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Mission Statement

- **Through our actions we represent those who can no longer represent themselves.**
- **Provide quality services as required by law or mandated by the public in order to enhance the health, safety, and general well being of the citizens and guests of Lafourche Parish.**
- **To assume jurisdiction over persons who come to their death suddenly, or where the death is caused by unnatural or unlawful means ensuring that decedents and their survivors are treated with the highest levels of dignity and respect.**
- **Ensure that investigations are carried out in an expeditious and professional manner, and maintaining the highest level of sensitivity and compassion to the surviving loved ones during their time of grief.**
- **Work in partnership with other organizations toward the reduction of preventable deaths.**
- **Provide educational presentations and continually serve as a resource to the public regarding the field of medicolegal death investigation.**



INTRODUCTION

The Lafourche Parish Coroner's Office serves the community by investigating sudden, unexpected, violent, suspicious, or unnatural deaths. The Coroner's staff recognizes the tragedy surrounding any untimely death and performs investigations, in part, to assist the grieving family. A complete investigation provides for the expeditious settling of estates and insurance claims, as well as for implementing civil and criminal actions. Questions which seem irrelevant in the initial hours, after death can become significant in the following months. The surviving family, friend, and general public can have the assurance the Coroner conducted a comprehensive investigation.

When a death occurs on the job or is work related, we immediately forward our results of our investigation to the State Department of Labor so families can gain the full benefits of our findings. Private insurance companies also routinely use our findings to settle claims.

Whenever a consumer product is implicated in a death, we notify the Consumer Product Safety Commission to ensure the product is studied and the necessary steps taken to protect the public. One of the Coroner's functions is to isolate and identify causes of sudden, unexpected death. When an infectious agent or poison is the cause of death, we notify the family and contacts of the deceased so they may receive any needed medical treatment. In this era of concern regarding bioterrorism, the Coroner provides an important level of surveillance for such possibilities.

Civil or criminal judicial proceedings frequently require the medical investigation of violent death. The Lafourche Parish Coroner's Office conducts medical investigation to provide the criminal justice system with medical information and evidence required for adjudication. Although criminal death investigations constitute a small portion of deaths investigated by the Coroner's Office, these deaths are studied in great detail due to the legal issues and consequences involved. In this way, The Lafourche Parish Coroner's Office offers the criminal justice system the best support medical science can provide.

In summary, the Lafourche Parish Coroner's Office brings trained medicolegal evaluation to the investigation of deaths that are of concern to the health, safety, and welfare of the community.

As your elected Coroner for the Parish of Lafourche, it is my pleasure to report on our fourth annual report.

Our services to the citizens of Lafourche have continued to improve and we are pleased that we have saved thousands of dollars in operational costs and expenses. We recently took possession of a donated ambulance that was offered to our office from the generosity of the South Lafourche Ambulance District. This vehicle alone has saved in having to purchase at least \$65,000.00 to the Parish of Lafourche and the taxpayers. The vehicle is also a mobile forensic crime scene unit equipped with necessary forensic equipment. Using this vehicle to transport bodies also continues to save an estimated \$50,000 per year from using private transport companies. The van that we purchased is still in service and will be utilized for multiple cases and as a backup vehicle.

Our public educational on infant mortality continues and the year 2011 had 2 infant death versus many others in previous years. The back to sleep program and public awareness is working and our goal is to have ZERO infant deaths in Lafourche Parish.

Order of Protection papers and Mental Health exams are increasing and they are being processed in a expedient manner. We are servicing the public 24/7 365 days a year.

Our web site <http://www.LPCoroner.Com> is updated constantly and has informative information to the public.

Training to the local law enforcement continues with a great work relationship. Our thanks and appreciation to Sheriff Craig Webre and other local law enforcement agencies. Our appreciation is also extended to Camille A. "Cam" Morvant II. Lafourche Parish District Attorney.

In the past 4 years as your elected Coroner of Lafourche Parish we have brought the Office to modern day technology and this has been accomplished with the cooperation of the Parish President and Council. We have an office you can be proud of.

If there is anything that myself or my office can be any assistance, please do not hesitate to call upon us anytime.

Kindest regards,

John C. King, MD

Coroner of Lafourche Parish



COST IMPROVEMENTS

Total autopsies 2011 was 70 (\$12,600.00 Savings)

Total autopsies 2010 was 88

Toxicology savings 2010 was \$71,000 from previous years.

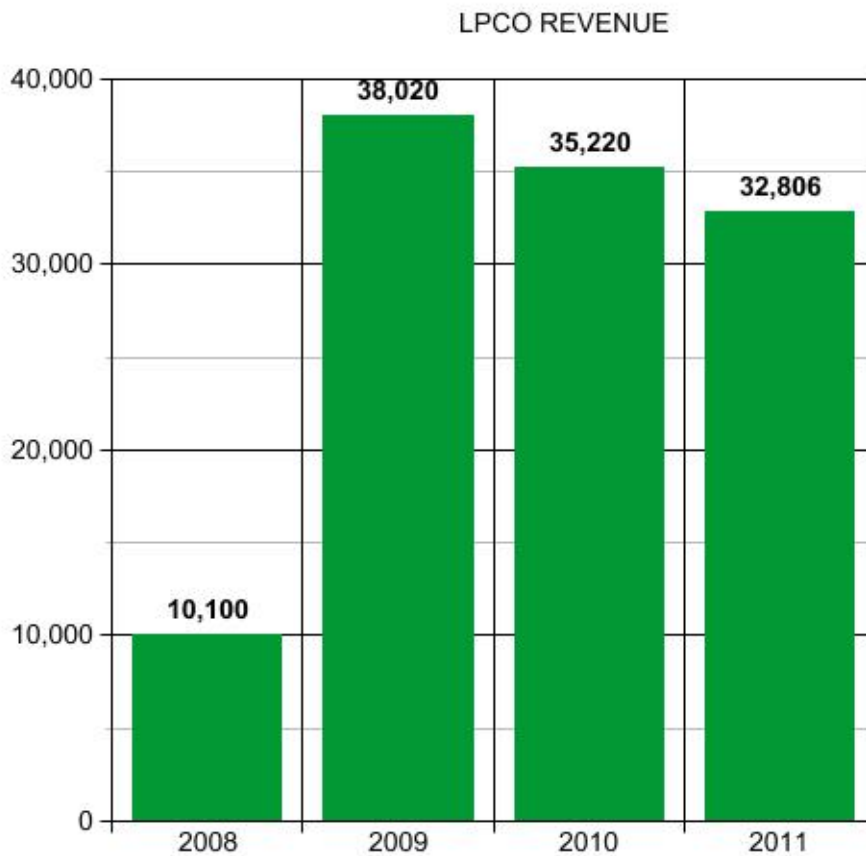
Disaster bag replacement savings were \$10,000



REVENUE 2011

Revenue is received from Cremation permits, Autopsy reports, Coroner Emergency Certificates from out of Parish residents, and organ recovery.

As of December 31, 2011 The Lafourche Parish Coroner's has brought in \$116,146.00 that went to the Lafourche Parish General Fund.





MANNERS OF DEATH

All Coroner Reports determine the manner of each death. All deaths investigated by the Lafourche Parish Coroner's Office are classified in one of five distinct categories:

NATURAL covers all deaths primarily resulting from a disease of the body and not resulting from injuries or abnormal environmental factors.

ACCIDENTAL covers all accidental deaths including motor vehicle incidents where there is no obvious intent to cause death. This classification includes any death resulting from an action or actions by a person which results in the unintentional death to him/herself or any death to any person that results from the intervention of a non-human agency.

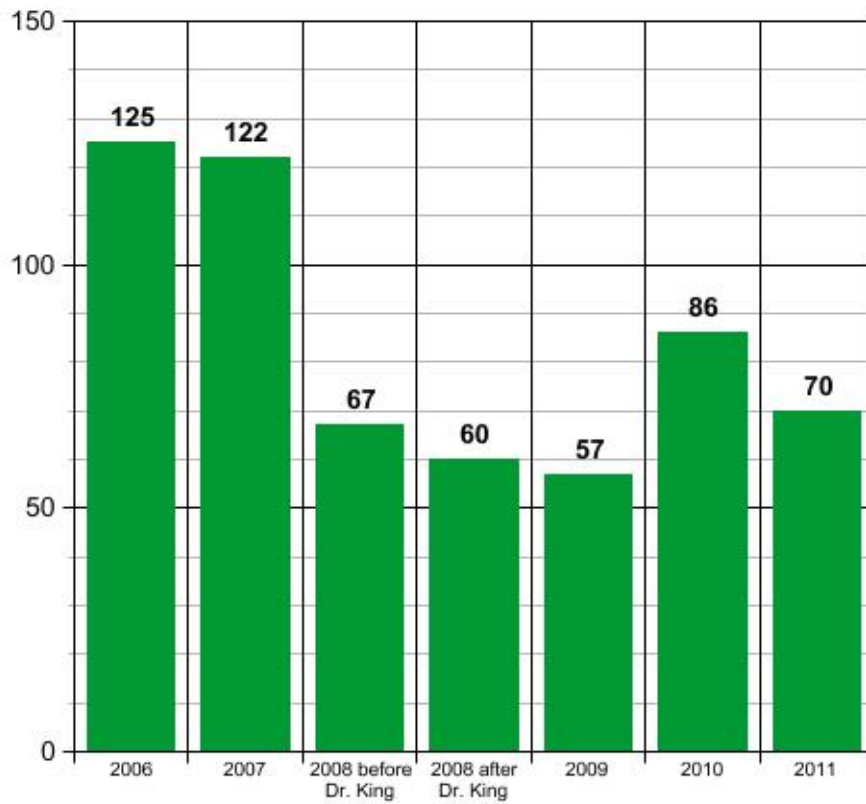
SUICIDE refers to any death from a self inflicted injury where there is apparent intent to cause death.

HOMICIDE includes any death resulting from injuries caused directly or indirectly by the actions of another person. (with the exception of unintentional motor vehicle accidents). Homicide is a neutral term that does not imply fault or blame.

UNDETERMINED is any death which cannot be classified in any of the other categories. The actual cause of death may or may not be known in these cases. An example of an undetermined death would be a drug overdose where it is unclear in one of the other existing categories before considering a classification of undetermined.



AUTOPSY CASES



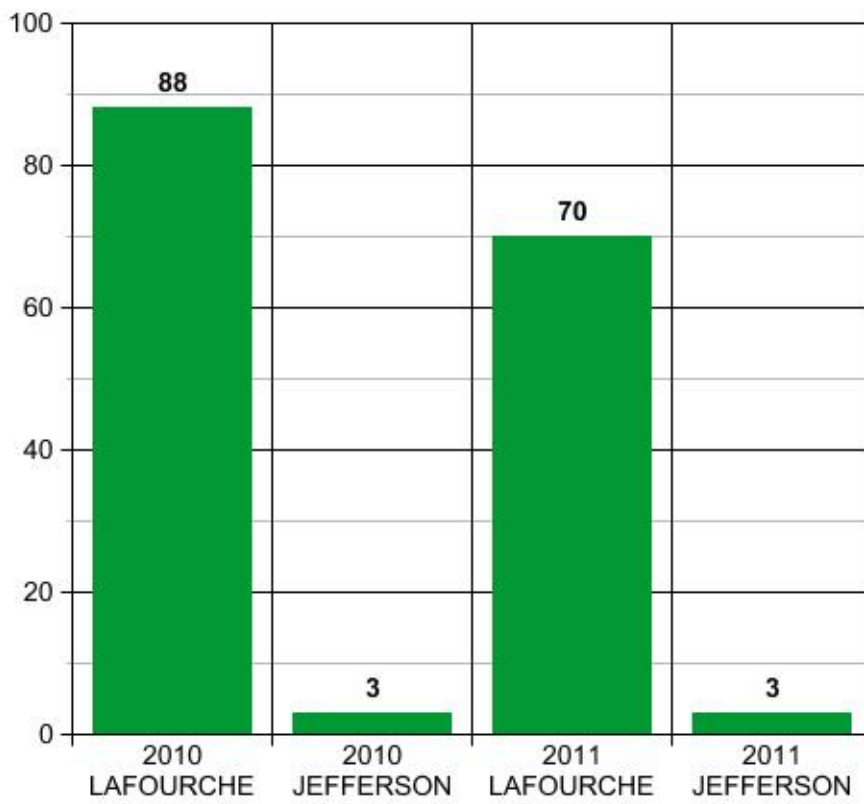
TOTAL CASES 2010

TOTAL CASES 2011

NATURAL	471	528
ACCIDENT	40	42
SUICIDES	17	12
HOMICIDES	4	3
UNDETERMINED	5	0

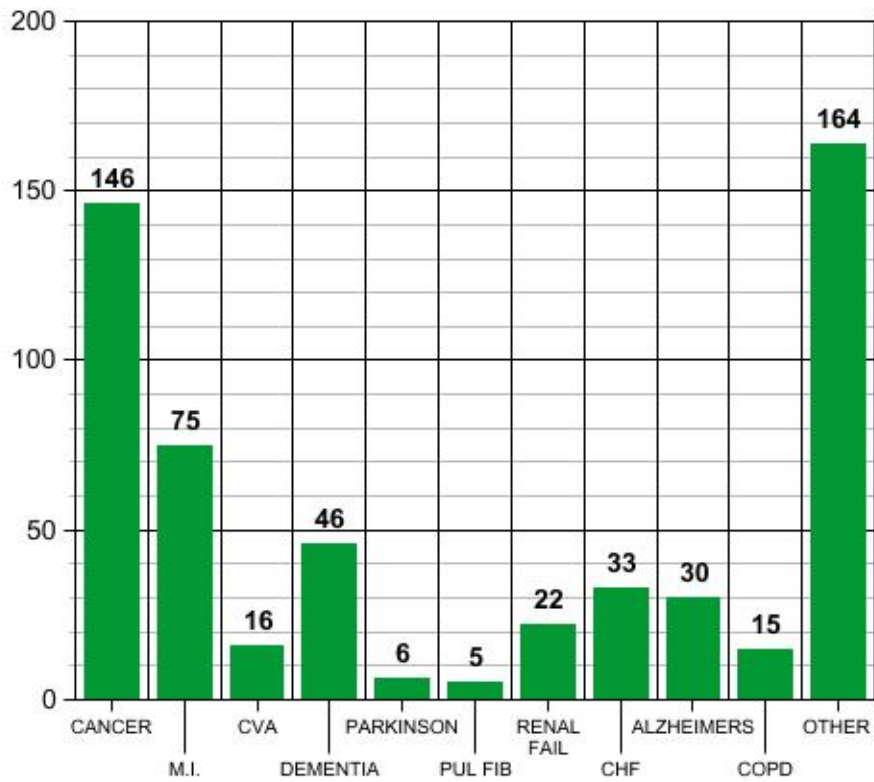


POST MORTEM CASES



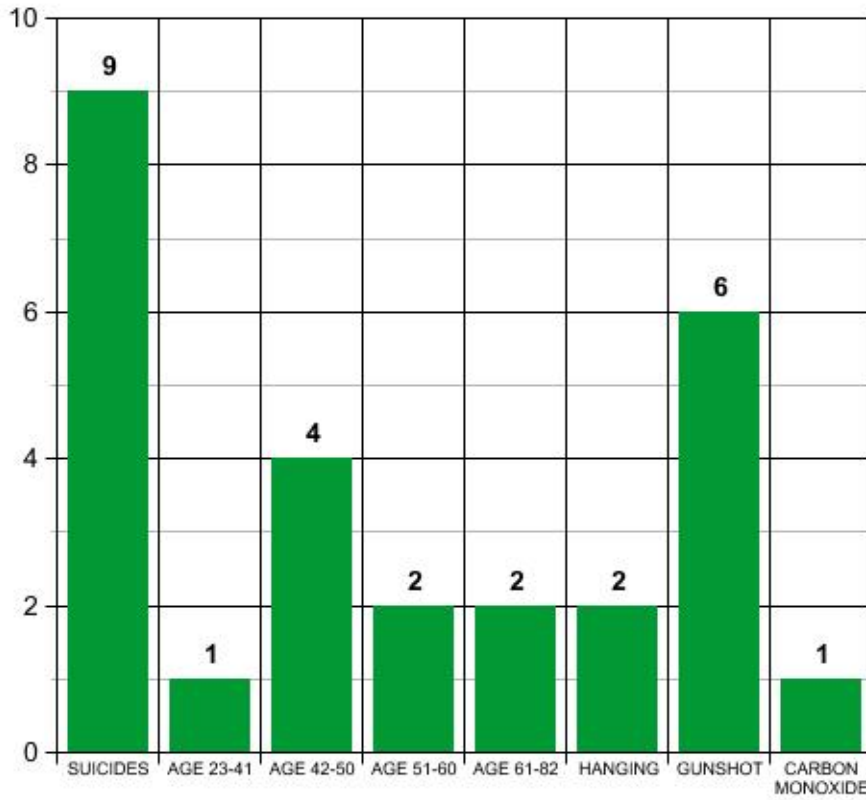


NATURAL DEATHS



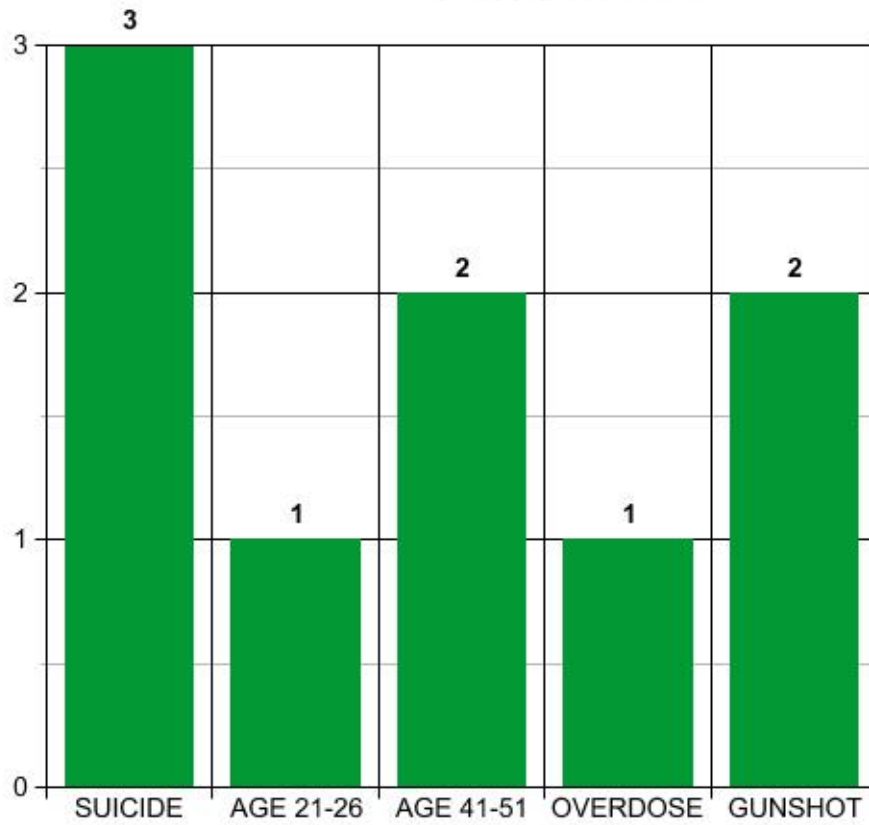


2011 SUICIDE MALE



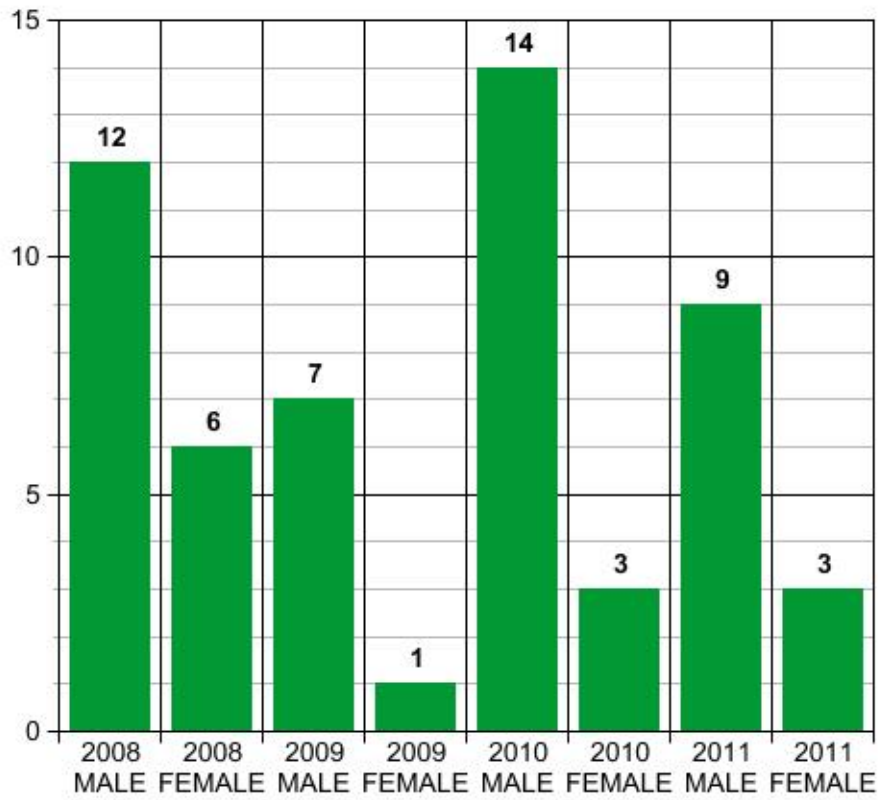


2011 SUICIDE FEMALE



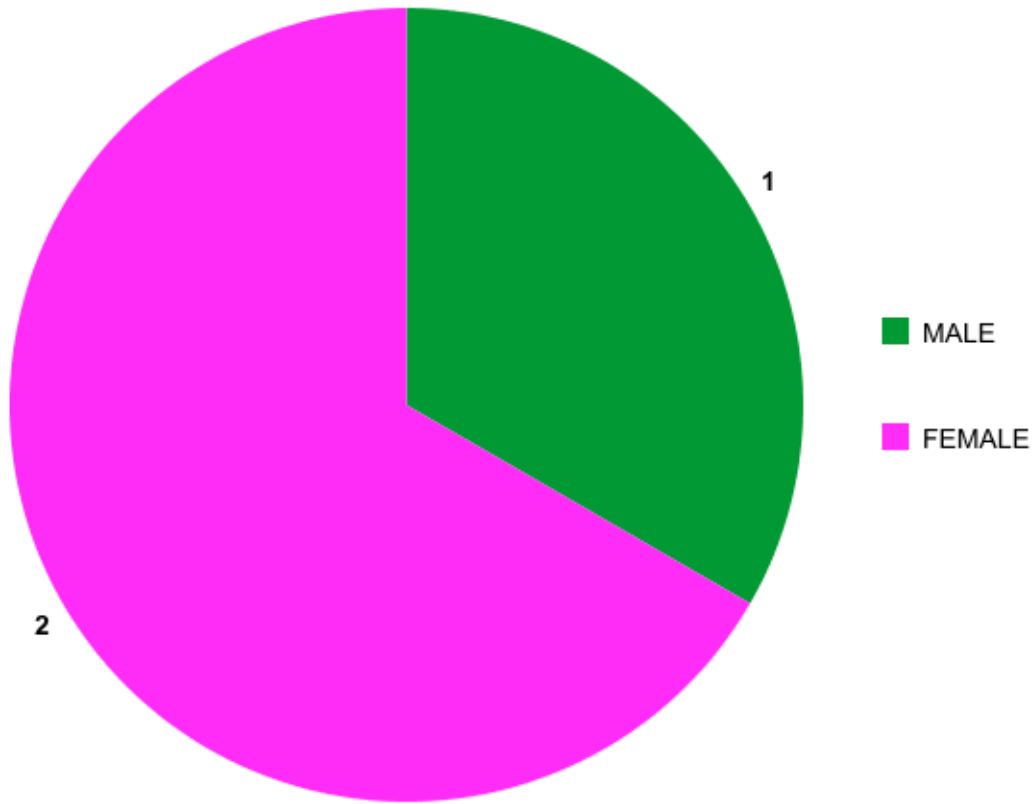


SUICIDE 2008-2011



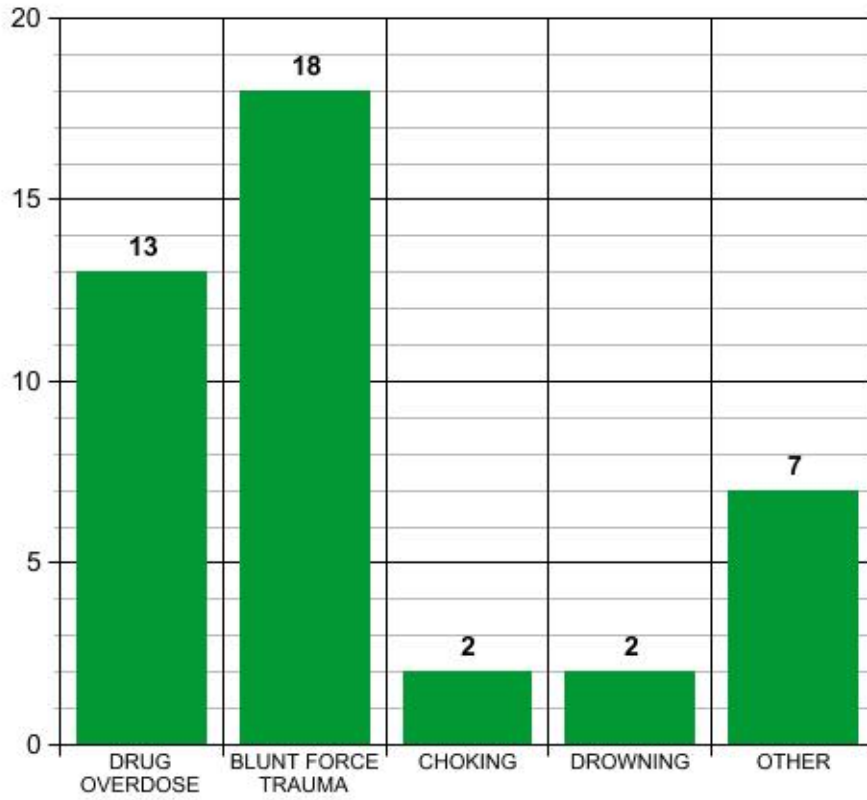


2011 HOMICIDES





ACCIDENT CASES

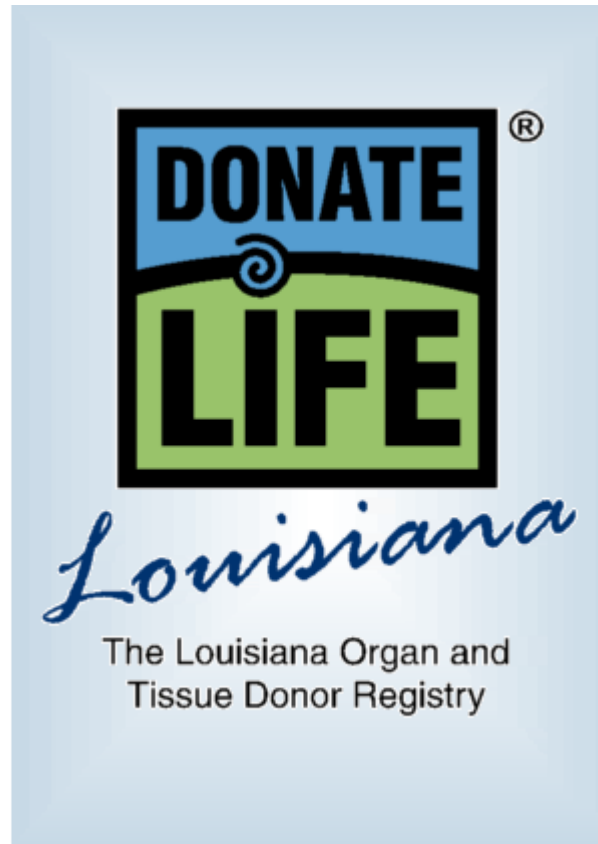




**The Lafourche Parish Coroner's Office is proud to be a part of assisting the efforts of the Southern Eye Bank.
Procedures are performed at the Lafourche Parish Coroner's Office as well as area local hospitals.**

2011 totals

**20 Recipients in Lafourche Parish
27 donors from Lafourche Parish**



The Lafourche Parish Coroner's Office is proud to be a part of assisting the efforts of the Louisiana Organ Procurement Agency.

Procedures are performed at the Lafourche Parish Coroner's Office as well as area local hospitals.

2011 Totals

24 Referrals made from Lafourche Parish

3 Organ Donors saving 13 lives (13 organs recovered for transplant)

4 Tissue donors enhancing 200 lives (50 people help per donor)

4 Family declines

13 ruled out for medical or social history



Sexual Assault

The Lafourche Parish Coroner's Office is also responsible for Sexual Assault Exams and coordinates with local law enforcement and the Lafourche Parish District Attorney's Office.

We provide Sexual Assault Evidence kits for all law enforcement agencies in Lafourche Parish.

All adults are examined in Lafourche Parish and juveniles are sent to Children's Hospital.



Mental Health

The Lafourche Coroner's Office also has a duty in the mental health area.

Order of Protection (OPC) if you meet the following criteria:

- *Dangerous to self**
- *Dangerous to others**
- *Gravely disabled**
- *Substance Abuse/Alcohol**
- *Unwilling to seek voluntary care**

The Coroner can order a psychiatric evaluation on a patient under an Order of Protective Custody (OPC).

If the patient meets the required criteria for an Order of Protective Custody (OPC) we will instruct you where to go to meet us to sign the legal paperwork.

Once the paperwork is completed a member of the Sheriff's Office will pick the patient up and bring them to the designated facility for an evaluation. The Coroner's responsibility is to only order the patient to the facility and we have no control on whether the physician will keep the patient or discharge.

If the patient is deemed for necessary hospital stay, the Emergency physician can issue a Physician Emergency Certificate (PEC) and within the next 72-hours a second evaluation will be performed by the Coroner's Office. The Coroner can either find the patient to be kept or to be discharged.

Physician Emergency Certificates are called in to the Lafourche Parish Coroner's Office 7 days a week and the Coroner and his two Deputy Coroner's are called out numerous times day and night.

This is called a Coroner's Emergency Certificate or CEC. Under the mental health law, the Coroner does not keep a patient in the hospital. Once a patient is committed to a hospital under the mental health law, the attending psychiatrist decides how long the patient stays.

There are limitations under the mental health law that limits the stay to 15 or 28 days depending on the circumstances. However, the psychiatrist can initiate a legal process called a judicial commitment. The patient can be kept in a facility against his/her will if a judicial commitment is issued by a judge.

If the patient is a Mental Health Clinic patient, the Coroner's Office will make every effort to have the patient sent the clinic where all his/her records are kept and the treating physician at the Mental Health Clinic is aware of the individual patient.

To receive an Order of Protective Custody (OPC) you must contact our office and meet the criteria for the order.