



ORANGE COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

Coroner Division

Quarter 1 Comparison Report

Report time frame: January - March 2021

(comparing to: January - March 2020)

Total cases

849

(+39% from 613 in 2020)

Q1 Total include 20 cases pending and 9 cases undetermined

Accident

364

(+44%)

Homicide

19

(+6%)

Suicide

87

(+12%)

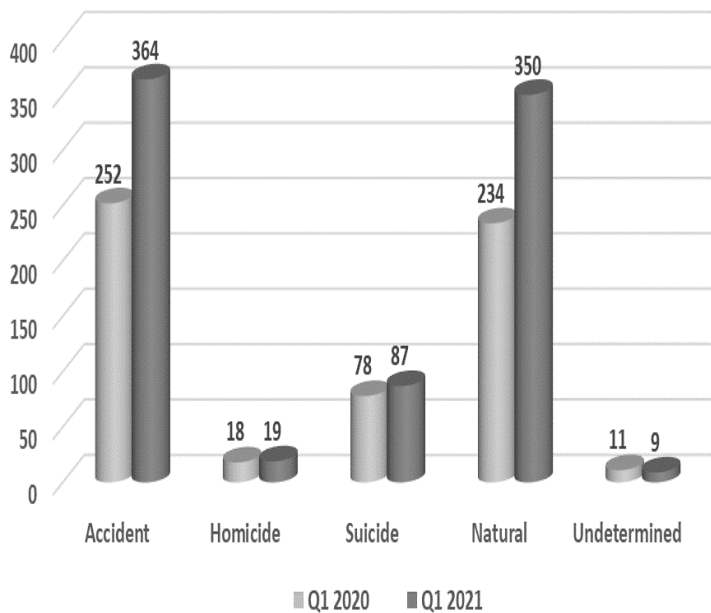
Natural

350

(+50%)

MANNER OF DEATH

Comparing Quarter 1 of 2020 to 2021, accidental deaths have increased by 44%, homicides were up by 6%, suicides were up by 12%, and natural deaths falling under the jurisdiction of the Coroner increased by 50%.



Accidents

Unintentional prescription and illicit drug related deaths increased in 2021 at 55% of all accidental deaths when compared to the same time frame in 2020. Traffic related deaths accounted for 19% while falls were at 17%.



Unplanned deaths due to illicit or prescription drugs and/or ethanol toxicity increased by 76% in the first quarter of 2021 compared to the same time period in 2020 (119 to 210)

Methamphetamine appeared in 48% of all overdoses cases which was a 11% increase compared to the first quarter of 2020.

Fentanyl related deaths also showed a 157% increase. (60 to 154)



Falls increased 11% in 2021 compared to 2020 (56 to 62) which makes them the third highest of all accidental death cases. Same level falls were most prevalent at 66% of all falls in 2021 which was the same as 2020.



Vehicular traffic related deaths increased by 35% in comparison to 2020 (52 to 70) with Auto vs. Auto but up 31% from 2020 (13 to 17).

Pedestrian deaths accounted for 41% of all vehicular deaths in Quarter 1 of 2021 while in 2020 they were at 31%.

Motorcycle related deaths stayed the same as 2020 (7 to 7)

Homicides

6%

INCREASE

In 58% of the cases a firearm was used.

Suicides

In Quarter 1 of 2021 there was an 12% increase in suicides compared to Quarter 1 of 2020.

During this time frame gunshot was the leading method at 31% followed by asphyxia at 26%

The work of the Coroner Division is largely based on Government Code § 27491, which states that all unnatural deaths including homicides, suicides, accidents, and deaths in custody are under the coroner/medical examiner's jurisdiction to investigate. Also falling under our jurisdiction are infectious diseases reaching epidemic proportions, deaths in state or local institutions, and deaths believed to be natural but that occurred suddenly and unexpectedly where the decedent had not seen their health care provider in the last 20 days of life. Note: All deaths that fall under § 27491 are also subject to whether the facts indicate the death occurred under natural circumstances and the physician of record has sufficient knowledge to reasonably state the cause of death occurred under natural circumstance. Therefore, not every death that falls under one of these categories will be investigated by the Medical Examiner's office. See Govt Code § 27491.

*Due to some cases still under investigation within the quarter, manner of death counts and associated insights may adjust slightly as those cases are closed