



**COUNTY OF COLLIN  
STATE OF TEXAS  
OFFICE OF THE MEDICAL EXAMINER  
FY 2013**

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## **OUR MISSION**

To uphold Article 49.25 of the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure.

This includes establishment of a competent cause and manner of death for all reported cases to the office. The Medical Examiner is also tasked with the issuance of cremation permits, facilitating organ and tissue procurement, as well as meeting the needs of families, law enforcement, the District Attorney, Homeland Security, medical and legal communities and funeral directors.

## **HISTORY**

The Collin County Medical examiner's Office was created in 1986 and opened on January 1, 1987. Under the requests and orders of the Commissioners Court, William B. Rohr M.D. was appointed as the County Medical Examiner who retains this position to this day. The Office has full accreditation by the National Association of Medical Examiners. Sheila Spotswood M.D. was added as an assistant October 2008. This enabled Dr. Rohr to maintain a personal workload acceptable for accreditation in a cost-effective manner yet still conduct autopsy services for Grayson and Fannin counties. The office operated on an annual budget of \$1,184,075 during FY 2013. Growing population and the re-opening of services outside of Collin County has increased the caseload handled by this office in terms of pathology, toxicology, investigation, evidence / property storage and disposal, transportation of bodies and courtroom testimony. Adult and Child Fatality Review Teams continue to be active. Both are chaired by Dr. Rohr.

Information presented in this annual report has been compiled on the deaths reported to the Collin County Medical Examiner's Office during FY 2013. It is meant to reflect workload and Office activity rather than public health concerns.

To understand just what these charts and graphs represent a glossary is included:

DEATH REPORT: Any reported death.

NO CASE: A reported death in which the attending physician is allowed to sign the death certificate. The death must meet four criteria.

1. Death in the presence of a good witness.
2. There is a physician able and willing to sign the death certificate.
3. Death not under confinement by law enforcement or a mental health institution.
4. Death unrelated to any possible trauma.

CASE: A death not meeting all of the above four criteria and requiring an examination by the medical examiner. The medical examiner always signs the death certificate.

ABSENTIA (IN ABSENTIA): A death not meeting all four of the above criteria but not undergoing an examination by the medical examiner. The medical examiner always signs the death certificate.

EXAMINED: Another term for case. There are two types of examination by the medical examiner. INSPECTION in which the body is only examined externally. AUTOPSY in which there is an external and internal examination of the body. Body fluids are obtained externally for further testing in either type of examination.

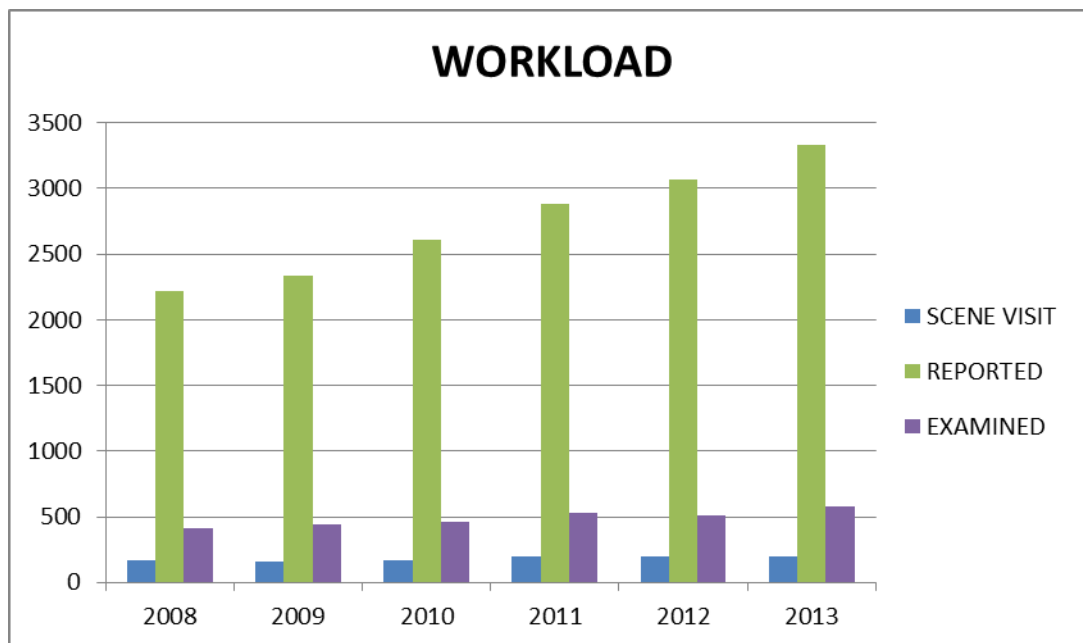
SCENE: The field agent travels to the scene of death to gather further information for the medical examiner and to assist law enforcement with their investigation. A medical examiner attends in select cases.

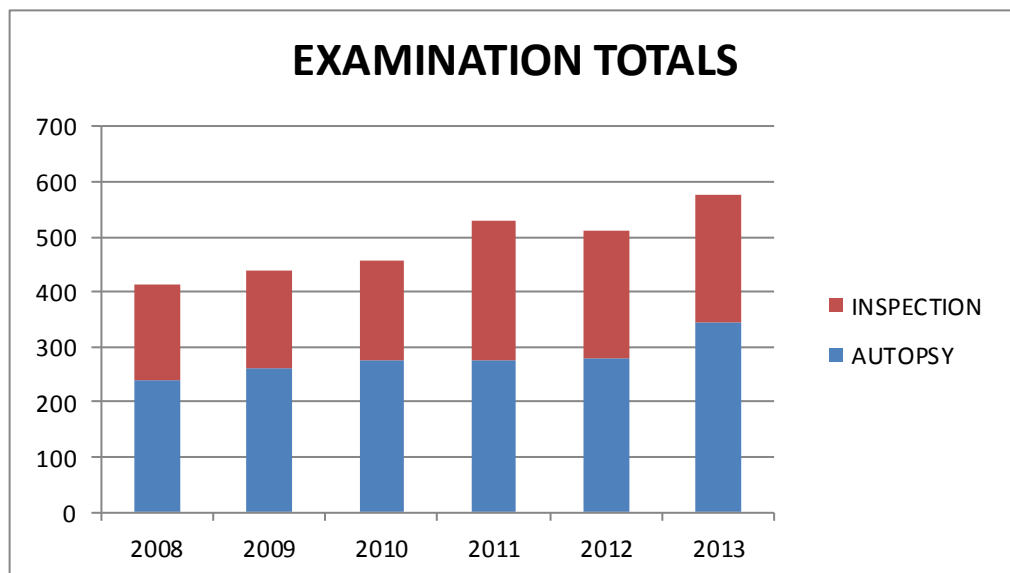
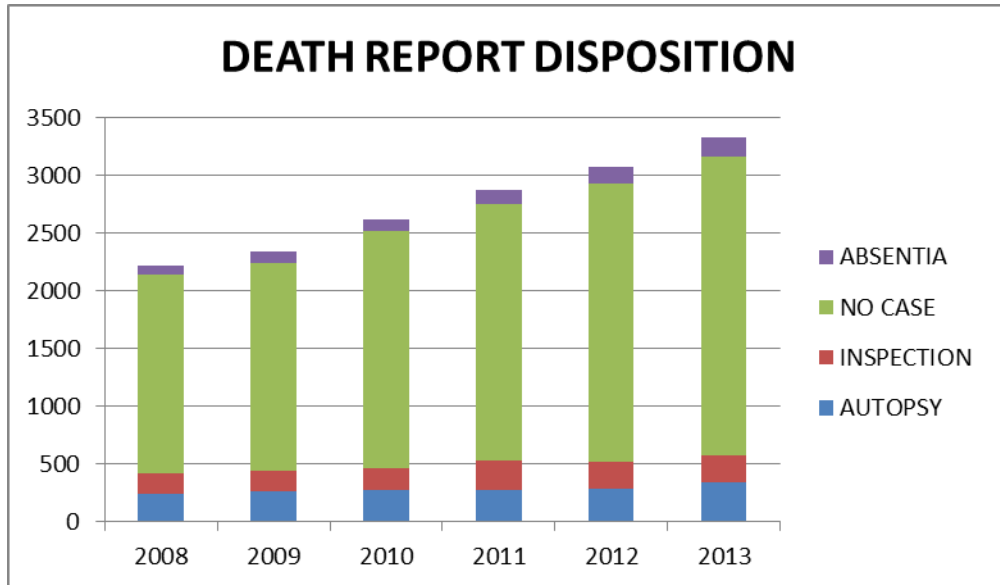
CREMATION PERMIT: A certificate issued by the medical examiner allowing a cremation to go forward. The certificate is required by the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure. Authorization for the cremation always comes from the family. A short informal investigation is always undertaken by the Office before the certificate (permit) is signed. A few requests require a more significant

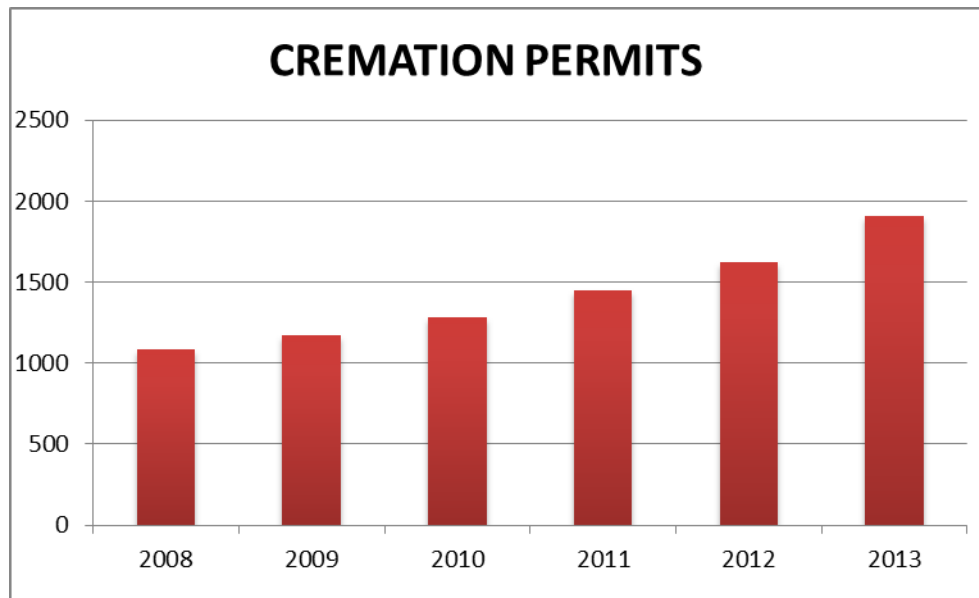
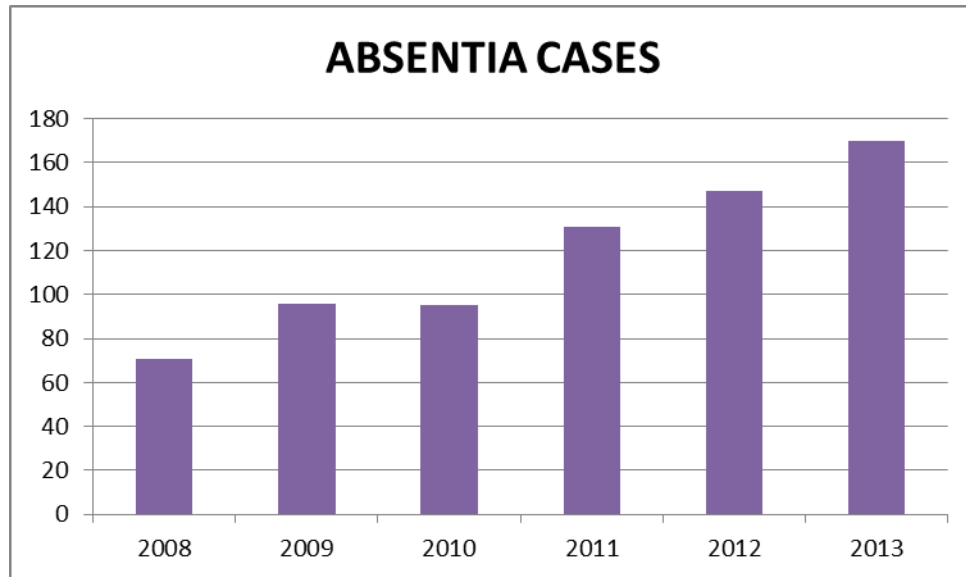
investigation including full autopsy. There is a fee of \$25 charged for every permit issued.

**MANNER OF DEATH:** This is the fashion about which death occurred. The medical examiner is required to make this determination for each death reported to the Office. There are several choices for manner of death. **NATURAL** is a death completely unrelated to trauma. **ACCIDENT** is when a death is in any way related to trauma. **SUICIDE** is a special type of traumatic death in which one dies at their own hand. **HOMICIDE** is a special type of traumatic death in which one dies at the hand of another. **UNDETERMINED** is when the medical examiner lacks sufficient information to make one of the above four determinations.

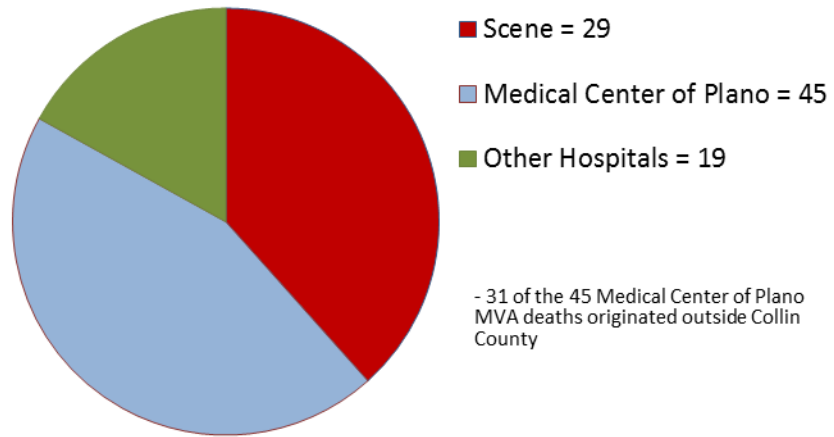
Years are fiscal years, not calendar years.



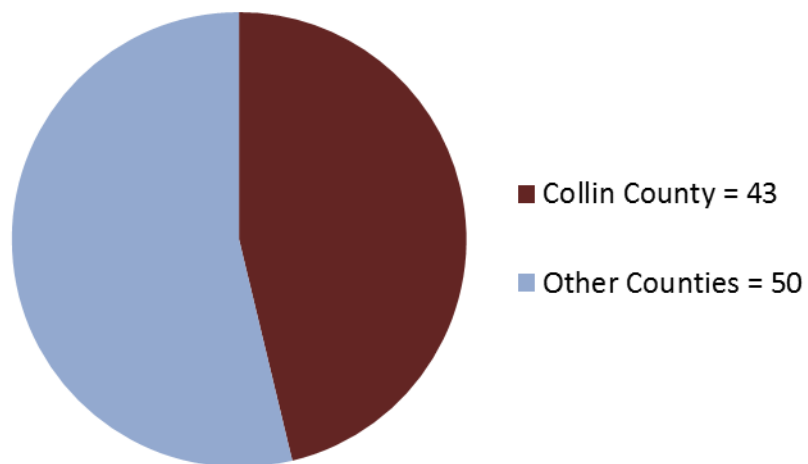




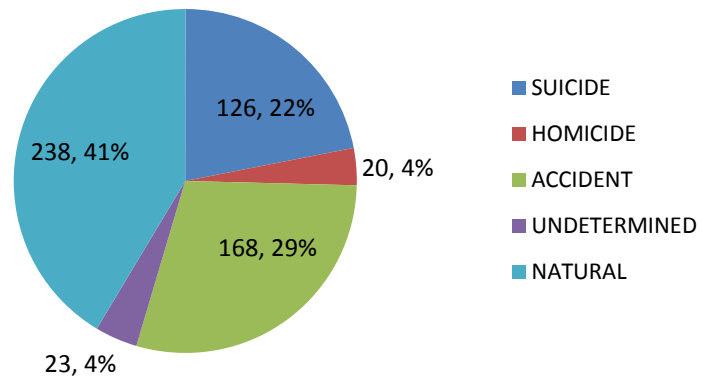
### FY2013 Motor Vehicle Accident - Place of death



### FY2013 Origin of Motor Vehicle Accident



### FY2013 Manner of Death by Examination



Homicide examinations generally create the most work. Natural deaths generally create the least amount of work. Homicides are almost always autopsied. The manner of death least likely to result in an autopsy is natural.

|                        | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 |
|------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| SUICIDE                | 56   | 54   | 62   | 83   | 89   | 100  | 126  |
| HOMICIDE               | 7    | 14   | 13   | 12   | 15   | 16   | 20   |
| UNDETERMINED           | 13   | 19   | 14   | 30   | 31   | 29   | 23   |
| CREMATIONS             | 982  | 1085 | 1169 | 1283 | 1446 | 1623 | 1911 |
| ABSENTIA               | 65   | 71   | 96   | 95   | 131  | 147  | 165  |
| SCENE VISIT            | 133  | 164  | 155  | 169  | 200  | 195  | 202  |
| REPORTED               | 2014 | 2215 | 2335 | 2613 | 2877 | 3066 | 3327 |
| EXAMINED               | 345  | 415  | 440  | 457  | 528  | 512  | 575  |
| ACCIDENT EXAMINED      | 68   | 81   | 84   | 94   | 116  | 145  | 168  |
| NON-TRAUMA<br>EXAMINED | 201  | 247  | 267  | 238  | 277  | 222  | 238  |
| AUTOPSY                | 190  | 241  | 261  | 276  | 275  | 281  | 330  |
| INSPECTION             | 155  | 174  | 179  | 181  | 253  | 231  | 232  |
| NO CASE                | 1604 | 1729 | 1799 | 2061 | 2218 | 2415 | 2587 |

# **ADULT FATALITY REVIEW TEAM**

The Adult Fatality Review Team meets on the last Friday of every month at the Collin County Medical Examiner's Office. The team members are:

**Dr. William Rohr – Chief Medical Examiner (Collin County)**

**Dr. Lynn A. Salzberger - Deputy Medical Examiner (Collin County)**

**Jawaid Asghar MBBS, MHA– Epidemiologist - Collin County Health Dept.**

**Amy Atnip R.N. – Director of Trauma Services: Medical Center of Plano**

**Courtney Pero – Narcotics, Plano Police Dept.**

**Sue Schultz, LPC, LMFT – Collin County CFRT Coordinator**

**Sabina Stern – CFRT Member**

The purpose of the Collin County Adult Fatality Review Team is to review all deaths of adults in Collin County from a public health perspective and to enhance the skills of those investigating death in Collin County, especially the Medical Examiner, Epidemiology, Substance Abuse, and Mental Health.

The interaction that takes place among these agencies during the Review Team meetings gives insight to everyone involved and helps them to understand why these deaths take place with a focus on prevention.

## **CHILD FATALITY REVIEW TEAM**

The Child Fatality Review Team meets the first Friday of every month at the Collin County Medical Examiner's Office. The team members are:

**Dr. William Rohr** - Chief Medical Examiner

**Dr. Lynn A. Salzberger** - Deputy Medical Examiner

**Jawaid Asghar MBBS, MHA**– Epidemiologist - Collin County Health Dept.

**Amy Atnip R.N.** – Director of Trauma Services: Medical Center of Plano

**Alyson Dietrich** – Collin County District Attorney's Office

**Katy Emerson** – CCCC

**Susan Etheridge** – CASA of Collin County

**Delia Guillamondegui** – CPS Inv. Supervisor / CCCC

**Peggy Harrell**, Plano Fire Dept.

**Curtis Howard** – Police Legal Advisor / Plano Police Dept.

**P. D. Jackson** – Allen Police Dept.

**Crystal Levonius** – Collin County District Attorney's Office

**Danelle Parker** – Community Wellness / THP-Hospital of Plano

**Courtney Pero** – Narcotics, Plano Police Dept.

**Sue Schultz, LPC, LMFT** – Collin County CFRT Coordinator

**Erica Stanley** – CCCAC

**Sabina Stern** – CFRT Member

**Vickie Stilley** – CCCC

**Dr. Brad Tate** – Pediatric Hospitalist

The purpose of the Collin County Child Fatality Review Team is to review all deaths of children in Collin County from a public health perspective and to enhance the skills of those investigating death in Collin County, especially the Medical Examiner, law enforcement and Child Protective Services. The interaction that takes place among these agencies during the Review Team meetings gives insight to everyone involved and helps them to understand why these deaths take place with a focus on prevention.

## **ORGANIZATIONAL CHART (2014)**

