Utah suicides by job type

2019–2023

Utah Department of
Health & Human
Services

Introduction

Suicide is a public health issue in both Utah and the United States, affecting individuals, families, and communities. Utah had the 7th highest suicide rate in the nation in 2023. It was the 2nd leading cause of death for Utahns 10 to 44 years of age.[3,4] Nearly 2 Utahns die by suicide and 14 receive treatment for self-inflicted injuries every day.[4,5] A majority (86%) of suicide deaths occur among individuals of working age (16–64 years).[4]

Knowing which industries have higher rates of suicide can guide the development of helpful actions for those most at risk.

Industry sectors (job type) are broad categories of employment based on the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). The National Violent Death Reporting System collects data about the industry in which the victim worked or had previously worked at the time of death. For more information about the NAICS and to explore the specific jobs within each industry sector, visit https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/economic-census/year/2022/guidance/understanding-naics.html.

This project was supported by funds from the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control (NCIPC), U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) under grant NU17CE010136—Advancing Surveillance of Violent Deaths Using the National Violent Death Reporting System. This information or content and conclusions are those of the author and should not be construed as the official position or policy of, nor should any endorsements be inferred by the NCIPC, CDC, DHHS, or the U.S. government.

Key findings

- The industry sectors with the highest suicide death rates were:
  1. Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction
  2. Construction
  3. Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting

- Almost 1 in 5 people who died by suicide worked in the construction industry.

- In the industry sectors with the highest suicide rates, those who died by suicide were more likely to use a firearm and less likely to have received mental health treatment.

Recommendations

- Conduct suicide prevention trainings in the workplace, especially industries with higher rates of suicide. Create incentives for those who participate in the trainings.

- Validate talking about suicide and seeking help in the workplace.

- Improve availability and access to quality physical and behavioral healthcare, especially in rural Utah.

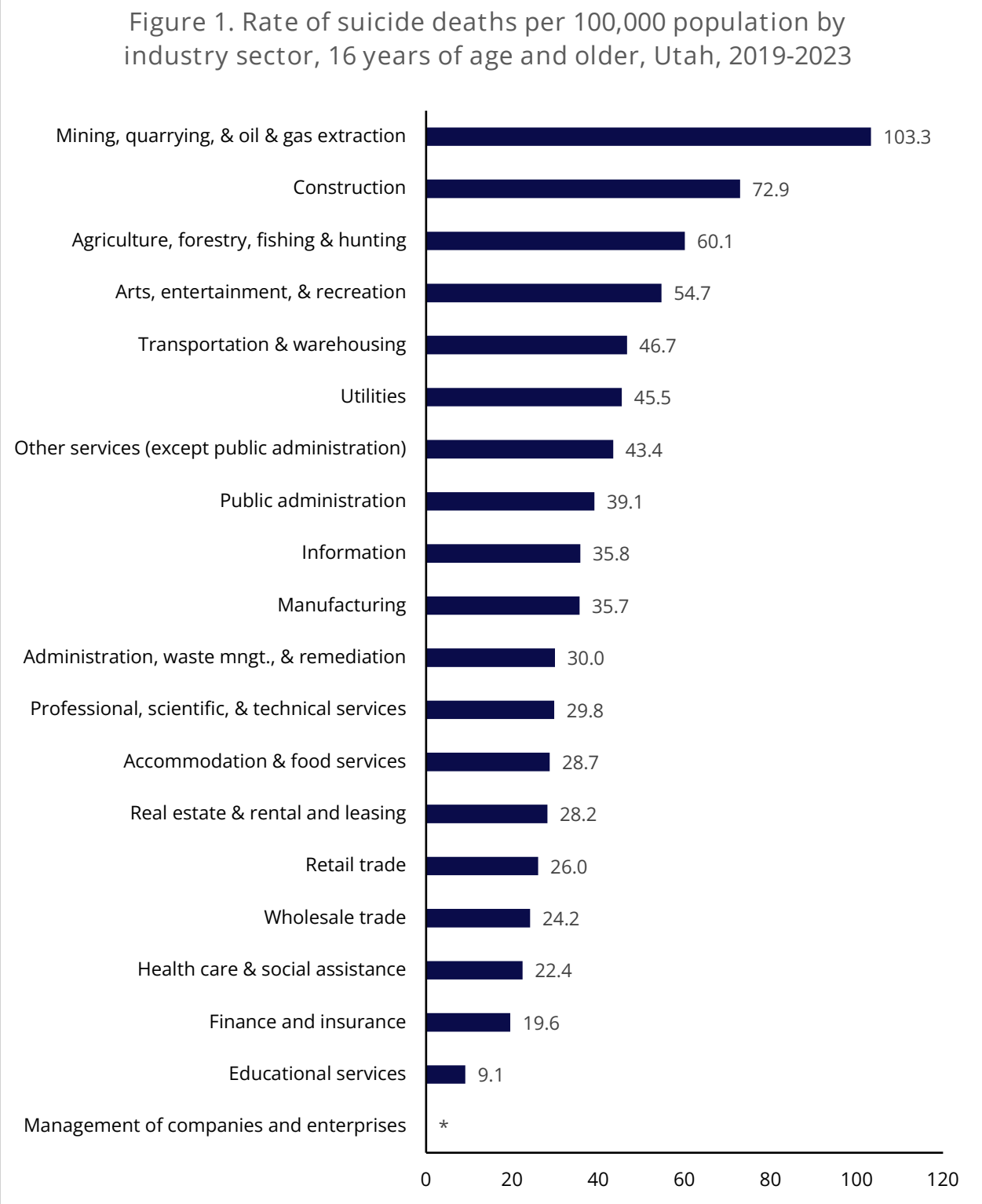
- Promote safety training and storage of firearms and other lethal methods of suicide.

The industry sectors with the highest suicide deaths rates were:

1. **Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction**
2. **Construction**
3. **Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting**

The majority of those who died by suicide in the industry sectors with the highest suicide death rates were male. These professions are male-dominated. Males are 3 times more likely to die by suicide than females.[1,2] The industry sector with the lowest suicide death rate was educational services. Those in the industry sectors with the highest suicide death rates were more likely to live in rural areas (Table 1 — appendix).[1]

Almost 1 in 5 people who died by suicide worked in the construction industry.

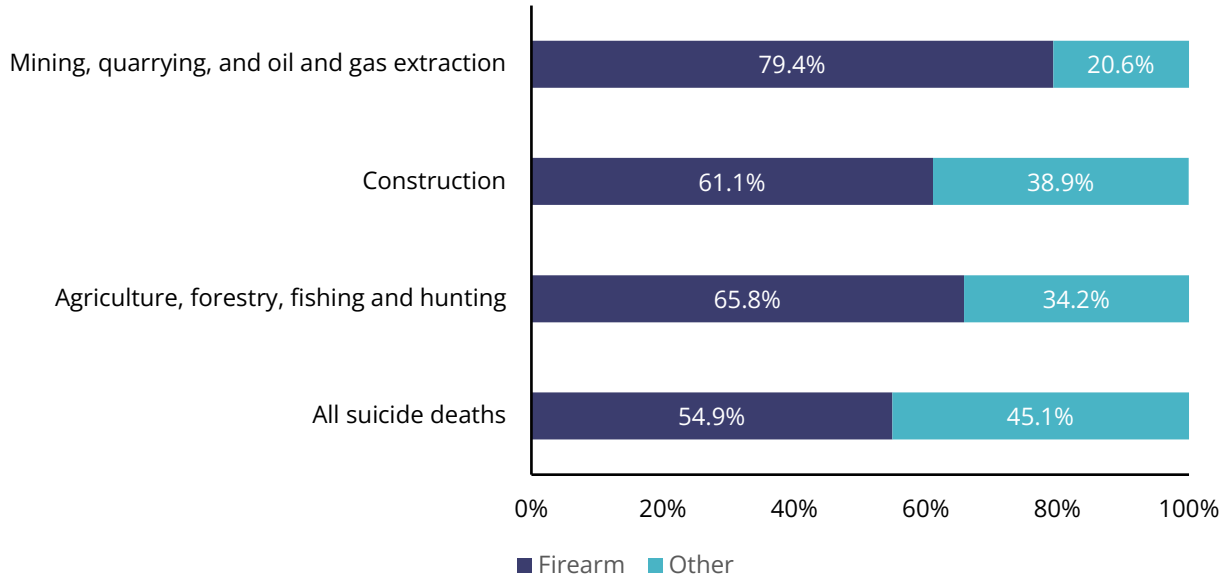


*Counts fewer than 11 are suppressed for confidentiality.

Those who died by suicide in the industry sectors with the highest rates of suicide death were more likely to use a firearm

Access to lethal methods, including firearms, increases the risk of suicide death. During stressful times, delaying access to a firearm could mean the difference between life and death. Temporarily store firearms off site until the situation improves, perhaps at a friend or relative's house. Gun shops and law enforcement may offer storage options. For more information on how you can talk to someone close to you about how to reduce access to lethal means, visit https://utahsuicideprevention.org/firearm-and-medication-safety/

Figure 2. Percentage of suicides deaths by industry sector and method of injury, 16 years of age and older, Utah, 2019-2023



Understanding the circumstances behind suicide deaths can help strengthen suicide prevention

- Compared to all Utahns who died by suicide, those who worked in the mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction industry sector were less likely to have received mental health treatment and leave a suicide note. They were more likely to have a recent crisis and an intimate partner problem (Figure 3).

- Compared to all Utahns who died by suicide, those who worked in the construction industry sector were less likely to have received mental health treatment and leave a suicide note. They were more likely to have a alcohol problem (Figure 4).

- Compared to all Utahns who died by suicide, those who worked in the agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting industry sector were less likely to have received mental health treatment. They were more likely to have recently disclosed their suicidal thoughts or intent, have an alcohol problem, and have a contributing physical health problem (Figure 5).

Those who died by suicide in each of the industry sectors with the highest rates of suicide death were less likely to have received mental health treatment.

Figure 3. Percentage of circumstances for suicide deaths in the mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction industry, 16 years of age and older, Utah, 2019-2023

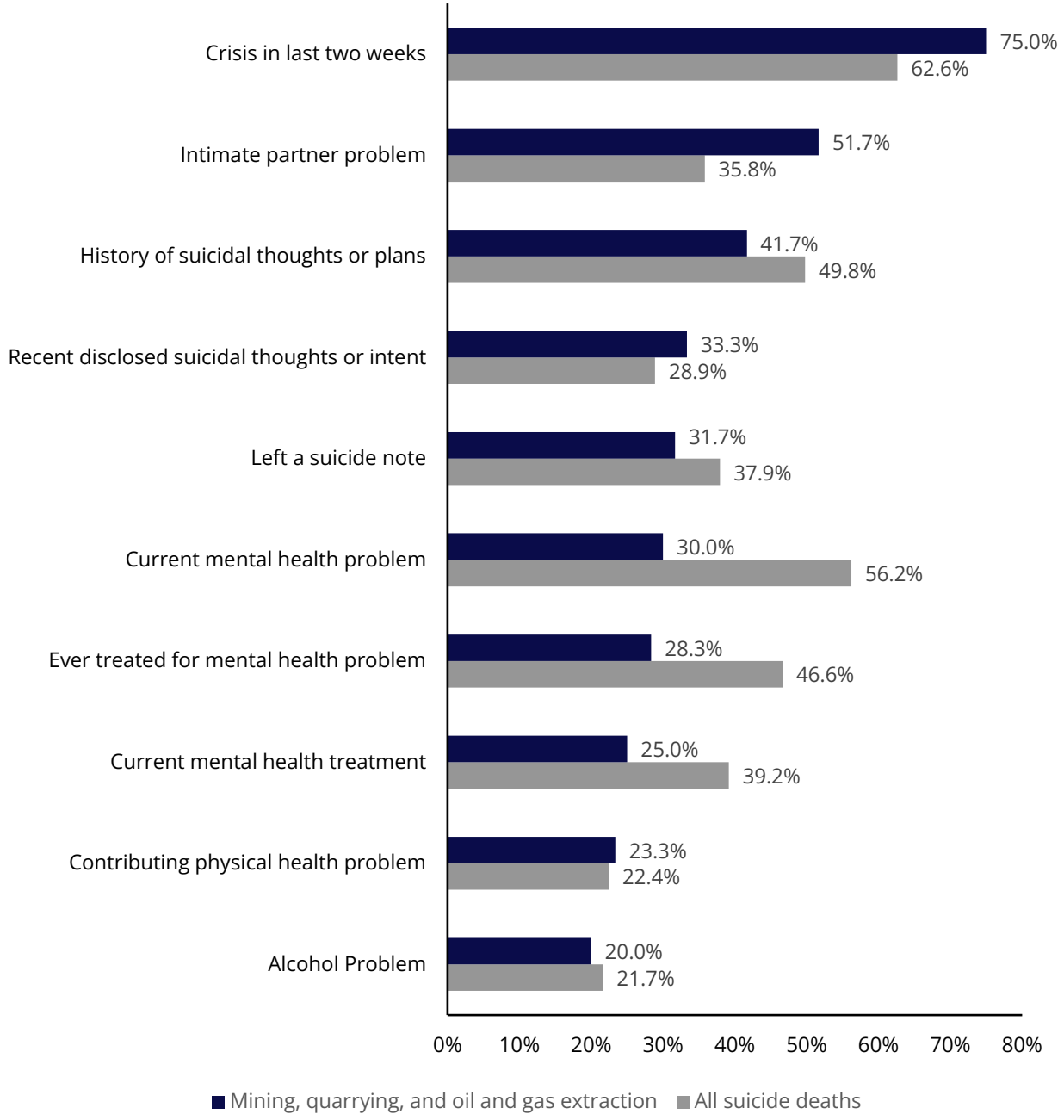


Figure 4. Percentage of circumstances for suicide deaths in the construction industry, 16 years of age and older, Utah, 2019-2023

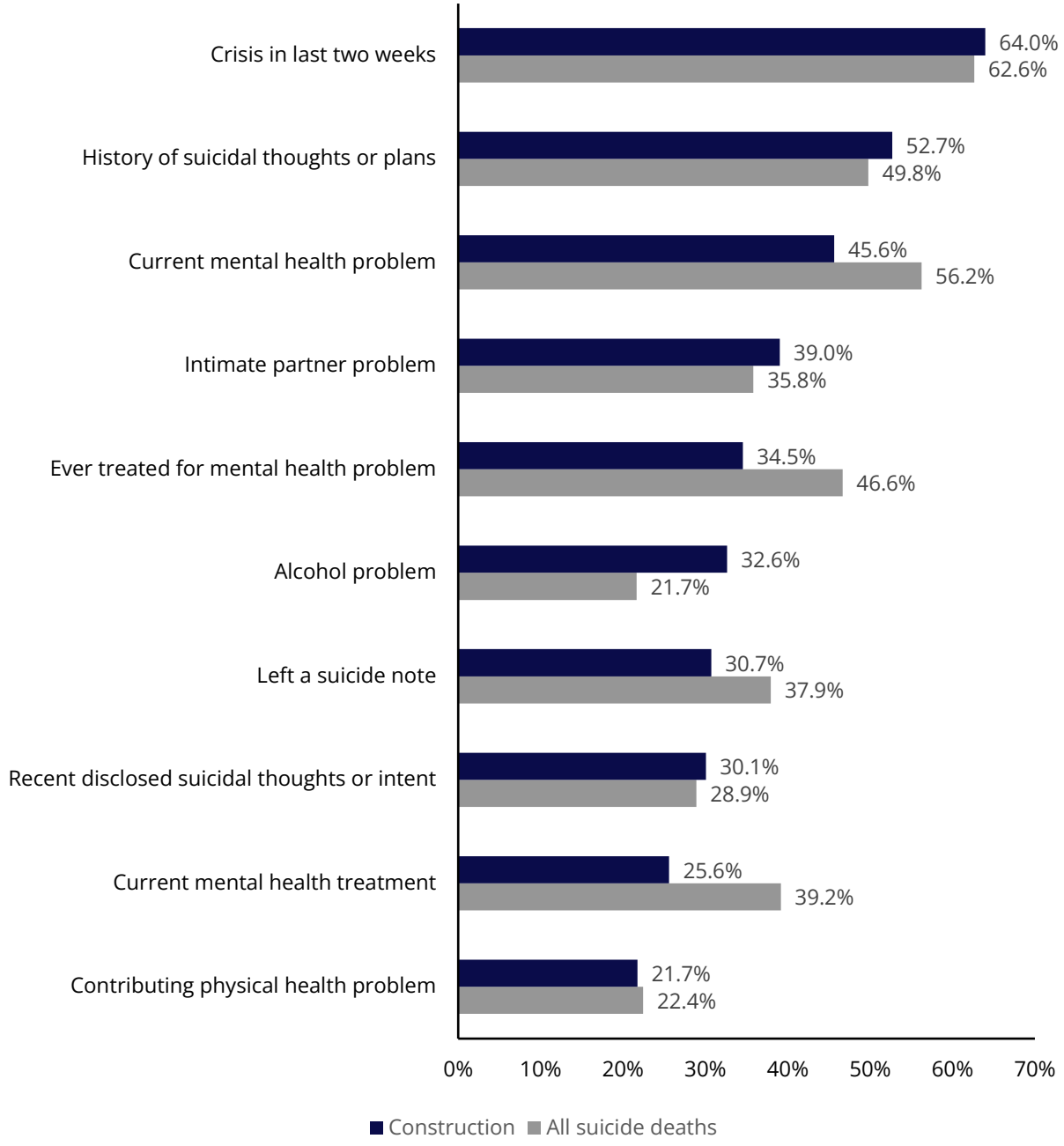
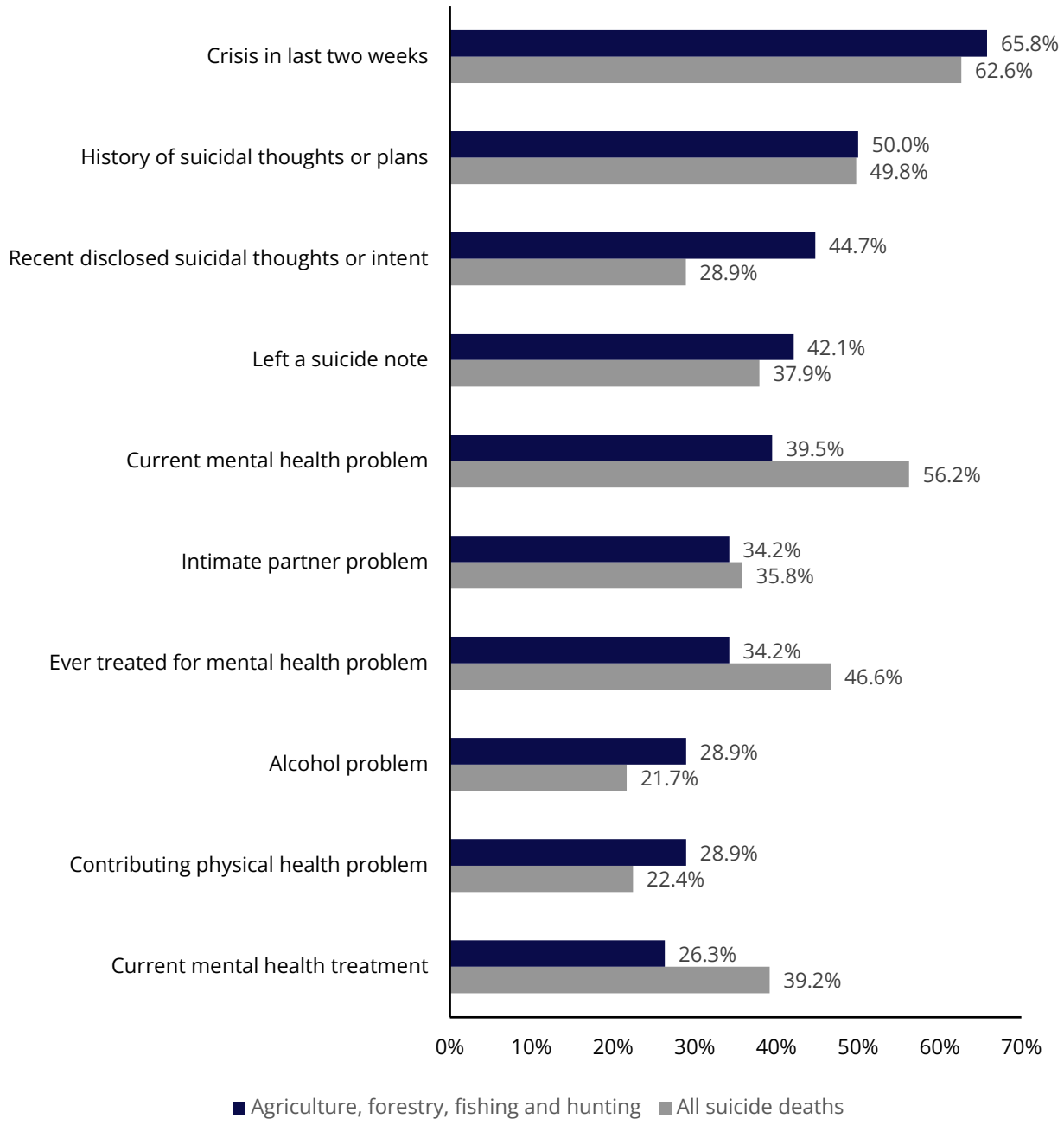


Figure 5. Percentage of circumstances for suicide deaths in the agriculture, forestry, 8shing and hunting industry, 16 years of age and older, Utah, 2019-2023



Suicide prevention resources

The Utah Suicide Prevention State Plan provides guidance on how individuals and communities can address suicide. The 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline provides 24/7, free, and confidential support for people in distress. 988 also provides prevention and crisis resources for loved ones.

Additional suicide prevention resources:

- 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline, 988 | https://988lifeline.org
- American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, https://afsp.org
- Intermountain Behavioral Health Navigation Line, 833-442-2211 | https://utah-suicideprevention.org/firearm-and-medication-safety
- Live On Utah, https://liveonutah.org
- National Alliance on Mental Illness Utah Chapter, https://namiut.org
- SafeUT, https://safeut.org
- Utah Suicide Prevention Committee and Coalition, https://utahsuicideprevention.org

To learn more about workplace suicide prevention, visit https://utahsuicideprevention.org/workplace

Data notes

- The data for those in the military, retired, or unemployed were not available when calculating the results for Figure 1 or the tables in the appendix.
- Counts fewer than 11 were suppressed for confidentiality. Small numbers have substantial variation over time and should be interpreted with caution.
- Circumstances were available for 99% of those who died by suicide ages 16 years and older. Multiple circumstances can be present for each death.

References

1. Utah Violence Death Reporting System, Violence and Injury Prevention Program, Utah Department of Health and Human Services, 2019–2023 data [cited 2025 July].
2. U.S. Census Bureau, Population Estimates by Industry for the Civilian Employed Population 16 Years and Over for 2019–2023 in Utah [cited 2025 July].
3. National Center for Injury Prevention and Control's Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System (WISQARS) [cited 2025 July].
4. Utah Death Certificate Database, Office of Vital Records and Statistics, Utah Department of Health and Human Services, 2023 data queried via Utah's Indicator Based Information System for Public Health (IBIS-PH) [cited 2025 July].
5. Utah Emergency Department Encounter Database, Healthcare Information and Analysis Programs, Office of Research and Evaluation, Utah Department of Health and Human Services, 2023 data queried via Utah's Indicator Based Information System for Public Health (IBIS-PH) [cited 2025 July].

Appendix

Table 1. Percentage of suicide deaths by sex, age, and geography for the industry sectors with the 3 highest suicide death rates, 16 years of age and older, Utah, 2019–2023

	Mining, quarrying, & oil & gas extraction	Construction	Agriculture, forestry, fishing & hunting	All suicide deaths, 16+ years of age
Sex				
Male	100%	98.3%	81.6%	79.0%
Female	0.0%	1.5%	*	21.0%
Age group				
16–24	*	12.1%	*	17.2%
25–44	42.9%	44.4%	28.9%	40.2%
45–64	23.8%	32.8%	31.6%	30.2%
65+	23.8%	10.7%	*	12.4%
Geography**				
Rural	66.7%	26.6%	60.5%	25.3%
Urban	33.3%	71.1%	34.2%	72.9%

*Counts below 11 are suppressed for confidentiality.
** Out of Utah's 29 counties, 24 are classified as rural, defined as having population density of fewer than 99 people per square mile.

Table 2. Percentage of employed population and percentage of suicide deaths 16 years of age and older, Utah, 2019–2023

Industry sector	Percent of suicide deaths, 16+ years of age	Percent of the employed population, 16+ years of age
Construction	17.6%	7.9%
Manufacturing	11.0%	10.2%
Retail trade	9.1%	11.5%
Healthcare & social assistance	7.9%	11.6%
Professional, scientific, & technical services	7.6%	8.4%
Transportation & warehousing	6.6%	4.7%
Other services (except public administration)	5.8%	4.4%
Public administration	5.5%	4.6%
Accommodation & food services	5.4%	6.1%
Administration, waste mngt., & remediation	3.9%	4.3%
Arts, entertainment, & recreation	3.5%	2.1%
Finance & insurance	3.1%	5.2%
Educational services	3.0%	10.8%
Mining, quarrying, & oil & gas extraction	2.3%	0.7%
Information	2.0%	1.9%
Real estate, rental, & leasing	1.6%	1.9%
Wholesale, trade	1.6%	2.2%
Agriculture, forestry, fishing & hunting	1.4%	0.8%
Utilities	0.9%	0.7%
Management of companies & enterprises	*	0.1%

*Counts below 11 are suppressed for confidentiality.