Firearm Deaths in Pierce County

Public health relies on multiple strategies to reduce firearm deaths and injuries.

- Background checks reduce the rate of violent firearm crimes by those whose mental health records prevent them from getting a firearm legally.
  - The National Instant Criminal Background Check System lets a licensed firearm dealer immediately check the status of a buyer.
- Safe storage laws reduced the risk of firearm suicide among youth age 14-17 by 10.8%.
- When people convicted of misdemeanor domestic violence can’t buy firearms, it reduces homicides of family members.

For more statistics on firearm violence and information on preventing injuries, visit www.tpchd.org/safety

Pierce County’s rate of firearm deaths outpaces the state and national rates. Access to firearms plays a role in suicide, homicide and firearm-related injuries.

- 113 Pierce County residents experienced firearm deaths in 2018.
- Nearly half of these deaths were suicides.
- Pierce County’s 2018 firearm death rate was higher than the state and national rate.
  - Pierce County rate: 12.8 per 100,000 people.
  - State rate: 10.6 per 100,000 people.
- Firearms are the leading method of suicide in the United States. In Pierce County they make up 72% of suicides over the past 10 years.
- In Pierce County, 11 percent of youth attempted suicide between one and six times in the past year.
- More than half of female intimate partner homicides involve a firearm.

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