



### Alcohol-Involved Deaths Climbing: A Public Health Perspective in Iowa

Alcohol-involved deaths are a serious public health problem in Iowa, increasing from 388 in 2008 to 650 in 2017. From 2008-2017, the average annual number of alcohol-involved deaths in Iowa was 505 (IDPH, 2017). According to the World Health Organization (2018), 3 million deaths occur globally each year as a result of the harmful use of alcohol. In the U.S. in 2010, an estimated 70,000 people died from alcohol use, making alcohol use the third leading cause of premature deaths (McGinnis, 2013). The first and second leading causes of preventable factors causing premature deaths in the U.S. were diet/inactivity (400,000) and tobacco use (350,000), respectively (McGinnis, 2013). This data brief highlights the impact of alcohol-involved deaths in Iowa.

*Alcohol use is the third leading preventable cause of death in the U.S.*



#### Top Preventable Causes of Death in the U.S. in 2010\*:

1. Tobacco use
2. Poor diet and physical inactivity
3. Alcohol consumption
4. Medical errors
5. Toxic agents

\*SOURCE: McGinnis (2013).

### Trends in Alcohol-Involved Deaths in Iowa

Figure 1 illustrates 2008-2017 alcohol-involved deaths in Iowa. The rate of alcohol-involved deaths has increased significantly over the past 10 years, from a rate of 13 per 100,000 population in 2008 to 21 per 100,000 population in 2017 (Figure 1). The rate of alcohol-involved deaths increased by more than 61%.

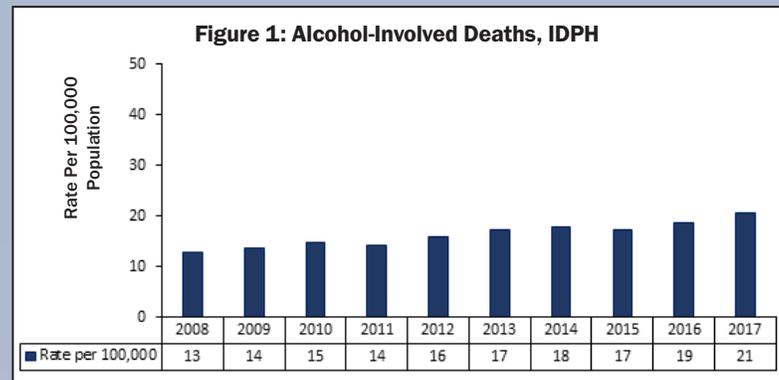
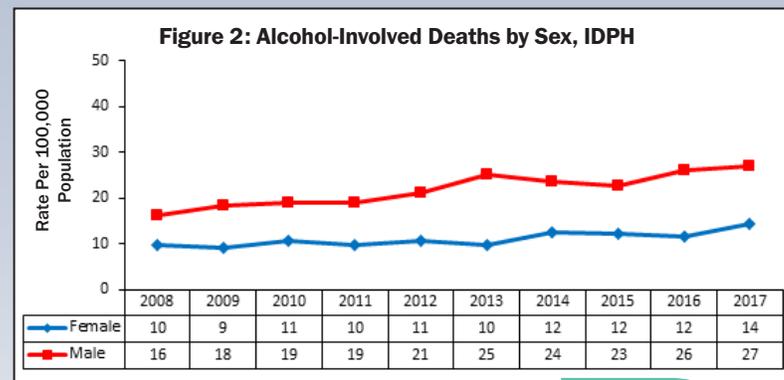


Figure 2 shows alcohol-involved deaths in Iowa by sex for 2008-2017. Alcohol-involved deaths continue to increase for both males and females; however, Iowa men are twice as likely to die from alcohol poisoning. From 2008-2017, alcohol-involved deaths increased from 16 per 100,000 population to 27 per 100,000 population for males, and 10 per 100,000 population to 14 per 100,000 for females (Figure 2). Alcohol-involved deaths have increased for both females and males since 2008, with males twice as likely to die in alcohol-involved deaths as females (Figure 2).



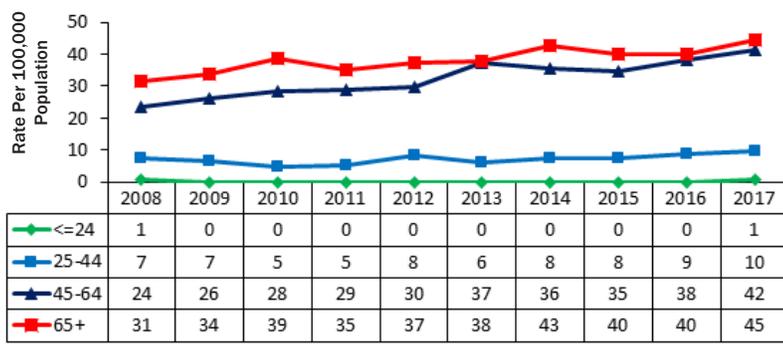
*Iowa men are twice as likely to die from alcohol poisoning.*



## Alcohol-Involved Deaths Most Common Among Older Adults

Figure 3 demonstrates alcohol-involved deaths by age. In Iowa, alcohol-involved deaths are prevalent among Iowans aged 45 to 64, and 65 or older. From 2008 to 2017, alcohol-involved deaths increased by 45% among Iowans aged 65 or older, and 75% among Iowans aged 45 to 64. In 2017, the rate of alcohol-involved deaths was 45 per 100,000 population for Iowans aged 65 or older, and 42 per 100,000 population for Iowans aged 45 to 64 (Figure 3).

**Figure 3: Alcohol-Involved Deaths by Age, IDPH**

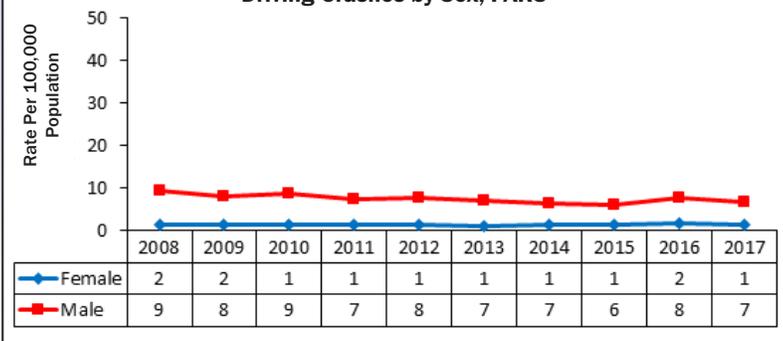


## Iowa's Sobering Facts: Alcohol-Impaired Motor Vehicle Crash Deaths

Figure 4 presents fatality rates involving alcohol-impaired driving crashes by sex. In 2017, there were 330 deaths from motor vehicle crash in Iowa. Of these 330 crash deaths, 88 (27%) involved at least one driver with a Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) of .08 g/dL or higher, which is above the legal intoxication level (FARS, 2017). Alcohol-involved motor vehicle crash deaths were higher among alcohol-impaired males compared to their female counterparts. In 2017, the rate of alcohol-involved motor vehicle crash deaths was 7 per 100,000 population for males and 1 per 100,000 for females (Figure 4).

**27% of Iowa motor vehicle deaths in 2017 involved an alcohol-impaired driver.**

**Figure 4: Fatality Rate Involving Alcohol-Impaired Driving Crashes by Sex, FARS**



## Conclusions about Alcohol-Involved Deaths in Iowa

Alcohol-involved deaths are a public health concern in Iowa. These deaths significantly increased over the past decade in Iowa. In 2017, 650 Iowans died from alcohol-involved causes such as acute poisoning, chronic diseases, injury and perinatal causes. In Iowa, the alcohol-involved death rate increases with age, and is two times higher among males.



**Alcohol-involved deaths have increased over the past decade.**

## More Information

For more information about prevention and treatment resources in Iowa, please visit the IDPH Substance Abuse Prevention website at <https://idph.iowa.gov/substance-abuse/prevention> or Your Life Iowa at <http://www.yourlifeiowa.org/>.

## References

McGinnis, J.M. (2013). Actual causes of death, 1990–2010. Presentation at the Workshop on Determinants of Premature Mortality, September 18, National Research Council, Washington, DC. Retrieved from [https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK279971/pdf/Bookshelf\\_NBK279971.pdf](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK279971/pdf/Bookshelf_NBK279971.pdf)

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## Sources

Fatality Analysis Reporting System. (2008-2017). Website: <https://www.fars.nhtsa.dot.gov/States/StatesAlcohol.aspx>

Iowa Department of Public Health. (2008-2017). Website: <https://tracking.idph.iowa.gov/Health/Substance-Use-and-Misuse/Substance-Involved-Mortality-Data>