



**ERIE COUNTY MEDICAL  
EXAMINER'S OFFICE**

**ANNUAL REPORT  
2013**

*501 Kensington Avenue  
Buffalo, NY 14214  
Telephone: 716.961.7591  
Fax: 716.961.7581*

## INTRODUCTION

In 2013, 2230 cases were reported to the Erie County Medical Examiner’s Office, excluding out of county cases. Data were compiled by *manner of death, biological sex, age, race, and month of the year* for deaths in Erie County, New York falling under the jurisdiction of the Erie County Medical Examiner’s Office (later referred to as ECMEO) in 2013. The manner of each death is classified as one of the following: Natural, Accident, Homicide, Suicide or Undetermined. Refer to **Table 1** below for mode/cause classifications for each manner of death. Manner of death classification follows “A Guide for Manner of Death Classification” issued by the National Association of Medical Examiners (NAME) in 2002.<sup>1</sup> The following definitions are verbatim from that document:

- Natural deaths are due solely to disease and/or the aging process.
- Accident applies when an injury or poisoning causes death and there is little or no evidence that injury or poisoning occurred with intent to harm or cause death. In essence, the fatal outcome was unintentional.
- Suicide results from an injury or poisoning as a result of an intentional, self-inflicted act, committed to do self-harm or cause the death of one’s self.
- Homicide occurs when death results from a volitional act committed by another person, usually to cause fear, harm, or death.
- Undetermined or “could not be determined” is a classification used when the information pointing to one manner of death is no more compelling than one or more other competing manners of death in thorough consideration of all available information.

**Table 1.** Classification, category or general cause of death for each manner of death.

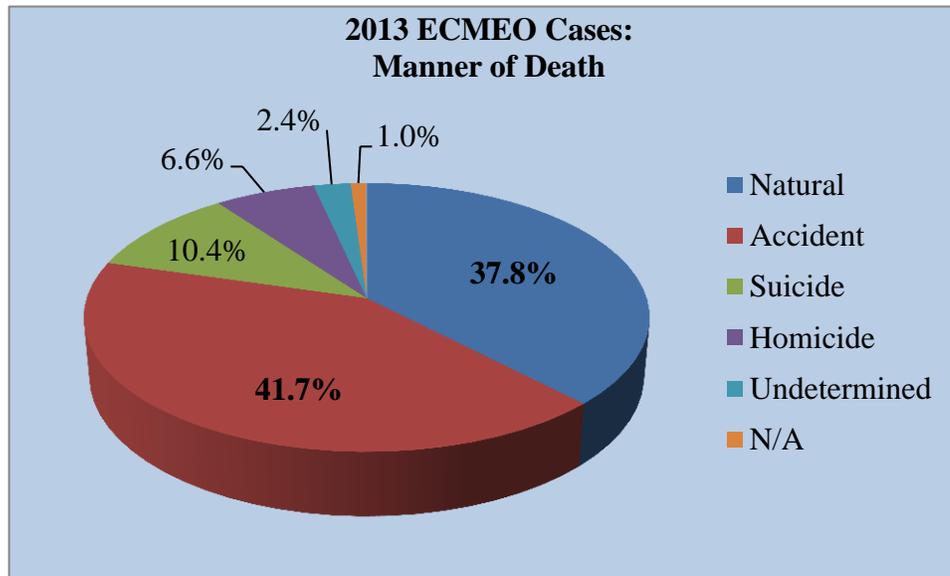
NATURAL	ACCIDENT	SUICIDE	HOMICIDE	UNDETERMINED
Cardiovascular	Transportation	Hanging	GSW*	Advanced Decomposition
Pulmonary	Falls	Drugs	Blunt Force Injury	Blunt Force Injury
Liver	GSW*	GSW*	Sharp Force Injury	Drugs
Neurological	Asphyxia	Blunt Force Injury	Strangulation/ Suffocation	Fetal Demise, SIDS, SUID
Gastrointestinal	Drugs	Sharp Force Injury	Multiple (combination)	GSW*
Infectious	Drowning	Fire/ CO**	Other	Drowning
Cancer/ Neoplastic	Fire/ CO**	Inhalation of Gases		CO**
Metabolic	Environmental	Other		Undetermined
Autoimmune	Therapeutic Complication			Therapeutic Complication
Genetic	Other			Other
Death in Infant/ Fetus				
Other				

\*GSW = firearm

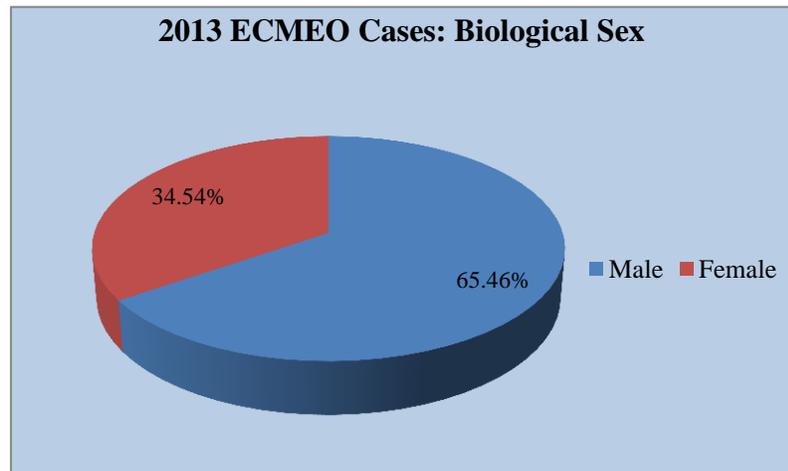
\*\*CO = carbon monoxide

<sup>1</sup> Hanzlick, Randy, MD, Hunsaker III, John C., MD, JD, Davis, Gregory J., MD, “A Guide For Manner of Death Classification,” First Edition, National Association of Medical Examiners ©

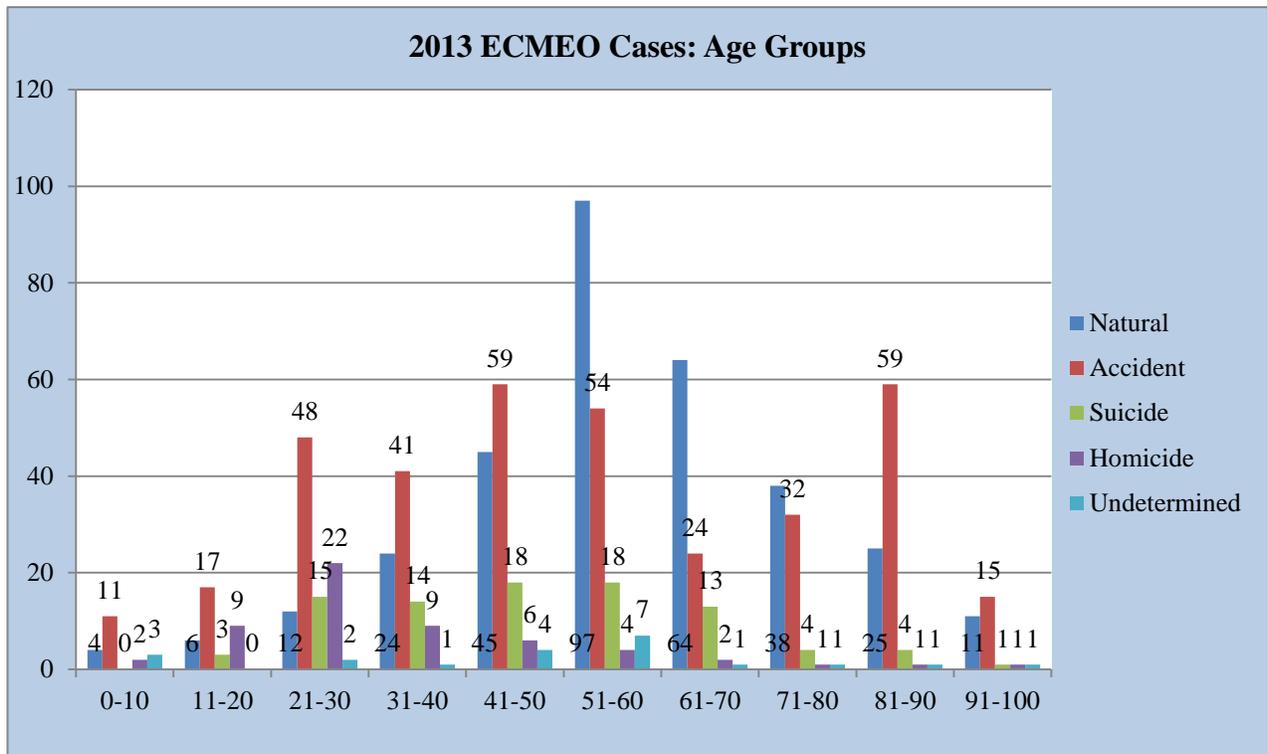
## GENERAL OVERVIEW



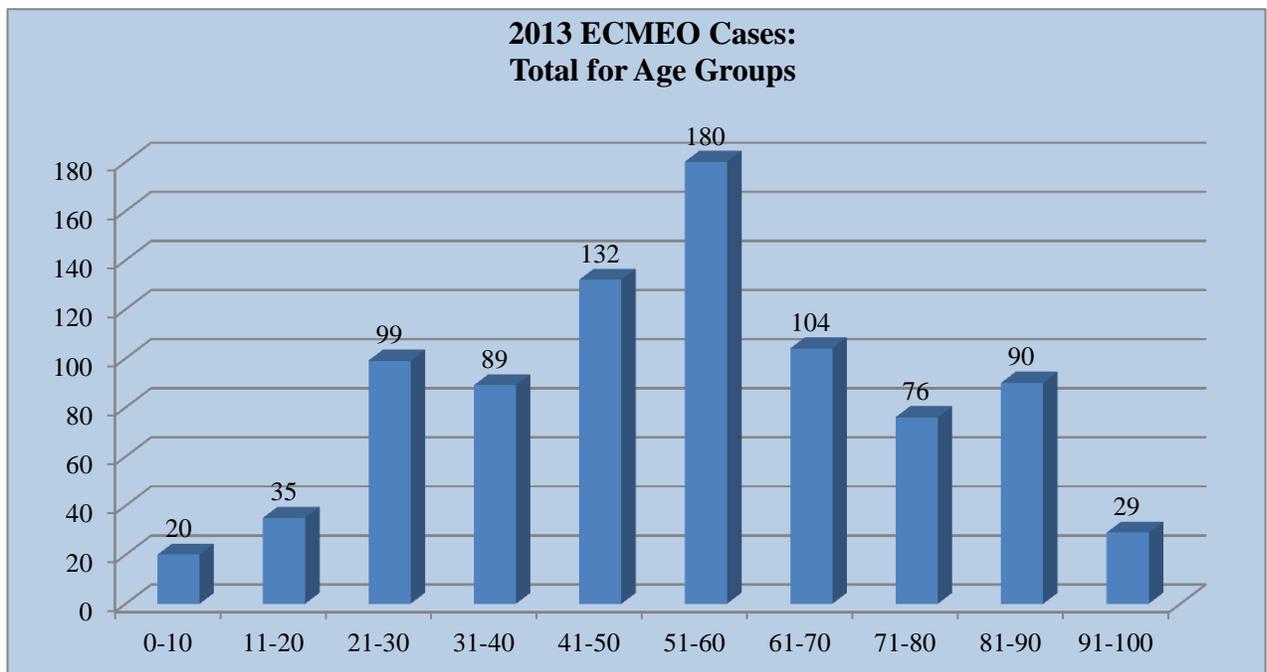
**Figure 1.** 854 cases investigated by the ECMEO in 2013, classified according to the manner of death. “N/A” cases are those which a manner of death determination is not needed or applicable (non-human remains and fetuses).



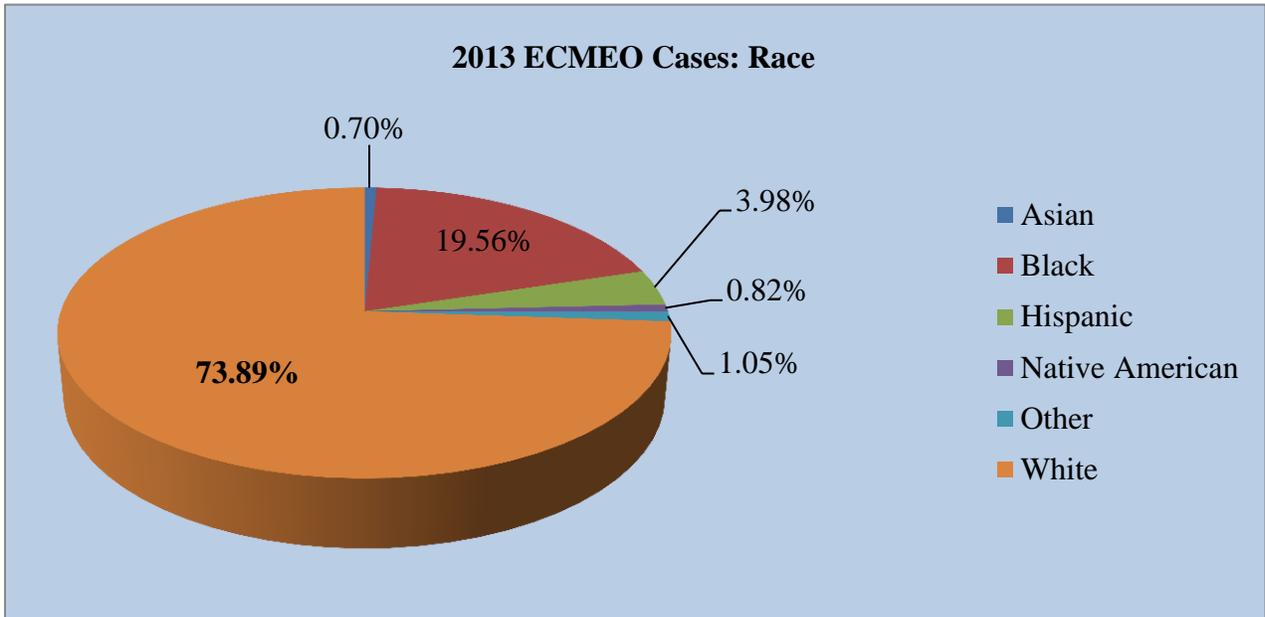
**Figure 2.** Biological sex breakdown for all Erie County ECMEO cases.



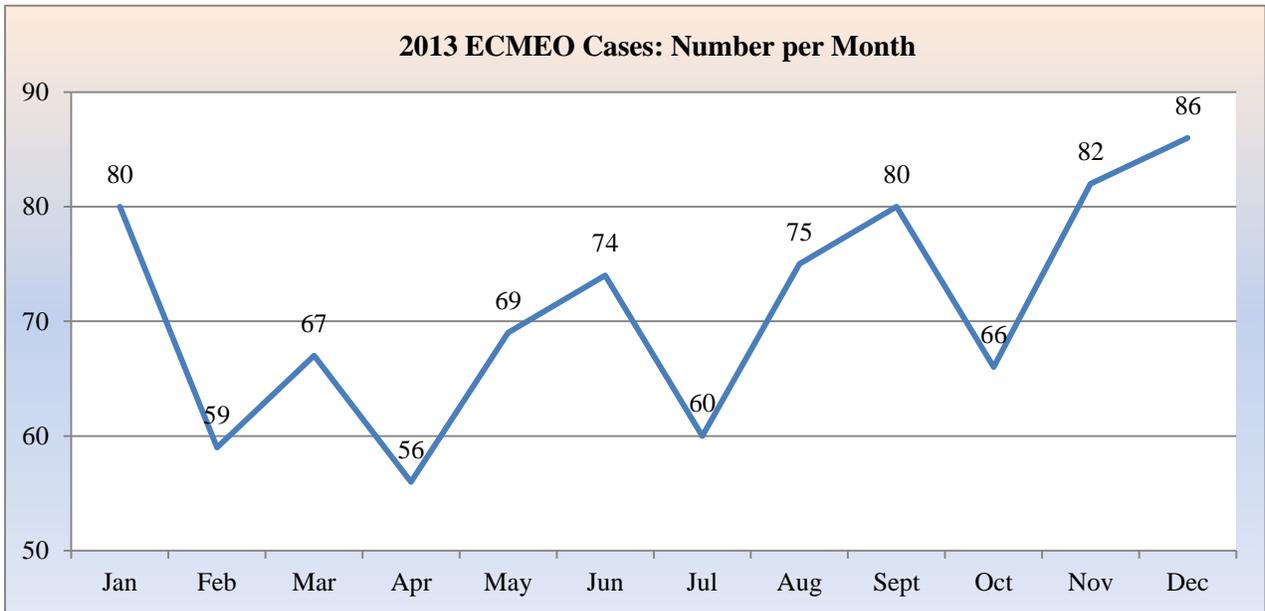
**Figure 3.** Manner of death classified by ten year age groups for all Erie County cases investigated by the ECMEO.



**Figure 4.** 854 cases investigated by age group.

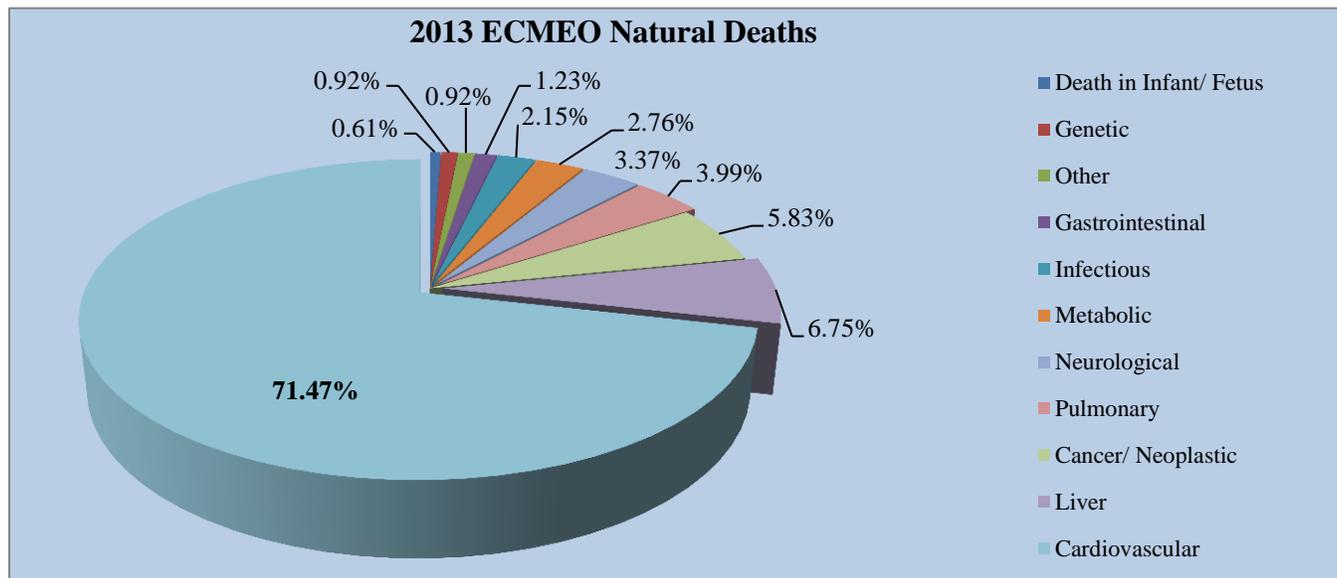


**Figure 5.** 854 cases investigated according to percent of total case load for each race group.

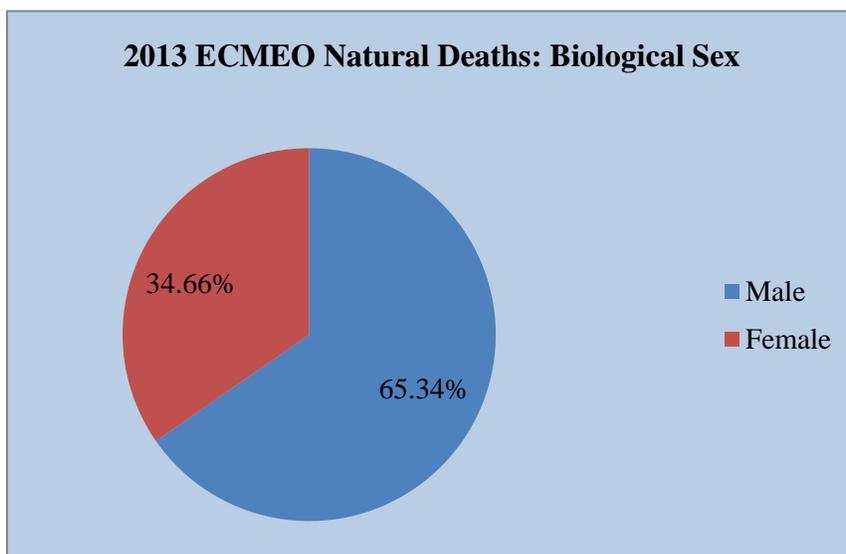


**Figure 6.** Total number of Erie County cases investigated at the ECMEO for each month of 2013.

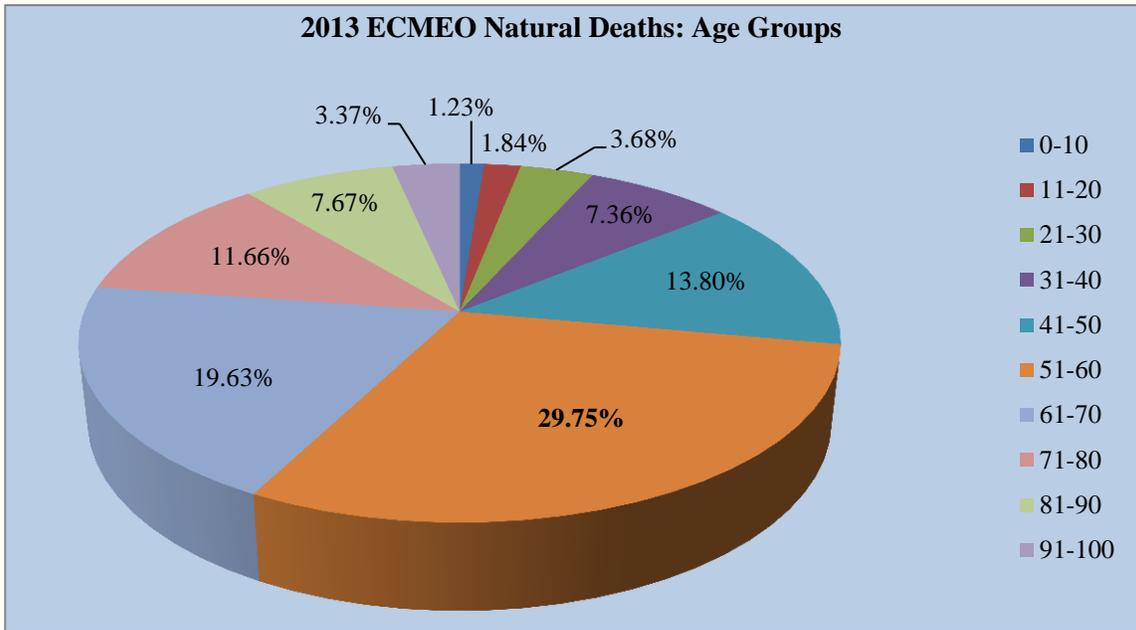
## NATURAL DEATH OVERVIEW



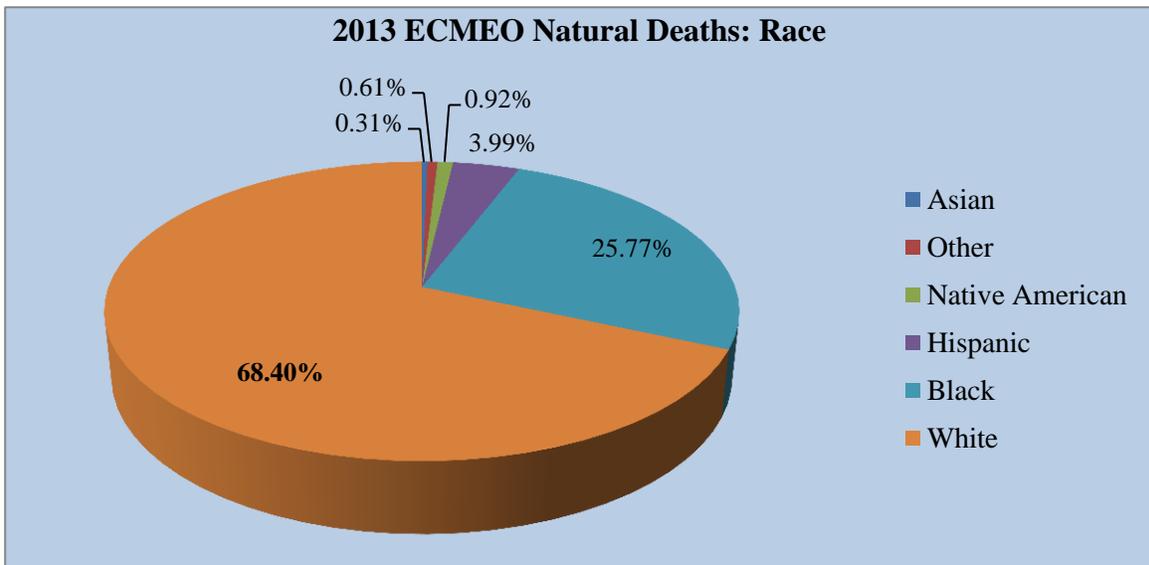
**Figure 7.** Natural deaths categorized by cause (disease type/organ system). Note that over 70% of all Natural deaths investigated were related to the cardiovascular system.



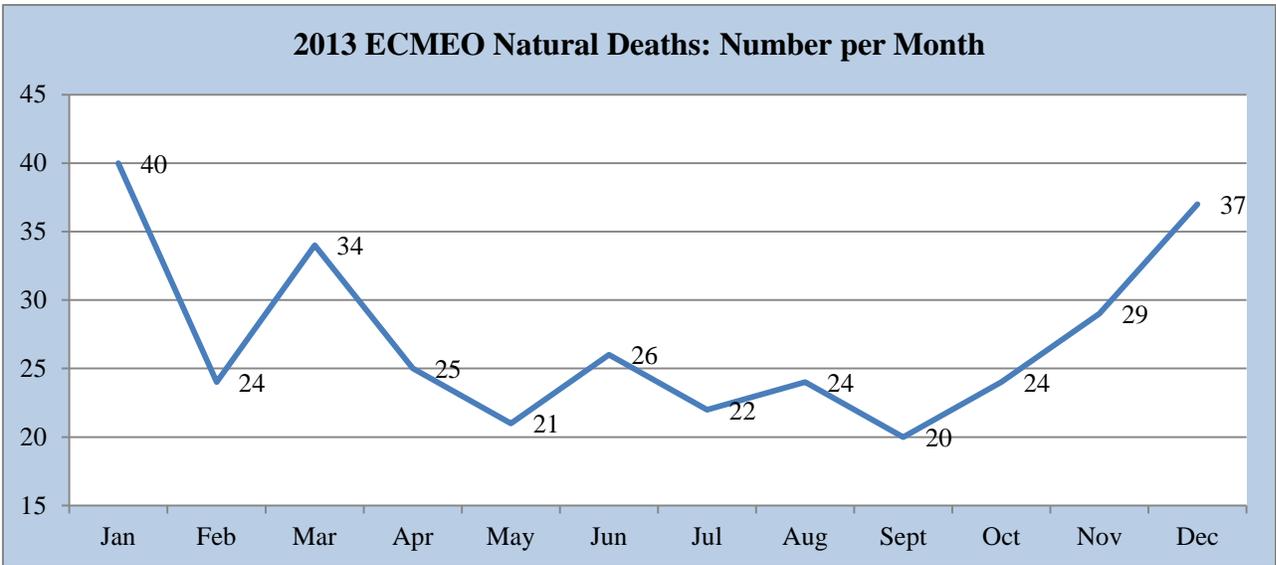
**Figure 8.** Natural deaths grouped by biological sex for all Erie County cases in 2013.



**Figure 9.** Natural deaths classified by age group.

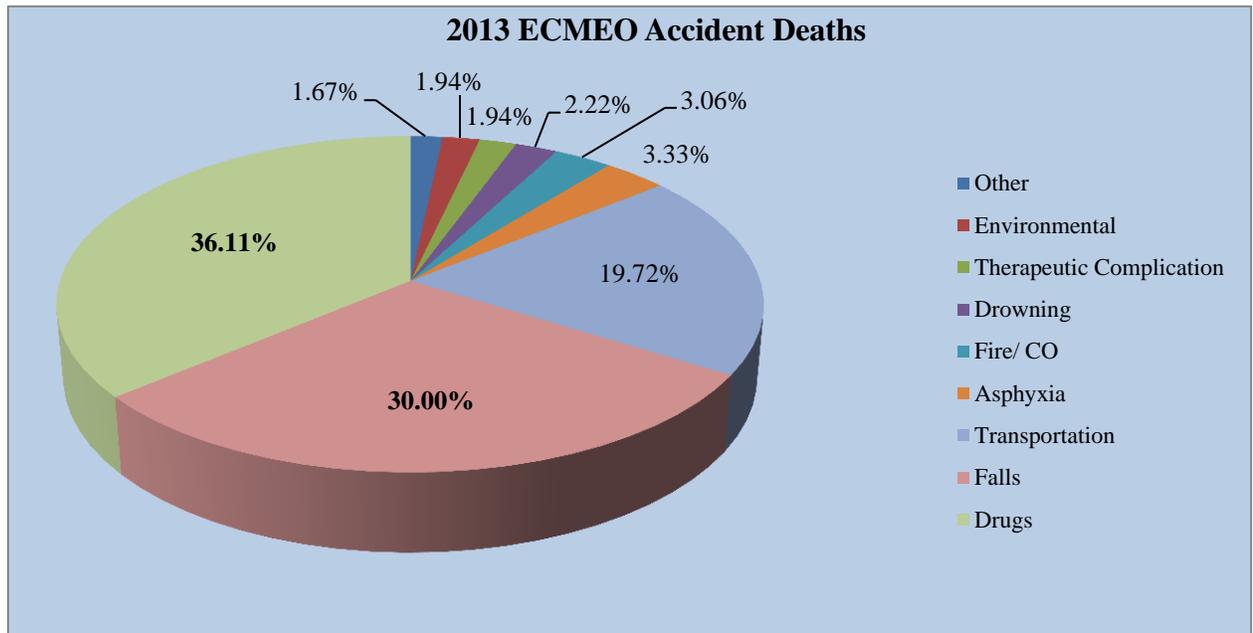


**Figure 10.** Natural deaths classified according to race.

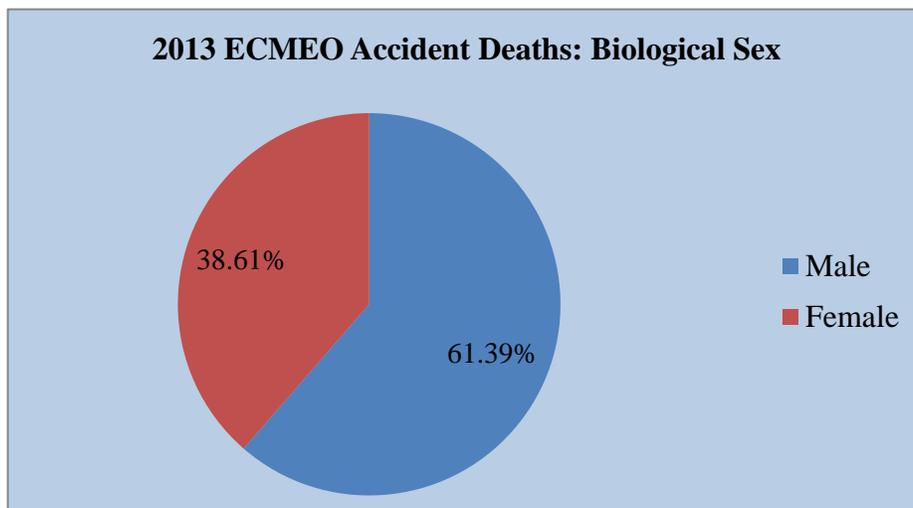


**Figure 11.** Total number of Natural deaths for each month in 2013.

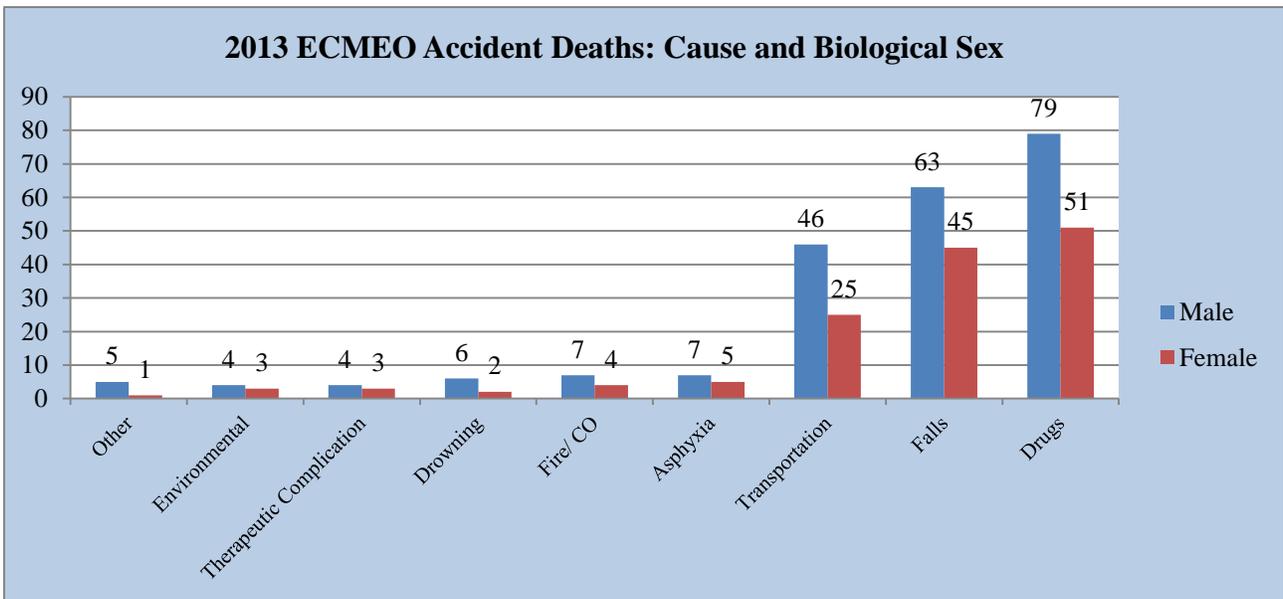
## ACCIDENT DEATH OVERVIEW



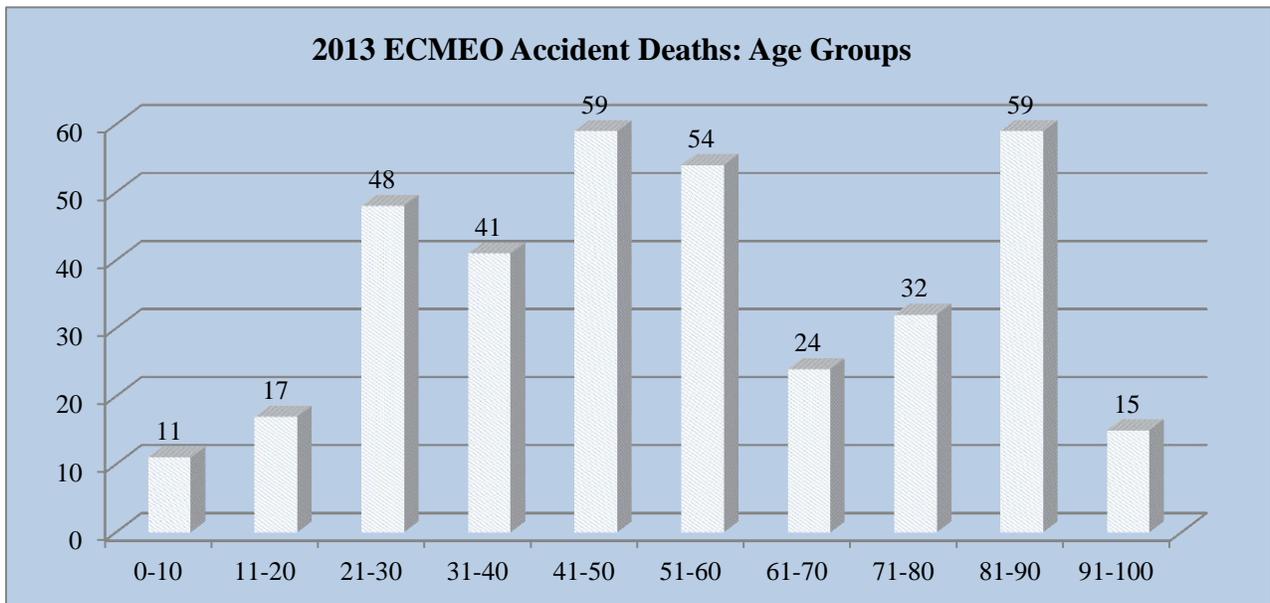
**Figure 12.** Accidental deaths classified by cause of death.



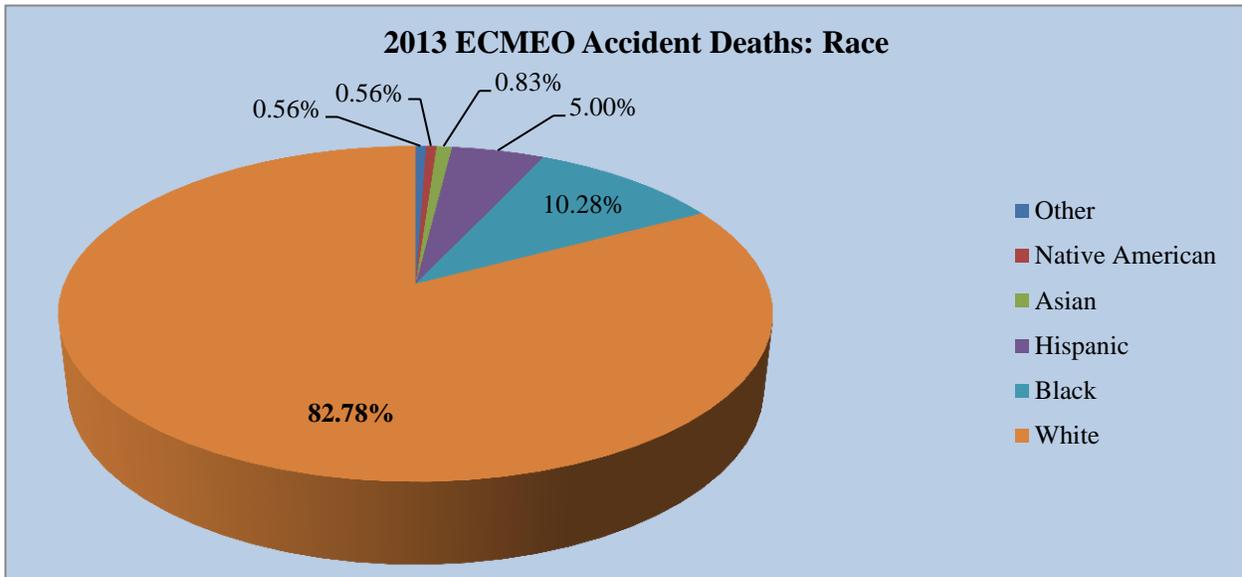
**Figure 13.** Percent of accidental deaths for males and females in 2013.



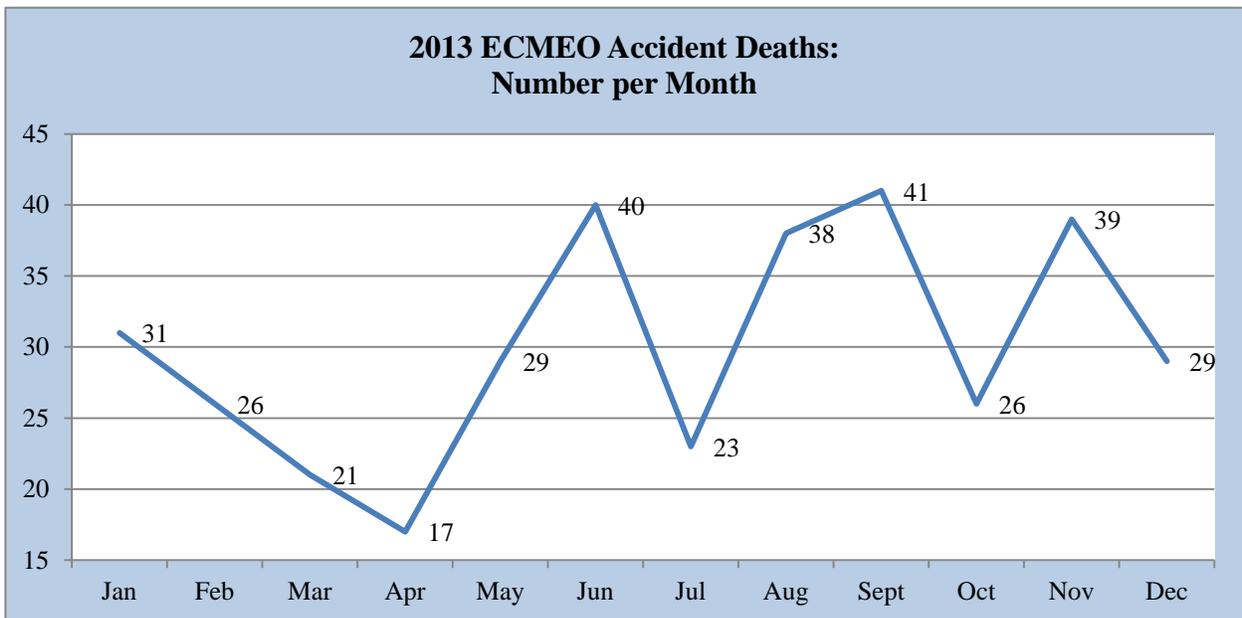
**Figure 14.** Accidental deaths grouped according to cause of death and biological sex.



**Figure 15.** Number of Accidental deaths according to age groups.

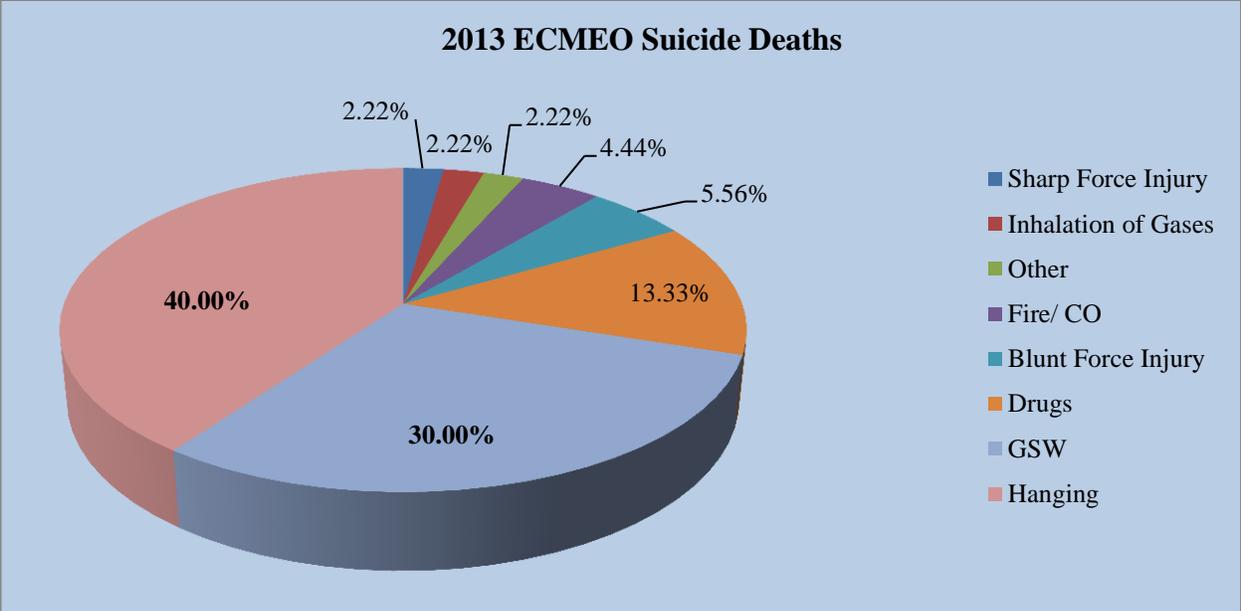


**Figure 16.** Accidental deaths in Erie County classified according to race in 2013.

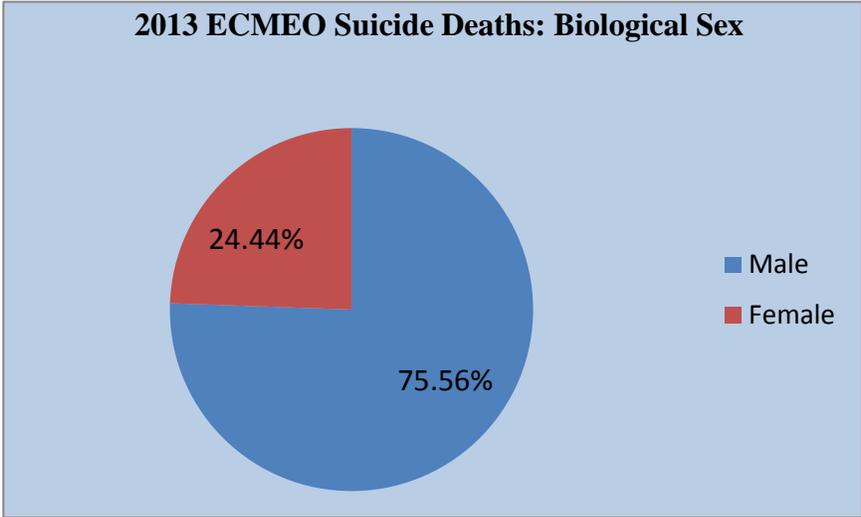


**Figure 17.** Accidental deaths in Erie County per month.

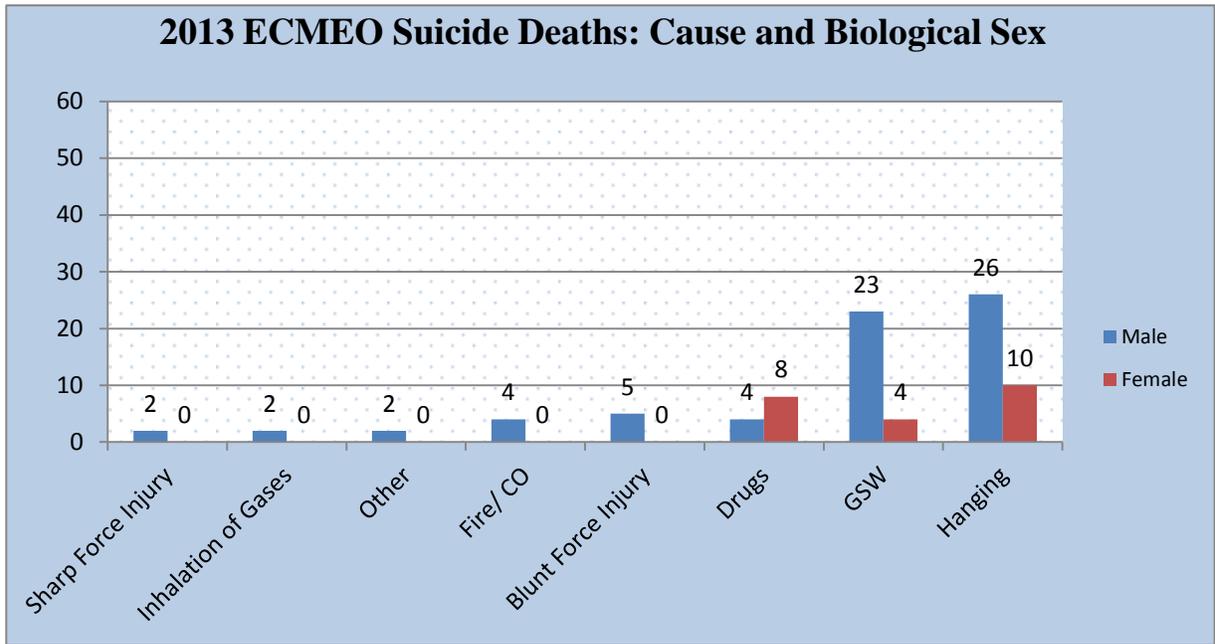
**SUICIDE DEATH OVERVIEW**



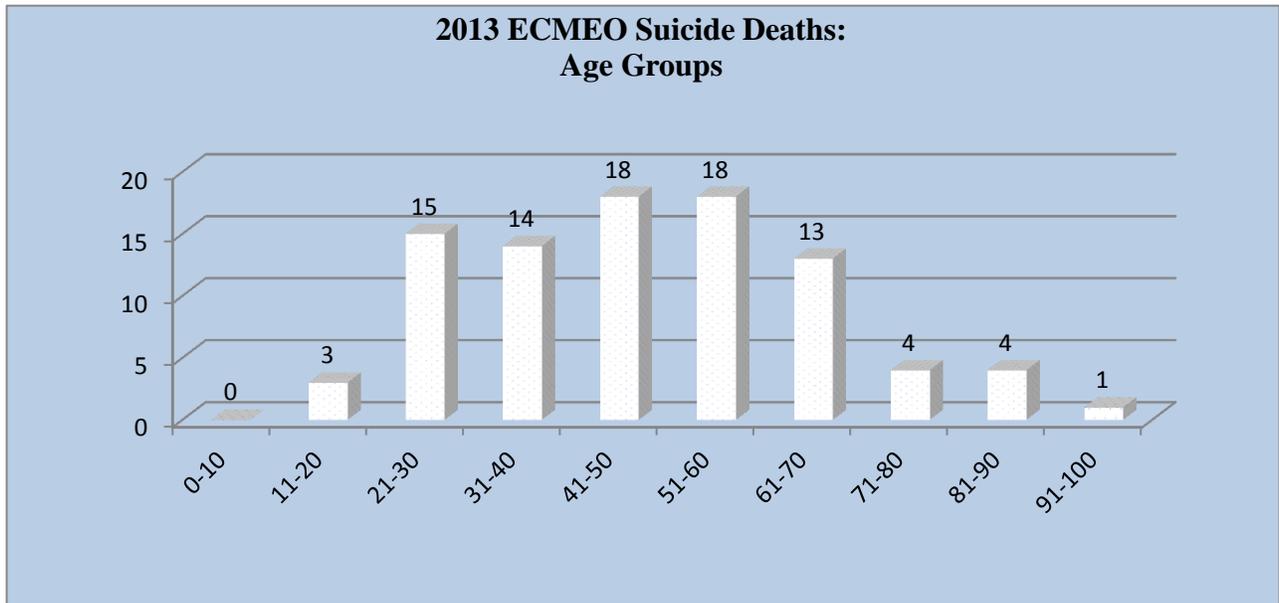
**Figure 18.** Suicide deaths in Erie County grouped according to cause of death.



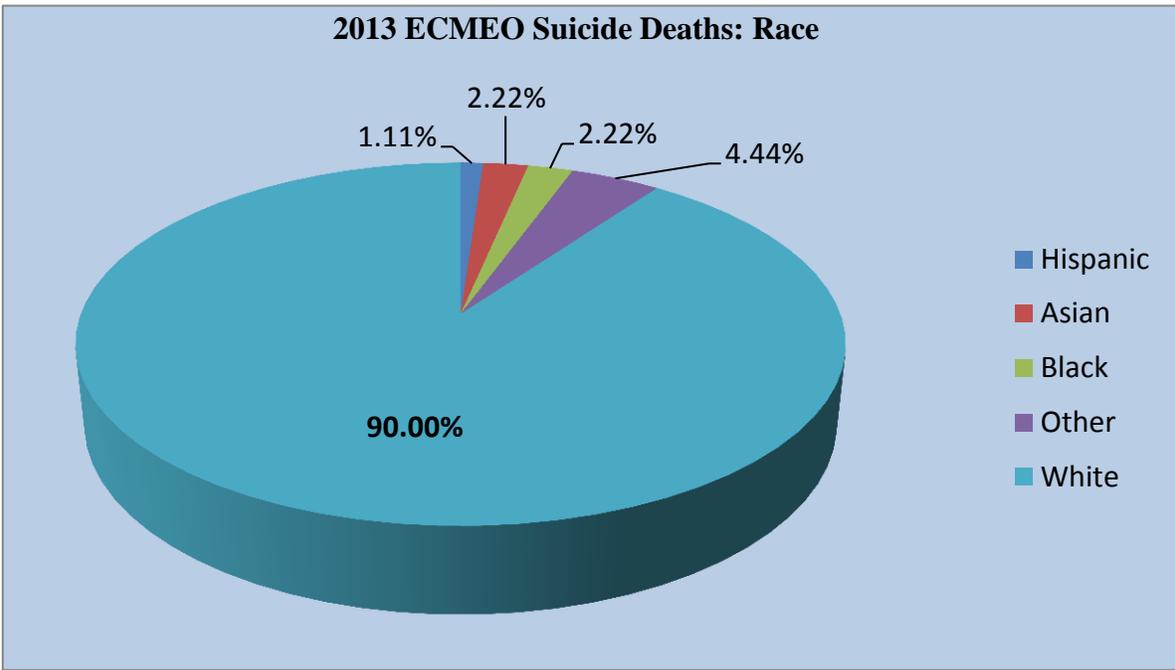
**Figure 19.** Percent of suicidal deaths grouped according to biological sex.



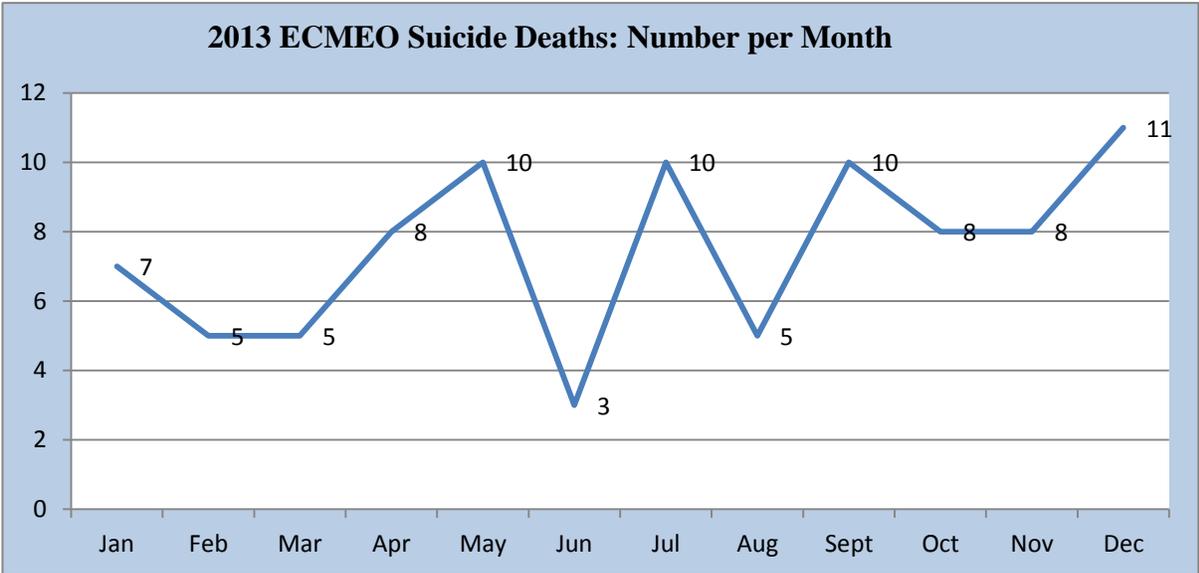
**Figure 20.** Cause of death in cases of Suicide grouped according to biological sex.



**Figure 21.** Number of suicide deaths for each age group.

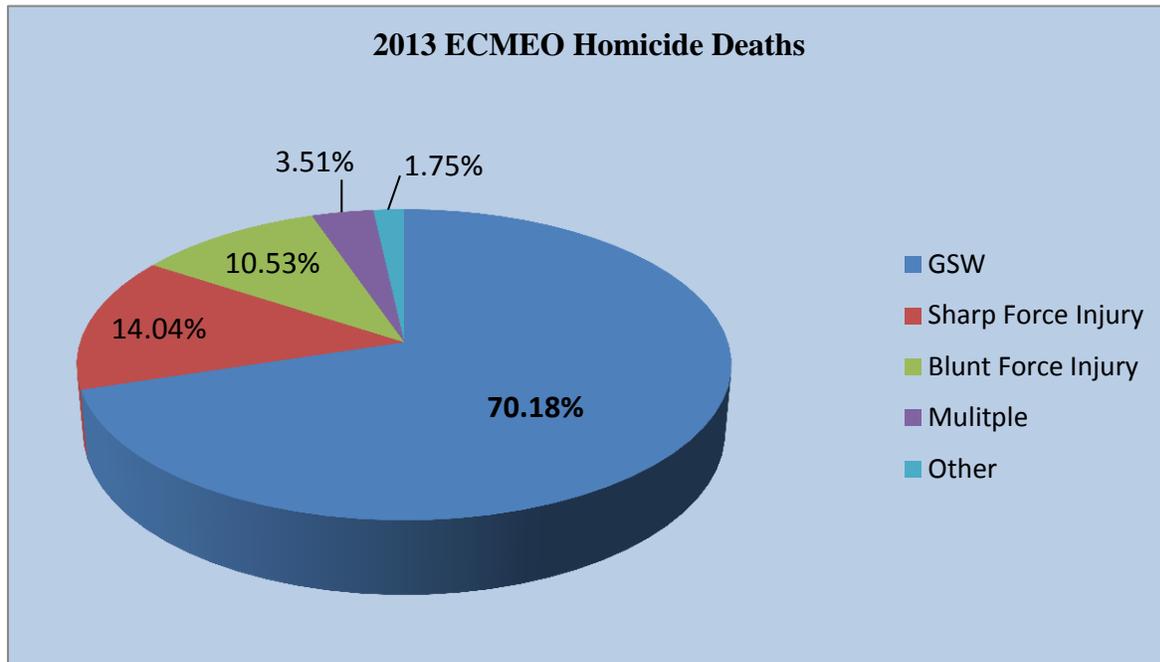


**Figure 22.** Suicides grouped according to race for 2013.

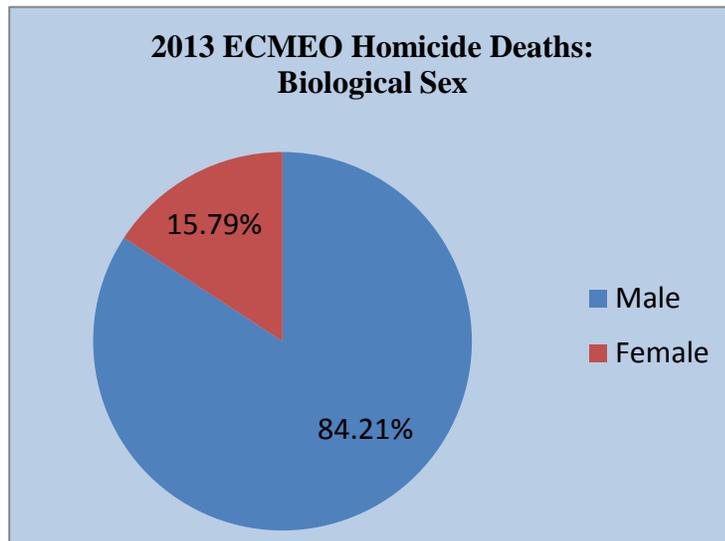


**Figure 23.** Total number of Suicides for each month of 2013.

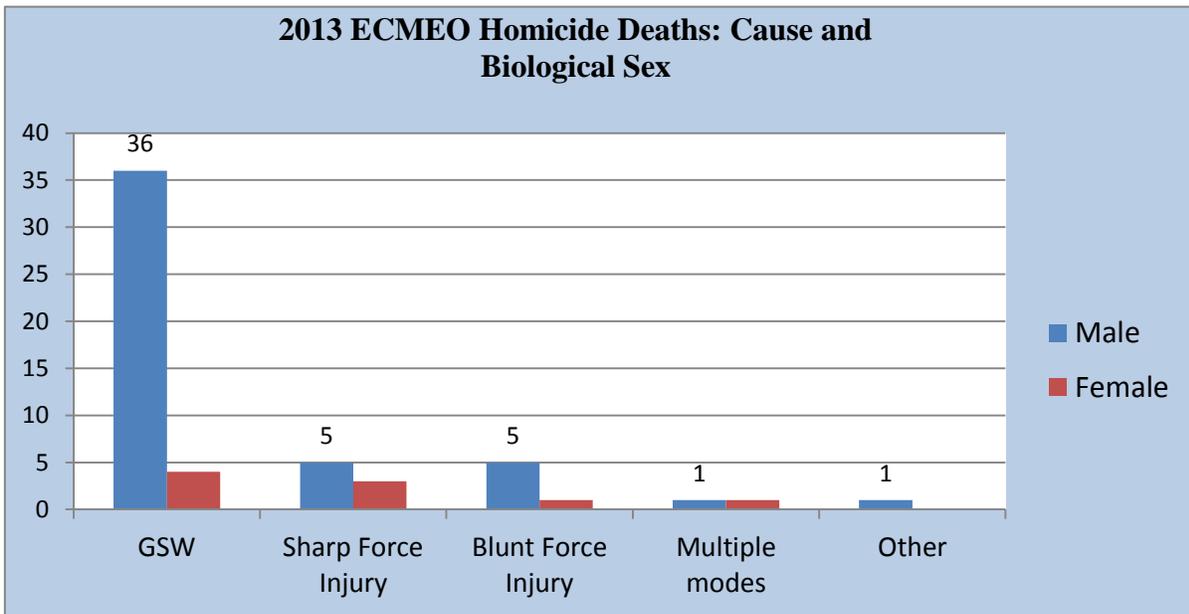
## HOMICIDE DEATH OVERVIEW



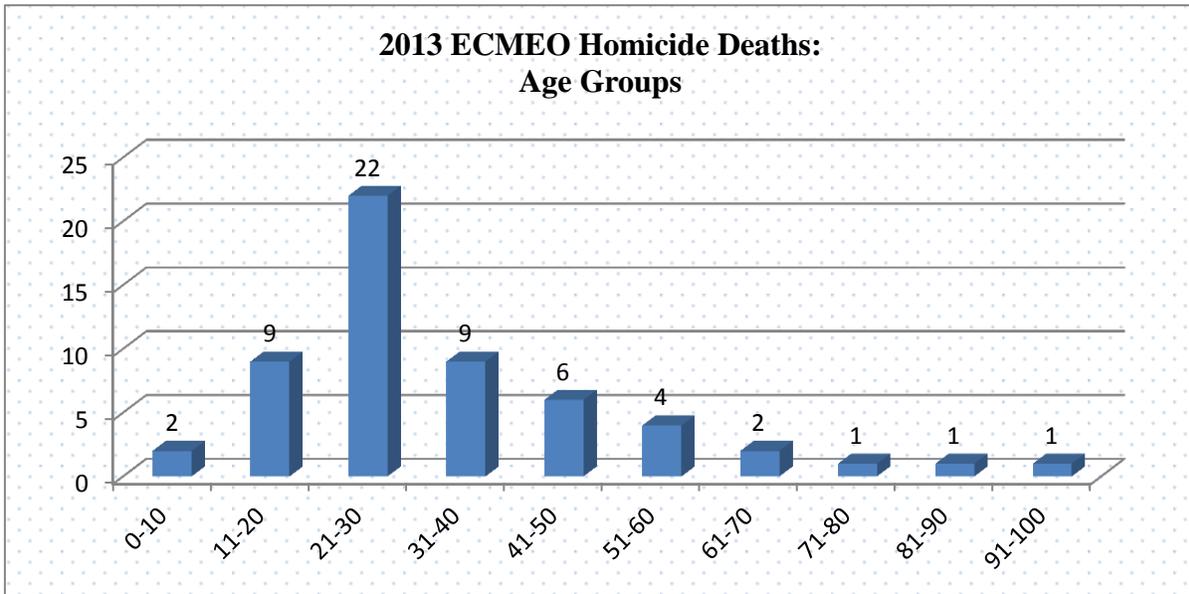
**Figure 24.** Cause of death for 2013 Erie County Homicides in 2013. Note that GSW account for the majority of cases.



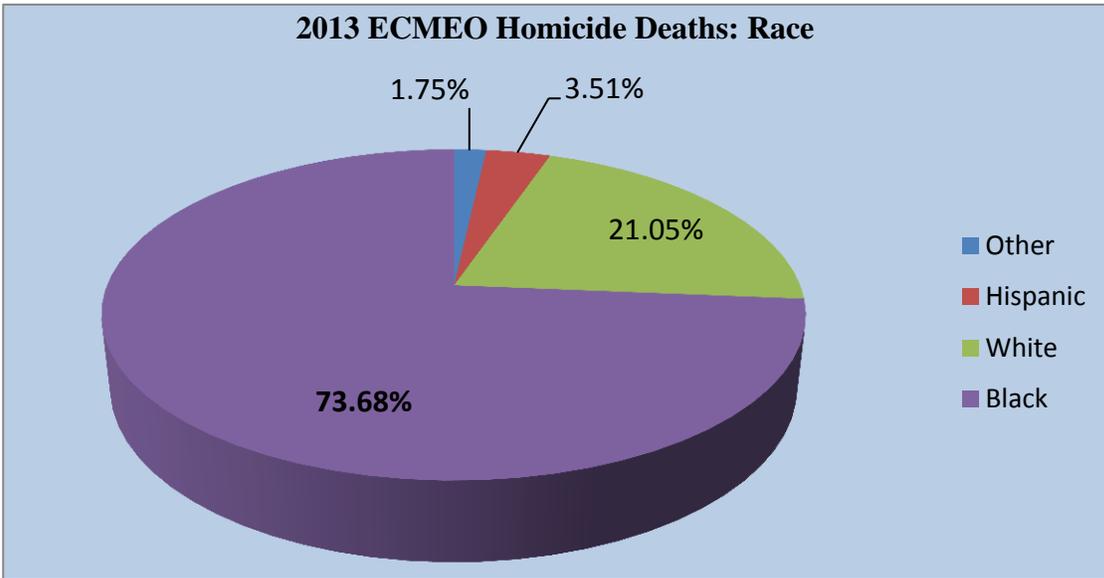
**Figure 25.** Percent of Homicide deaths for males and females.



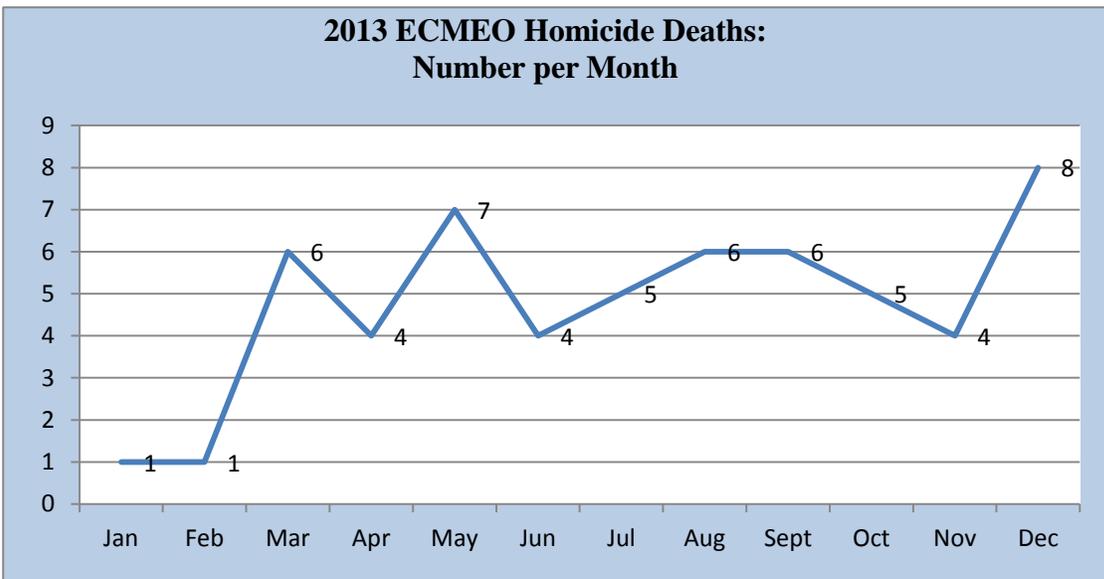
**Figure 26.** Cause of death in cases of Homicide for males and females for Erie County cases in 2013.



**Figure 27.** Total number of Homicides for each age group in 2013.

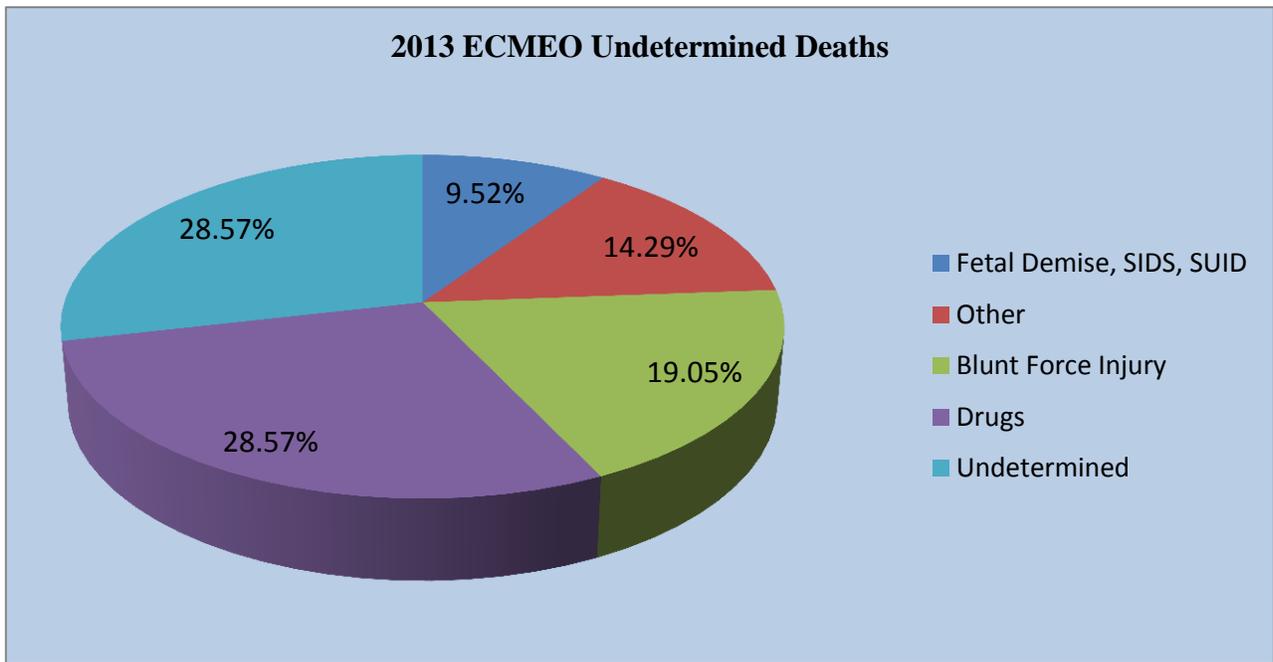


**Figure 28.** Percentage of Homicide cases according to race.

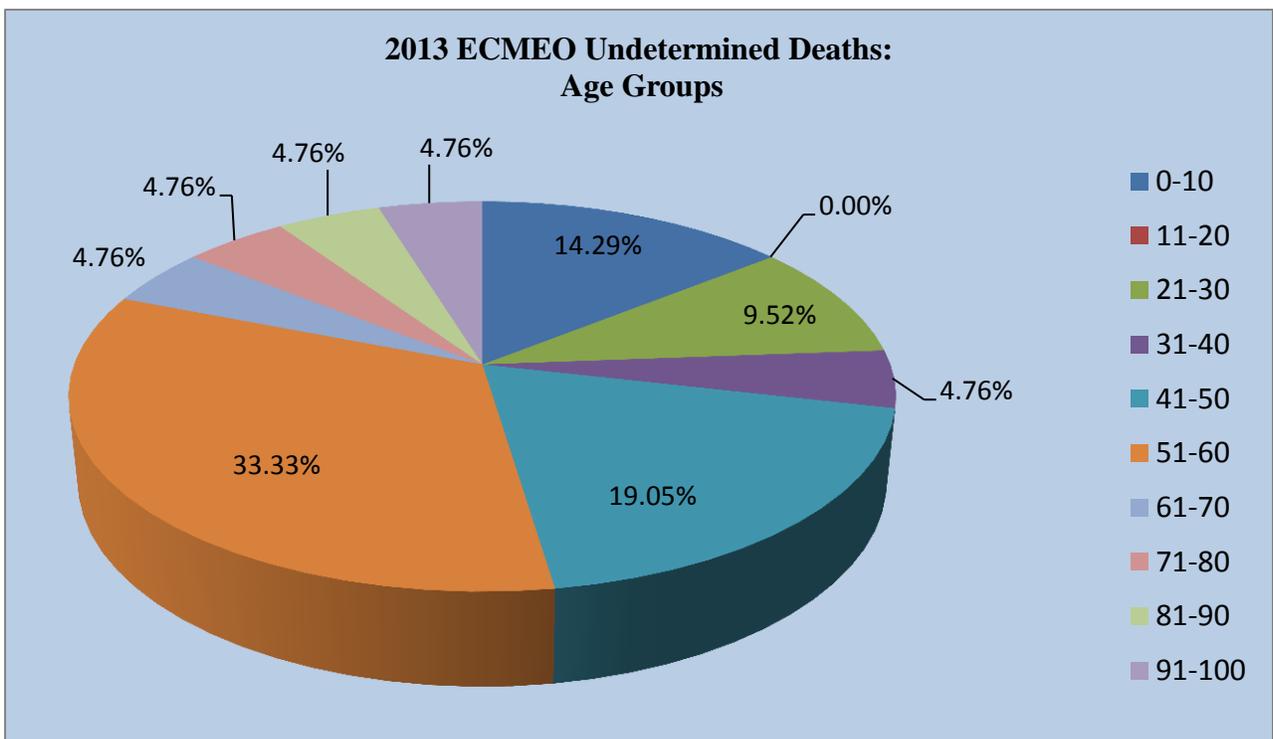


**Figure 29.** Total number of Erie County Homicides per month in 2013.

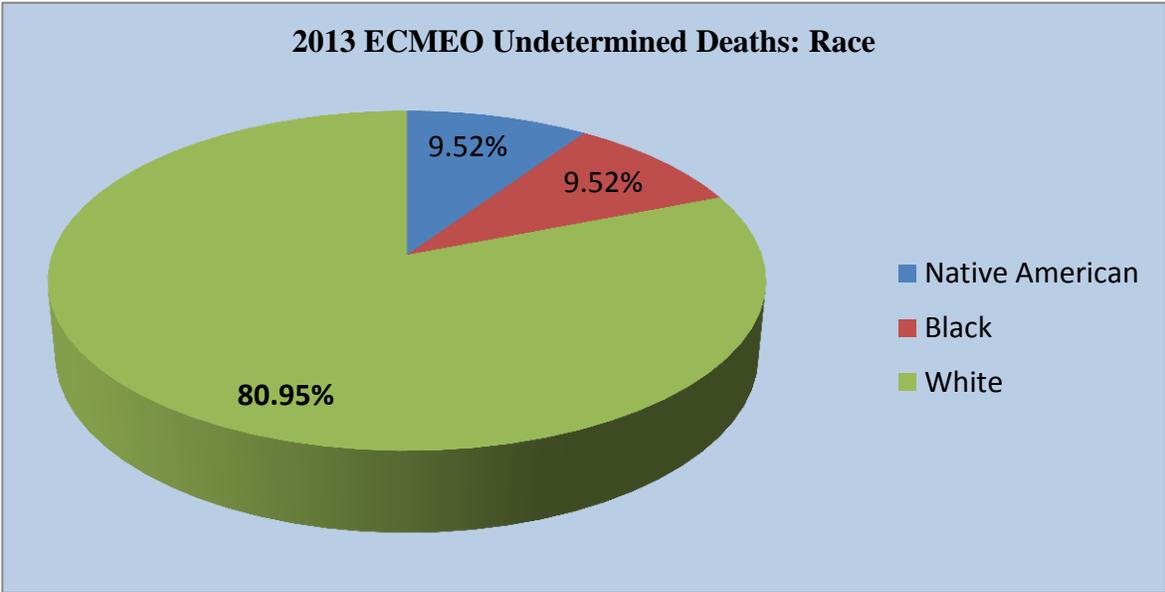
## UNDETERMINED MANNER OF DEATH OVERVIEW



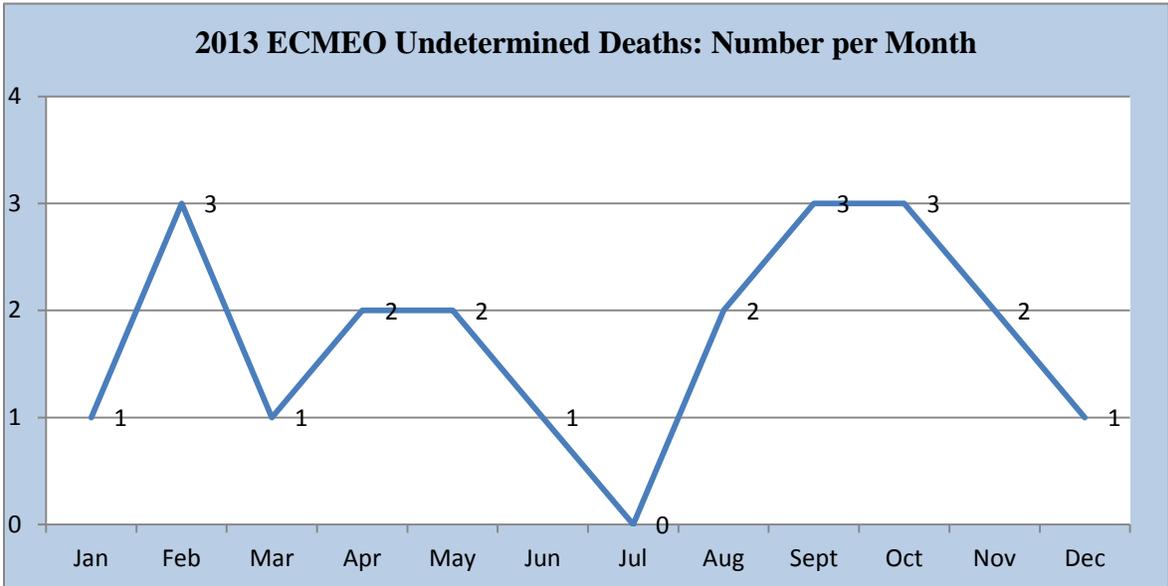
**Figure 30.** Cause of death for Undetermined deaths in Erie County in 2013. 57% of undetermined deaths were females and 43% were males.



**Figure 31.** Undetermined deaths by age groups for Erie County cases in 2013.



**Figure 32.** Undetermined deaths grouped according to race.



**Figure 33.** Number of Undetermined deaths by month for 2013.

## 2013 CHEMICAL INTOXICATION DEATHS OVERVIEW

Chemical intoxication deaths were classified into five (5) different groups for 2013 deaths:

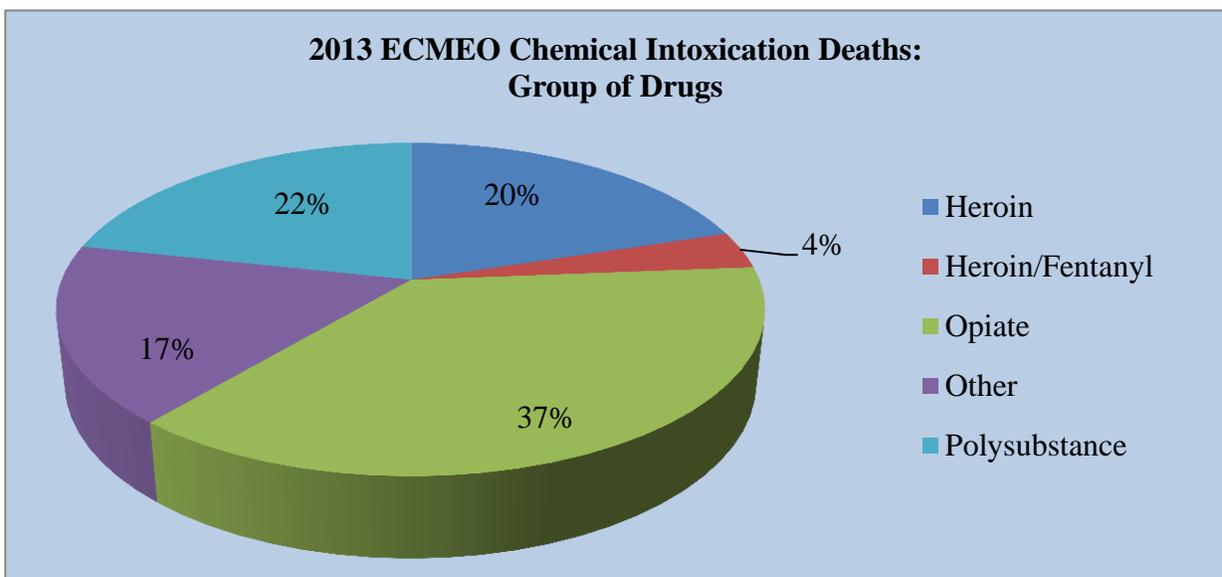
*Polysubstance*: three (3) or more substances

*Opiate*: one (1) or two (2) substances; one of which was an opiate

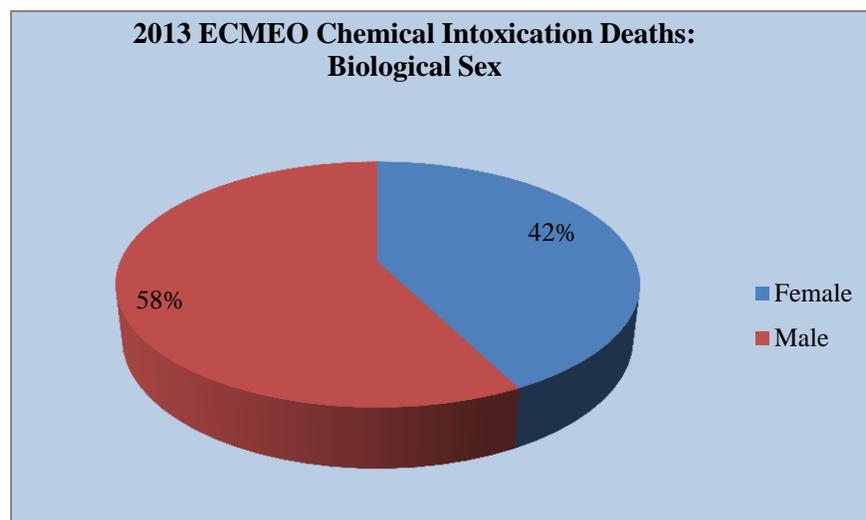
*Heroin*: one (1) or two (2) substances; one of which was heroin

*Heroin/Fentanyl*: combination of heroin and fentanyl (opiate)

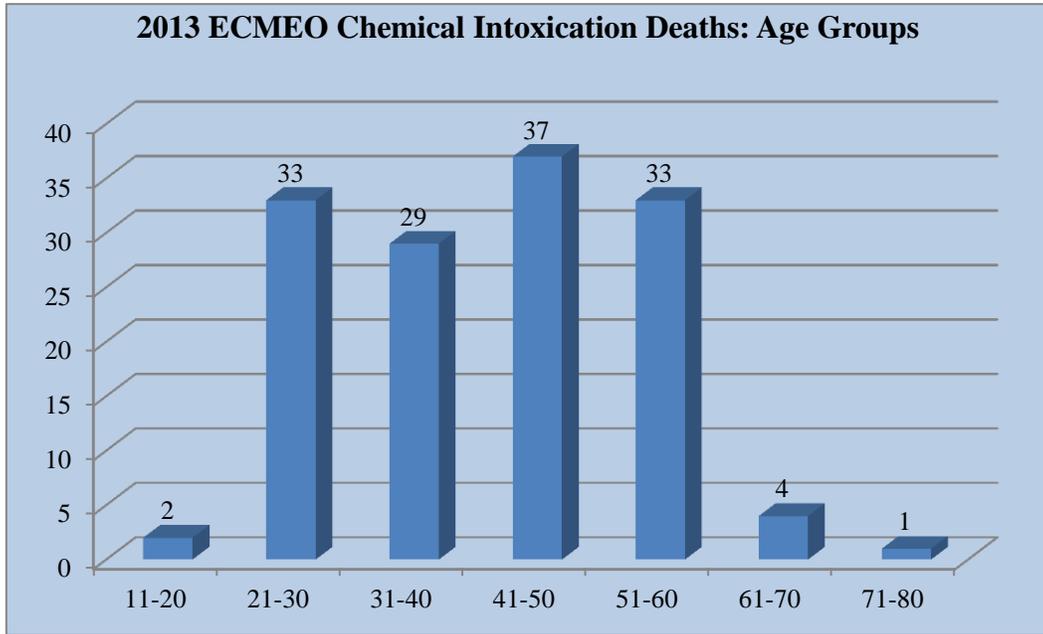
*Other*: any other substances not falling into the above groups



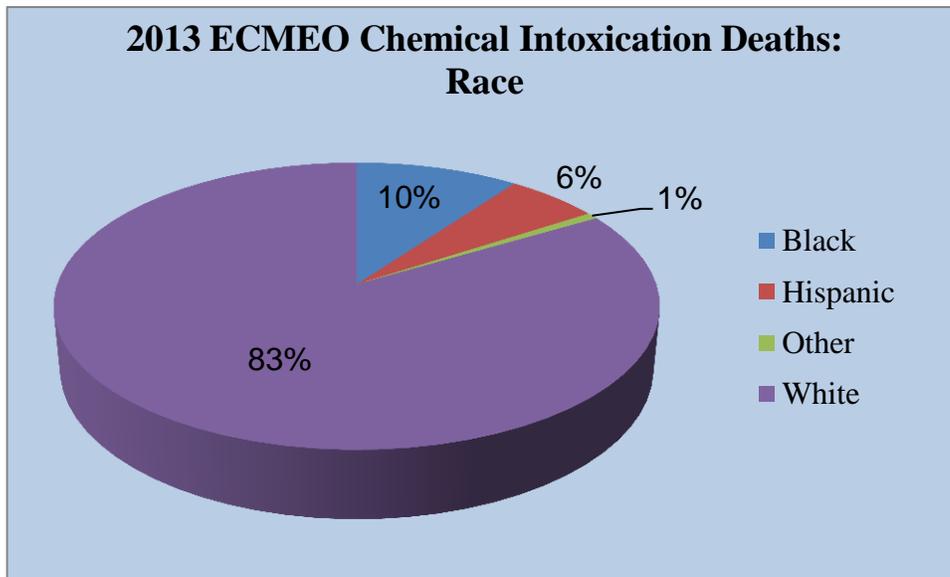
**Figure 34.** Overall number of chemical intoxication deaths categorized according to group of drug.



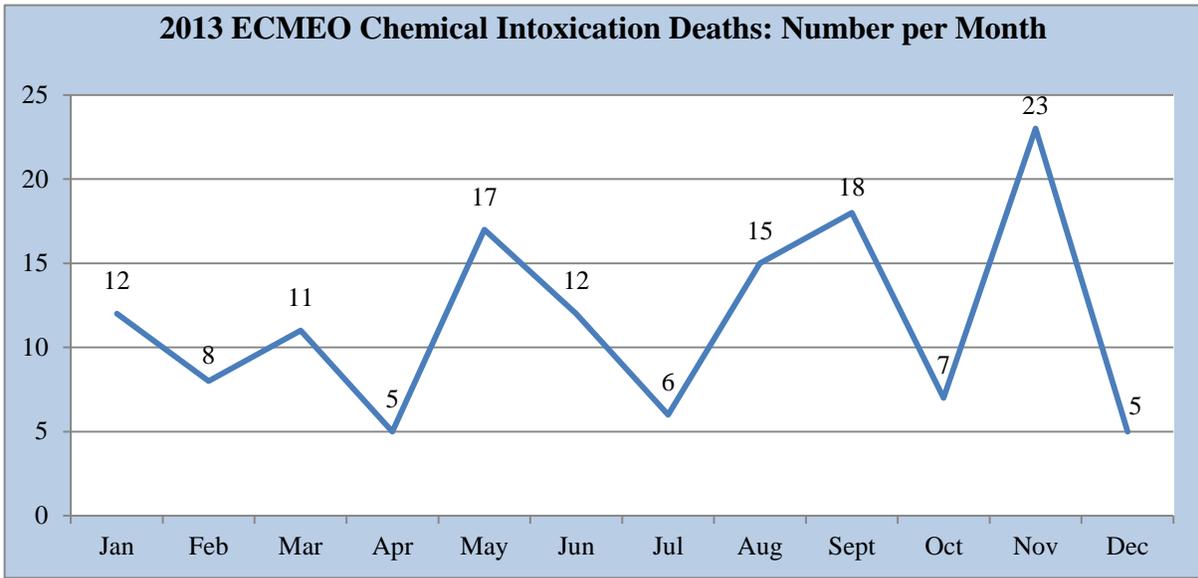
**Figure 35.** Chemical intoxication deaths by biological sex.



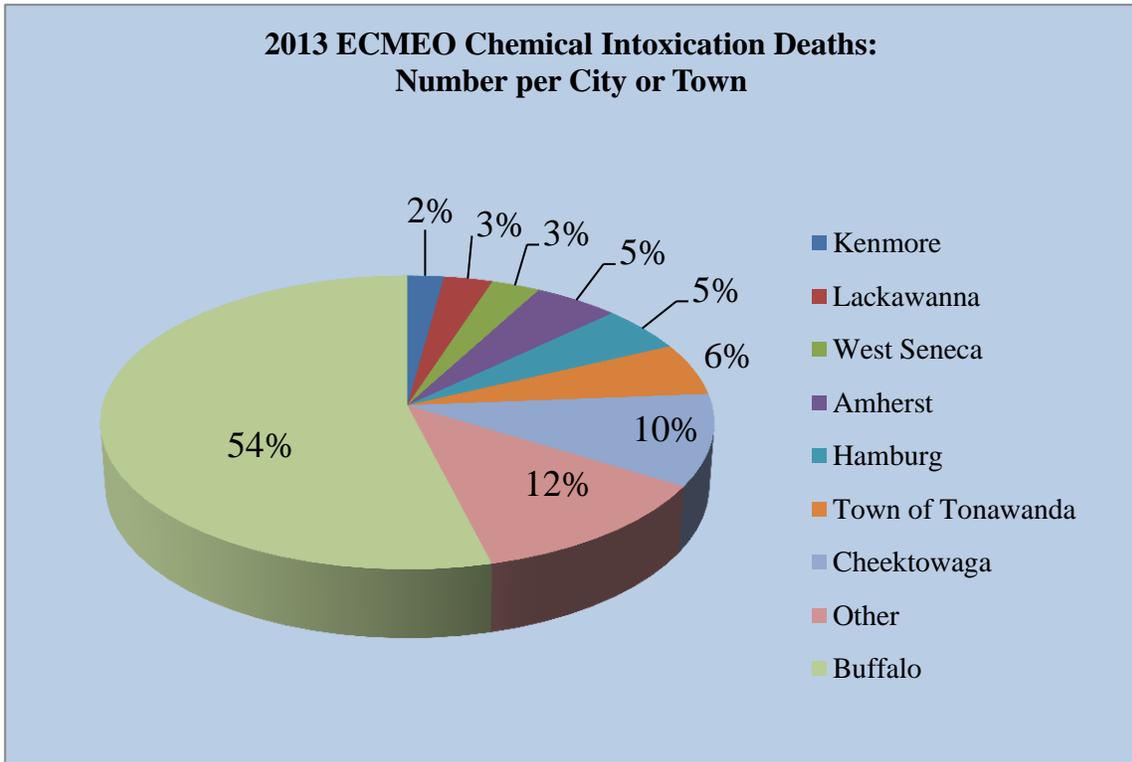
**Figure 36.** Chemical intoxication deaths according to 10 year age groups. Note that age groups “0-10”, “81-90” and “91-100” were removed because no case fit into these three groups.



**Figure 37.** Chemical intoxication deaths according to race.



**Figure 38.** Number of chemical intoxication deaths for 2013 for each month.



**Figure 39.** Total number of chemical intoxication deaths according to city/town. Note that nearly 54% of all chemical intoxication deaths occurred in the city of Buffalo. “Other” category includes cities/towns that had two (2) or less chemical intoxication deaths in 2013.