

## 5.3 Results

### *Overall Mortality Rates and Demographic Characteristics*

Table 8 presents the total mortality counts, rates, and demographic statistics for deaths among Arizonans who died in 2012 by gender and age group. In 2012, 48,459 Arizona residents died, with about 72 percent ( $n = 34,959$ ) of these deaths occurring to Arizonans 65 years and older. The overall mortality rate was 3,490.1 per 100,000 resident females age 65 and older and 3,987.4 per 100,000 males. With each increasing age group, the mortality rate increased at an exponential rate for both males and females. Additional analyses (not shown here) revealed that among Arizona adults age 65 years and older in 2012, the average age at death was 81.6 years, with the mean age at death being 80.0 years for males and 83.0 years for females. Notably, 40.6 percent of the roughly 35,000 Arizonans age 65 and over who died in 2012 were 85 years and older, a 5.3 percent increase from 2002.

In 2012, Arizona resident females represented 51 percent ( $n = 17,856$ ) of deaths among persons 65 years and older. The largest proportion of deaths among women 65 years and older was among women 85 years and older ( $n=8,522$ , 47.7 percent). Arizona resident males represented 49 percent ( $n = 17,101$ ) of deaths among Arizonans 65 years and older in 2012. Sixty percent of the 14,186 death among Arizonans age 85 and older in 2012 were to females. Interestingly, deaths among elderly men were more evenly distributed than deaths among elderly women. Unlike resident women, the largest proportion of deaths among men occurred among men 65 -74 years ( $n = 6,427$ , 37.5 percent).

For both males and females, the vast majority of deaths among older Arizona residents occurred to White non-Hispanics. For both genders and all age groups, more than 80% of deaths in 2012 were to White non-Hispanics. With increasing age, the race/ethnicity of decedents become even more homogenous, with deaths to all racial/ethnic minorities representing only 15 percent of all deaths among Arizonans age 85 and older in 2012.

Among older Arizonans who died in 2012, males tended to have somewhat higher educational attainment than females. For example, about 43 percent ( $n = 7,631$ ) of decedent females had earned a high school diploma and about 36 percent reported having some college education ( $n = 6,386$ ). For male decedents age 65 and older, 32 percent reported earning a high school degree ( $n = 5,436$ ) and 49 percent reported having attended some college ( $n = 8,124$ ).

Concerning marital status, widows represented the largest proportion of deaths among resident females 65 years and older (58.6 percent) while married males represented the largest proportion of resident males (57.4 percent). The majority of widowed females were 85 years and older, reaffirming the relatively long lifespan of females compared to males.

Finally, the majority of Arizona residents age 65 and older who died in 2012 lived in areas defined as urban. For both male and female decedents, about 80 percent resided in urban settings.