



# Utah Suicide Toxicology Report Fiscal Year 2009

UAC 26-4-28 Report to the Legislature

## Introduction

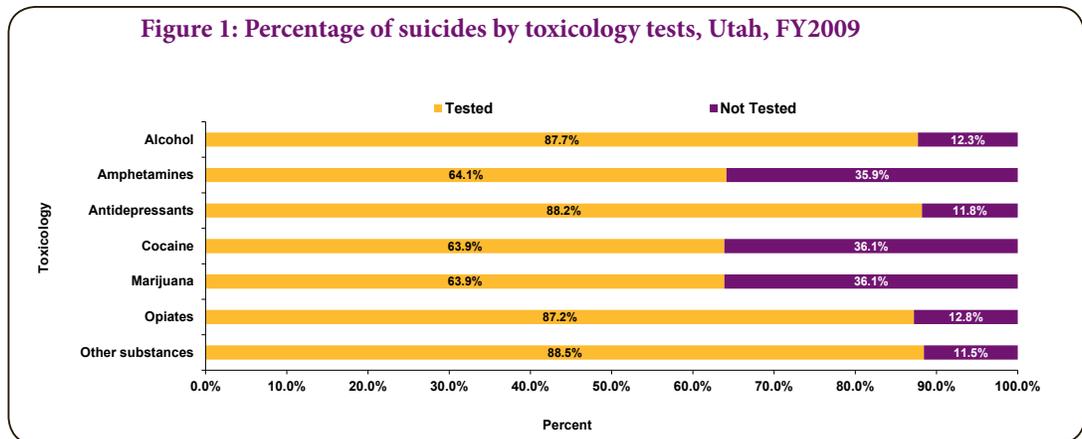
As a requirement of UAC 26-4-8, the Utah Department of Health is required to report “the types of substances found present in the samples taken from the body of a person who is suspected to have died as a result of suicide or assisted suicide.”

## Toxicology Results

In fiscal year 2009 (July 2008 through June 2009) there were 412 suicides.<sup>1</sup> Toxicology tests were conducted in 98.8% (n=407) of suicides. Toxicology tests are not conducted for all suicides. For example, based on the likelihood of illicit drugs being present, as determined by investigation and medical history, tests for illicit drugs may not be conducted.

Tests for other substances were conducted for 88.5% of suicides. Tests for alcohol and antidepressants were conducted for approximately 88.0% of suicides and tests for opiates were conducted for 87.2% of suicides. Tests for amphetamines, cocaine, and marijuana were conducted for approximately 64.0% of suicides (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Percentage of suicides by toxicology tests, Utah, FY2009



The most common drug found in victims who died from suicide was other substances (35.8%) (Table 1). This category includes over-the-counter medications and benzodiazepines, such as anti-anxiety medications and muscle relaxants. The least common drug found was cocaine (4.2%) (Table 1).

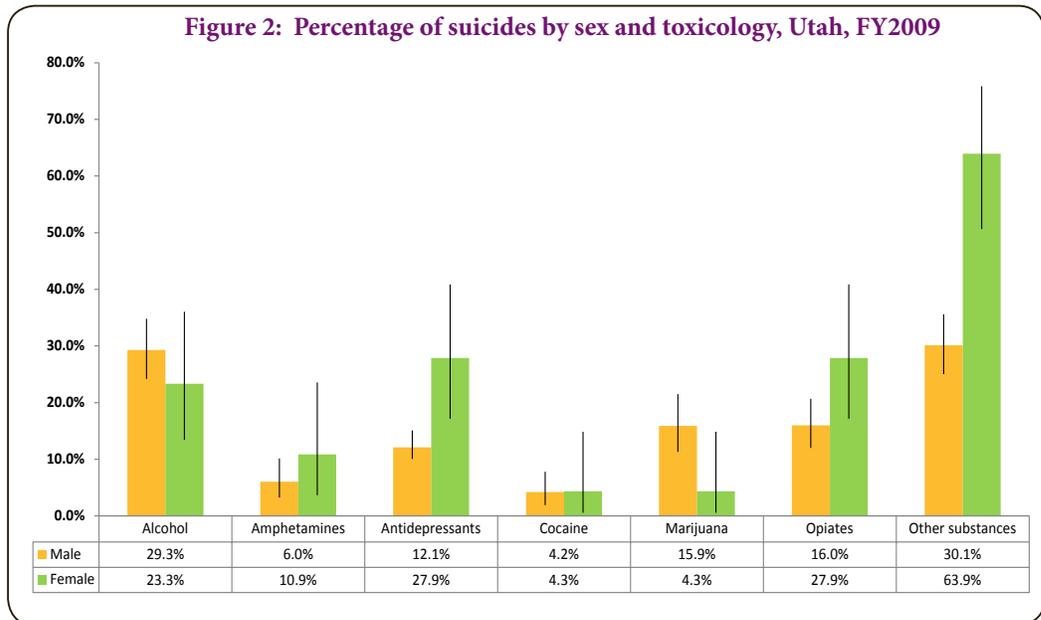
Table 1: Summary of suicide toxicology test results, Utah, FY2009

Toxicology	Screened	Present	Percent
Other substances	360	129	35.8%
Alcohol	357	101	28.3%
Opiates	355	64	18.0%
Antidepressants	359	53	14.8%
Marijuana	260	36	13.8%
Amphetamines	261	18	6.9%
Cocaine	260	11	4.2%

Of those who tested positive for alcohol, the average Blood Alcohol Concentration percent (BAC) was two times (0.16%) the legal limit. The legal BAC for Utah is 0.08%.

Females were significantly more likely to test positive for antidepressants and other substances compared to males (Figure 2). There were no significant differences seen between age groups.

Figure 2: Percentage of suicides by sex and toxicology, Utah, FY2009



Last updated: January 30, 2013

## References

<sup>1</sup>Data are from the Utah Violent Death Reporting System (UTVDRS). UTVDRS is an initiative of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to systematically collect violent death data from death certificates, medical examiner records, police reports, crime lab records, and supplemental homicide reports on suicides, homicides, deaths of undetermined intent, unintentional firearm-related deaths, and deaths due to legal intervention.

### Our Mission...

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.

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