

## Highlights of New Mexico Vital Statistics, 2010

Vital statistics provide essential data used to monitor the health status of the New Mexico population. This report presents natality and mortality trends through 2010 as well as findings for 2010. In the last 10 years birth rates for females under 15 years have decreased 45% and birth rates for teens ages 15-19 years have declined 29%. Since 1931 teen (15-19) birth rates have declined 41%. Birth rates were at a record low in New Mexico in 2010 and in the U.S. in 2009. The proportion of births to single mothers has increased over the last 20 years in both New Mexico and the U.S. For 2010 in New Mexico 52% of births were to single mothers compared to 35% in 1990. National preliminary data indicate that 41% of births were to single mothers in 2009. Infant mortality rates continue to decrease with NM rates lower than those for the U.S.

For the past 70 years heart disease has been ranked as the leading cause of death in New Mexico. And yet, for the second time in the last few years, cancer has outranked heart disease as the leading cause. Heart disease, however, continued to have the highest age-adjusted rate at 201.5 per 100,000 population in 2010. Death rates due to unintentional injuries, the third leading cause of death in New Mexico, continued to rise from 53.6 in 2000 to 64.5 in 2010. Alzheimer's disease, which was not one of the top 10 leading causes until 2000, moved up to the 9<sup>th</sup> position in 2010. One of the most dramatic changes in the last decade is the increase in the number of unintentional poisoning deaths, largely due to drug overdoses, from 234 in 2000 to 420 in 2010.

### Methods

The New Mexico statistics in this report are based on information from birth and death certificates collected by the Bureau of Vital Records and Health Statistics which have been collected since 1918. National statistics are preliminary 2009 data from the Centers for Disease Control's National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS).

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Population estimates used as the denominators in calculating birth and death rates in this report were produced by the University of New Mexico's Bureau of Business and Economic Research (BBER) for years 2000 to 2009. BBER updated its methodology beginning with the population estimates for 2007. Any rate differences after 2006 must be interpreted with caution, as they may be partly attributable to the changes in population estimates used in the rate denominators. In this report the New Mexico rates for 2010 are based on the 2009 population estimates.

### Results — Births

The latest data show that birth rates in New Mexico and the U.S. were the lowest rates ever recorded. The birth rates in both the U.S. and the state have dropped steadily since the 1960's after the distribution of the first birth control pill in June of 1960 (Figure 1). The NM birth rate in 2010 was 13.2 births per 1,000 population compared to the highest recorded birth rate in 1960 (32.3), a decrease of 59.1%. The U.S. 2009 preliminary birth rate of 13.5 is 4% below the rate in 2008 (14.0). The largest decrease in birth rates of 20% was to White mothers from 11.0 in 2000 to 8.8 in 2010. The fertility rate, births per 1,000 women ages 15-44, decreased from 69.2 to 63.8 between 2000 and 2010 in New Mexico. Live births to New Mexico mothers totaled 27,795 in 2010—1,078 less than in 2009.

### Geographic Variation

The largest number of births, 8,589, were to mothers living in Bernalillo County, while the lowest was in Harding County, with only 3 births. The highest birth rate was in Lea County at 17.3 per 1,000 residents while Dona Ana and Roosevelt counties had the second highest at 15.7. State comparisons of 2010 pre-

liminary data show Utah with the highest birth rate at 19.4 births per 1,000 population, while Vermont had the lowest at 9.8. New Mexico ranked 9<sup>th</sup> highest in the U.S.

### Racial and Ethnic Composition

From 2000 through 2010 Hispanic mothers had the highest fertility rates (74.6 in 2010). Until 2010, Native American and Alaska Natives (AIAN) had the second highest fertility rates (71.5 in 2009). Asian or Pacific Islander (API) mothers had the second highest rate in New Mexico in 2010 at 69.3. During that 10 year period fertility rates in both the Hispanic (from 81.5 to 74.6) and AIAN (from 72.8 to 66.8) populations decreased steadily while rates for the Asian or Pacific Islander population increased from 52.9 to 69.3 per 1,000 women ages 15-44.

### Age-Specific Birth Rates

New Mexico's 2010 age-specific birth rates show lower rates of childbearing for mothers over age 30 years and higher rates for younger mothers. However, since 2000 New Mexico birth rates have increased for mothers' ages 25-34 years while in the U.S. mothers' ages 30-39 had higher birth rates. National and NM rates decreased for mothers under age 25. The highest birth rates in both the state and the U.S. were for women ages 25-29 years.

Forty-six females under age 15 gave birth in 2010, for a birth rate of 0.6 births per 1,000 females ages 10-14 years. Since 2000, births to females under age 15 have

decreased by over 45% in New Mexico. New Mexico's 2010 birth rate to teens ages 15-19 years (46.2 per 1,000 population) was 28.9% lower than in 2000 and 15% higher than the US rate of 39.1. Birth rates in New Mexico for this age group ranged from 18.7 for API to 64.2 for Hispanics. Birth rates for teens ages 15-17 years decreased 33.5% and rates for ages 18-19 years decreased 27.8% between 2000 and 2010.

Between 2000 and 2010, Hispanic mothers had the highest birth rates and AIAN mothers had the second highest birth rates, with the notable exception in 2010 where the API birth rate was highest at 69.3 per 1,000.

### Birth Order

Data for recent years show a decline in family size as higher percentages of births are to females having their first or second child. In 1960, 47.9% of mothers were having their first or second child while a third were having their fourth or fifth child. In 2010, nearly 67.3% of mothers were having their first or second child and only 13.6% were having their fourth or fifth child.

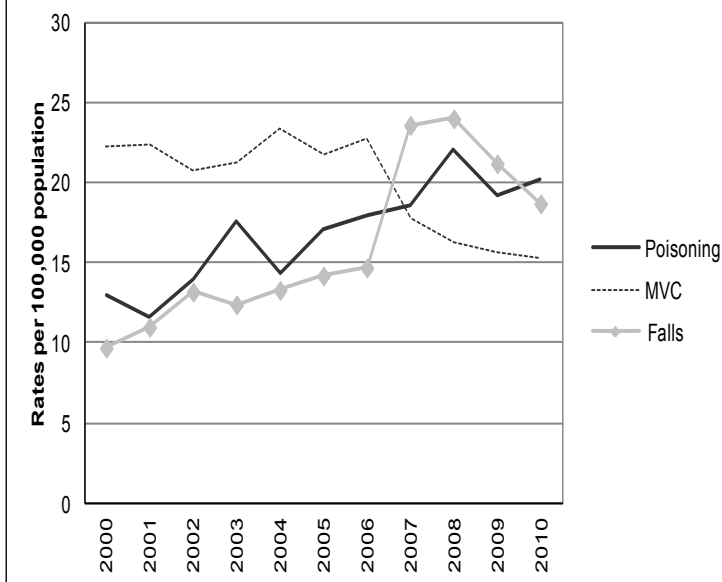
### Unmarried Mothers

Marital status among mothers has also changed over time. Continuing an upward trend, births to single mothers in New Mexico increased to 52.2% in 2010, compared to 35.1% in 1990. Since 1965, New Mexico's percentage of single mothers has exceeded the national proportion. Preliminary data for 2009 show that 41.0% of mothers in the United States were single when they gave birth. In New Mexico, the 2010 percentage of births to single mothers ranged from a low of 16.0% in Los Alamos County to a high of 74.6% in Cibola County.

### Birthweight

Low birthweight is defined as less than 2,500 grams at birth. The proportion of infants weighing less than 2,500 grams has increased at both NM and national levels since the 1980s, with New Mexico at 8.6% and the U.S. at 8.3% reaching an all-time high in 2006. Since then, the percent of low birthweight infants has decreased slightly in both the U.S. and NM. Low birthweight was highest for younger and older mothers, with the lowest percentage among mothers who were ages 25-29 years (7.9%) and highest among mothers ages 40-44 years (13.0%). Infants weighing 4,000 grams or higher also face increased medical risks. In 2010, the percent of high birthweight infants was 5.3%

Figure 2. Unintentional Injury Deaths by Cause  
New Mexico 2000 - 2010



in New Mexico. By race, the greatest proportion of low birthweight births was among Black infants, while the largest proportion of high birthweight births was among AIAN infants.

### Results — Deaths

There were 15,866 deaths to New Mexico residents in 2010. New Mexico's age-adjusted death rate was 928.9 deaths per 100,000 population, compared to the national rate of 741.0 in 2009. The New Mexico mortality rates for 2010 are based on 2009 populations.

#### Causes of Death

Between 2000 and 2010, the top ten leading causes of death remained the same, although the ranking changed for many causes. The number of cancer deaths surpassed the number of deaths due to diseases of the heart in 2010 as they did in 2008. Heart disease had been ranked the leading cause of death all other years between 2000 and 2010. 2008 was the first year the leading cause of death changed since the 1930's when heart disease displaced infectious diseases as the leading cause of death. The two leading causes, cancer and heart disease, made up 41.1% of deaths to New Mexicans in 2010 and 47.9% of deaths to U.S. residents in 2009. Although the number of deaths due to heart disease has declined, the age-adjusted death rate remains the highest in both New Mexico (201.5) and the U.S. (179.8). Of the 10 leading causes that changed rank in 2010, suicide moved up from the 8<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> leading cause and Alzheimer's disease moved up from the 10<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> leading cause. Conversely, chronic liver disease

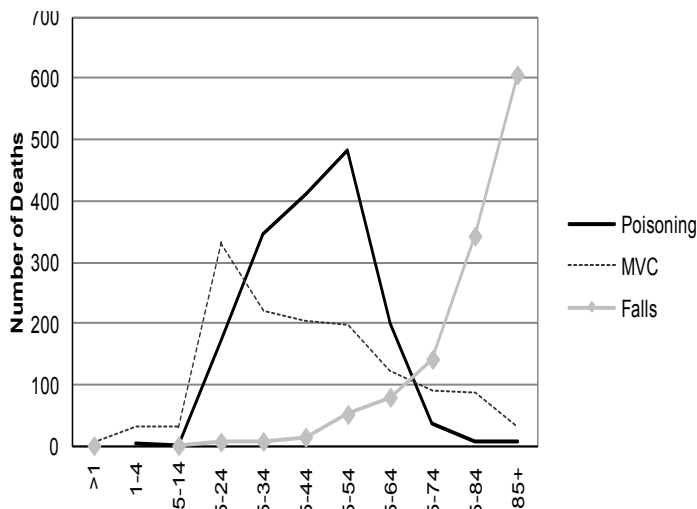
and influenza and pneumonia were ranked lower than in previous years. The death rate for unintentional injuries, New Mexico's third leading cause, was 64.5 and nearly twice the national rate of 37.0. Unintentional injuries ranked fifth in the United States. Chronic liver disease and cirrhosis ranked 8<sup>th</sup> in New Mexico with a rate of 16.8, compared to the U.S. rate of 9.2 and a ranking of 12<sup>th</sup>.

New mortality trends in New Mexico over the last 10 years include the decrease in motor vehicle crash deaths and the increase in both fall and unintentional poisoning deaths. While deaths from falls are on the rise, most of the increase in death rates between 2006 and 2007 was the result of a change in the methodology for estimating populations. The largest proportion of deaths from falls occurred among ages 85 plus where the methodology change resulted in a much lower population estimate thus abruptly increasing the death rate for falls. More than half the deaths from poisoning were among ages 35-54 years, a population less affected by the methodology change. The poisoning death rate almost doubled from 13.0 in 2000 to 20.2 in 2010 (Figure 2), and the number of deaths was greatest in the 45-54 year age group (Figure 3).

#### Infant Mortality

With 155 infant deaths in 2010, New Mexico's infant mortality rate fell 15.2 % between 2000 and 2010 from 6.6 to 5.6 deaths per 1,000 live births. With the exception of 1994, the state's infant mortality rate has been below the national rate since 1980. In 2009, the most current year for which New Mexico and U.S. rates can be compared, the state's rate (5.0) was 21.9% below the national rate (6.4).

Figure 3. Numbers of Unintentional Injury Deaths by Cause and Age Group New Mexico, 2007-2010



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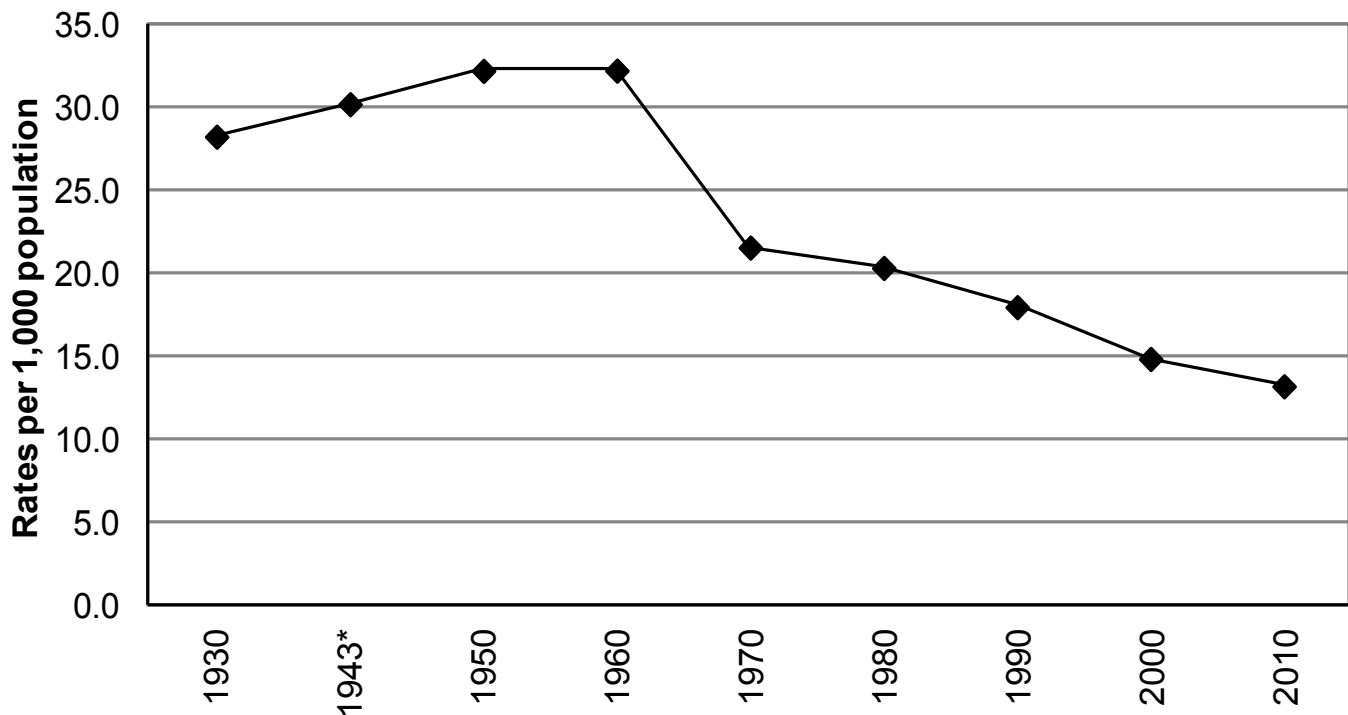
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**Figure 1. Birth Rates in New Mexico 1930-2010**



\* American Indian & Alaska Native births were included in NM vital records beginning in 1943.