



For Immediate Release:
Thursday, September 11, 2014

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News Release

CDC Funds 32 States to Collect Data on Violent Deaths *879 Violent Deaths Occurred in Utah in 2013*

(Salt Lake City, UT) – The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has announced that Utah will be one of 32 states to receive more than \$1 million over the next five years to collect and link data on violent deaths through the National Violent Death Reporting System (NVDRS).

The NVDRS is a surveillance system that collects detailed facts from multiple sources such as death certificates, medical examiner records, police and crime lab records, and supplemental homicide reports. It also serves as Utah’s suicide surveillance system, providing critical information on circumstances surrounding suicide deaths which has been used in the state’s many suicide prevention efforts over the past several years.

Violent deaths include homicides, suicides, deaths of undetermined intent, unintentional firearm-related deaths, and deaths where individuals are killed by law enforcement in the line of duty. In Utah, 879 individuals died from violent deaths in 2013*. Of these deaths, 579 (65.9%) were due to suicide, 246 (28.0%) were undetermined deaths (primarily due to drug overdoses), and 54 (6.1%) were homicides.

“These data give us a more complete picture of the deaths, including details about victims and suspects, their relationships, important circumstances that contributed to a death, and weapons used,” said Anna Fondario, Utah Department of Health epidemiologist. “Knowing the who, when, where, and how these deaths occurred gives us insights to help prevent them from happening again.”

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Utah was first funded in 2004 and began data collection in 2005. The state has remained committed to tracking violent deaths and the circumstances surrounding them.

Utah won the “Excellence in Collecting the Most Timely and Complete Violent Death Data” for participation in NVDRS in 2007, 2008, 2009, and 2010. Utah was also honored with the “Innovative Initiative of the Year” award from the Safe States Alliance for integrating unintentional drug overdose deaths into the NVDRS.

For a list of all NVDRS-funded states, visit

<http://www.cdc.gov/violencePrevention/NVDRS/index.html>.

For more information about violent deaths in Utah, visit

<http://www.health.utah.gov/vipp/topics/nvdrs/>.

*2013 data are preliminary and include occurrent deaths (i.e., all individuals who died in Utah, whether or not they were a resident of Utah).

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The mission of the Utah Department of Health is to protect the public's health through preventing avoidable illness, injury, disability and premature death, assuring access to affordable, quality health care, and promoting healthy lifestyles.