

DESCRIPTION

Firearm injuries and fatalities are a large cause for concern in the U.S., in fact, Americans are 25 times more likely to be murdered with a gun than people in other developed countries.¹ About 500 Minnesotans are hospitalized or receive emergency care as a result of firearm injuries each year.² Over the last decade, an average of 368 Minnesotans per year died from firearms, and 77 percent of those were suicides.³ Both fatal and nonfatal gun injuries cost Minnesota \$764 million per year in medical costs, criminal justice expenses, employer costs and lost income. This cost increases to an estimated \$2.2 billion per year with the addition of reduced quality of life caused by pain and suffering. The cost of gun violence in Minnesota is equal to 11 percent of the state's yearly general fund spending.⁴

HOW WE ARE DOING

In 2016, there were 143 firearm-related injuries treated in a hospital or emergency department among Ramsey County residents-142 nonfatal injuries and one fatality. Ramsey County is not meeting the Healthy People 2020 target for nonfatal firearm-related injuries. In 2016, Ramsey County's rate was 22.4 per 100,000 population. Ramsey County's firearm-related fatality rate of 0.2 for every 100,000 people does meet the Healthy People 2020 target of 9.3.²

BENCHMARK INDICATOR

Healthy People 2020:

- 1) Reduce firearm-related deaths.
U.S. Target: 9.3 deaths per 100,000 population
- 2) Reduce nonfatal firearm-related injuries.
U.S. Target: 18.6 injuries per 100,000 population

DISPARITIES

In 2016, Ramsey County males were far more likely than females to be injured by firearms.² In 2015 in the U.S., blacks had a firearm-related fatality rate of 20.7, the highest among all race/ethnicities.⁵ In Minnesota, black/African-Americans are much more likely than whites to be killed by firearms, but whites are more likely than black/African-Americans to use guns to kill themselves. Minnesota data show that black/African-Americans are 12 times more likely than whites to die from gun homicides; however, the gun-suicide rate for whites is three times higher than the rate for black/African-Americans.⁶

RISK FACTORS

Firearm-related death rates are seven times higher in the states with the highest rates of household gun ownership compared to states with the lowest rates.⁷ Improper firearm handling and storage can lead to unintentional injuries and death. In adolescents, a national study found risk factors that may indicate future gun injuries including living with less than

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Information to note

- Ramsey County is not meeting the Healthy People 2020 target for nonfatal firearm-related injuries.
- In Minnesota, black residents are much more likely than whites to be killed by firearms, but whites are more likely than blacks to use guns to kill themselves.

Community voice

"Guns and violence."
- White/ Native American/
Nigerian Female, age 35-44

Respondents mentioned shootings, guns, and gun violence as influencing their health.

¹ Everytown for Gun Safety. Learn What It Takes to Keep America Safe. <https://everytown.org/learn/>. Accessed March 28, 2018.

² Minnesota Department of Health. Minnesota Injury Data Access System (MIDAS). <http://www.health.state.mn.us/injury/midas/violence/index.cfm>. Accessed February 2, 2018.

³ Gun Violence and Background Checks in Minnesota. <https://everytownresearch.org/gun-violence-and-background-checks-in-minnesota/>. Accessed May 2018.

⁴ Minnesota Coalition for Common Sense. The economic cost of gun violence in Minnesota: A business case for action. 2016. <http://americansforresponsiblesolutions.org/files/2016/12/The-Economic-Cost-of-Gun-Violence.pdf>. Accessed February 2, 2018.

⁵ Disparities Overview by IVP-30 firearm related deaths. Healthy People 2020. <https://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/data/disparities/summary/Chart/4768/3>. Accessed February 9, 2018.

⁶ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics. Underlying Cause of Death 1999-2010 on CDC WONDER Online Database, released 2012. Data are from the Multiple Cause of Death Files, 1999-2010, as compiled from data provided by the 57 vital statistics jurisdictions through the Vital Statistics Cooperative Program.

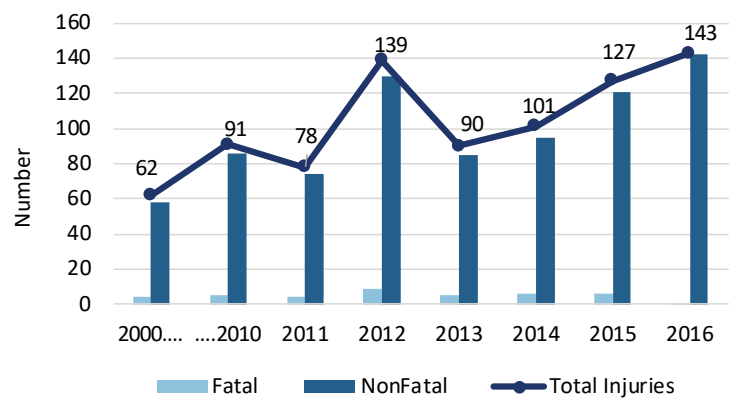
⁷ Harvard School of Public Health. Harvard Injury Control Research Center. Homicide – Suicide – Accidents – Children and Women. 2009. <http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/research/hicrc/firearms-research/guns-and-death>. Accessed May 2018.

two parents, skipping class during school and previous arrest.⁸ States that require background checks for gun sales report a lower rate of suicide, domestic violence, homicide and police killed with handguns.¹ In Minnesota, no background check is required to purchase through a private sale or transfer, which makes it easy for those who are prohibited from possessing a gun under federal and state law to obtain a firearm.

WHAT RAMSEY COUNTY IS DOING

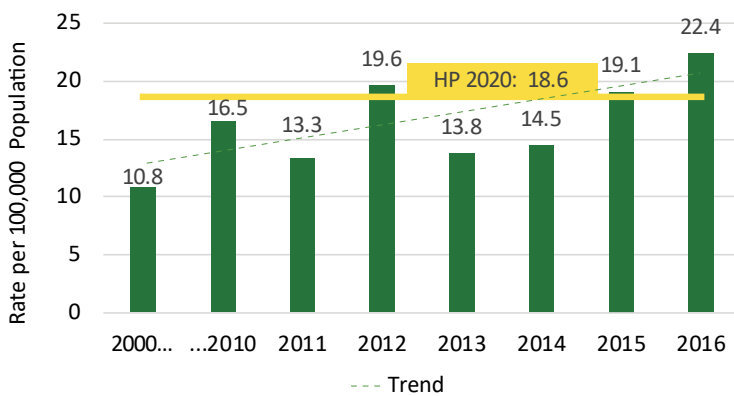
Two places in Minnesota state law prohibit the collection of data regarding guns, which prevents essential public health research from taking place.⁹ Ramsey County supports state funding initiatives to conduct surveillance for all forms of violent injury and research regarding the role of firearms in violence, and the effectiveness of different types of firearm laws. The Ramsey County Attorney's Office has joined with Saint Paul – Ramsey County Public Health, the Ramsey County Sheriff's Office and multiple community partners to make sure guns in homes are safely locked and stored away from children. This prevention effort is designed to encourage all gun owners to lock and secure their firearms by making it easy for residents to pick up free gun locks from community-based locations. Distribution sites include select recreation centers, libraries and community centers.

Hospital and Emergency Department-Treated Injuries* from Firearms, Ramsey County



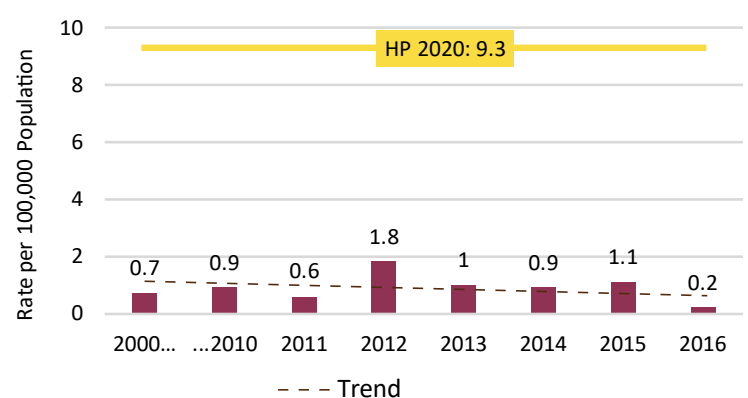
* includes paintball and airgun injuries
Source: Minnesota Department of Health. MIDAS.¹⁰

Rate of Non-Fatal Firearm-Related Injuries Treated in a Hospital or Emergency Department, Ramsey County



Source: Minnesota Department of Health MIDAS.¹⁰

Rate of Fatal Firearm-Related Injuries Treated in a Hospital or Emergency Department, Ramsey County



Source: Minnesota Department of Health. MIDAS.¹⁰

⁸ Paris CA, Edgerton EA, Sifuentes M, et al. Risk factors associated with non-fatal adolescent firearm injuries. *BMJ Journals*. 2002;8:147–150. <http://injuryprevention.bmj.com/content/8/2/147>. Accessed February 9, 2018.

⁹ MN Statute 144.05 and 625.714. <https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes>. Accessed May 2018.

¹⁰ Hospital Treated Injuries. MIDAS- Minnesota Department of Health Web site. <http://www.health.state.mn.us/injury/midas/injury/index.cfm>. Accessed February 2, 2018.