



INFORMATION BULLETIN

For Immediate Release
2019PSSG0053-000956
May 15, 2019

Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General
BC Coroners Service

BC Coroners Service releases updated data on illicit drug deaths

VICTORIA – The BC Coroners Service has released two updated reports on illicit drug deaths and fentanyl-detected deaths to the end of March 2019.

Key findings include:

- The monthly average for illicit drug deaths for the first quarter of 2019 (89 deaths/month) is down 32% from the same period in 2018 (132 deaths/month).
- More than two-thirds of the illicit-drug deaths in the first quarter of 2019 involved people aged 30 to 59. Males accounted for four in every five of all illicit-drug deaths over the same period.
- Also for the first quarter of 2019, nine in every 10 illicit drug deaths occurred inside, including more than half in private residences.
- There were 82 suspected illicit drug overdose deaths with fentanyl detected in March 2019.
- Carfentanil was detected in over one-quarter (64 of 227) of the fentanyl-detected deaths in the first quarter of 2019.
- Fentanyl or its analogues were detected in approximately 85% of illicit drug deaths for the first quarter of 2019 and 87% of illicit drug deaths in 2018.
- There were no deaths at supervised consumption or drug overdose prevention sites.

Data is preliminary and, therefore, should be interpreted with caution and is subject to change as investigations conclude.

Learn More:

Illicit drug overdose death report: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/birth-adoption-death-marriage-and-divorce/deaths/coroners-service/statistical/illicit-drug.pdf>

Fentanyl-detected death report: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/birth-adoption-death-marriage-and-divorce/deaths/coroners-service/statistical/fentanyl-detected-overdose.pdf>

Contact:

Andy Watson
Manager, Strategic Communications
BC Coroners Service
250 356-9253

Connect with the Province of B.C. at: news.gov.bc.ca/connect