

888* Bodies and Counting

* overdoses through 12-29-15



OFFICE OF COMMON COUNCIL PRESIDENT MICHAEL J. MURPHY

200 East Wells Street
Milwaukee, WI 53202
414.286.2074
mmurph@milwaukee.gov





Drug Overdoses in Milwaukee

Like much of the nation, Wisconsin continues to battle a heroin and opiate epidemic that is placing an increased burden on communities to better understand the local challenges associated with addiction and its public health implications. Milwaukee County alone has seen a 495% increase in heroin related deaths between 2005-2014¹. These deaths, together with other opiate-related overdoses, have exceeded injury related deaths such as motor vehicle fatalities and homicides. Yet while our community faces a major outbreak in the use and abuse of opioids, policymakers have much to learn and about the complexities of the problem in order to introduce a targeted public health prevention model that is dynamic, multipronged, multilayered and integrated across different governmental jurisdictions.

Targeted Policy Initiatives

To move Milwaukee County away from an opiate and heroin abuse outbreak to a county of superior public health, we must narrowly define the problem, identify who is most at risk and deploy a targeted communication strategy. Defining the problem requires the implementation of an effective data strategy. To optimize the use of data, we must not only ensure a consistent approach to data collection and management, but also that the data collected is easily accessible by the general public. With quality data in place and key experts across different sectors engaged in the analysis process, Milwaukee County will be a leader in drug overdose prevention strategies through its use of data as a strategic asset.



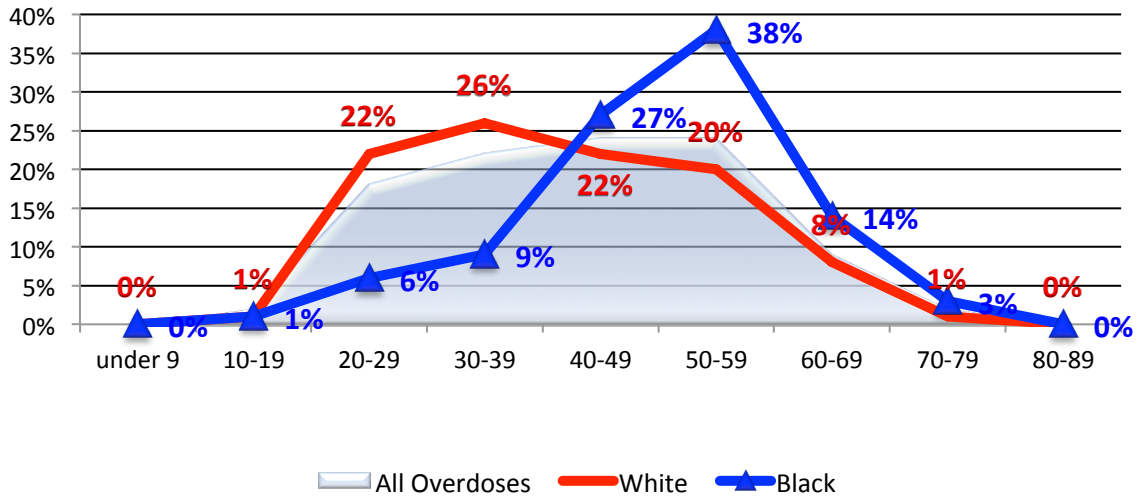
photo credit: WI DOJ

¹ <http://www.jsonline.com/news/health/heroin-deaths-in-milwaukee-county-jump-by-72-b99447450z1-292396321.html>



Understanding the Numbers

**Distribution of Age Ranges for
Overdose Deaths by Race/Ethnicity 2012-2015**



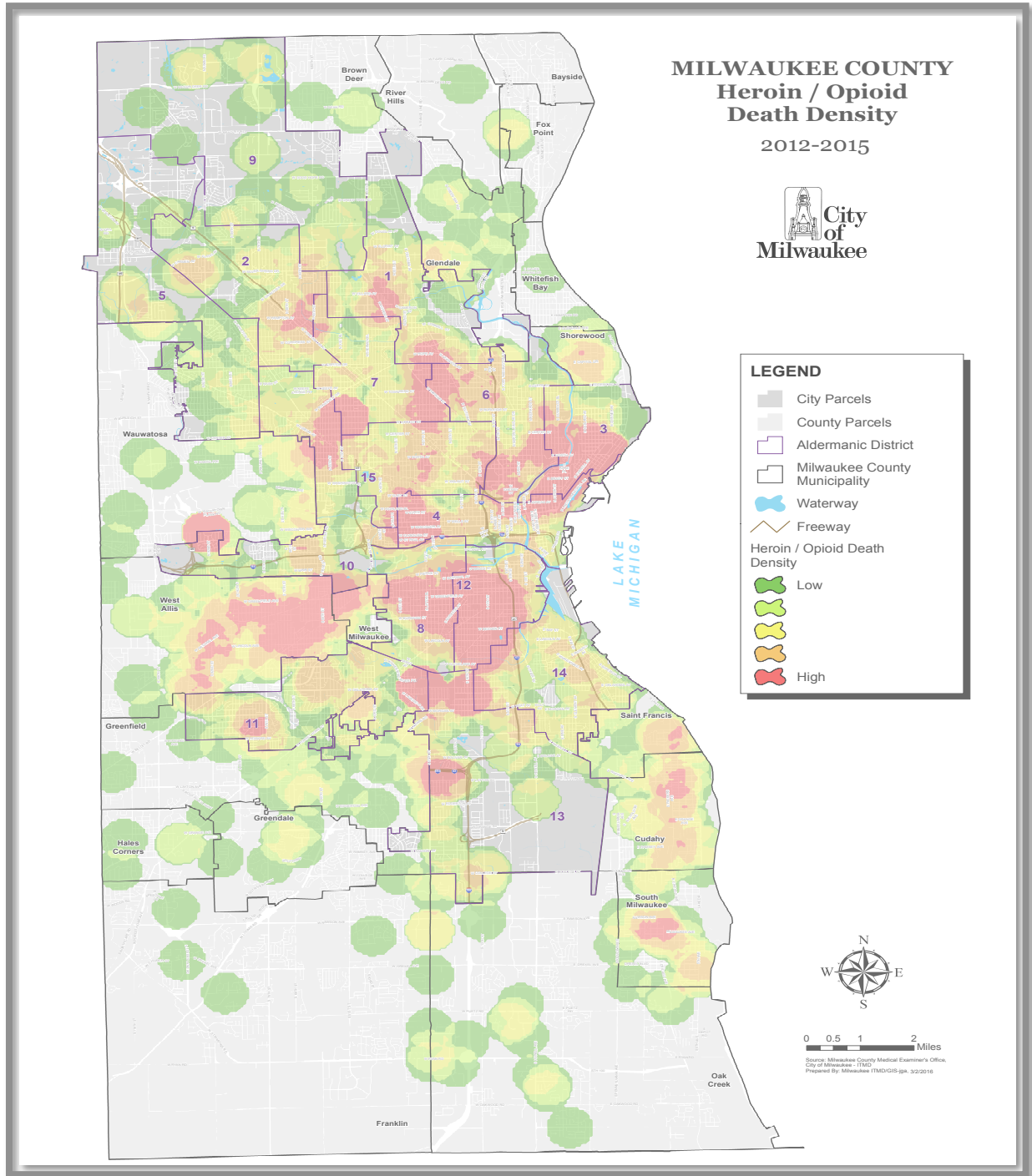
Contrary to popular discourse that young people are primarily overdosing, nearly 50% of overdoses in Milwaukee County are occurring between the ages of 30-59.

While white overdose victims nearly match the distribution of all overdoses, black overdose victims skew older, with 38% of overdoses occurring between the ages of 50-59. The majority of white overdoses (26%) occur between the ages 30-39.

The average age of an overdose victim in Milwaukee County is 43.



Understanding the Numbers: Geographic Location

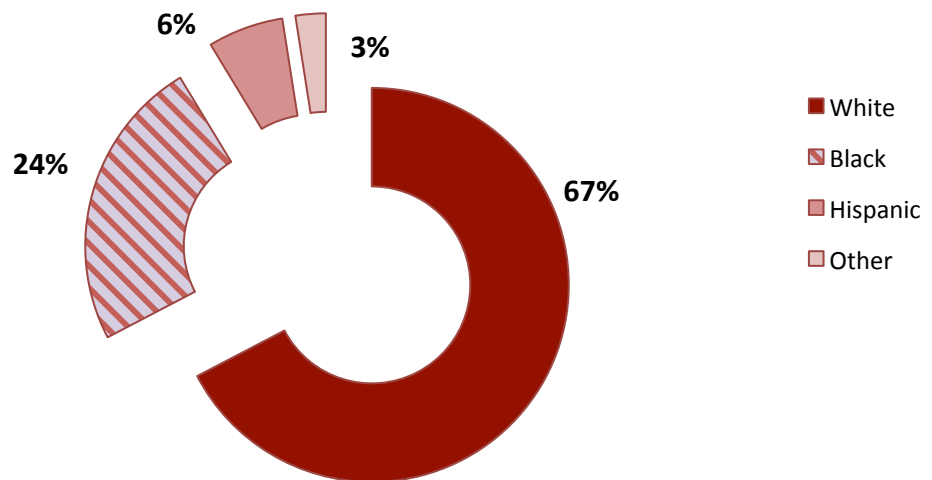




Understanding the Numbers: Demographics

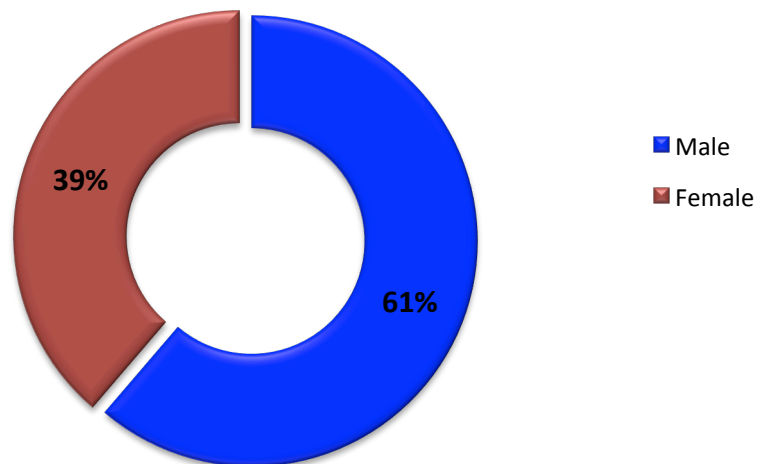
Of the 888 overdoses, 598 (67%) were white individuals, far outpacing all other categories.

Drug Deaths by Race/Ethnicity



544 (61%) were male and 344 (39%) were female.

Distribution of All Overdoses by Sex

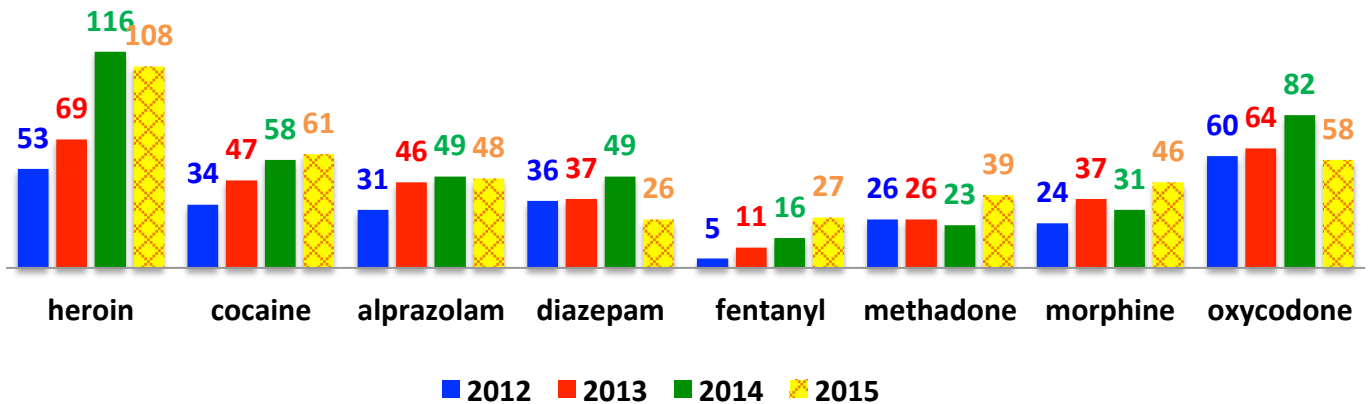




	All Overdoses 2012-2015		White 2012-2015		Black 2012-2015	
Sex	Freq.	% of All Deaths	Freq.	% of White Deaths	Freq.	% of Black Deaths
Male	544	61%	376	63%	116	54%
Female	344	39%	222	37%	97	46%
Age Range						
under 9	3	0%	1	0%	1	0%
10-19	14	2%	7	1%	3	1%
20-29	158	18%	129	22%	12	6%
30-39	194	22%	153	26%	20	9%
40-49	210	24%	133	22%	57	27%
50-59	214	24%	121	20%	82	38%
60-69	79	9%	46	8%	30	14%
70-79	15	2%	8	1%	7	3%
80-89	1	0%	0	0%	1	0%
Race/ Ethnicity						
White	598	67%	-	-	-	-
Black	213	24%	-	-	-	-
Hispanic	55	6%	-	-	-	-
Other	22	2%	-	-	-	-
Most Prevalent Drugs						
	Freq.	% of All Deaths	Freq.	% of White Deaths	Freq.	% of Black Deaths
Heroin	346	39%	252	42%	64	30%
Oxycodone	264	30%	164	27%	71	33%
Cocaine	200	23%	91	15%	97	46%
Other Opioids & Benzos of Importance						
Alprazolam	174	20%	126	21%	30	14%
Diazepam	148	17%	107	18%	34	16%
Methadone	114	13%	81	14%	22	10%
Morphine	138	16%	91	15%	29	14%
Fentanyl	59	7%	44	7%	13	6%



Drug Frequency for Most Commonly Occurring Drugs in Toxicology Report 2012-2015



Heroin was the most commonly occurring drug found in toxicology reports, appearing in 39% of toxicology reports between 2012-2015. Oxycodone and cocaine follow. However, while heroin was the most commonly occurring drug found in white toxicology reports (42%), cocaine had the highest frequency for black toxicology reports, appearing in 46% of reports. Also of importance is the continued increase of fentanyl occurrences.

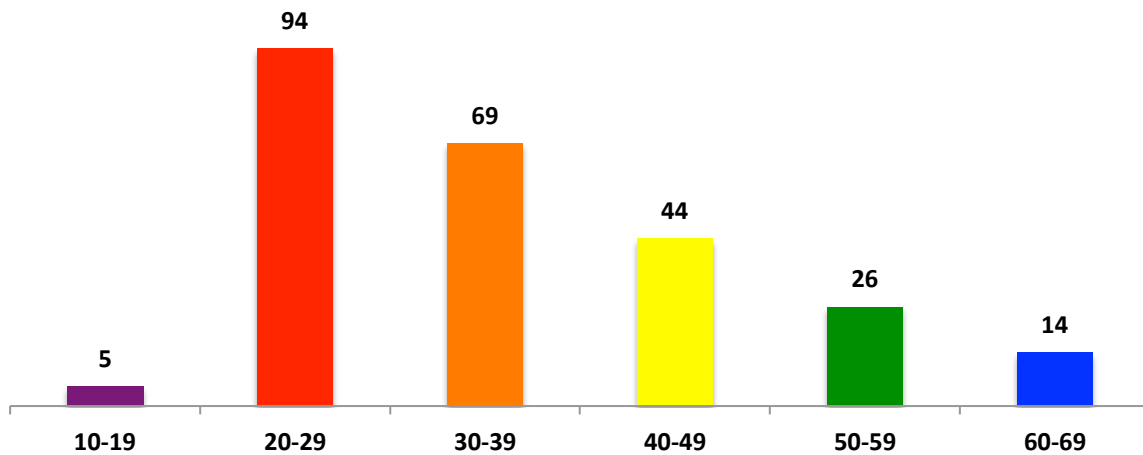
	HEROIN	COCAINE	ALPRAZOLAM	DIAZEPAM	FENTANYL	METHADONE	MORPHINE	OXYCODONE
% change 2012-2015	+104%	+79%	+55%	-28%	+440%	+50%	+92%	-3%
% change 2014-2015	-7%	+5%	-2%	-47%	+69%	+70%	+48%	-29%
% of 2015 overdoses	43%	24%	19%	10%	11%	16%	18%	23%

% of 2015 overdoses equates to the percent of toxicology reports where the specific drug appears.



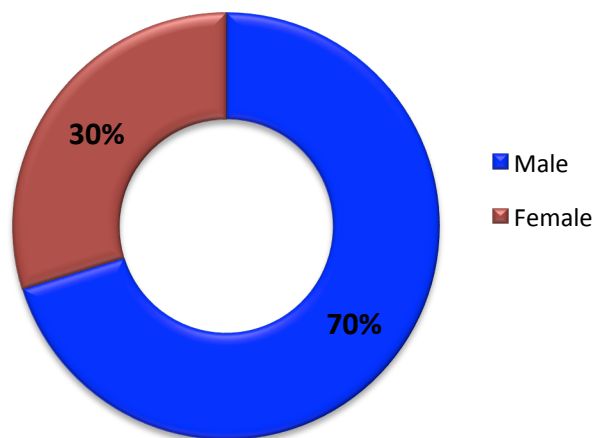
Drug Profiles: Heroin

Total White Heroin-Related Death Frequencies by Age Range 2012-2015



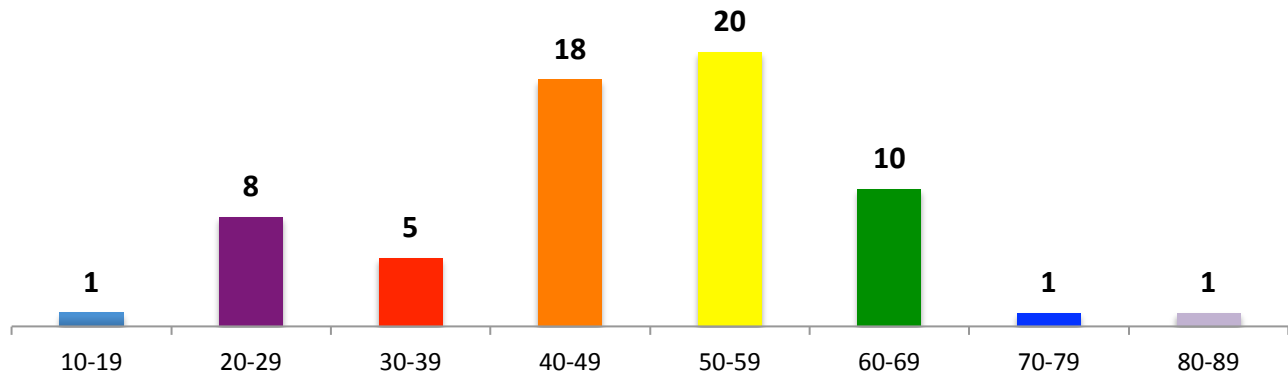
The majority of white heroin-related deaths occur between 20-39 years of age.

White Heroin-Related Deaths by Gender 2012-2015



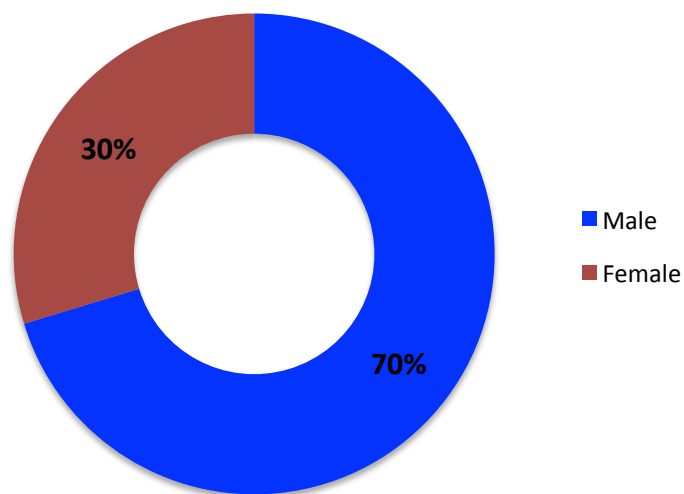


Total Black Heroin-Related Death Frequencies by Age Range 2012-2015



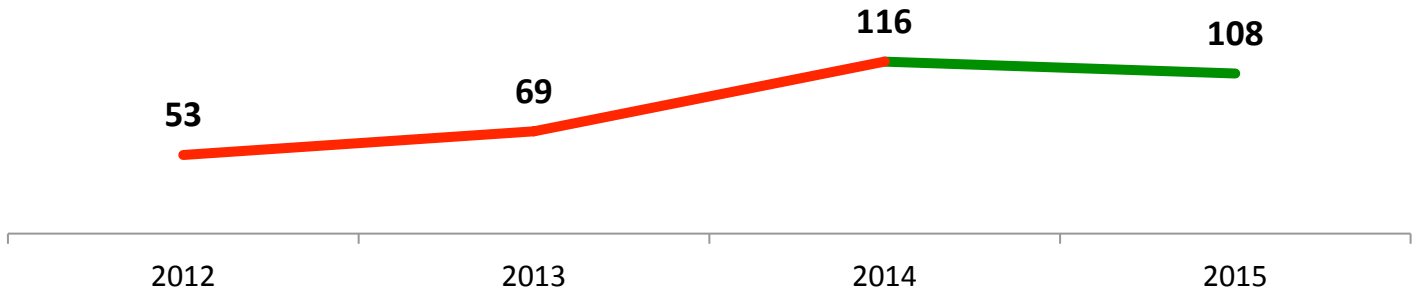
The majority of black heroin-related deaths occur between 40-59 years of age.

Black Heroin-Related Overdose Deaths by Gender 2012-2015





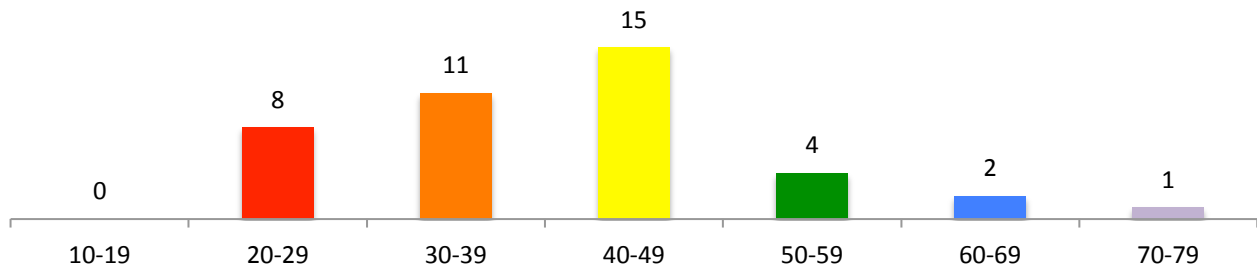
Heroin Related Overdoses 2012-2015



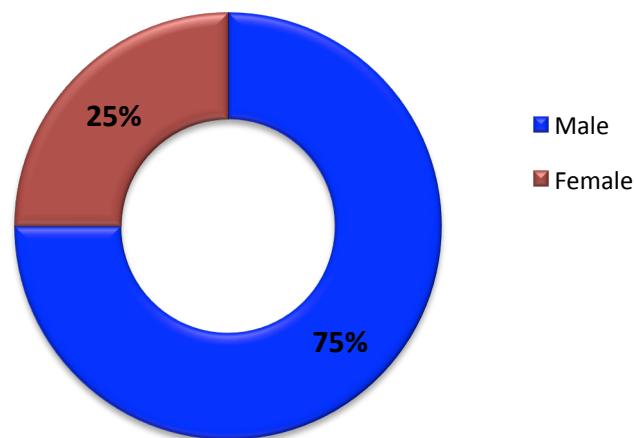


Drug Profiles: Fentanyl

**Age Ranges for White
Fentanyl-Related Overdoses 2012-2015**

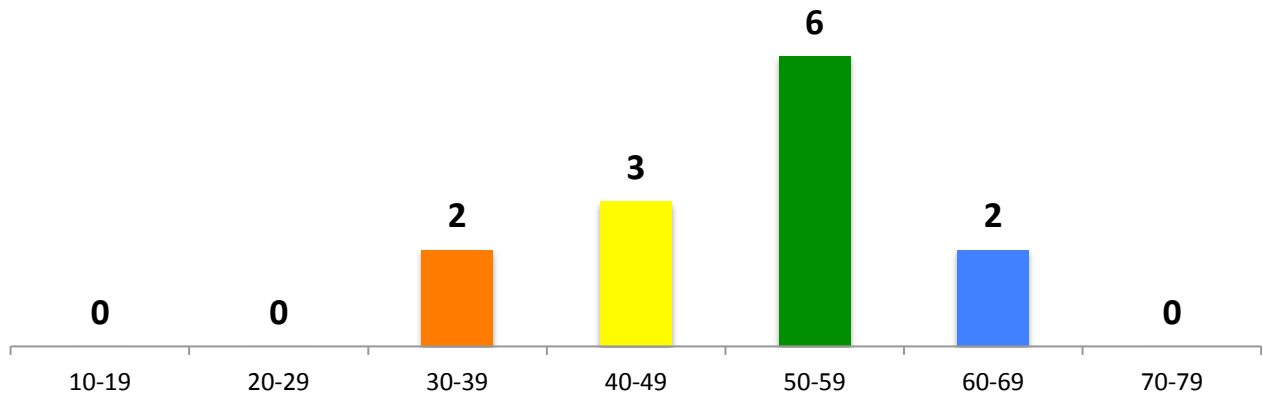


**White Fentanyl-Related Deaths by
Gender 2012-2015**

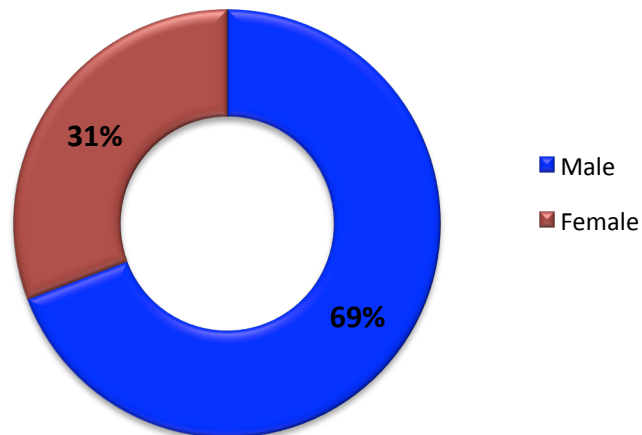




Age Ranges for Black Fentanyl-Related Overdoses 2012-2015

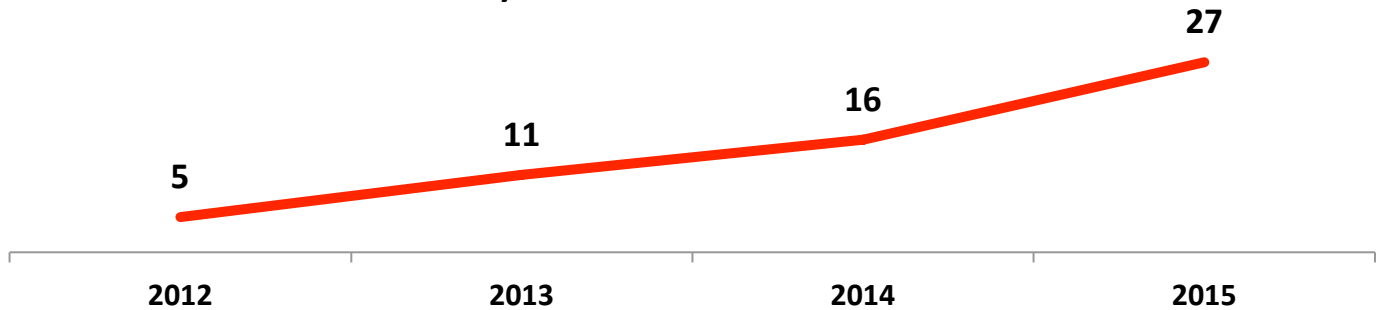


Black Fentanyl-Related Deaths by Gender 2012-2015





Fentanyl Related Overdoses 2012-2015



The data analyzed in this report was provided by the Milwaukee County Medical Examiner's Office and includes confirmed overdose deaths in Milwaukee County from January 2012 through December 29, 2015.

Data Analyzed and Report Prepared by:

Sarah A. Rola Zàrate

Office of Common Council President

200 E. Wells Street, Room 205

Milwaukee, WI 53202

414.286.2074

<http://city.milwaukee.gov/commoncouncil/District10>

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