

## Meth, heroin top list for Oregon drug-related deaths

by Bend\_Weekly\_News\_Sources

Oregon State Medical Examiner Dr. Karen Gunson recently released drug-related death statistics for 2006 indicating the highest number of these deaths since 1999 and that for the second straight year Methamphetamine-related deaths matched Heroin-related deaths. "Overall, we continue to see a gradual, steady rise in the number of deaths related to Heroin, Cocaine and Methamphetamine," said Dr. Gunson. "These drugs continue to have an impact on our communities and kill people who use them." Statistics released by the State Medical Examiner indicate 212 people died in Oregon during 2006 either from Heroin, Cocaine, Methamphetamine, or a combination use of drugs. These drug-related death statistics have shown a continual increase since 2001 and an increase of 8% over last year when 197 deaths were recorded. In looking closer at the 212 drug-related deaths, the use of these illegal drugs were either alone, or in combination, the factor in these deaths. Please note that the below listed information represents the frequency of use in the total number of deaths. Specific drug-related death statistics noted were: • Methamphetamine use was related to 89 deaths, an increase of 4% from last year's 86 deaths and nearly 3 times the number of methamphetamine-related deaths ten years ago • Heroin use was related to 89 deaths, an increase of 4% from last year's 86 deaths • Cocaine use was related to 64 deaths, an increase of 15% from last year's 56 deaths Nearly 45 percent of these deaths were reported in Multnomah County, followed by Lane County with fifteen percent and Marion County with 9 percent. Heroin use was noted in more than half of the drug-related deaths in Multnomah and Marion counties. Methamphetamine use was noted in nearly 60 percent of Lane County's drug-related deaths.

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