

*Portland Police Bureau*  
**BEHAVIORAL HEALTH UNIT**



**AN ANALYSIS OF  
COMPLETED SUICIDES:  
APRIL 2011-JUNE 2013**

**September 30, 2013**

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# BEHAVIORAL HEALTH UNIT: AN ANALYSIS OF COMPLETED SUICIDES

## APRIL 2011-JUNE 2013

**“Moreover, suicide is one of Oregon’s most persistent yet largely preventable public health problems; it is the second leading cause of death among Oregonians ages 15-34, and the eighth leading cause of death among all Oregonians in 2010.”**

### Background

As reported by the National Center for Injury and Prevention Control<sup>1</sup>, suicide was the 10th leading cause of death for all ages in 2010.<sup>2</sup> Suicide among males is four times higher than females and represents 79% of all U.S. suicides<sup>1</sup>. Also, suicide is the third leading cause of death among persons aged 15-24 years, the second among persons aged 25-34 years, the fourth among person aged 35-54 years, and the eighth among person 55-64 years.<sup>1</sup> The national suicide rate in 2010, was 12.4 per 100,000 population.<sup>3</sup>

Moreover, suicide is one of Oregon’s most persistent yet largely preventable public health problems; it is the second leading cause of death among Oregonians ages 15-34, and the eighth leading cause of death among all Oregonians in 2010.<sup>4</sup> In 2010, the age-adjusted suicide rate among Oregonians was 17.1 per 100,000.<sup>3</sup> Men were 3.7 times more likely to die by suicide than women. The highest suicide rate occurred among men ages 85 and over (76.1 per 100,000). Non-Hispanic white males had the highest suicide rate among all races/ethnicity (27.1 per 100,000).<sup>3</sup>

The following analysis will examine only Portland Police Bureau (PPB) cases of completed suicides, for the dates between April 2011 through June 2013. The data range was chosen for this analysis by examining if offenses were coded as a completed suicide and cross-referencing and merging that data with incident reports of a completed suicide. The download of this data occurred on July 18, 2013.<sup>5</sup>

Data was gathered for this report by the Behavioral Health Unit (BHU), which is located within PPB’s Central Precinct. The BHU encompasses and oversees the police response to individuals with mental illness, and or who are in crisis.<sup>6</sup>

This report was facilitated as an initial look at the most current cases of

<sup>1</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control. Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System (WISQARS) [online]. (2010). [cited 2012 Oct 19] Available from [www.cdc.gov/injury/wisqars/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/injury/wisqars/index.html).

<sup>2</sup> 2010 is the most recent year for which data is available.

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.suicidology.org/c/document\\_library/get\\_file?folderId=262&name=DLFE-636.pdf](http://www.suicidology.org/c/document_library/get_file?folderId=262&name=DLFE-636.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> <http://public.health.oregon.gov/DiseasesConditions/InjuryFatalityData/Documents/NVDRS/Suicide%20in%20Oregon%202012%20report.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> Current records may not reflect the data set, due to the fact of adding or subtracting records.

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.portlandoregon.gov/police/62135>

## **Background** *(con't.)*

reported completed suicides, to the Portland Police Bureau. Even though this report collects data from multiple PPB databases, it is a challenge to analyze all data surrounding completed suicides. For example, at the time of this report, the BHU did not have access to completed suicide numbers in Multnomah County.

A more in-depth analysis may include this information; as well as, a cross-reference by the Medical Examiner's office, to examine if a completed suicide was not due to other factors (i.e. death by natural causes, ruled a homicide).

Nevertheless, by completing this report, the BHU hopes to impact policy and procedures and shed a brighter light on the issue of suicides in the City of Portland; thus, helping the bureau better identify those situations that are deemed crisis related, and deploy resources as needed.

## Summary

**“The summer months had the highest adjusted seasonal average of completed suicides”**

- There were a total of 202 completed suicides, between the April 2011 through June 2013; with a rate of 34.4 per 100,000, over that time period. This was nearly three times the 2010 national rate of 12.4 per 100,000.
- There was an average 7.5 completed suicides per month.
- The average days between completed suicides was 3.9 days; with the longest time between completed suicides being 23 days.
- The average age of those who completed suicide was 44.8 years of age; with the oldest person that completed suicide being 89 years of age and the youngest being 10 years of age.
- Males represented 83.7% (N=169) of the completed suicides; females represented 16.3% (N=33).
- Caucasians represented 87.6% (N=177) all completed suicides. African-American/Blacks and Asians each represented 4.5% (N=9) of the total completed suicides. Hispanics represented 3.5% (N=7), of the total completed suicides.
- The average age for females who completed suicide was 46.5 years of age; for males the average age was 44.5.
- Caucasians had the highest average age (46.5 years of age), for those who completed suicide.
- White males represented 73.8% (N=149) of all the reported cases of completed suicide; white females represented 13.9% (N=28). These were the highest percentages of those who completed suicide.
- White females had the highest average age (50.1 years of age), for those who completed suicide. African-American/Black males had the next highest average age (48.0 years of age). However, African-American/Black females had the lowest average age (22.9 years of age), of those who completed suicide.
- Completed suicides were evenly distributed throughout PPB's three precincts. Central Precinct had the highest number of completed suicides (N=74; 36.6% of total); followed by North Precinct (N=64; 31.7% of total), then East Precinct (N=63; 31.2% of total).
- The majority of completed suicides were reported during PPB's morning shift (N=111; 55.0%).
- The majority of completed suicides were reported in the morning shift, for all three precincts (Central: N=41; 20.3% of total; East: N=33; 16.3% of total; North: N=36; 17.8% of total).
- August 2011 was the month with the most completed suicides (N=14; 6.9% of total).
- When looking at the months combined (i.e. June 2011+June 2012+June 2013), it was found that the month of June had the highest adjusted average of reported completed suicides (10.3).
- The summer months had the highest adjusted seasonal average of completed suicides (8.9).

**Overall <sup>7</sup>**

For the months between April 2011 through June 2013, there were a total of 202 completed suicides that were reflected in the Portland Police Bureau’s (PPB) databases. This is a rate of 34.4 per 100,000<sup>8</sup> people. This averages out to 7.5 completed suicides per month, for the given time period. Furthermore, the average days between completed suicides, for this time period was 3.9 days; with the longest time between completed suicides being 23 days.

**Completed Suicides:  
April 2011-June 2013**

**Total number**  
202

**Rate per 100,000**  
34.4

**Average per month**  
7.5

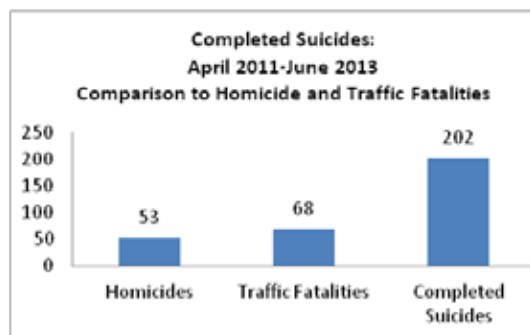
**Average days between completed suicides**  
3.9 days

**Longest time between completed suicides**  
23 days

“To put these numbers into perspective, there were 53 homicides and 68 traffic fatalities during the same time period, reported to the Portland Police Bureau.”

To put these numbers into perspective, there were 53 homicides<sup>9</sup> and 68 traffic fatalities<sup>10</sup> during the same time period, reported to the Portland Police Bureau. Thus, there were nearly twice as many completed suicides (N=202) when looking at the total amount, compared to the total amount of both homicides and traffic fatalities (N=121).

<b>Completed Suicides: April 2011-June 2013</b>	
<b>Comparison to Homicide and Traffic Fatalities</b>	
	<b>N</b>
Homicides	53
Traffic Fatalities	68
Completed Suicides	202



<sup>7</sup> Note: Totals in this report may not add, due to rounding.

<sup>8</sup> 2012 population estimate of 587,865: <http://www.pdx.edu/prc/population-estimates-0>

<sup>9</sup> Homicides include: Aggravated Murder, Law enforcement shooting, Negligent Criminal Homicide, and Willful Criminal Homicide.

<sup>10</sup> Fatal Accidents include: Fatal Bicycle Accident, Fatal Other Motor Vehicle Accident, Fatal Pedestrian Accident, Fatal Accident where the vehicle was not specified, Fatal Accident Against a Fixed Object, and Fatal Accident where the vehicle ran off the road.

## Demographics

### Age

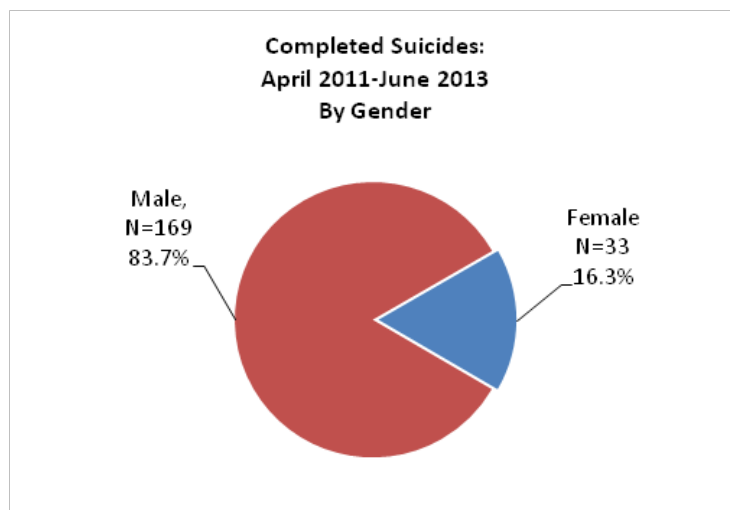
The average age of those who completed suicide, between April 2011 through June 2013, was 44.8 years of age; with the oldest person being 89 years of age and the youngest being 10 years of age.

<b>Completed Suicides: April 2011-June 2013</b>	
By Age	
Average: 44.8	
Oldest: 89.0	
Youngest: 10.0	

### Gender

Males represented 83.7% (N=169) of the completed suicides, for the designated time period; with females representing 16.3% (N=33). This is comparable to the 2010 national statistics, where of those who died by suicide, 78.9% were male and 21.1% were female.

<b>Completed Suicides: April 2011-June 2013</b>		
By Gender		
	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Female	33	16.3%
Male	169	83.7%
Total	202	100.0%

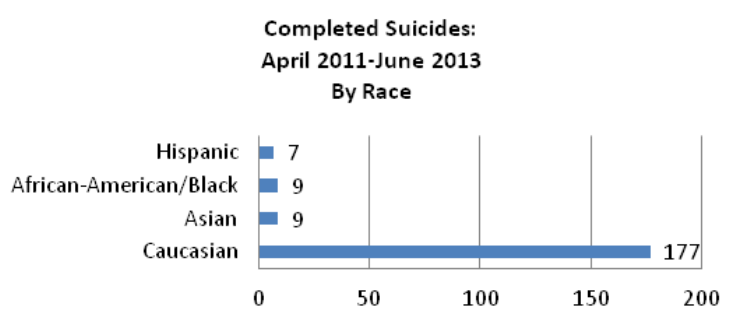


<sup>11</sup> <http://www.afsp.org/understanding-suicide/facts-and-figures>. Figure 4

**Race**

Caucasians represented 87.6% (N=177) all completed suicides. African-American/Blacks and Asians represented 4.5% (N=9; rate per 100,000= 1.5) of the total completed suicides. Hispanics represented 3.5% (N=7), of the total completed suicides.

Completed Suicides: April 2011-June 2013 By Race		
	N	%
Hispanic	7	3.5%
Asian	9	4.5%
African-American/Black	9	4.5%
Caucasian	177	87.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>202</b>	<b>100.0%</b>



**Age and Gender**

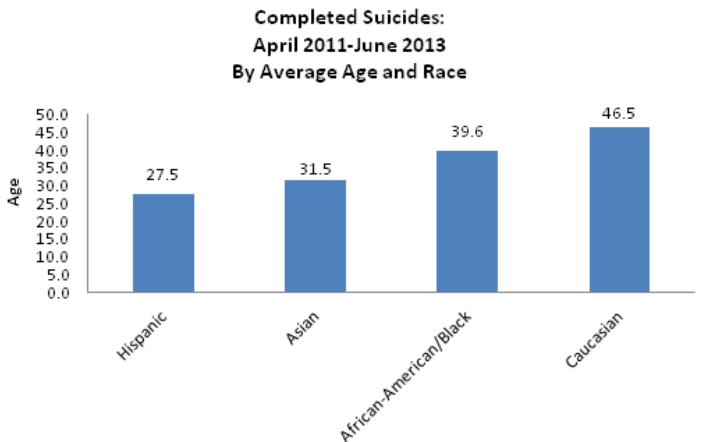
The average age for females who completed suicide was 46.5 years of age; while the average age for males was 44.5 years.

Completed Suicides: April 2011-June 2013 By Average Age and Gender	
	Average age
Female	46.5
Male	44.5
Overall Average	44.8

**Age and Race**

Caucasians had the highest average age (46.5); followed by African American/Blacks (39.6). Hispanics had the lowest average age (27.5).

Completed Suicides: April 2011-June 2013 By Average Age and Race	
	Average age
Hispanic	27.5
Asian	31.5
African-American/Black	39.6
Caucasian	46.5
Overall Average	44.8





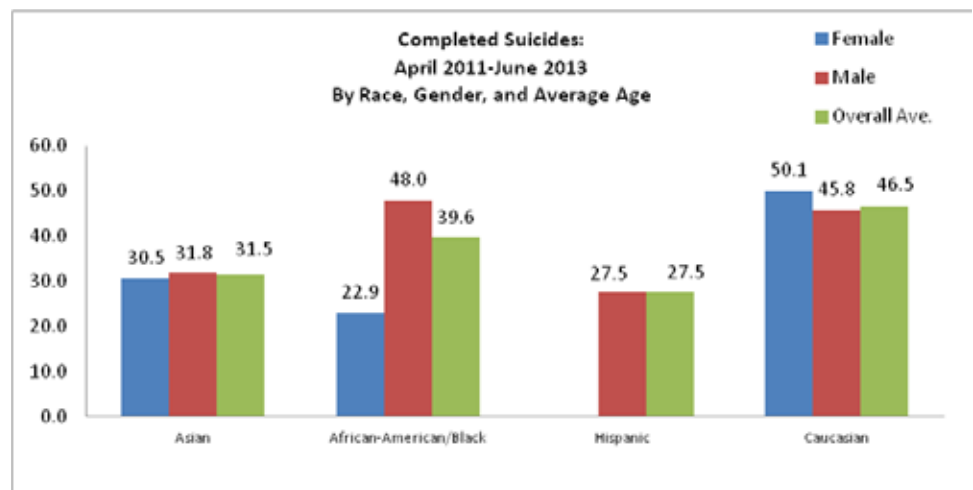
**Race and Gender**

White males represented 73.8% (N=149) of all the reported cases of completed suicide, between April 2011 through June 2013. White females represented 13.9% (N=28) of all the reports on completed suicides. The only race and gender that was not reported were Hispanic females.

<b>Completed Suicides: April 2011-June 2013 By Average Age and Gender</b>			
	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Total</b>
Asian	2 (1%)	7 (3.5%)	9 (4.5%)
African-American/Black	3 (1.5%)	6 (3%)	9 (4.5%)
Hispanic	0	7 (3.5%)	7 (3.5%)
Caucasian	28 (13.9%)	149 (73.8%)	177 (87.6%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>34 (16.3%)</b>	<b>169 (83.7%)</b>	<b>202 (100%)</b>

**Race, Gender, Age**

White females had the highest average age (50.1), for those who completed suicides. African-American/Black males had the next highest average age (48.0). However, African-American/Black females had the lowest average age (22.9), of those who completed suicide.



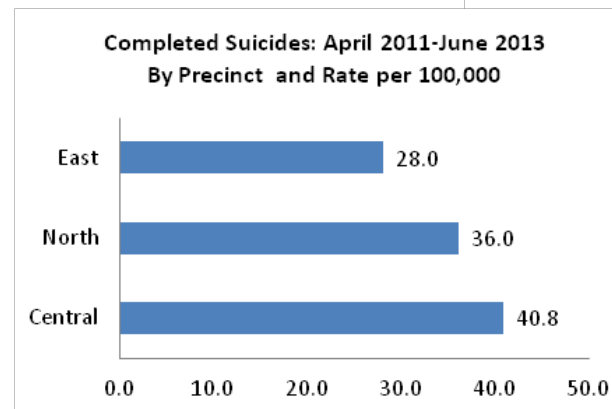
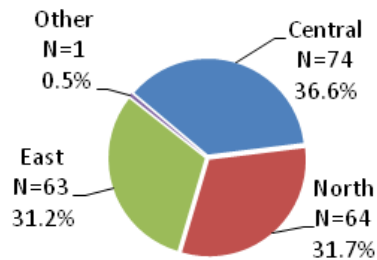
## Occurrence

### Precinct

Completed suicides for the months of April 2011 through June 2013, were evenly distributed throughout PPB’s three precincts. Central Precinct had the highest number of completed suicides (N=74; 36.6% of total; rate of 40.8<sup>12</sup> completed suicides per 100,000); followed by North Precinct (N=64; 31.7% of total; rate of 36.0<sup>13</sup> completed suicides per 100,000), and East Precinct (N=63; 31.2% of total; rate of 28.0<sup>14</sup> completed suicides per 100,000). As illustrated by the table and graph below, the one case of “Other,” occurred in Multnomah County, where PPB officers responded to assist on a completed suicide call.

Completed Suicides: April 2011-June 2013 By Precinct			
	N	% of Total	Rate per 100,000
Central	74	36.6%	40.8
North	64	31.7%	36.0
East	63	31.2%	28.0
Other	1	0.5%	N/A
Total	202	100.0%	34.4

Completed Suicides:  
April 2011-June 2013  
By Precinct



<sup>12</sup> Based off of 2010 population estimate of Central Precinct=181,160

<sup>13</sup> Based off of 2010 population estimate of North Precinct=177,554

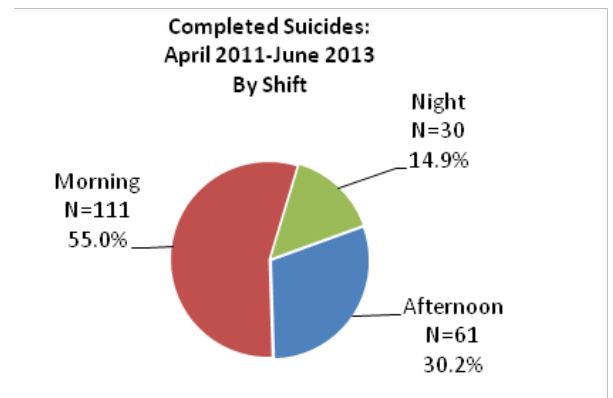
<sup>14</sup> Based off of 2010 population estimate of East Precinct=225,024

**Shift**

PPB shifts are organized as follows: Morning: 7:00-17:00, Afternoon: 16:00-2:00, Nights: 22:00-8:00. The majority of completed suicides were reported during PPB’s morning shift (N=111; 55.0%). It has to be assumed that some of the completed suicides that were reported, happened on the shift (or 2 shifts) prior (i.e. suicide was completed during the night shift, and was not reported (body found) until the morning shift).

**“The majority of completed suicides were reported in the morning shift, for all three precincts.”**

<b>Completed Suicides: April 2011-June 2013 By Shift</b>		
	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Afternoon	61	30.2%
Morning	111	55.0%
Night	30	14.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>202</b>	<b>100.0%</b>



**Precinct and Shift**

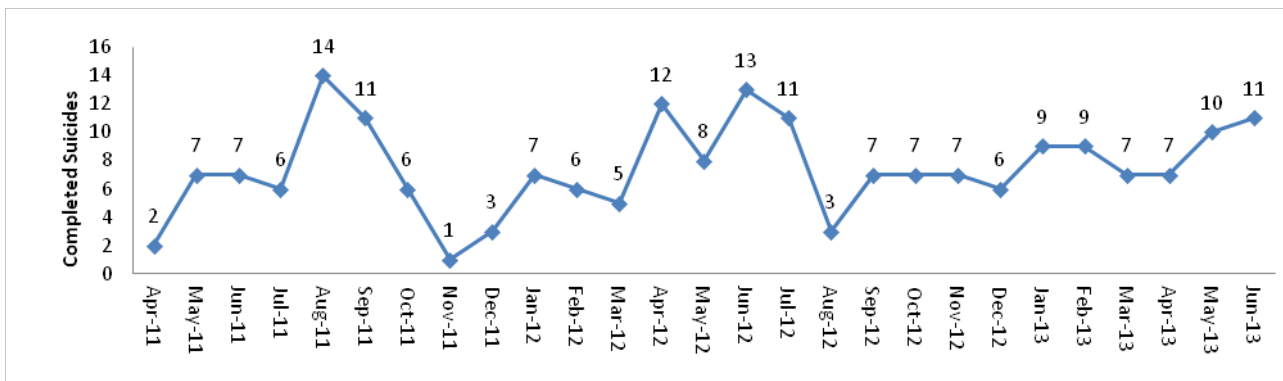
The majority of completed suicides were reported in the morning shift, for all three precincts (Central: N=41; 20.3% of total; East: N=33; 16.3% of total; North: N=36; 17.8% of total). Excluding the “Other” category, East Precinct’s night shift had the lowest number of reports of completed suicides (N=8; 4.0% of total).

<b>Completed Suicides: April 2011-June 2013 By Shift and Precinct</b>										
	Central		East		North		Other		Total	
	<b>N</b>	<b>% of Total</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>% of Total</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>% of Total</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>% of Total</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>% of Total</b>
Afternoon	23	11.4%	22	10.9%	16	7.9%	0	0.0%	61	30.2%
Morning	41	20.3%	33	16.3%	36	17.8%	1	0.5%	111	55.0%
Night	10	5.0%	8	4.0%	12	5.9%	0	0.0%	30	14.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>37.1%</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>31.2%</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>31.7%</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0.5%</b>	<b>202</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Per Month**

In the 27-month time period, between April 2011 through June 2013, August 2011 was the month with the most completed suicides (N=14; 6.9% of total). Furthermore, November 2011 had the lowest number of reports of completed suicides, with only one report of a completed suicide.

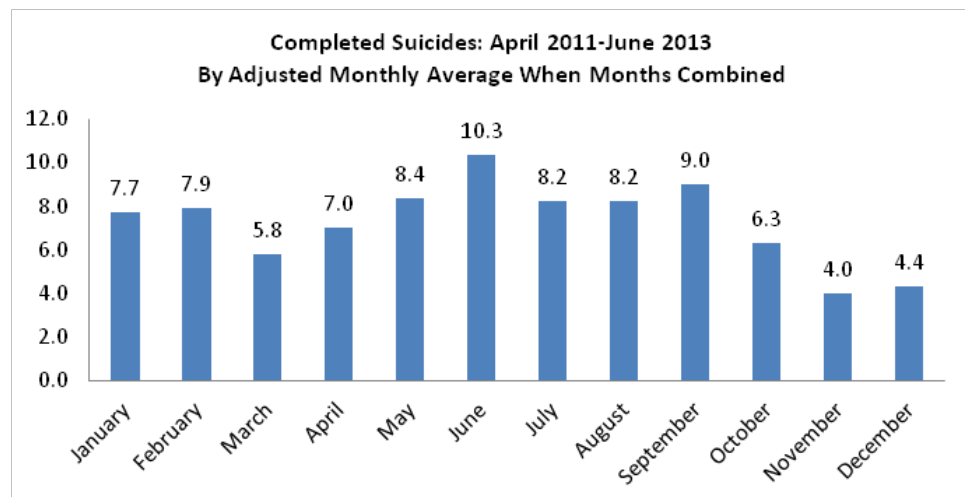
Completed Suicides: April 2011-June 2013 Per Month	
Month-Year	
Apr-11	2
May-11	7
Jun-11	7
Jul-11	6
Aug-11	14
Sep-11	11
Oct-11	6
Nov-11	1
Dec-11	3
Jan-12	7
Feb-12	6
Mar-12	5
Apr-12	12
May-12	8
Jun-12	13
Jul-12	11
Aug-12	3
Sep-12	7
Oct-12	7
Nov-12	7
Dec-12	6
Jan-13	9
Feb-13	9
Mar-13	7
Apr-13	7
May-13	10
Jun-13	11
N	
% of Total	



**Months Combined<sup>15</sup>**

When looking at the months combined (i.e. June 2011+June 2012+June 2013), it was found that the month of June had the highest adjusted average of reported completed suicides (10.3). The month that had the lowest adjusted average of reported completed suicides, was November (4).

Completed Suicides:	
April 2011-June 2013	
By Adjusted Monthly Average When Months Combined	
	Adjusted Monthly Average
January	7.7
February	7.9
March	5.8
April	7.0
May	8.4
June	10.3
July	8.2
August	8.2
September	9.0
October	6.3
November	4.0
December	4.4

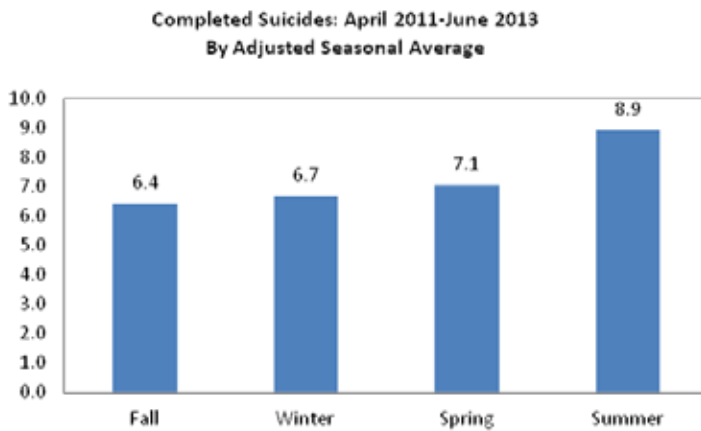


<sup>15</sup> It must be noted for this adjusted monthly analyses there is 3 years of data for only 3 of the months and 2 years for 9 of the months. Thus, these monthly comparisons were analyzed using averages instead of count. This analysis also takes into account for the differences in the number of days within each month.

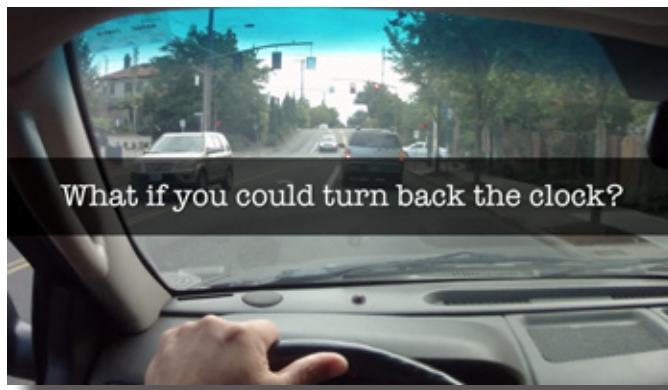
**Seasons combined**<sup>16</sup>

For the purpose of this analysis, the 4 seasons were operationalized as follows: Fall: September-November; Winter: December-February; Spring: March –May; Summer: June-August. The Summer months had the highest adjusted seasonal average of completed suicides (8.9); followed by the Spring months (7.1).

<b>Completed Suicides:</b>	
<b>April 2011-June 2013</b>	
<b>By Adjusted Seasonal Average</b>	
<b>Fall</b>	<b>6.4</b>
<b>Winter</b>	<b>6.7</b>
<b>Spring</b>	<b>7.1</b>
<b>Summer</b>	<b>8.9</b>



<sup>16</sup> It must be noted for this adjusted seasonal analyses there is 3 years of data for only 3 of the months and 2 years for 9 of the months. Thus, these seasonal comparisons were analyzed using averages instead of count. This also takes into account for the differences in the number of days within each month.



View the Portland Police Bureau's video "What if you could turn back the clock on suicide?"



**Portland Police Bureau**

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