

TABLE 7-3

NUMBER OF SUICIDES BY FIREARMS AND TOTAL SUICIDES BY AGE GROUP AND YEAR, ARIZONA RESIDENTS, 1996-2006

Age group	Cause	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	*2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
5-14	All Suicides	7	7	12	7	6	9	12	8	2	11	11
	# by Firearms	4	3	5	4	1	1	3	4	0	4	5
15-19	All Suicides	56	75	50	36	41	40	39	39	49	61	57
	# by Firearms	45	57	39	28	26	20	26	17	25	30	28
20-44	All Suicides	392	413	425	350	339	257	383	395	386	403	388
	# by Firearms	255	258	256	198	205	141	222	202	202	191	197
45-64	All Suicides	161	160	201	219	194	181	256	219	263	275	295
	# by Firearms	110	105	141	141	127	104	153	141	145	156	182
65 and over	All Suicides	144	154	156	160	157	113	165	145	154	164	196
	# by Firearms	111	113	128	123	127	92	140	112	126	126	142
All Ages**	Total Suicides	762	810	845	773	737	767	855	807	854	915	948
	# by Firearms	527	537	569	495	486	468	544	476	498	507	554
	% by Firearms	69.2	65.1	67.3	64.0	65.9	61.0	63.6	57.1	58.3	55.4	58.4

*Caution must be exercised when interpreting the 2001 data. See note below.

**Includes records with unknown or unspecified age.

Note: Before data for 2000, mortality medical information was based on manual coding of an underlying death for each certificate in accordance with WHO rules, and done locally by the Office of Vital Records. Effective with the 2000 data year, cause-of-death data presented in this publication were coded by the National Center for Health Statistics, using computerized procedures of SuperMICAR (Mortality Medical Indexing and Retrieval) and ACME (Automated Classification of Medical Entities) systems. The conversion to computerized coding contributed to at least some of the breaks in comparability over time of cause-of-death statistics for drug-induced deaths, intentional self-harm (suicide), firearm-suicide, and accidental discharge of firearms.

Data year	1999	2000	2001		2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
			unmodified	modified					
Suicide	773	737	600	767	855	807	854	915	948
Suicide by firearms	495	486	358	468	544	476	498	507	554
Accidental discharge of firearms	7	11	114	6	26	13	13	15	9

Unprecedented decline in 2001 in the number of suicides and the equally unprecedented increase in the number of firearm deaths classified as accidental obviously are associated. Approximately 100 firearm fatalities, that would have been classified as suicides had the manual coding system been in place, were classified as accidents in 2001 because the "manner of death" was not indicated and the automated coding system defaulted to accidental injury. Table 3-1 provides two data columns for 2001: unmodified and modified for the misclassification of the underlying cause of death. The majority of firearm suicides misclassified as accidents were White non-Hispanic males. The numbers and rates used in the "modified" column for 2001 are from the WISQARS site at http://webappa.cdc.gov/sasweb/ncipc/mortrate10_sy.html.