

# DEATH



## *2,558 RESIDENT DEATHS*

In 1995, 2,558 Alaskan residents died. Of this number, 169 Alaska residents died out of state. A total of 2,546 deaths occurred in Alaska. Of this number, 2,389 were Alaska residents and 157 were from out of state. (See Tables 7.1A and 7.1B.) The total number of resident deaths (2,558) represents a 3.8 percent increase over the 2,465 resident deaths in 1994.

July was the month with the highest number of deaths (234) and June had the fewest deaths with 196.

Almost 28 percent of decedents were born in Alaska; however only 8.5 percent of white decedents were born in Alaska, while 93.8 percent of Native decedents were born in Alaska.

One-third of decedents age 18 and over were veterans (52.9 percent of males and 2.2 percent of females).

Forty-three percent of decedents age 18 and over were married at the time of death, 22.6 percent were widowed, 15.2 percent had never married, and 17.2 percent were divorced. Statistics for men and women varied significantly:

- 20.8 percent of males had never married while only 6.3 percent of females had never married;
- 10.5 percent of males were widowed and 41.8 percent of females were widowed;
- 48.2 percent of males were married and 35.9 percent of females were married;
- 18.4 percent of males were divorced and 15.1 percent of females were divorced.

During 1995, 68.8 percent of decedents age 18 and over had achieved at least a 12th grade education.



census area throughout the state. Note that the 'Place of Death' column includes non-residents who died in Alaska and residents who died outside the state.

TABLE 5.1B DEATHS BY NATIVE REGIONAL CORPORATION OF RESIDENCE AND BY PLACE OF DEATH (INCLUDES NON-RESIDENTS), ALASKA, 1995

NATIVE REGIONAL CORPORATION	RESIDENCE	PLACE OF DEATH
AHTNA	21	15
ALEUT	23	27
ARCTIC SLOPE	27	25
BERING STRAITS	47	38
BRISTOL BAY	37	34
CALISTA	117	85
CHUGACH	58	63
COOK INLET	1,397	1,448
DOYON	384	385
KONIAG	58	52
NANA	35	31
SEALASKA	354	343
OUTSIDE ALASKA		169
ALASKA	2,558	2,715

## DEATHS BY RACE AND SEX

As individual groups, males and Natives account for a disproportionate number of deaths. Males make up 52.3 percent of the population in Alaska but accounted for 61.2 percent (1,565) of all deaths in 1995. Natives constituted 16.3 percent of the population and accounted for 21.9 percent of all deaths in 1995. The median age for all deaths was 64.1 years. The median age of death for males was 60.1 and for females was 70.7. The median age of death for whites was 65.9 and for Natives was 58.1.

The total number of deaths for whites in 1995 was 1,848 compared to 1,726 in 1994, an increase of 7.1 percent. The total number of deaths for Natives in 1995 was 561 compared to 626 in 1994, a decrease of 10.4 percent. The total number of deaths for all other races in 1995 was 149 compared to 108 in 1994, an increase of 38.0 percent. The overall increase in the number of deaths from 1994 to 1995 was 3.8 percent.

One reason for the decrease in Native deaths and the disproportionate increase in other groups may be an inconsistency in recording the decedent's race. To ensure more consistent reporting and calculation of rates by race in this report, the race on the death certificate has been compared with the race on the birth certificate for all decedents who were born in Alaska in 1989 or later. For those showing a different race on the death certificate, the race as shown on the birth certificate has been used for purposes of analysis.



TABLE 5.2B DEATHS BY THE DECEDENT'S NATIVE REGIONAL CORPORATION OF RESIDENCE, RACE AND SEX, ALASKA, 1995

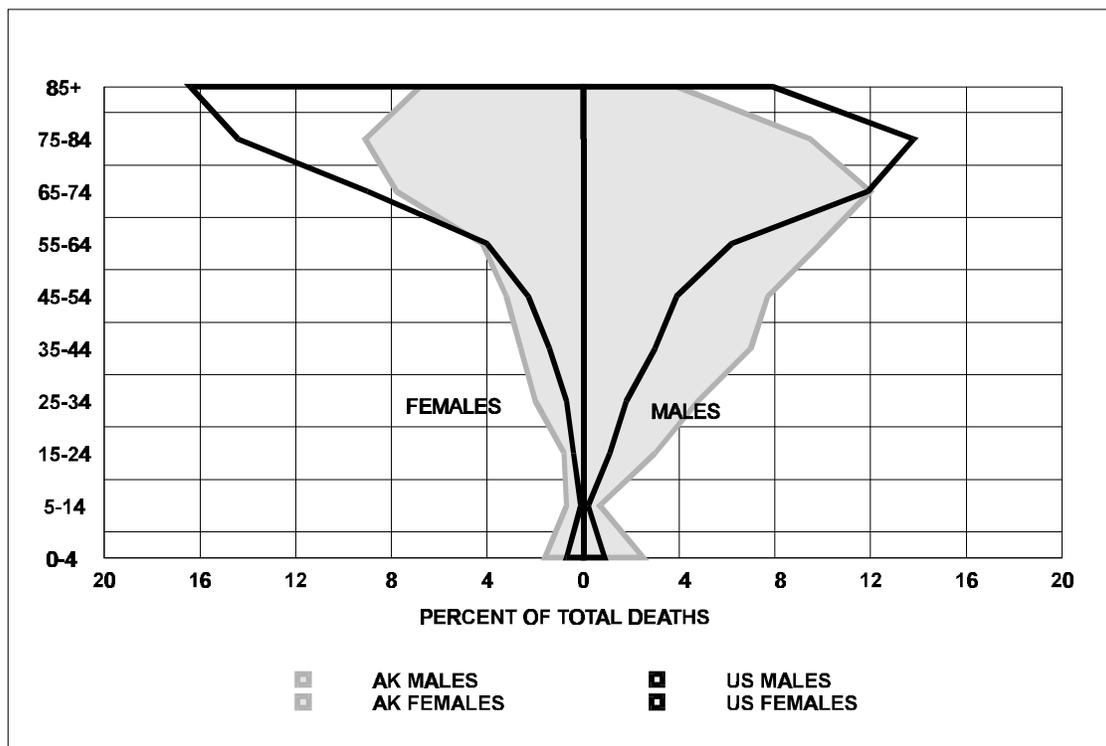
NATIVE REGIONAL CORPORATION OF DECEDENT'S RESIDENCE	RACE AND SEX OF DECEDENT										TOTAL
	WHITE		NATIVE		BLACK		ASIAN/PI		UNKNOWN		
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
AHTNA INC.	7	7	4	3							21
ALEUT CORP.	8	1	8	4	2						23
ARCTIC SLOPE CORP.	4	1	11	11							27
BERING STRAITS CORP.	4	3	25	15							47
BRISTOL BAY CORP.	3	2	19	12				1			37
CALISTA CORP.	6	1	68	41		1					117
CHUGACH NATIVES INC.	32	15	8	2				1			58
COOK INLET REG CORP.	710	452	60	61	28	21	37	22	6		1,397
DOYON LTD.	179	113	43	37	6	3	2	1			384
KONIAG INC.	25	8	17	4			1	3			58
NANA REGIONAL CORP.	1	1	21	12							35
SEALASKA CORP.	166	99	44	31	2		8	3		1	354
TOTAL	1,145	703	328	233	38	25	48	31	6	1	2,558







CHART 5.1 PERCENT OF DEATHS BY AGE AND SEX, ALASKA AND THE UNITED STATES, 1995<sup>2</sup>



### AGE-ADJUSTED DEATH RATES

Since the population of Alaska is younger than the population of the country as a whole, crude death rates and percentages by age do not provide a valid comparison between the two populations. In this case, age-adjusted death rates are used. Please refer to Appendix B for an explanation of how age-adjusted death rates are calculated. Table 5.6 shows age adjusted death rates for Alaska and the United States<sup>3</sup> for certain populations.

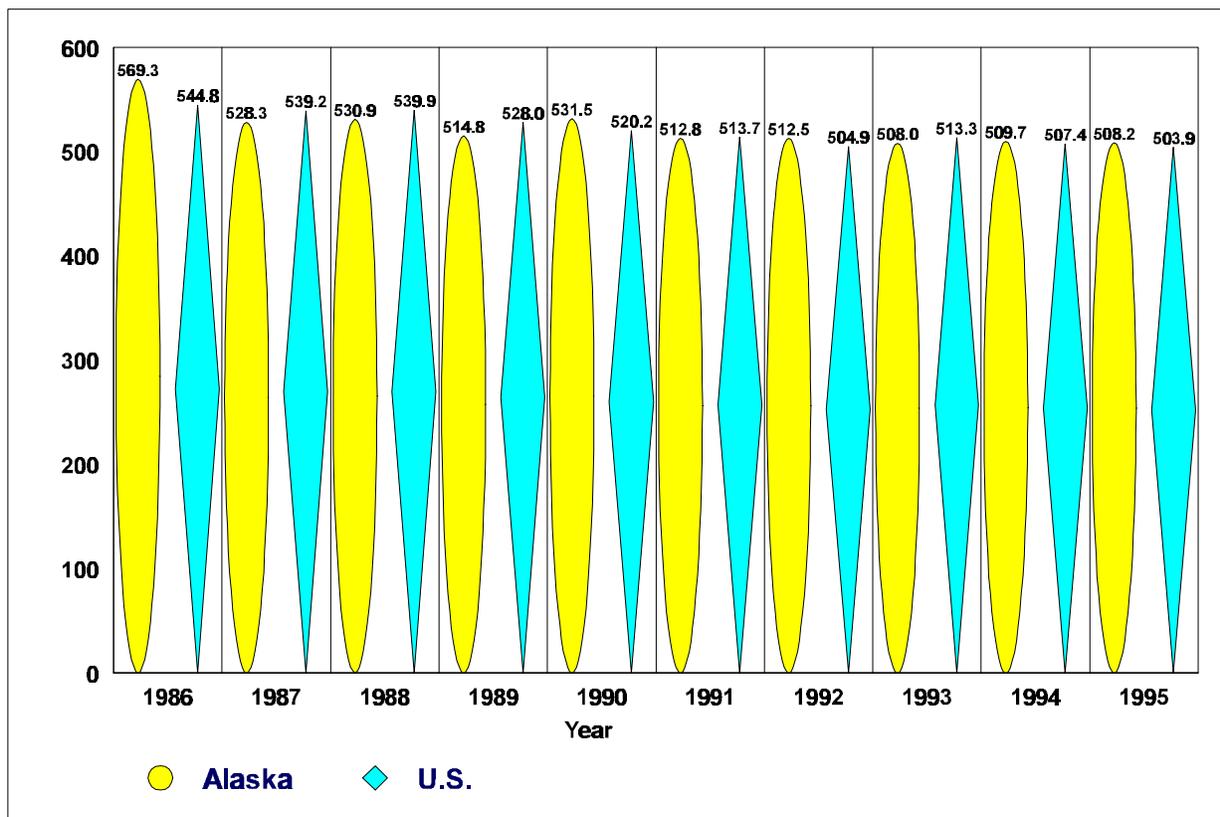
Chart 5.2 compares age-adjusted death rates for the populations of Alaska and the United States from 1986 through 1995. Rates are per 100,000 population, adjusted to the 1940 U.S. standard million population. (See Appendix A for the definition of *standard million population*.)

2 National Center for Health Statistics, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, "Report of Final Mortality Statistics, 1995," *Monthly Vital Statistics Report*, Vol. 45, No. 11(S2), June 12, 1997, Table 14, p. 50.  
 3 Ibid., Table 1, page 16.

TABLE 5.6 AGE-ADJUSTED DEATH RATES FOR CERTAIN POPULATIONS, ALASKA AND UNITED STATES, 1990-1995

POPULATION	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
Alaska Males	673.7	648.1	631.3	631.0	631.0	633.5
U.S. Males	680.2	669.9	656.0	664.9	654.6	646.3
Alaska Females	388.5	377.9	394.2	384.1	387.4	379.2
U.S. Females	390.6	386.5	380.3	388.3	385.2	385.2
Alaska Whites	497.8	474.5	468.4	465.0	470.5	486.3
U.S. Whites	492.8	486.8	477.5	485.1	479.8	476.9
Alaska Natives	774.6	774.7	789.1	762.7	792.2	676.4
U.S. American Indian	445.1	441.8	453.1	468.9	460.7	468.5
Alaska Other Races	393.8	322.9	378.3	406.5	336.3	401.2
U.S. Blacks	789.2	780.7	767.5	785.2	772.1	765.7
<b>Alaska Total</b>	<b>531.5</b>	<b>512.8</b>	<b>512.5</b>	<b>508.0</b>	<b>509.7</b>	<b>508.2</b>
<b>U.S. Total</b>	<b>520.2</b>	<b>513.7</b>	<b>504.5</b>	<b>513.3</b>	<b>507.4</b>	<b>503.9</b>

CHART 5.2 AGE-ADJUSTED DEATH RATES, ALASKA AND THE UNITED STATES, 1986-1995



## EXPECTATION OF LIFE

The expectation of life at birth for 1995 was the average number of years that infants born during 1995 could expect to live if they were to experience the same age-specific death rates experienced during 1995. The expectation of life for the United States during 1995 was 75.8 years, the same as the record high in 1992, and an increase of 0.1 years compared to life expectancy in 1994.<sup>4</sup> In Alaska, expectation of life is calculated by using five years of data to reduce the possibility of year-to-year random fluctuations. From 1991-1995, the expectation of life in Alaska was 74.2, an increase of 0.2 year from 1990-1994. Females generally have a longer life expectancy than males. For Alaskan females, the 1991-1995 expectation of life was 77.1 and for males it was 71.7 years. In 1995, whites had a life expectancy of 75.2 years and Natives had a life expectancy of 68.5 years. For an explanation of how expectation of life is calculated, see Appendix B.

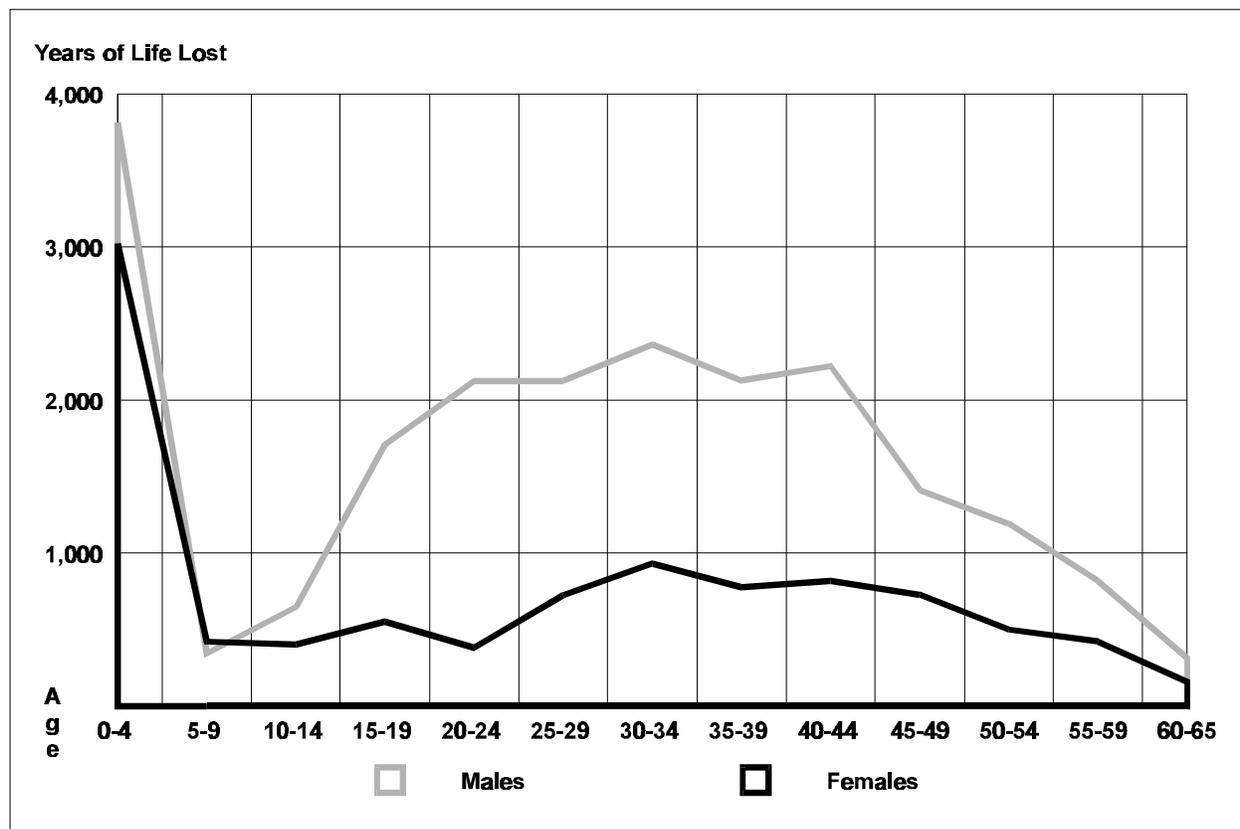
## YEARS OF LIFE LOST

Years of Life Lost (YLL) is one indicator of the risk of mortality for a population. YLL statistics emphasize mortality in younger populations and are calculated by multiplying the number of deaths within an age group by the remaining number of years of productive life.

Chart 5.3 shows YLL for males and females in Alaska. For calculation purposes, deaths were assumed to occur at the midpoint of the age interval. Data in Chart 5.3 are based upon a standard definition of 65 years of productive life for males and females and was derived by averaging data for a three-year period, from 1993 to 1995.

4 National Center for Health Statistics, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, "Report of Final Mortality Statistics, 1995," *Monthly Vital Statistics Report*, Vol. 45, No. 11(S2), June 12, 1997, page 5.

CHART 5.3 YEARS OF LIFE LOST IN ALASKA BY FIVE-YEAR AGE GROUPS, 3-YEAR AVERAGE VALUES, 1993-1995



### CAUSES OF DEATH IN ALASKA

The reported cause of death in this report is the underlying cause of death shown on the death certificate. The underlying cause of death is defined by the World Health Organization’s International Classification of Diseases, Ninth Revision (ICD-9) as the disease or injury which initiated the sequence of morbid events leading directly to the death, or the circumstances of the accident or violence which produced the fatal injury. The National Center for Health Statistics has categorized causes of death for the purposes of uniform analyses in all 50 states.<sup>5</sup> For statistical purposes, causes of death are generally grouped into 72 selected categories. For special analyses, causes of death have been broken into different categories in certain tables. Appendix C lists the selected causes of death used in the following tables and specifies the ICD-9 codes associated with each.

Table 5.7A lists the age-adjusted death rates for Alaska and the United States for the total population, males, and females, for the ten leading causes of death in Alaska. United States’ rankings are given in parentheses. Chart 5.4 is a graph of the age-adjusted death rates for Alaska’s ten leading causes of death.

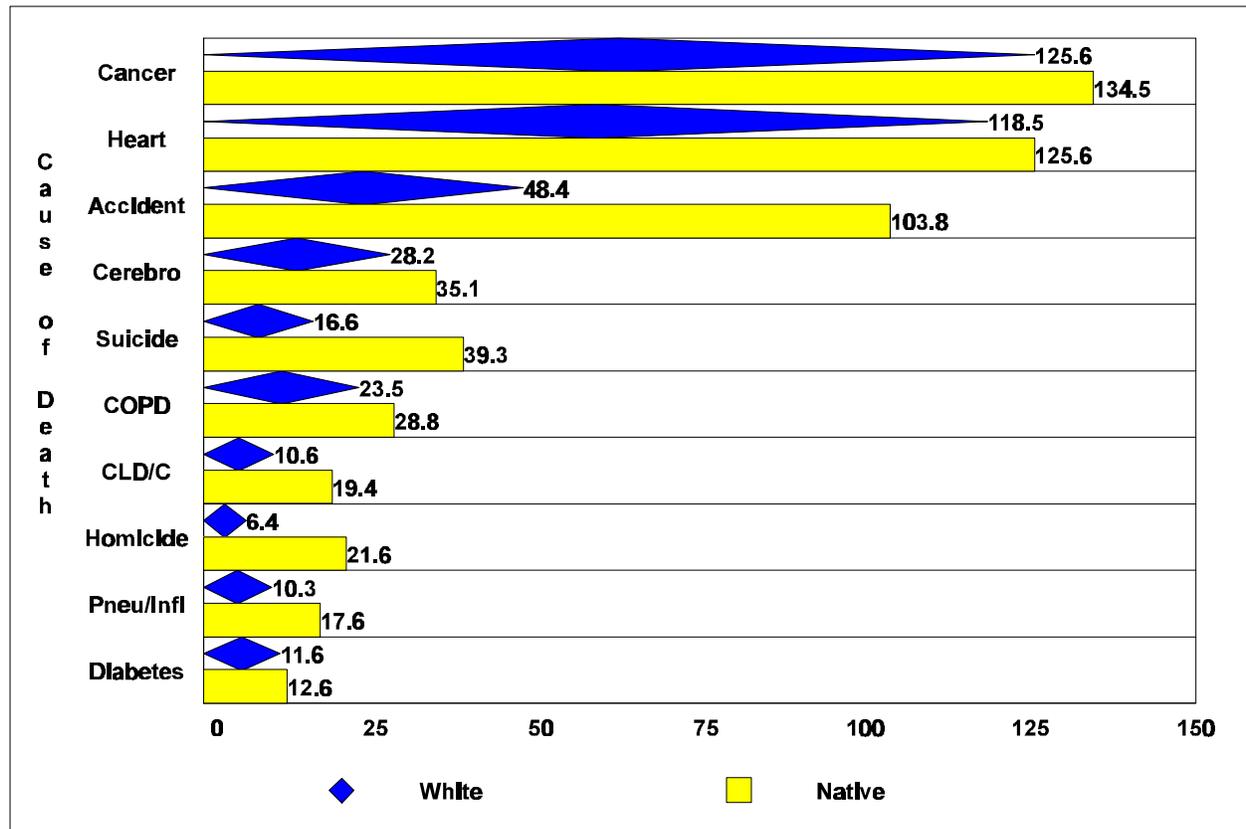
<sup>5</sup> National Center for Health Statistics, Public Health Service, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, “Vital Statistics: ICD-9 Underlying Cause-of-Death Lists for Tabulating Mortality Statistics,” *Instruction Manual, Part 9, Tabulation*, Effective 1979.







CHART 5.6 AGE-ADJUSTED DEATH RATES FOR WHITES AND NATIVES FOR THE TEN LEADING CAUSES OF DEATH IN ALASKA, 1995



Charts 5.4 through 5.6 show comparisons of the age-adjusted death rates for the leading causes of death for the United States and Alaska (Chart 5.4), for Alaskan males and females (Chart 5.5), and for Alaskan whites and Natives (Chart 5.6). Also refer to Table 5.7C for rankings for specific populations. Table 5.7D shows the age-adjusted death rates by cause for the years 1991-1995.





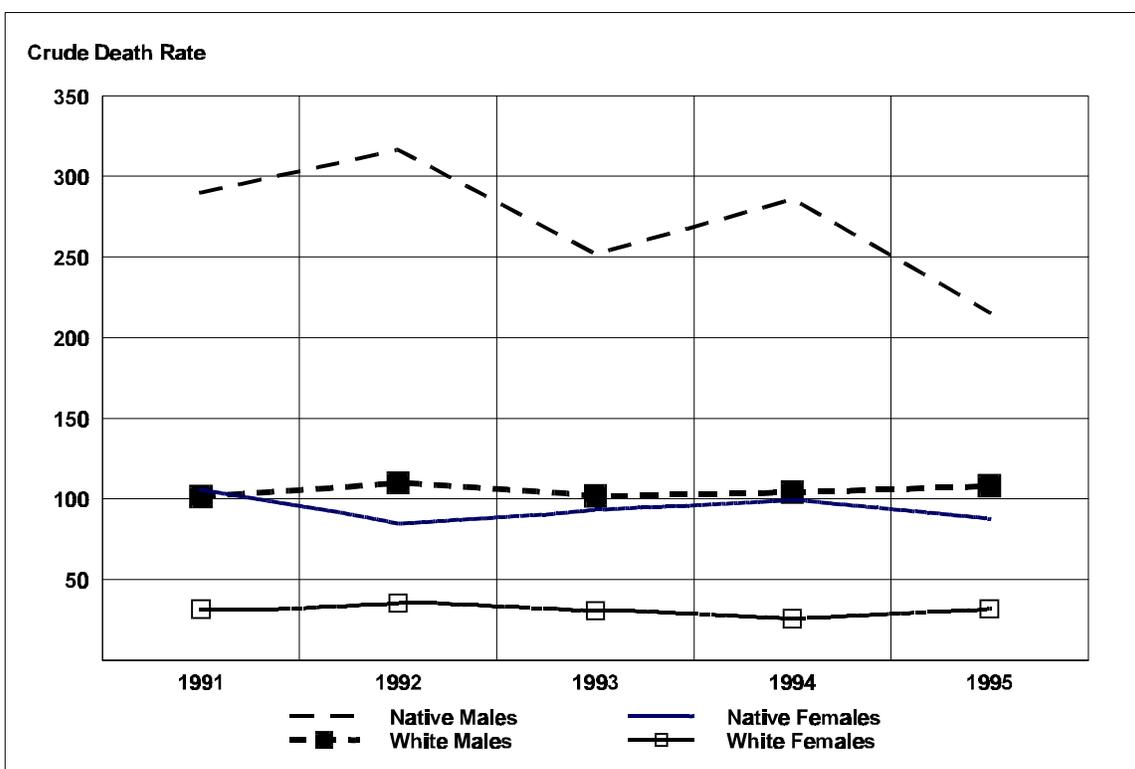
In the 15-24 year age group, there were 26 deaths from suicide, and in the 25-34 year age group there were 31 suicide deaths in 1995, making suicide the second leading cause of death for these age groups. Together, accidents and suicides accounted for more than 60 percent of all deaths in these two age groups. After accidents and adverse effects, suicide results in the greatest number of years of life lost (4,050).

### Homicide

Homicide and legal intervention increased by 25.5 percent, from 47 deaths in 1994 to 59 deaths in 1995. Males made up 59 percent of homicide victims; females 41 percent. Whites constituted 51 percent of homicide victims; Natives 30 percent. Fifty-three percent of all homicide victims were between the ages of 15 and 34.

Homicide was the eighth leading cause of death in 1995 and was the fifth in years of life lost (1,789).

**CHART 5.7** CRUDE DEATH RATES FOR EXTERNAL CAUSES OF DEATH FOR ALASKA WHITE AND NATIVE RESIDENTS BY SEX, 1991-1995



### SPECIFIC DEATH RATES BY CAUSE OF DEATH

Tables 5.8A through 5.10B provide numbers and percentages of deaths by cause for specific populations (by sex, race, and age). Sex-specific, race-specific, sex/race-specific, and age-specific rates are also given. In cases where there were fewer than three deaths, the rates have been blacked out since rates based on small numbers are not reliable.



























TABLE 5.14 RESIDENT DEATHS BY DETAILED CAUSES OF DEATH, BY SEX AND RACE, ALASKA, 1995

CAUSE OF DEATH	SEX		RACE					TOTAL
	FEMALE	MALE	WHITE	NATIVE	BLACK	AS/PI	UNKN	
TUBERCULOSIS	4	2	3		1	2		6
SEPTICEMIA	8	8	9	6		1		16
HIV INFECTION	4	26	20	9	1			30
CANCER: LIP, ORAL CAVITY & PHARYNX	4	2	3	2		1		6
CANCER: DIGESTIVE ORGANS & PERITONEUM	52	84	97	34		5		136
CANCER: RESPIRATORY & INTRATHORACIC ORGANS	67	109	137	34	2	3		176
CANCER: BREAST	44	1	37	5		3		45
CANCER: GENITAL ORGANS	18	28	38	4	4			46
CANCER: URINARY ORGANS	11	13	20	4				24
CANCER: OTHER & UNSPECIFIED SITES	31	46	64	11		1	1	77
CANCER: LEUKEMIA	7	15	19	3				22
CANCER: OTHER LYMPHATIC & HEMATOPOIETIC TISSUES	16	23	35	1		3		39
DIABETES MELLITUS	27	27	40	10	1	3		54
RHEUMATIC FEVER & RHEUMATIC HEART DISEASE	7	3	4	6				10
HYPERTENSIVE HEART DISEASE	6	4	5	3	1	1		10
ACUTE MYOCARDIAL INFARCTION	42	87	107	16	4	2		129
ANGINA PECTORIS		1			1			1
OTHER FORMS OF CHRONIC ISCHEMIC HEART DISEASE	62	160	182	32	4	4		222
OTHER HEART DISEASE	71	100	123	38	5	5		171
ALCOHOL USE/ABUSE	32	58	48	42				90
CEREBROVASCULAR DISEASES	91	56	105	32		10		147
ATHEROSCLEROSIS	10	7	14	3				17
ACUTE BRONCHITIS & BRONCHIOLITIS		1	1					1
PNEUMONIA & INFLUENZA	26	29	38	14	1	2		55
OTHER CHRONIC OBSTRUCTIVE PULMONARY DISEASES	31	52	61	18	3	1		83
EMPHYSEMA	7	10	12	2	1	1	1	17
ASTHMA	2	5	7					7
CHRONIC LIVER DISEASE & CIRRHOSIS	6	7	12		1			13
NEPHRITIS, NEPHROTIC SYNDROME & NEPHROSIS	7	12	11	5		3		19
CONGENITAL ANOMALIES	6	8	10	4				14
PERINATAL PERIOD CONDITIONS	11	19	14	7	3	6		30
SIDS	9	13	9	8	3	2		22
ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE	6	7	11	2				13
MOTOR VEHICLE ACCIDENTS	33	80	77	31	4	1		113
ALL OTHER ACCIDENTS & ADVERSE EFFECTS	39	172	141	58	5	7		211
SUICIDE	19	97	77	35	2	2		116
HOMICIDE & LEGAL INTERVENTION	24	35	30	18	5	6		59
ALL OTHER CAUSES	153	158	227	64	11	4	5	311
TOTAL	993	1,565	1,848	561	63	79	7	2,558





TABLE 5.17A SUICIDES BY THE DECEDENT'S CENSUS AREA OF RESIDENCE AND AGE, ALASKA, 1995

CENSUS AREA OF DECEDENT'S RESIDENCE	DECEDENT'S AGE GROUP								TOTAL
	10-14	15-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	80+	
ALEUTN WEST					1				1
ANCHORAGE		4	6	12	12	6			40
BETHEL			3	4	1				8
DILLINGHAM			2						2
FAIRBANKS		2	2	2	3	1	1		11
HAINES				1					1
JUNEAU				2	2				4
KENAI PEN		1	3	3	2	3			12
KETCHIKAN				1	2		1	1	5
KODIAK				2		1			3
MAT-SU		2	2		1	2			7
NOME			2	1	1				4
NORTH SLOPE				1					1
NW ARCTIC		1	1	1	1				4
SE FAIRBANKS				1					1
WADE HAMPTON	1	1	4	1					7
WRANGELL-PBG						1			1
YUKON-KOY		1	1	1		1			4
OUT OF STATE			2	2	1	1			6
TOTAL	1	12	28	35	27	16	2	1	122

TABLE 5.17B SUICIDES BY THE DECEDENT'S NATIVE REGIONAL CORPORATION OF RESIDENCE AND AGE, ALASKA, 1995

N R C OF DECEDENT'S RESIDENCE	DECEDENT'S AGE GROUP								TOTAL
	10-14	15-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	80+	
ALEUT					1				1
ARCT SLOPE				1					1
BRNG STRT			2	1	1				4
BRSTL BAY			2						2
CALISTA	1	1	7	5	1				15
CHUGACH				1		1			2
COOK INLT		7	11	14	15	10			57
DOYON		3	3	4	3	2	1		16
KONIAG				2		1			3
NANA		1	1	1	1				4
SEALASKA				4	4	1	1	1	11
NON-AK RES			2	2	1	1			6
TOTAL	1	12	28	35	27	16	2	1	122







