

## MOVCAC – Lewis County Excess Death Analysis

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Based on population numbers provided by [West Virginia Demographics](#), Lewis County ranks thirty-fourth in the state with 16,500 total residents. MOVCAC has performed numerous detailed analyses on Wood County excess death. Via that analysis, we confirmed that 2021 saw the highest levels of death experienced in recent history. Based on that analysis and the publication of the 2021 vital statistics by the WV DHHR, we are finally able to provide an analysis of this excess death phenomenon for each county in West Virginia.

As you can see from the two tables below, Lewis County mirrors the statewide excess death experience for 2020. As alarming as that should be, the 2021 increase of 51.72% over the pre-pandemic total of 232 in 2019 is catastrophic:

Year	Total WV Death	Percent Change
2011	21,870	
2012	21,651	-1.00%
2013	21,846	0.90%
2014	22,164	1.46%
2015	22,643	2.16%
2016	22,721	0.34%
2017	23,290	2.50%
2018	23,462	0.74%
2019	23,291	-0.73%
<b>2020</b>	<b>26,108</b>	<b>12.09%</b>
<b>2021</b>	<b>29,402</b>	<b>26.24%</b>

Total Lewis		
Year	County Death	Percent Change
2011	202	
2012	235	16.34%
2013	210	-10.64%
2014	229	9.05%
2015	241	5.24%
2016	233	-3.32%
2017	247	6.01%
2018	251	1.62%
2019	232	-7.57%
<b>2020</b>	<b>268</b>	<b>15.52%</b>
<b>2021</b>	<b>352</b>	<b>51.72%</b>

Data source - [https://dhhr.wv.gov/HSC/SS/Vital\\_Statistics/Pages/Vital\\_Statistics.aspx](https://dhhr.wv.gov/HSC/SS/Vital_Statistics/Pages/Vital_Statistics.aspx)

Note – While each of the other years in the tables above are compared to the prior year, 2021 is compared to the pre-pandemic year of 2019. It makes no sense to compare 2021 to an already pandemic-effected elevated death total in 2020.

The 51.72% increase in total Lewis County death in 2021 (over the pre-pandemic year of 2019) ranks second in the state. In order to understand how each county performed during the height of the pandemic, I compared 2021 death to 2019 and 2021 death to 2020 and ranked each county by percent increase. Lewis County is only one of three counties (Wetzel and Wirt were the other two) to rank in the top six for increase in death in both year comparisons.

West Virginia Death by County					West Virginia Death by County				
County	2019	2020	2021	2021 Change Over 2019	County	2019	2020	2021	2021 Change Over 2020
1 Wirt	57	69	87	52.63%	1 Tyler	115	98	144	46.94%
2 Lewis	232	268	352	51.72%	2 Wetzel	221	236	322	36.44%
3 Wetzel	221	236	322	45.70%	3 Lewis	232	268	352	31.34%
4 Summers	180	222	261	45.00%	4 Webster	124	119	153	28.57%
5 Wyoming	291	379	414	42.27%	5 Harrison	921	866	1,103	27.37%
6 Taylor	190	253	270	42.11%	6 Wirt	57	69	87	26.09%
7 Berkeley	1,097	1,372	1,535	39.93%	7 Randolph	383	391	486	24.30%
8 Doddridge	68	91	95	39.71%	8 Mason	390	398	493	23.87%
9 Wayne	523	636	722	38.05%	9 Nicholas	351	354	438	23.73%
10 Preston	358	439	491	37.15%	10 Braxton	180	172	210	22.09%

What happened in Lewis County in 2021? The pandemic was new in 2020 and there were no vaccines available until 2021. Wouldn't common sense tell you that our 2020 experience should be worse than 2021?

The age-ranged tables that follow were created by compiling each year’s age-ranged data provided on the “Age at Death by County of Residence” table in the appendix section of each year’s [Vital Statistics Report published by DHHR from 2011 to 2020](#). The 2021 report no longer contains these detailed schedules. We contacted the DHHR for the 2021 details and were provided a spreadsheet containing the county level detail.

**Age Ranges of Concern**

The following are the tables for age ranges with the most alarming trends culminating in 2021. Please note, many of these deaths are occurring in our working age citizens. Shouldn’t this be investigated by our elected officials?

**(\*)Note – For each of the age ranges below, the two highest years in regards to total death are identified by the bold boxes. The percent change column is comparing totals for each year to the prior year for years 2011 through 2020. For the 2021 percent change calculation, the next highest death total is identified and used as the comparison year.**

Age Range 35-44		
Year	Total Death	Percent
2011	8	
2012	6	-25.00%
2013	2	-66.67%
2014	7	250.00%
2015	6	-14.29%
2016	9	50.00%
2017	7	-22.22%
<b>2018</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>28.57%</b>
2019	4	-55.56%
2020	7	75.00%
<b>2021 *</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>88.89%</b>

Age Range 45-54		
Year	Total Death	Percent
2011	8	
2012	15	87.50%
<b>2013</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>60.00%</b>
2014	15	-37.50%
2015	19	26.67%
2016	15	-21.05%
2017	15	0.00%
2018	19	26.67%
2019	11	-42.11%
2020	16	45.45%
<b>2021 *</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>29.17%</b>

How can we have an 88.89% increase in death of 35-44-year-olds in Lewis County in 2021 and not have that be statewide frontpage news? These are working-age citizens.

For the 45-54 age range, not only did we set the record for death in 2021, but that record was 29.17% higher than the previous record set in 2013. Again, these are working-age Lewis County citizens. This is devastating and in need of thorough investigation.

Age Range 65-74			Age Range 75-84		
Year	Total Death	Percent Change	Year	Total Death	Percent Change
2011	49		2011	53	
2012	50	2.04%	2012	56	5.66%
2013	41	-18.00%	2013	54	-3.57%
2014	54	31.71%	2014	56	3.70%
2015	46	-14.81%	2015	62	10.71%
2016	53	15.22%	2016	56	-9.68%
2017	53	0.00%	2017	65	16.07%
2018	50	-5.66%	2018	70	7.69%
2019	55	10.00%	2019	57	-18.57%
2020	60	9.09%	2020	74	29.82%
<b>2021 *</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>56.67%</b>	<b>2021 *</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>33.78%</b>

For both of the age groups above, Lewis County saw record total death in 2020. Those records were shattered in 2021. What happened in 2021 and why are we not concerned?

If you are concerned about this catastrophic rise in Lewis County death (as documented by your state), please consider sharing this information with state leaders responsible for representing your population.

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**Please note** – After the election, your delegate or senator may change. After November 5, 2024, please refer to the new rosters as published on the legislature’s website –

House Roster - <https://www.wvlegislature.gov/house/roster.cfm>

Senate Roster - <https://www.wvlegislature.gov/Senate1/roster.cfm>