*(1 case=San Benito)
Total	470*	

**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

The Medical Examiner-Coroner reported its first fatality from combined xylazine (tranq), fentanyl, 4-ANPP and olanzapine. The Medical Examiner-Coroner along with other County partners issued a statement and educational outreach to the public regarding the xylazine death on April 3, 2023.

Fentanyl continues to take many lives in Santa Clara County. As seen in the table above, the number of fentanyl deaths recorded in 2022 by the Medical Examiner-Coroner surpasses the number of fatalities for 2021 and prior years. The Medical Examiner-Coroner does not foresee this trend decreasing. Most fentanyl drug deaths in Santa Clara County continue to involve fentanyl combined with other drugs, including methamphetamine. We continue to certify deaths

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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)

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*) and the Medical Examiner-Coroner predicts higher caseloads will continue post pandemic.

Summary tables are provided for your convenience:

Count of Decedent					
Month	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Jan	364	353	965	528	406
Feb	303	354	543	470	405
Mar	325	405	421	375	402
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	1213

Weekly Case		Weekly Case		Weekly Case		Weekly Case		Weekly Case	
Week	2019	Week	2020	Week	2021	Week	2022	Week	2022
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	92
1/20 - 1/26	74	1/19 - 1/25	81	1/17 - 1/23	210	1/16 - 1/22	139	1/15 - 1/28	92
1/27 - 2/2	76	1/26 - 2/1	76	1/24 - 1/30	186	1/23 - 1/29	131	1/29 - 2/4	84
2/3 - 2/9	60	2/2 - 2/8	94	1/31 - 2/6	172	1/30 - 2/5	133	2/5 - 2/11	110
2/10 - 2/16	83	2/9 - 2/15	85	2/7 - 2/13	159	2/6 - 2/12	122	2/12 - 2/18	104
2/17 - 2/23	87	2/16 - 2/22	84	2/14 - 2/20	129	2/13 - 2/19	115	2/19 - 2/25	102
2/24 - 3/2	80	2/23 - 2/29	79	2/21 - 2/27	104	2/20 - 2/26	113	2/26 - 3/4	102
3/3 - 3/9	68	3/1 - 3/7	84	2/28 - 3/6	81	2/27 - 3/5	89	3/5 - 3/11	99
3/10 - 3/16	76	3/8 - 3/14	82	3/7 - 3/13	111	3/6 - 3/12	89	3/12 - 3/18	95
3/17 - 3/23	80	3/15 - 3/21	97	3/14 - 3/20	73	3/13 - 3/19	78	3/19 - 3/25	85
3/24 - 3/30	66	3/22 - 3/28	98	3/21 - 3/27	120	3/20 - 3/26	76	3/26 - 3/31	65
3/31 - 4/6	55	3/29 - 4/4	100	3/28 - 4/3	71	3/27 - 4/2	88	Grand Total	1213
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	96		
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	126		
Grand Total	3609	Grand Total	4995	Grand Total	5192	Grand Total	4861		

Weekly Cases

COVID-19	2020
1/1-4	0
1/5-11	0
1/12-18	0
1/19-25	0
1/26-2/1	0
2/2-8	1
2/9-15	0
2/16-22	1
2/23-29	0
3/1-7	1
3/8-14	3
3/15-21	11
3/22-28	19
3/29-4/4	14
4/5-11	20
4/12-18	27
4/19-25	16
4/26-5/2	15
5/3-9	10
5/10-16	7
5/17-23	1
5/21-30	2
5/31-6/6	7
6/7-13	3
6/14-20	1
6/21-27	5
6/28-7/4	7
7/5-11	12
7/12-18	15
7/19-25	12
7/26-8/1	15
8/2-8	9
8/9-15	12
8/16-22	19
8/23-29	21
8/30-9/5	12
9/6-12	14
9/13-19	20
9/20-26	13
9/27-10/3	15
10/4-10	12
10/11-17	10
10/18-24	16
10/25-31	10
11/1-7	20
11/8-14	11
11/15-21	22
11/22-28	22
11/29-12/5	45
12/6-12	73
12/13-19	108
12/20-26	140
12/27-31	117
Grand Total	966

Weekly Cases

COVID-19	2021
1/1-2	51
1/3-9	136
1/10-16	152
1/17-23	130
1/24-30	100
1/31-2/6	93
2/7-13	65
2/14-20	47
2/21-27	35
2/28-3/6	22
3/7-13	23
3/14-20	11
3/21-27	12
3/28-4/3	10
4/4-10	14
4/11-17	4
4/18-24	5
4/25-5/1	6
5/2-8	8
5/9-15	2
5/16-22	3
5/23-29	2
5/30-6/5	2
6/6-6/12	6
6/13-19	3
6/20-6/26	3
6/27-7/3	2
7/4-10	2
7/11-17	3
7/18-24	6
7/25-31	6
8/1-7	4
8/8-14	14
8/15-21	15
8/22-28	23
8/29-9/4	21
9/5-11	31
9/12-18	25
9/19-25	11
9/26-10/2	11
10/3-9	14
10/10-16	9
10/17-23	11
10/24-30	11
10/31-11/6	11
11/7-13	14
11/14-20	12
11/14-27	10
11/28-12/4	17
12/5-11	8
12/12-18	7
12/19-25	16
12/26-31	9
Grand Total	1268

Weekly Cases

COVID-19	2022
1/1	2
1/2-8	25
1/9-15	32
1/16-22	60
1/23-29	58
1/30-2/5	45
2/6-12	39
2/13-19	35
2/20-26	31
2/27-3/5	15
3/6-12	22
3/13-19	4
3/20-26	11
3/27-4/2	11
4/3-9	1
4/10-16	9
4/17-23	5
4/24-30	8
5/1-5/7	2
5/8-5/14	10
5/15-5/21	8
5/22-5/28	17
5/29-6/4	12
6/5-11	14
6/12-18	18
6/19-25	15
6/26-7/2	22
7/3-9	18
7/10-16	24
7/17-23	27
7/24-30	22
7/31-8/6	36
8/7-13	15
8/14-20	17
8/21-27	8
8/28-9/3	14
9/4-10	16
9/11-17	12
9/18-24	10
9/25-10/1	11
10/2-8	11
10/9-15	6
10/16-22	6
10/23-29	7
10/30-11/5	11
11/6-11/12	9
11/13-11/19	13
11/20-11/26	12
11/27-12/3	15
12/4-10	23
12/11-17	20
12/18-24	16
12/25-31	20
Grand Total	930

Weekly Cases

COVID-19	2023
1/1 - 1/7	21
1/8 - 1/14	15
1/15 - 1/21	16
1/15 - 1/28	12
1/29 - 2/4	11
2/5-2/11	16
2/12-2/18	18
2/19-2/25	20
2/26-3/4	9
3/5-3/11	19
3/12-3/18	8
3/19-3/25	12
3/26-3/31	3
Grand Total	180

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