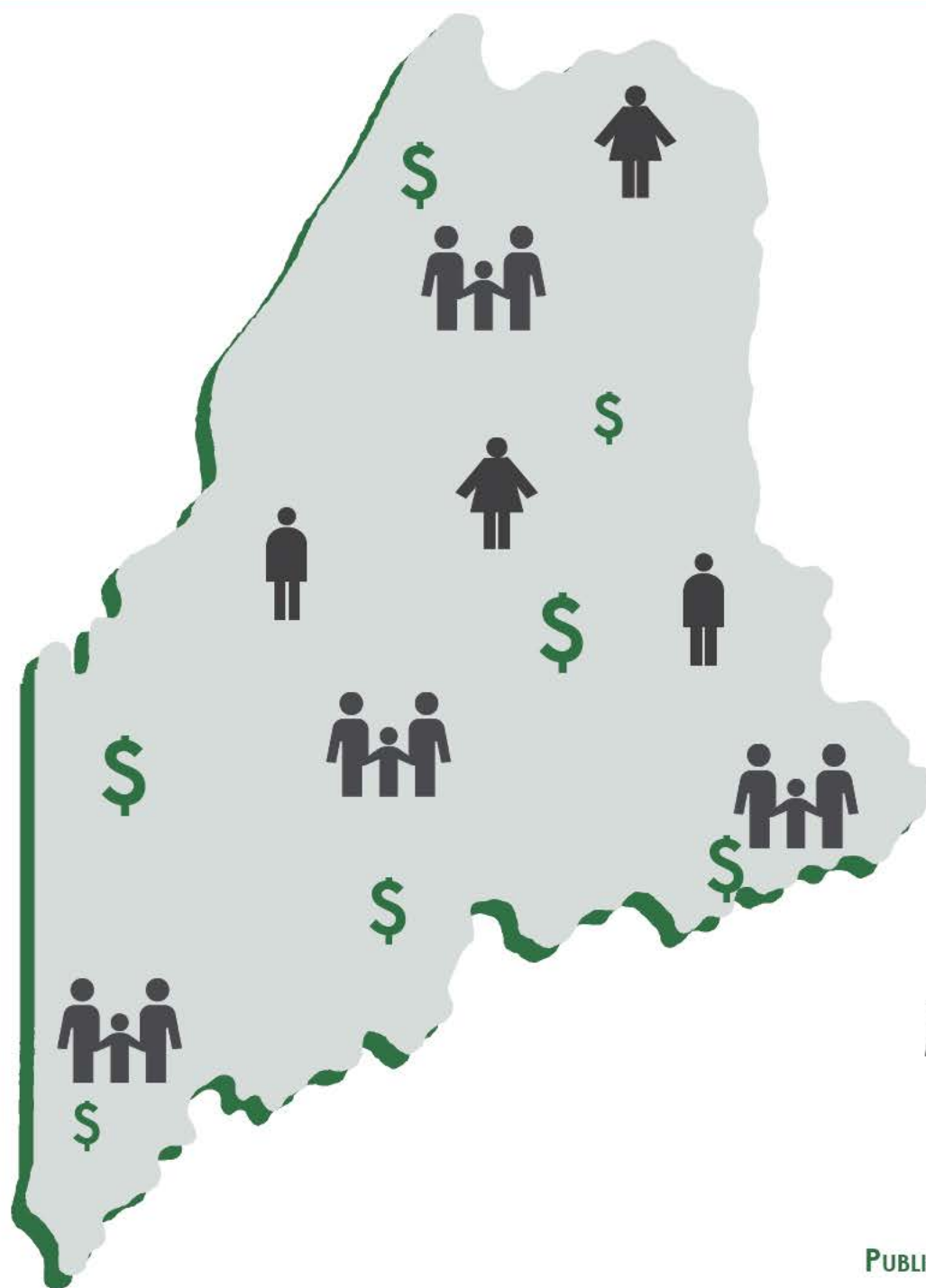


# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

The following document is provided by the  
**LAW AND LEGISLATIVE DIGITAL LIBRARY**  
at the Maine State Law and Legislative Reference Library  
<http://legislature.maine.gov/lawlib>



Reproduced from electronic originals  
(may include minor formatting differences from printed original)



# The Cost of Alcohol and Drug Abuse in Maine 2000

## *Executive Summary*

PUBLISHED BY THE MAINE OFFICE OF SUBSTANCE ABUSE, JULY 2004



## Drug Court graduate wins White House award

By JUDY HARRISON

Bangor Daily News, December 13, 2003

BANGOR - Two years ago, Bobby Twitchell was in Penobscot County Jail, serving a 191-day sentence for trafficking in heroin, burglary and drunken driving for the third time.

On Friday, the 25-year-old Bangor man accepted an award from the White House for his work helping others sentenced to the Penobscot County Adult Drug Court...

One award is given each year in states that have Drug Court programs, Richardson said Friday. Twitchell is the second of the state's Drug Court graduates and the first in northern Maine to receive the award. He accepted it on behalf of the other 22 graduates of Penobscot County Adult Drug Court.

Twitchell was recognized for creating seven new Narcotics Anonymous meetings in Bangor while still in the program. He also has spoken at area schools about his addiction and the road that led him to jail.

"This program gave me a real chance at life," Twitchell said Friday. "I felt there was a gaping hole in my life. It wasn't until I was in prison and in this program that I realized it was sobriety and recovery that was missing. The team gave me an opportunity to live a healthy, normal life again. It's an honor to accept this award for you."

Twitchell said that when he entered the drug court program as part of his probation in February 2002, there were just three or four Narcotics Anonymous

meetings a week in Bangor. Now, there are seven - one every day of the week. Attendance has also increased dramatically, he said.

Superior Court Justice Andrew Mead, a member of the Drug Court team in Bangor, called Twitchell "Exhibit A" in the program's success.

"He's an example of what I've been saying from the start - you people don't belong here," said Mead. "You aren't criminals and if it weren't for some chemical combinations that are out there, you wouldn't be here at all."

*Reprinted with permission of the Bangor Daily News.*

## Lewiston man knifed in brawl; 5 charged

By MARK LAFLAMME

Lewiston Sun Journal, October 4, 2002

A local man was stabbed in the back and chest early Thursday and slashed across the throat when two groups brawled at Knox and Birch streets.

Troy Berry, 21, was listed in stable condition at Central Maine Medical Center Thursday night. Two teenagers were charged with aggravated assault in connection with the knifing. Two others were arrested for disorderly conduct when police broke up the melee.

As detectives continued investigating the knifing Thursday night, a fifth man was arrested. Bashir Jama, 23, of 20 Knox St., was charged with aggravated assault at about 6:30 p.m. after he was identified as one of the assailants, police said.

The fight was the latest in a series of violent actions that has plagued the area in recent weeks. Police said when they responded to the brawl, they found several people fighting, some of them with weapons.

Investigators were still trying to determine what led to the clash. They were also exploring the possibility the brawl was a result of racial discord in the

downtown area...

From his hospital bed Thursday night, even Berry seemed unsure if the fight was the result of racial tension. The three people charged with aggravated assault in the stabbing are Somalis. Berry acknowledged that he and his friends have clashed with the immigrants before.

"They don't like us and we don't like them," he said.

But Berry also said he was having a cigarette with two of the suspects when a third Somali appeared. Words were exchanged. Fists started flying. Berry said he began fighting with one of the Somalis and didn't realize at first that a knife was involved.

"I thought he was punching me. It turns out, he was stabbing me," Berry said. "He probably felt as threatened as I before we started fighting."

Nearly a dozen people were involved in the clash and alcohol appeared to be a factor, police said. Investigators said there is a possibility the dispute had nothing to do with race.

What we know for certain is that there were a couple groups that got together. Most, if not all of them,

were intoxicated," Bussiere said.

Investigators said several people involved in the dispute first smoked and talked together in the early morning hours. A fight erupted but broke up moments later.

Shortly after that altercation, the same groups met again near the intersection and fighting began. Neighbors called police.

Police recovered two knives at the scene when they broke up the brawl, investigators said. They also found Berry suffering from multiple stab wounds. He was treated at the scene by paramedics before he was taken to Central Maine Medical Center...

The intersection of Birch and Knox streets has been a trouble zone for police since the start of summer, officials said.

Bussiere said detectives are investigating Thursday's incident. "There are still a lot of people we need to interview," he said.

*Reprinted with permission of Sun Journal, Lewiston.*



---

# INTRODUCTION

The problem of alcohol and drug abuse continues to be a major concern, with serious personal, social and economic consequences for Maine and the nation. Alcohol and drug abuse are major causes of illness, disability, and premature death. The burden on society encompasses the use of costly health care resources, significant productivity (economic) losses due to lost work time, serious injuries from motor vehicle accidents, and criminal activity resulting in property damage, personal injury and incarceration. Although it is not possible to quantify in monetary terms all of the consequences of drug and alcohol abuse, prior to this report the only estimate of the costs of substance abuse in Maine was a total based on an extrapolation from national data.

Similar efforts to analyze the economic costs of substance abuse have been undertaken by other states, including Washington, Texas, Minnesota, and Oregon, as well as by the federal government. This report is in large part modeled after the Washington State reports for 1990 and 1996 (Wickizer et al., 1993 and Wickizer, 1999), which in turn incorporated the basic methodology of two reports done for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; the first was conducted by Rice et al. (1990), and the second was conducted for the National Institute of Drug Abuse (NIDA) and the National Institute of Alcoholism and Alcohol Abuse (NIAAA), (NIDA/NIAAA, 1998).

The methodology used to estimate each category of costs is described in detail in the full report: *The Economic Costs of Alcohol and Drug Abuse in Maine, 2000*. The report is available online at

[www.maine.gov/bds/osa/pubs/osa/2004/costrpt.pdf](http://www.maine.gov/bds/osa/pubs/osa/2004/costrpt.pdf)  
or can be ordered by contacting the Information and Resource Center at (207) 287-8900 or 1-800-499-0027.

This summary provides an overview of each chapter of the full report, plus several graphs designed to summarize the data presented in that chapter. A common complaint about highly technical economic studies is that the in-depth analyses of financial costs can unintentionally overshadow the human face of the problem. Excerpts from recent newspaper articles are included in this document to accompany the data for each category of costs. Many reflect the complexities of substance abuse issues, which in real life do not necessarily fall neatly into single categories. The stories highlighted here were selected from a large collection of relevant articles. They are not meant to be representative or comprehensive in any way, nor are they intended to single out particular individuals or cases. They are simply a smattering of the many similar stories that are far too common in the pages of Maine's newspapers. They are included in this summary solely for the purpose of ensuring that in looking at this data we don't forget that real Maine citizens, families, businesses, and communities are bearing the burden of these costs.



# Lost, and found

By SELINA RICKS

Portland Press Herald, February 2, 2004

Several times, she came close to giving up on a clean and sober life.

Even after four months of residential drug treatment, and with just two months left in the program, Heidi Hanscome packed her bags and threatened to leave. But she didn't.

"I knew the first thing I'd do if I left was go get high," said Hanscome, a 17-year-old Searsport resident. "My counselor said, 'Heidi, I know you have another run in you, but I don't think you have another recovery.' And I knew that was true."

In December, Hanscome became the first resident to complete the six-month treatment program at the Phoenix Academy. Opened last June, the residential treatment center serves addicts aged 13 to 18. The 14-bed center is one of three residential substance-abuse programs for Maine teens.

Hanscome, who started using drugs at age 15, said she believes her drug treatment has saved her life.

Since leaving treatment, she has shared her story with local high school students in hopes that they won't repeat her mistakes. She recently began classes at the University of Maine at Augusta, and she plans to become an adolescent substance-abuse counselor.

It was only last year, her senior year of high school, that she dropped out with just 2 1/2 credits left to graduate. "I was too busy getting high," she said.

She's smoked pot, popped painkillers such as OxyContin, and snorted cocaine and heroin. An overdose in January 2003 on Klonopin, a tranquilizer, was a wake-up call.

"That's when I realized I couldn't do drugs safely," recalled Hanscome. "I was the only one who didn't know I had a drug problem. I had 50 people telling me I had a drug problem."

With few hospital beds in the state for adolescents to detox, Hanscome was forced to suffer her opiate withdrawal - vomiting, shaking, sweating - at home. Hanscome suspected that if she did not get help, she would die high.

She began seeing a drug counselor in Rockland several days a week, but that was not enough to keep her sober. She had several relapses before becoming part of the first group of teens to live at the Phoenix Academy last June.

The treatment center's program employs a therapeutic community approach, requiring teens to work together to stay sober, function responsibly and maintain honesty while revealing the underlying reasons for their abuse. In treatment, Hanscome said she was forced to confront herself and her addiction.

"I didn't like being called on my behavior, like lying," she recalled. "I didn't like being told I couldn't smoke (cigarettes). I didn't like the consequences. I had my stuff packed a few times."

As she struggled through treatment, she watched several of her fellow residents quit the program.

The Phoenix Academy is an unlocked facility, meaning that residents can leave if they are not willing to complete the program. To be accepted into the program, teens must want to give sobriety a shot. Counselors work hard to keep the youths motivated, but many do not make it.

"It was sad," she said. "They'd start to change. They'd start the process of realizing they had a drug problem. . . . I just knew if I didn't complete it, I'd be kicking myself." She thought about leaving too. She even knew what drug she would use and predicted how soon she would suffer her final overdose.

"The only thing I haven't done is stick a needle in my arm, so that's what I would do, shoot heroin," said Hanscome. "This is a progressive disease. . . . I would give myself maybe a week to live."

During her treatment, Hanscome learned that four of her former drug-abusing friends, all between the ages of 17 and 24, died of alcohol- or drug-related causes.

"Just last week I attended another funeral, a 19-year-old girl who used," said Hanscome.

She credits the staff at the Phoenix Academy for encouraging her to complete treatment and recognize her potential. She earned her high school diploma from Maranacook Community High School in Readfield, which provides education for the residents. She applied to college, something she hadn't considered when she was in the haze of her addiction.

And as she began making new friends in treatment - friends who wanted to be sober as badly as she did - she cut off her old drug-using friends.

"I don't talk to them," she said. "It's sad. . . . They're just doing the same thing. I figured they'd all stop 'cause I stopped. But they didn't, and they're not getting anywhere."

Hanscome also mended her relationship with her family during treatment.

"My parents can trust me," she said. "They can leave stuff out and know it will be there in the morning."

Eventually, Hanscome stopped counting the days she had until she could leave treatment. As she got closer to completion, she grew nervous about leaving the residence and re-entering the real world.

"The last two weeks, I didn't want to leave," she recalled. "I told (the staff) I wanted to build an apartment upstairs. This was my little safe bubble."

Dave Aho, clinical supervisor and acting director of the Phoenix Academy, said Hanscome proved she was ready to complete treatment when she was able to accept accountability for her drug problem.

"As treatment went on, Heidi became more willing and able to confront herself," said Aho, a licensed alcohol and drug counselor for more than 20 years. "I think she left here with a clear conscience."

Aho said Hanscome, like many of the residents at Phoenix Academy, took treatment one day at a time.

Completing substance-abuse treatment is easier for adults than adolescents, said Aho.

"When a person my age quits drinking or drugging, my peers say, 'It's about time,'" he said. "When an adolescent quits, peers say, 'Oh, great, but you can still smoke reefer, right? You can still drink once in a while, right?...' They don't provide the same kind of support for abstinence. And they don't understand that an addict needs to have abstinence to remain successful."

After moving out of the Phoenix Academy and in with her parents, Hanscome visited the treatment center every other day for support. She structured her time at home, and she focused on preparing for college and searching for a job. She also made sure to avoid her old hangouts.

"I don't want to put myself in those situations," she said. "I don't hang out with people who use. I can't afford to lose everything I've gained back."

Although she has moved out of the Phoenix Academy and now lives at home with her parents, Hanscome won't officially graduate until her six months of after-care counseling are complete.

She sees her counselor in Rockland three times a week, she calls the Phoenix House daily to check in with staff and she attends group meetings at the treatment center. And, each day, she makes the choice to stay sober.

"I'll never say, 'I've got to stay sober for the rest of my life,'" she said. "I don't want to say that. But I know it's a goal I'll be able to reach."

Treatment has changed her mentally and physically, she said.

"I know I look different," she said. "When I started treatment I probably weighed 100 pounds. I had a horrible complexion."

Sometimes, she wonders how she got into that mess in the first place. But, said Hanscome, those thoughts are useless - she can't change the past.

"It's hard to accept," she said. "I did some shameful things. Things that make me feel guilty and embarrassed. But I don't have to do it again."

Hanscome has made many new friends and supporters since finishing treatment. She's met people who also have overcome addiction, or are dealing with family members who abuse drugs. She said addicts cannot be forced to stop using - they have to want to quit for themselves.

Hanscome said her journey to sobriety has brought her more satisfaction than any drug ever did.

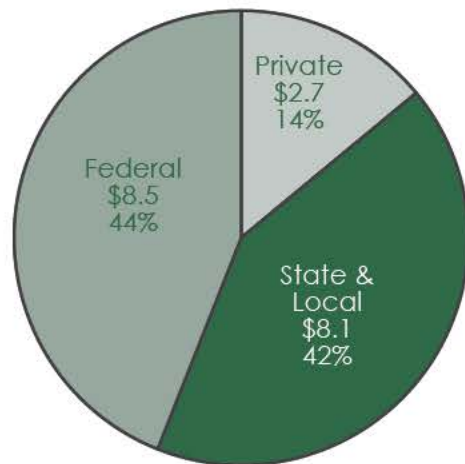
"I eat dinner with my parents, I can look people in the eye, I don't have to lie," she said. "I love to read, I write a lot, I go to the gym. . . . This is the first thing I've completed in my life. This is the first thing I can be proud of."

*Reprinted with permission of Portland Press Herald/Maine Sunday Telegram. Reproduction does not imply endorsement.*

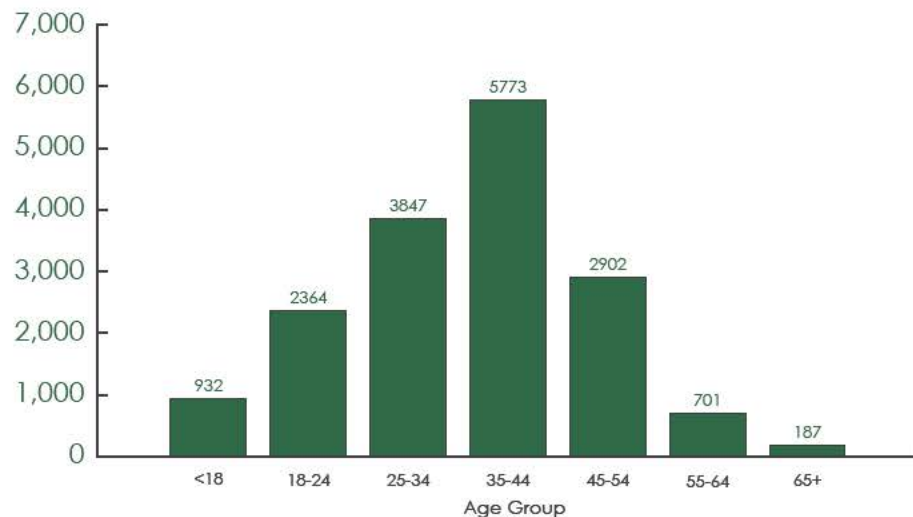


# SUBSTANCE ABUSE TREATMENT

**Substance Abuse Treatment  
by Funding Source, Maine, 2000  
(\$ in millions)**



**Number of Admissions for Treatment  
Maine, 2000**



Treatment services available in Maine to help persons with chemical dependency problems include various levels of residential programs, outpatient programs, opioid replacement therapy, detoxification, and specialty programs for youth, pregnant women, and persons who are diagnosed as both mentally ill and chemically addicted.

## *Summary Findings:*

- Approximately 16,706 admissions for drug and/or alcohol treatment were reported during 2000.
- These admissions represent an unduplicated count of 11,620 clients.
- The largest proportion of the cost of treatment, \$5.2 million (26.7%), was paid out of State General Funds, followed by Medicaid, \$4.4 million (22.8%) and Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Block Grant monies, \$4.3 million (22.4%).
- Only 13.7% of treatment costs are paid by private funding sources.
- The total estimated cost of providing treatment in Maine in 2000, based on reported annual revenue, was \$19.3 million. This amount represents 3% of the total cost of substance abuse in Maine.

## Calais may test new employees for drug use

By DIANA GRAETTINGER

Bangor Daily News, May 15, 2003

CALAIS - Drugs and safety can't coexist and that is why the City Council is likely to adopt a policy to test new employees.

Councilors also are examining a policy that would require random drug testing of all city employees. The city has about 35 full-time employees.

According to City Manager Linda Pagels, the City Building staff is ready to be tested. But, she reported, when she informed some new city employees of the yet-to-be-implemented policy, two walked off their jobs.

The city has submitted its new policy to the State Department of Labor. Once approved, the policy will be implemented for new employees only, Pagels said.

Last year, the Baileyville Police Department was the first department in the state to willingly establish a program that allows for random drug testing of its 14 full- and part-time officers. Baileyville

Police Chief Philip Harriman surveyed police chiefs around the state and learned that no other department had a drug- testing policy for its employees, but that a few had implemented policies for new applicants.

Pagels said she has prepared a resolution for the City Council to consider at its next meeting.

The resolution, if adopted, will detail the council's support for the drug and alcohol testing of new city employees.

The policy not only would apply to workplace incidents, but also to those employees who are conducting city-related activities while off the premises.

"The city of Calais is committed to providing a safe, efficient, and productive work environment for all employees. Using or being under the influence of drugs or alcohol on the job may pose serious safety and health risks," the proposed policy says.

Pagels said she plans to meet with the city union leaders about adopting a similar policy for current employees.

Other considerations, Pagels said, are the cost of the project and the requirement that the person who tests positive receive counseling.

"We are not sure if we could afford that piece of the package, especially if someone wasn't a full-time employee and didn't have city health insurance," she said. "What do you do with those folks after they've tested positive to help them and get them back in the work force?"

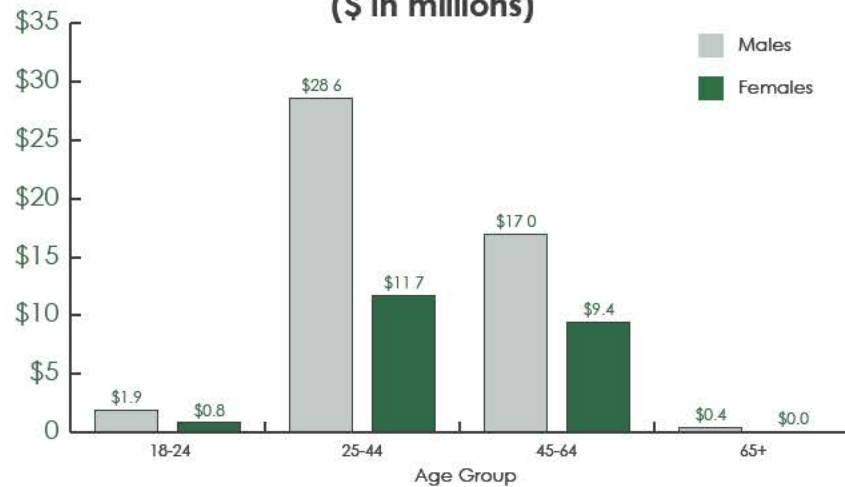
Pagels said she and her staff were looking at some options that may help the city pay for the program.

*Reprinted with permission of the Bangor Daily News.*



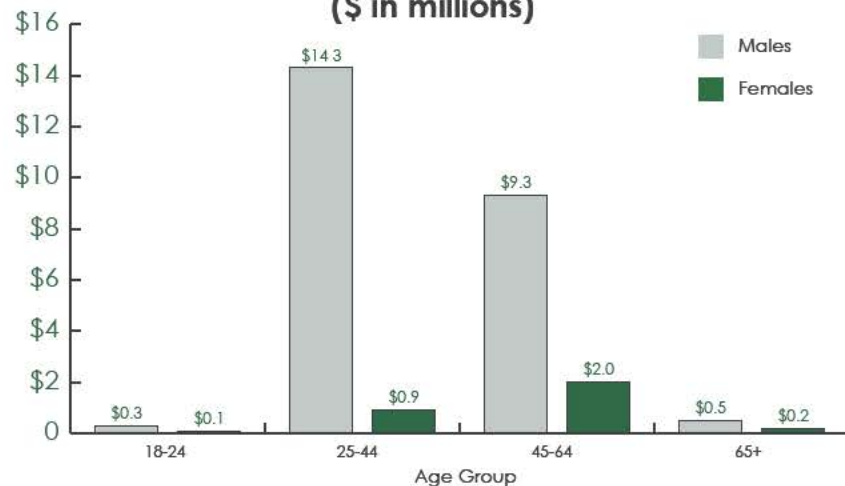
# MORBIDITY

**Estimated Cost of Lost Productivity  
Due to Alcohol Abuse  
Maine, 2000  
(\$ in millions)**



Alcohol and drug use or dependence may adversely affect an individual's work productivity as well as his or her ability to function in other roles. Examples of reduced work productivity would include a worker calling in sick or working while hung-over from heavy drinking the night before, using drugs or alcohol on the job, or leaving work early to use drugs or consume alcohol. An individual's productivity in other non-work roles may also be affected by alcohol or drug use, e.g., performing household or child-care duties. In all these cases, reduced output resulting from alcohol or drug use can be measured as an economic loss. It is often assumed, incorrectly, that the affected worker or individual incurs all of the costs for his or her behavior. But alcohol and drug abuse or dependence creates an economic loss borne by society at large.

**Estimated Cost of Lost Productivity  
Due to Drug Abuse  
Maine, 2000  
(\$ in millions)**



## Summary Findings:

- Approximately \$69.8 million (72%) of these costs were attributed to alcohol abuse and \$27.6 million (28%) were attributed to drug abuse.
- Substance abuse among males accounted for \$72.3 million or 74% of total costs in this category.
- The highest morbidity cost, \$28.6 million, was due to alcohol disorders among males age 25-44.
- Total costs related to lost productivity in 2000 were an estimated \$97.4 million and represented 16% of the total cost of substance abuse in Maine.



# Killing Suspect says he thought gun was empty; A judge sets bail at \$50,000 for Gary Sweeney, charged with manslaughter

By MEREDITH GOAD

Portland Press Herald, February 7, 2003

The 45-year-old Casco man facing a manslaughter charge in the shooting death of his longtime girlfriend was firing what he thought was an unloaded gun and told police, "I didn't mean to kill her."

Gary Sweeney, accused of killing 39-year-old Christine Pepin, made his first appearance in court Thursday.

Sweeney entered no plea and was ordered to have no contact with his 11-year-old son without approval of the Maine Department of Human Services. Superior Court Justice Robert Crowley set bail at \$50,000.

Pepin was shot in the left side of her head Tuesday night at the Sweeney home on Jim Small Road, where she was found lying on a mattress in a second-floor loft. According to court records, Sweeney and Pepin had been drinking and fighting before the shooting, and Sweeney pulled the trigger on the gun several times before it went off. Sweeney said the weapon wasn't supposed to be loaded.

"I didn't mean to kill her," Sweeney told police on the scene, according to a police affidavit filed in court on Thursday. "She took it right in the side of her head. It was an accident."

Sweeney, who is unemployed, has a previous domestic violence conviction involving the same victim. Cumberland County District Attorney Stephanie Anderson told the court Thursday that the Department of Human Services has received "numerous referrals" about domestic violence and alcohol abuse at the Sweeney home, but no action was ever taken to remove the child from the situation.

Newell Auger, a DHS spokesman, acknowledged that the agency had received numerous referrals, the last one in October, and that attempts were made to encourage the parents to accept services.

"Tragically, those offers were not accepted," he said.

According to police and witnesses, Sweeney, Pepin and their son, Jesse, went to the home of their neighbors Judy and Ronald Flanagan about 4:30 p.m. Tuesday for dinner and drinks. Around 7:30 p.m., Sweeney, Pepin and their son went home.

Jesse Sweeney told police that his parents seemed drunk before the shooting. He said he stayed outside to play in the snow until his father appeared in the doorway and yelled at him. Sweeney brought a small-caliber revolver to the door, held it in the air and pulled the trigger nine times, but it made only clicking noises, Jesse Sweeney said.

The boy said he heard his father ask his mother "where the bullets are," then he heard his mother screaming, "Gary, get off of me now!" Frightened, the boy ran to the Flanagins' house for help.

Brandy Senecal, the Flanagins' 17-year-old daughter, told police that Jesse Sweeney was upset when he arrived back at her house around 8 p.m. He stated that his father had hit his mother in the head with a gun and knocked her down. He also said he heard his father screaming at his mother, "Where's the bullets? Where's the bullets?"

Jesse Sweeney told Senecal that he wanted to check on his mother and headed home. On his way there, he saw his father walking down the road, blood on his clothes and hands, yelling for help.

The boy told police he heard his father say, "She's dead," "I can't believe I did it," "How did that bullet get in there?" and "I'm sorry."

Gary Sweeney then came into his neighbors' kitchen and said that he had shot Pepin and she was dead, according to police. He told his neighbors that the weapon wasn't supposed to be loaded, and that the shooting was an accident.

Sweeney was "ranting and raving," the witnesses said, throwing things around the kitchen and breaking several items. He ripped his shirt off and threw it onto the floor.

Amber Senecal, the Flanagins' 15-year-old daughter, told police that she heard Sweeney tell his son he was sorry for killing his mother and that he would be "going away for a long time, for the rest of my life."

If convicted, Sweeney could face a sentence of up to 40 years.

Waiting in a patrol car, Sweeney also made several spontaneous statements to police, including, "I didn't mean to kill her" and "I clicked it four times and then it went off."

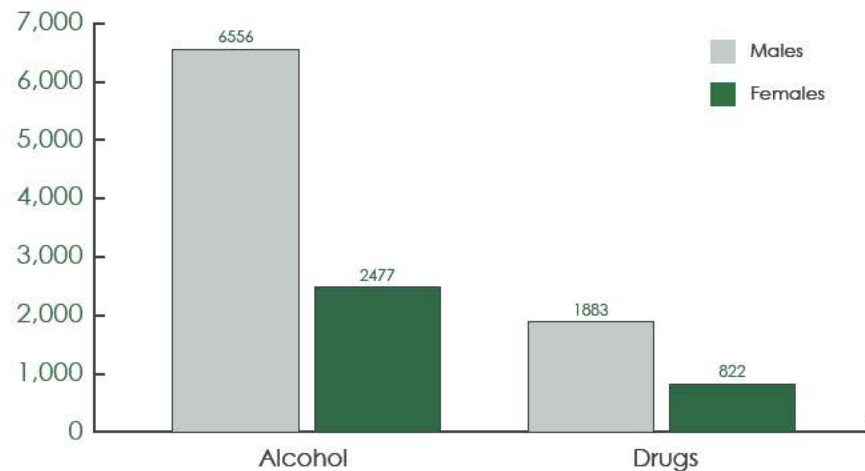
In addition to his previous domestic violence conviction, Sweeney has a drug-related conviction from the years he spent in Germany in the military. That conviction, for the possession and sale of hashish, occurred about 20 years ago and resulted in his discharge from the service.

A probable cause hearing will be held April 30 at 8:30 a.m., unless Sweeney is indicted by a grand jury first.

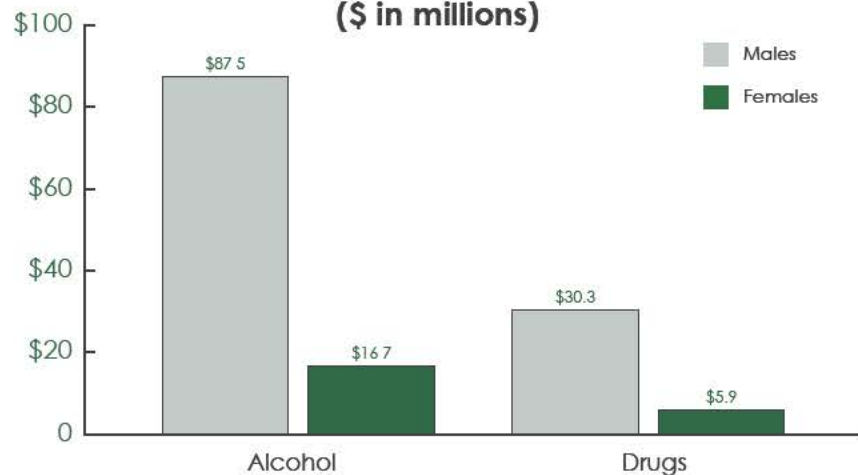
*Reprinted with permission of Portland Press Herald/ Maine Sunday Telegram, Reproduction does not imply endorsement.*

# MORTALITY

**Years of Potential Life Lost  
Due to Substance Abuse  
Maine, 2000**



**Estimated Cost of Lost Productivity  
Due to Substance Abuse  
Maine, 2000  
(\$ in millions)**



A major economic loss is imposed on society by premature death from substance use and abuse. Premature death through illness or injury can occur through auto and other accidents involving alcohol, through liver diseases such as hepatitis and cirrhosis, through increasing the risk of cancer or cerebrovascular disease, and through violence involving drugs or alcohol. When an individual dies prematurely, there is an economic cost to society in the form of the loss of that individual's productive capacity.

## Summary Findings:

- In 2000, an estimated 541 deaths related to drug or alcohol abuse occurred in Maine; 473 alcohol-related and 68 drug-related.
- These 541 deaths resulted in 11,738 years of potential life lost.
- Major causes of death were:
  - a. cancers (various types) 117 deaths
  - b. cirrhosis 64 deaths
  - c. cerebrovascular disease 57 deaths
- Estimated total mortality costs for 2000 were \$140.3 million. Of this amount, \$104.2 million resulted from alcohol abuse and \$36.2 million from drug abuse.
- The average economic cost per alcohol or drug related death in 2000, measured in lost earnings, was \$259,410.
- The \$140.3 million in mortality costs represents nearly a quarter (23%) of the total cost of substance abuse in Maine.



# Party host testifies in rape trial; The lawyer for Benjamin Cormier of Portland says the sex between his client and a 14-year-old girl was consensual

By JOHN RICHARDSON

Portland Press Herald, November 20, 2002

Benjamin Cormier and some friends had been drinking beer and rum when they decided to call a 14-year-old girl, someone they knew as an incoming freshman at Gray-New Gloucester High School.

They asked her to come to the party to drink. But Cormier also had other plans, according to the boy who hosted the party.

"Benjamin Cormier said he wanted to get her drunk so that he could have sex with her," Cumberland County District Attorney Stephanie Anderson said. "She goes over having no clue what's going to happen to her."

Cormier, 19, went on trial Tuesday on charges that he raped the freshman three times that night while she was passed out or too drunk to resist. If convicted of gross sexual assault, the Portland man could face 40 years in prison.

Anderson told the Superior Court jury that Cormier plied the girl with alcohol and took part in an assault so violent it left her with significant internal injuries. Another defendant, Matthew Kelley, is already in the Long Creek Youth Development Center for his part in the rape, she said.

Cormier's lawyer gave the jury a different account. Cormier, who was 18 at the time, did have sex with the girl, both at the party in New Gloucester and outside his car at a stop in Gray, said William Childs. But the girl knew what was happening and was never forced to do anything, he said.

"What we have is kids with a lot of sexual knowledge, but not a lot of wisdom," Childs said. "Nothing bad has happened in a criminal sense." Consensual sex between an 18-year-old and 14-year-old is not a crime, he said.

Childs said the girl changed her story as time passed, and that she made the accusation only after mean rumors started circulating at school. "These things are absolutely untrue," Childs told the jury.

The rape charges against Cormier and Kelley drew national media attention earlier this year after the alleged victim - Lindsey Kadziauskas - asked that her name be made public to show she did nothing wrong. Kadziauskas, who has since turned 15, said she had been mocked, threatened and made the subject of rumors that implied she willingly had sex that night.

Victims of alleged sex crimes are traditionally protected from having their names disclosed to avoid causing any additional trauma. The Portland Press Herald/Maine Sunday Telegram named her only after she and her parents made the request. The alleged assaults happened Sept. 8, 2001, after a group of teenagers met at the New Gloucester home of Ryan Stinchfield, a teenage friend of Cormier's. There were no adults at the house and the teens were drinking beer and spiced rum and smoking marijuana, Stinchfield testified Tuesday.

Some of the boys at the party decided to call Kadziauskas, even though they didn't know her and had only seen her at school, Stinchfield said. Stinchfield said Cormier and Kelley wanted to get her there, get her drunk and have sex with her. "He (Cormier) said that because it was my house, I'd have first dibs on her," Stinchfield said.

Stinchfield talked to Kadziauskas on the telephone and said he and Cormier would pick her up after her parents went to bed. She snuck out the window of a second-floor bathroom.

Back at the house, Stinchfield gave her a cup of Pepsi mixed with Captain Morgan's spiced rum. Someone else would give her another mixed drink, he said. Stinchfield also blew marijuana smoke into her mouth. Kadziauskas didn't know most of the people at the party and was the youngest one there, he said.

She was soon drunk, stumbling around and unable to stand, he said. Stinchfield said he helped her lie down on his bed, gave her toast and water

and closed his bedroom door.

Kadziauskas fell asleep, according to Anderson. "When she woke up, Benjamin Cormier was on top of her . . . She hears Benjamin Cormier saying, 'I can't do this to a girl who's crying.'"

Anderson said Cormier was talking to Matthew Kelley, who also was in the bedroom. And despite what he said, according to Anderson, Cormier continued to rape the crying girl.

Childs told the jury that Kadziauskas was not passed out or incapacitated when Cormier was in the room with her. She and Cormier took each others' clothes off and she willingly had sex with both Cormier and Kelley, he said. She never asked for help from others at the party and had no signs of being forced to have sex, he said.

Stinchfield said he later carried the drunken girl outside and put her in Cormier's car with Kelley. On the way home, Kadziauskas and Cormier again had a sexual encounter - the third rape, according to the state.

Rumors quickly swirled at school the following week. Anderson said that's when Kadziauskas realized she'd been the victim of rape. Childs, on the other hand, suggested that the rumors caused her story to change into a criminal accusation.

No one disputes the internal injuries suffered by Kadziauskas, although Childs said it was the result of consensual intercourse.

Stinchfield told jurors Tuesday how he climbed into his bed early in the morning after the party and felt that his sheet was "saturated" with blood. He took the sheet off the bed and then noticed that the mattress also was stained red.

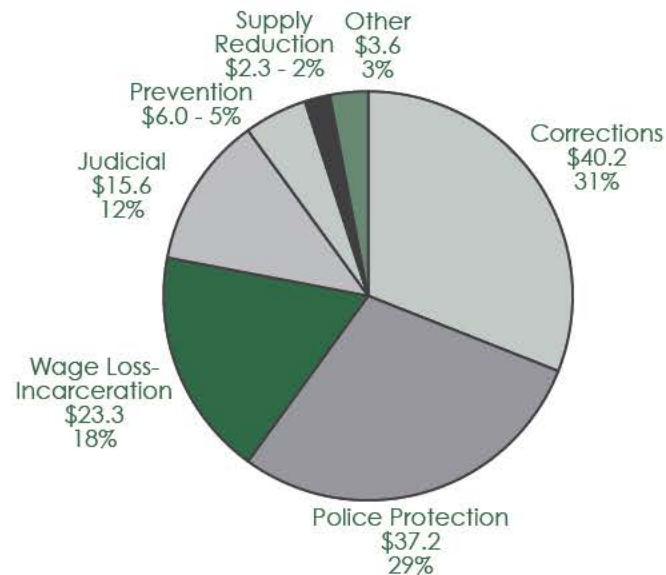
"I flipped it over so I could sleep on it," Stinchfield said.

*Reprinted with permission of Portland Press Herald/ Maine Sunday Telegram, Reproduction does not imply endorsement.*

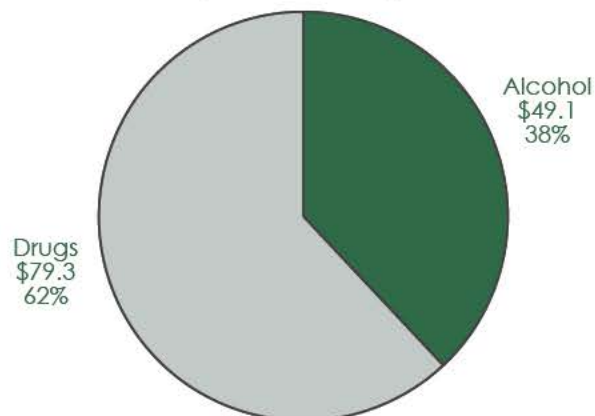


# CRIME

## Estimated Cost of Crime Related to Substance Abuse Maine, 2000 (\$ in millions)



## Estimated Cost of Crime by Substance Maine, 2000 (\$ in millions)



Over the last twenty years, evidence has accumulated showing a strong link between substance abuse and crime. A 1989 Department of Justice study found that, in some cities, as many as 50%-80% of persons arrested for felonies tested positive for drugs (Tonry & Wilson, 1990). Recent surveys of incarcerated populations provide further evidence of the strong link between crime and substance abuse. Approximately one in four Federal inmates and one in two State inmates reported that they were under the influence of alcohol or illicit drugs at the time of their current offense (U.S. Department of Justice, 1995).

## Summary Findings:

- Maine had a total of 7,625 arrests for assault (aggravated, sexual and other) of which an estimated 2,280 (30%) were related to alcohol abuse and 386 (5%) to drug abuse.
- Of 11 arrests for homicide, 3 were estimated to be related to alcohol and 2 to drug abuse.
- Total estimated drug- and alcohol-related costs of crime in 2000 were \$128.4 million, of which \$79.3 million (62%) was attributed to drug-related crimes and \$49.1 million (38%) was attributed to alcohol-related crimes.
- The highest costs were for corrections, \$40.2 million (31%) [\$28.7 million for state facilities and \$11.5 million for county jails], followed by police protection, \$37.2 million (29%).
- \$6.0 million (5%) was spent on the prevention of drug and alcohol abuse, and an additional \$2.3 million (2%) was spent on reducing the supply of drugs.
- The \$128.4 million in crime-related costs represents 21% of the total cost of substance abuse in Maine.



# Waterville safety officials upset by excessive drinking at college; 6 students hospitalized last weekend, schools downplay incidents

By DOUG HARLOW

Kennebec Journal, September 9, 2003

WATERVILLE - Police and fire officials expressed concern Monday after the second consecutive weekend of excessive alcohol consumption and loud parties at the city's two college campuses.

Four students from Colby College and two more from Thomas College were hospitalized over the weekend during incidents that officials said stressed emergency response and the city budget.

It was binge drinking paid for by Waterville taxpayers, Police Chief John E. Morris said Monday. The last two weekends we've had a high number of calls to both Colby and Thomas, all revolving around alcohol abuse.

I am very concerned that police, fire and EMS services are being overextended to the detriment of the community.

Morris said police already have dealt with as many incidents of intoxication on campus in the first full week of school as they did all of last year.

In addition, it took 20 police officers from Waterville, Fairfield, Maine State Police and Kennebec County Sheriff's Department to shut down a party at Colby early Saturday morning.

Colby College spokesman Stephen Collins said Monday that reduced hours at the campus health center and the tradition of back-to-school parties combined this year to produce what seemed like more of a problem.

The alcohol numbers, while not good, show that the numbers of students treated for too much consumption are commensurate to what we've seen in past years, Collins said. We're working to address this through education and compliance with the law.

Collins said the decision not to staff the campus infirmary came in August, in part because of the lack of available qualified night nurses. Closing the health center overnight also has financial benefits to the school, he said.

He said the police presence this past weekend, summonses to students and trips to the hospital were an unfortunate consequence of the excitement of the first week back to college.

"It's a wrinkle, rather than a trend or an escalation of the problem," Collins said. "We hope we can refine our protocol and practices so it doesn't have any potential burden on city services."

At Thomas College, Dean of Student Affairs Lisa Desautels-Poliquin acknowledged that two students were taken to the hospital over the weekend.

Our protocol is that we will err on making sure they are safe, rather than just put them to bed and hope everything is going to be all right, she said.

Desautels-Poliquin said the college staff made the decision to call for emergency services. She said the excitement of coming to college sometimes gets the best of new students.

"It is not a weekly occurrence for us," she said. Not that this doesn't raise concern. We're trying to recognize that students are beginning to make choices and we're trying to educate along the way.

Morris, who also is serving as the city's director of public safety, and Fire Department Capt. David Lafountain said the first two weeks of the college year appear to be worse than in the past.

The police and fire departments are not hired to transport drunk college students, Morris said. These drunken episodes were handled by the

college. Now that the infirmary is closed at night, students are calling Waterville public safety official to deal with the drunken students. That's a waste of assets.

Desautels-Poliquin said there has never been an infirmary open overnight at Thomas.

On Friday night, two Colby students, one 17 years old and the other 20, were taken to Maine General Medical Center for treatment for alcohol consumption. Both were issued summonses for illegal possession of alcohol by consumption.

On Saturday three more students, 18, 19 and 20 were summonsed for illegal consumption and two of them were taken to the hospital. Two students had been issued summonses the previous weekend.

At Thomas, meanwhile, two students, 17 and 18, were taken to the hospital and were summonsed for illegal possession by consumption.

Police and fire officials said running cruisers and emergency vehicles to opposite ends of the city is making it necessary to call reserve emergency personnel from home.

"It's a clear case of cost shifting," Lafountain said. "They're saving money while emergency services pick up the cost."

Collings said the college medical director met with city officials and hospital staff when the decision was made to close the Colby health center each night at 8 p.m.

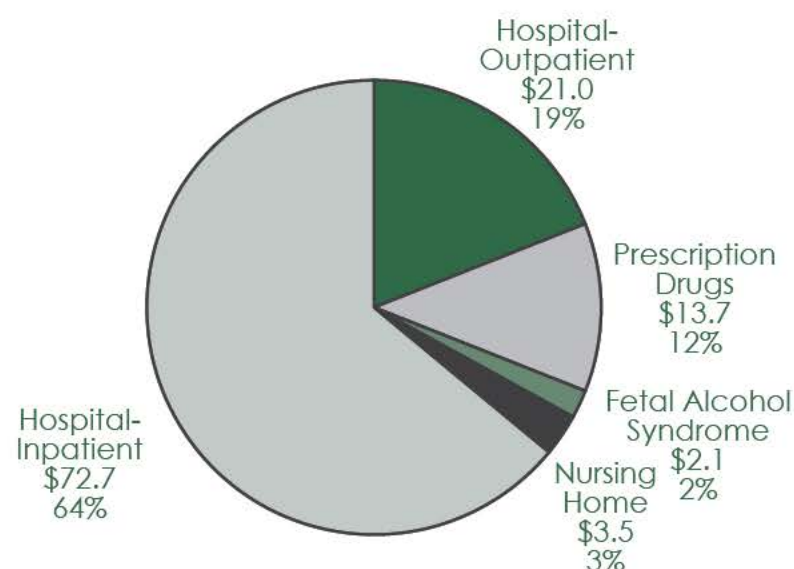
"There are going to be some hiccups along the way," Collins said. "I don't want to downplay it. This is sort of the straw that broke the back."

*Reprinted with permission of the Kennebec Journal.*



# MEDICAL CARE

**Estimated Cost of Alcohol-  
and Drug-Related Medical Care  
Maine, 2000  
(\$ in millions)**



Alcohol and drug abuse increases the risk of illness or injury and thereby increases the use of health care services. The effects of substance abuse on health care utilization may be obvious and immediate or more indirect and long term. The link between substance use and health care costs is clear in the case of an individual overdosing on drugs and then requiring hospitalization, or a person driving under the influence of alcohol who sustains serious injury in an auto accident and requires emergency hospital treatment. But prolonged alcohol abuse can also increase the risk for a number of diseases, including stomach cancer, cancer of the esophagus, respiratory tuberculosis, liver damage and pancreatitis, thereby increasing the demand for costly medical care as well as premature nursing home care. In addition, heavy alcohol use can affect not only the health of the individual with the disorder, but, in the case of a pregnant woman, can permanently affect the health of her unborn child, through conditions such as Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS).

## *Summary Findings:*

- There were approximately 7,577 hospital discharges in Maine in 2000 directly or indirectly related to drug or alcohol abuse.
- The total charges for hospital inpatient medical care related to substance abuse was estimated to be \$72.7 million (64%), including \$59.5 million (82%) related to alcohol use.
- The estimated cost of FAS was \$2.1 million (2%).
- Prescription drug costs and nursing home costs were, respectively, \$13.7 (12%) million and \$3.5 million (3%).
- The total estimated medical care cost attributable to alcohol and drug abuse was \$113.0 million or 18% of the total cost in Maine.



## Man accused of ramming car carrying his wife, children

STAFF REPORT

Portland Press Herald, August 7, 2002

A Windham man faces assault and drunken-driving charges after an incident in which police say he drove his pickup truck at 60 mph into the car carrying his family.

Douglas S. Morton, 43, of River Road was arrested by Windham police about 4:30 p.m. Monday. He is charged with driving to endanger, his second drunken-driving offense and three counts of assault.

Morton is accused of punching his wife at the dinner table after a day of drinking, then hitting his teen-age son when the woman and their children tried to leave.

As the family drove away in a 2000 Chevrolet Impala, Morton climbed in his 1999 Chevrolet S-10 pickup and chased after them, police said.

He rammed the car with such force that both vehicles were destroyed, police said. The son, who

was clutching the family dog, suffered bruises and the 15-year-old daughter complained of a headache. The family took refuge in the back kitchen of nearby Thayer's Store while police were summoned.

*Reprinted with permission of Portland Press Herald/ Maine Sunday Telegram, Reproduction does not imply endorsement.*

## Mother arrested, children taken after wild car ride: Police said children in the car, which contained rotten meat and eggs, were dirty and appeared ill

The Associated Press, June 18, 2003

SOUTH BERWICK – The state has taken custody of three young children who were in their mother's car when police saw her driving erratically and tried to stop her, authorities said.

Luella Mae French, 34, of North Berwick was arrested early Saturday when she was cornered in a Berwick driveway more than two hours after her driving first caught the attention of police.

Berwick police Capt. Jerry Locke said conditions in the car were deplorable. It contained rotten eggs and meat, and beer cans. He said an infant was covered in insect bites, and none of the children had bathed in a long time and appeared ill.

"It was unbelievable," Locke said. The chase began about 10 p.m. Friday in South Berwick,

when French was first stopped for speeding having an improperly attached license plate. The officer also suspected the woman was driving under the influence. When the officer returned to his cruiser to consult headquarters, French drove off into Dover, N.H. The officer followed French with lights and sirens but stopped after she ran a red light, police said.

"We wouldn't pursue her," said South Berwick Sgt. Jack Gove. "Nobody wants to push somebody into a crash."

Police said French struck a vehicle in Dover and failed to yield to officers' lights and sirens in Durham, N.H. She was later seen crossing from Somersworth, N.H., into Berwick, where police

attempted to stop her using lights and sirens.

When French pulled into a driveway on Route 236, police were able to block her in. She backed up into a police cruiser, causing little damage to either vehicle, before she was arrested.

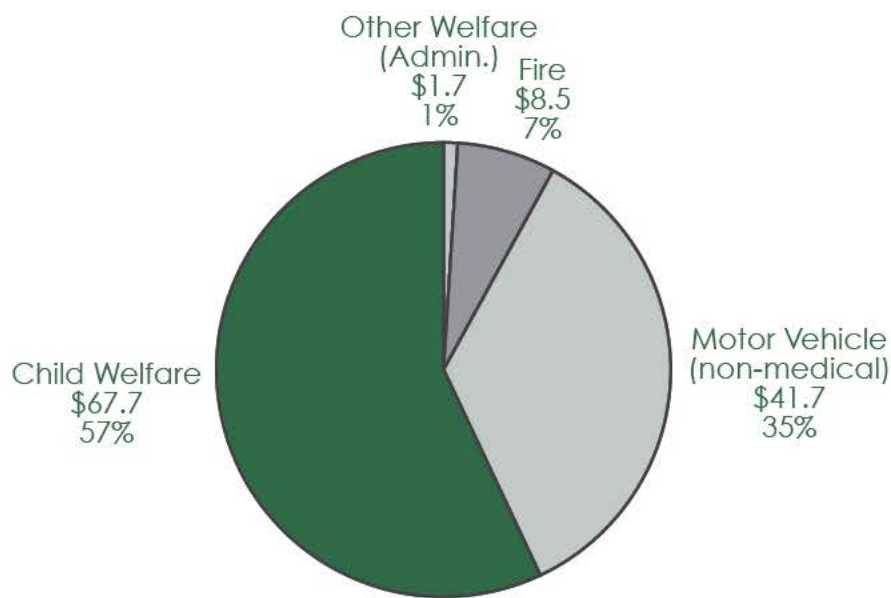
French likely will face a variety of charges in each of the communities, including operating without a license, hit and run, operating under the influence and failure to stop for a law enforcement officer.

After her arrest, the Maine Department of Human Services was contacted and the children, one an infant and all under age 9, were taken into protective custody.

*Reprinted with permission of The Associated Press.*

# OTHER RELATED COSTS

**Child Welfare and Other Costs  
of Substance Abuse  
Maine, 2000  
(\$ in millions)**



In addition to the costs examined in the previous chapters, there are three other categories of drug and alcohol-related costs that are included in this analysis. These are the substance abuse related costs of: 1) child welfare and the administration of other social welfare programs, 2) fire protection and the destruction caused by fire, and 3) the non-medical costs of motor vehicle accidents. The general methodology used to estimate these costs was similar to that used to estimate other costs; attributable risk coefficients, used by Rice et al. (1990) and NIDA/NIAAA (1998), were applied to cost data obtained from available sources and used to generate estimates of costs related to drug and alcohol abuse in Maine.

## Summary Findings:

- An estimated \$67.7 million was spent on child welfare costs related to substance abuse in Maine during 2000; an additional \$1.7 million was spent in the administration of other social welfare programs.
- In 2000, the estimated cost of fires associated with alcohol abuse in Maine was \$8.5 million.
- The non-medical cost of alcohol-related motor vehicle crashes in Maine in 2000 is estimated at \$41.7 million.
- The combined cost for all three cost categories was \$119.6 million or 19% of the total cost in Maine.



# Costly search by Coast Guard ends when man found at home

The Associated Press, September 12, 2002

**SOUTHWEST HARBOR** – The U.S. Coast Guard spent nearly \$50,000 on a search-and-rescue mission that ended Sunday when police found a suspected drowning victim at home in bed.

Coast Guard spokesman Gabe Somma said a false alarm triggered a five-hour search that included 10 Coast Guard officers on two rescue boats, a coast Guard helicopter and crew from Cape Cod, two boats and three officers from the Maine Marine Patrol, the Rockport Police Department and volunteer firefighters.

He said the helicopter search alone cost \$42,264, and the Coast Guard boat patrols cost \$6,610. The Marine Patrol estimated its costs at about \$1,000. Total bill: \$49,874.

Somma said the Coast Guard might be criticized for the expenditure, but the public would have been outraged if the search had been suspended and the man was found dead.

"It's a lot of money to spend just because someone was irresponsible, but we have to treat every distress call as distress," Somma said. "Until we're confident he is not out there (in the water), we are going to keep searching."

The incident began when the Coast Guard received a distress call at 9:40 p.m. Saturday from the skipper of the schooner Timberwind, who had come upon a man who was in the water at Clam Cove, an inlet in Rockport.

The man, Edward Rochester, 43 of Rockport, had apparently jumped into the water from his kayak during a fight with his girlfriend, Amy Gray, 34, of Rockport, who was in a small skiff nearby, Somma said.

Both the man and woman had been drinking, and the man was "extremely intoxicated," Somma said.

The skipper offered to help Rochester out of the water, "but he was disgruntled and belligerent and refused help," Somma said.

The woman asked the skipper to call the Coast Guard and later told authorities she "left him out in the water" without a life jacket or any other help.

When the skipper called the Coast Guard and related what had happened, the Coast Guard asked him to return to the area and at least throw the man a life jacket until the Coast Guard could

get there, Somma said.

But when the skipper returned, the man was gone. After talking to the girlfriend and confirming that she had left him in the water, the Coast Guard activated its search-and-rescue system, assuming that Rochester was in distress or perhaps had drowned.

While boats, helicopters and rescue crews searched the waters and the coastline, Rockport police twice went to the couple's home. The second time, moments after the Coast Guard had called off the search, Gray walked out of the house when she saw the cruiser lights.

"She said they had been sleeping," Rockport Patrolman Matthew Elwell said. Rochester and Gray could not be reached for comment Tuesday.

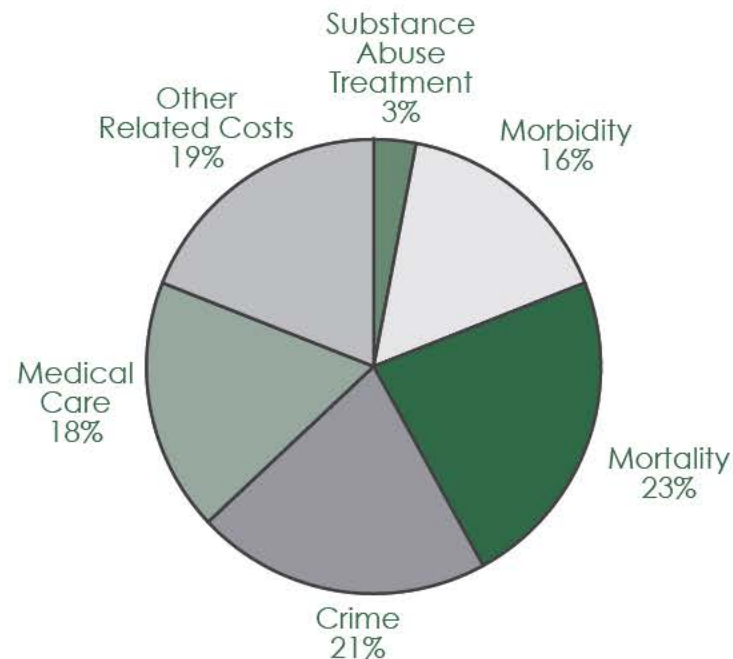
Lt. Alan Talbot of the Marine Patrol called the incident a "big fiasco."

"It was a big waste of time and it took us away from something that could have been important," he said.

*Reprinted with permission of The Associated Press.*

# SUMMARY

**Distribution of Drug and Alcohol Costs  
Maine, 2000**



This report attempts to quantify drug and alcohol costs broken down by the major categories in which actual costs are expended or opportunities for economic productivity are lost: Substance Abuse Treatment, Morbidity, Mortality, Crime, Medical Care, and Other Related Costs. Although this type of analysis cannot measure the emotional toll exacted by alcohol and drug abuse, it nonetheless provides valuable information for decision makers charged with identifying appropriate strategies to prevent or reduce substance abuse's adverse effects.

## *Summary Findings:*

- In 2000, the total estimated cost of substance abuse in Maine was \$618 million; \$432 million from alcohol abuse and \$186 million from drug abuse.
- This \$618 million translates into a cost equaling \$485 for every resident of Maine.
- Drug abuse made up a smaller proportion of the total cost in Maine than in the United States as a whole: 30% in Maine versus 41% in the U.S.
- At \$19 million, substance abuse treatment comprised the smallest proportion of total cost (3%), while lost earnings due to mortality, \$140 million, comprised the largest proportion (23%).
- In 2000, illness or injury associated with substance abuse resulted in 49,571 outpatient visits (\$21 million), 7,577 hospital discharges (\$60 million\*) and 541 deaths (\$140 million).

\* An estimated \$13 million in additional inpatient charges resulted from hospitalizations unrelated to substance abuse but extended in length due to co-occurring alcohol or drug use disorders.



# Drinking, Driving and the Death of Hope; 2001 crash alters lives of two families

By BILL TROTTER

Bangor Daily News, March 3, 2003

A year and a half has passed since a 14-year-old girl died in a pickup truck accident at the end of the suspension bridge that spans the Penobscot River just south of Bucksport.

Chester Porter of Prospect believes a jury convicted the right man last fall when it found Paul A. Mason III, 29, of Frankfort responsible for the death of his daughter Hope Porter.

The jury decided Mason was driving the truck when it sped away from Bucksport police, smashed through a telephone pole and flipped over a guardrail at the eastern end of the Waldo-Hancock Bridge.

Paul Mason Jr. of Searsport, the driver's father, disagrees with the jury. He and his family say someone else was driving the truck during the accident that resulted in a nine-year prison term for one of his two sons and a serious brain injury for the other.

The two fathers agree, however, on one point: A drunken-driving accident hurts more than just those directly involved...

According to police, Mason's eldest son was behind the wheel of a pickup that drove away from a June 20, 2001, party in Bucksport where people had been drinking and using drugs. Also in the cab of the truck were the driver's brother Adam Mason, 24, of Searsport; April Kane, 17, of Orland; Nicholas Leach, 21, of Bucksport; and Hope Porter.

Leach and the girls had met the Masons once or twice before but hopped into their truck to get a ride back to Waldo County on the other side of the bridge. Bucksport police pulled the truck over for erratic operation on Route 1 in Verona, but it sped off as the girls tried to climb out of the cab.

With police in pursuit, the truck went out of control where the road makes a sharp turn toward the bridge, smashed through a telephone pole and flipped over a guardrail. Leach and Paul Mason escaped the resulting crash with relatively minor injuries. Adam Mason suffered a serious head injury that kept him in a coma for a month, and Kane suffered a fractured skull and nerve damage in her leg.

Hope Porter, who recently had finished the seventh grade at Bucksport Middle School, died from her injuries within hours at Eastern Maine Medical Cen-

ter in Bangor.

Mason insists his family knows it was not his son who drove the truck that night. His son was convicted of drunken driving in 1997, Mason said, and since then developed the habit of giving his keys to others when he drank - a habit he repeated the night of the accident.

"He gave his keys away," the father said. "He stands by that."

The younger Mason testified at his trial that because he had been drinking, he did not drive earlier the day of the accident when he and a friend went to Ellsworth to run an errand. He said that after the accident, because of a gap in his memory, he thought he and his friend had crashed while driving back from Ellsworth.

Porter is angry at the people who let Mason drive away from the Bucksport party.

"I don't feel bad for the guy," he said. What angers him "is that people knew he [Mason] was that bad off, and they still let him go."

Mason Jr. said that because his son denies driving the truck, he is appealing his conviction to the state supreme court. His son acknowledges the role alcohol has played in his current situation and has vowed never to drink again, he said.

"He feels if he hadn't drank at all, he wouldn't have the problem he has," the father said. "He doesn't want to touch another drop at any time."

Porter admitted he and his family have had their own difficulties with alcohol, even before Hope died. Elizabeth Porter, Chester Porter's wife and Hope's mother, committed suicide in 1998 after being diagnosed with terminal cancer, he said. His wife drank heavily before she died, and Porter drank heavily for a year after her death.

Blood tests from Hope's autopsy, however, revealed she had no alcohol in her system when she died, he said. An assistant district attorney has confirmed the test finding.

One of Hope's two older brothers has been involved in drunken-driving accidents but has since given up drinking, according to Porter. All three of his sons, including Hope's twin brother, are familiar with the

dangers of alcohol, he said.

"They know," Porter emphasized...

Mason's younger son, Adam, who now lives in Florida, likely will never recover fully from his injuries.

"He's not with it. I don't think he ever will be," Mason said. "He can't hold a job. He still wants to drink and carouse."

Paul Mason III, who has a 3-year-old son, will not be released from prison until the child is 12, Mason Jr. noted...

Hope always had a smile and a hug for relatives at large family gatherings and cooked for her father and brothers after her mother died, according to Porter. Her outgoing, "comical" demeanor helped their family cope with a 1998 fire that destroyed their home, he said, and also with her mother's suicide later that year.

Hope liked the outdoors and occasionally would accompany her father on hunting trips, even though her chatty manner prevented them from sneaking up on any game, he recalled.

"We never saw anything anyway, the way she talked," Porter said, adding that hunting, more often than not, was just an excuse to take a walk with his daughter.

The teenage girl used to enjoy picking flowers on nearby Mount Waldo, where her mother often would go, Porter said. That's why he asked those attending his daughter's funeral to leave only wildflowers on her grave.

Porter said he and his family always had big plans, including college, for Hope. "She was smart enough that if she wanted to make up her mind, she could've done anything," he said. The young girl could listen to a song on the radio once and then sing it back to her dad...

Porter said the pain of his loved ones' deaths will never go away, but he expects things will get better. When spring arrives and the road to the top is reopened, he plans to drive up to the peak of Mount Waldo to enjoy the view and remember happier days.

"I'll be up on top again," he said.

*Reprinted with permission of the Bangor Daily News.*



## Cops nab two in raids

By TERRY KARKOS

Lewiston Sun Journal, March 11, 2004

RUMFORD - Two Rumford men were arrested Wednesday afternoon during simultaneous drug raids by several police officers, drug and U.S. Border Patrol agents.

David Paquette, 26, of 235 Pine St. was charged with a Class A felony crime of aggravated trafficking in narcotic prescription painkillers and a probation violation.

Ronald Harding, 40, of 25 Falmouth St. was charged with a misdemeanor possession of prescription drugs. Other drug trafficking charges are pending, Rumford police said.

Both men failed to post respective bails of \$3,000 cash and \$800 cash and were transported to Oxford County jail...

Gallant, who participated in the Pine Street

raid, said the investigation stemmed from a recent prescription drug overdose death of a Rumford resident, whom he did not identify.

"I'm scared that we're going to start seeing more deaths now from illegally sold prescription drugs, because these people need a fix and the strength of the heroin they're using has been cut way down, so they're buying and pumping more drugs into their system," Gallant said.

Due to the increasing frequency of prescription drug trafficking and abuse, Rumford police teamed up with Oxford and Franklin county police, Maine Drug Enforcement agents and two Border Patrol agents to combat the problem.

Two narcotics detection dogs, one from the Border Patrol and the other from Oxford County

police, were used to locate the illegal painkillers.

"Illegal prescription drug sales in Maine is getting to be an epidemic, so we're getting together with other law enforcement agencies, sharing information and resources, and aggressively investigating it," he added.

Oxford County Sgt. Gary Hill, who participated in the execution of a search warrant at Paquette's residence, said Oxford County is particularly hard hit by prescription drug trafficking.

"It is a problem throughout the whole county," Hill said. "People are shopping around for the drugs, then saying that they're selling them to make a living. But they are drug dealers, pure and simple."

*Reprinted with permission of the Sun Journal, Lewiston.*

## Employee substance abuse can hurt a small business

By MAGGI BLUE

Bangor Daily News, March 7, 2003

More than 14 million Americans use illicit drugs, and roughly three-quarters of these individuals are employed. When they arrive for work, they don't leave their problems at the door.

Some problems they create for businesses - increased absences, accidents and errors - are obvious. Other effects of substance abuse, such as low employee morale and high illness rates, are less obvious but equally harmful.

Small businesses are particularly vulnerable when it comes to drugs and alcohol in the workplace. They are less likely than large companies to have programs to combat the problem, and they are more likely to be the employer-of-choice for illicit drug users. Individuals who can't adhere to a drug-free workplace policy may seek employment at businesses that don't have one.

The cost associated with just one error caused by an impaired employee can devastate a small company.

So, what can small businesses do to protect their business investment and their employees against the impact of workplace substance abuse? The U.S. Department of Labor's Working Partners for an Alcohol and Drug-Free Workplace program suggest the implementation of a comprehensive plan with five

possible components: a drug-free workplace policy, supervisor training, employee education, employee assistance and drug testing.

Although employers may not choose to include all five components, the program recommends that all be explored and considered when developing a drug-free plan. The key, experts say, is to not fall into the misconceptions that often surround substance abuse in the workplace.

According to Geoffrey Miller, prevention specialist for the Maine Office of Substance Abuse, many employers believe that substance abuse is not an issue in their workplace. They are wrong: According to the 2000 Household Survey on Drug Abuse, one in 12 full-time workers reported heavy alcohol use during the past month and one in 13 reported illicit drug use during the past month.

"Illicit drug users were twice as likely to have multiple employers during the past year and were 2 1/2 times more likely to skip work," said Miller.

Employers can save money by implementing workplace substance-abuse prevention programs, which help lower recruitment and training costs, workers' compensation bills and work-related accident rates. Data on cost-effectiveness of employee assistance pro-

grams, published by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, indicate that a savings-to-investment ratio may be as great as 15 to 1.

Employee assistance programs, as part of a drug-free workplace policy, can result in fewer absences, lower turnover and lower medical claims of employees and their family members. According to a study by Commerce Clearing House Inc., the average per-employee cost of absenteeism was \$789 per year in 2002, up from \$755 in 2001.

Having access to an employee assistance program is a wonderful resource for those businesses that can afford it, but the majority of businesses in Maine are too small to take advantage of them.

The Maine Office of Substance Abuse provides some low-cost (or no-cost) options for small employers to consider when faced with substance abuse in the workplace...

When uncertain about the nature of an employee's problem, employers should address the concern with the employee in a caring and supportive way. Some very useful information can be found in the Working Partners Web site at [www.dol.gov/workingpartners](http://www.dol.gov/workingpartners).

*Reprinted with permission of the Bangor Daily News.*





Maine Office of Substance Abuse

**OSA**

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

MAINE OFFICE OF SUBSTANCE ABUSE

159 SHS, AMHI Complex, 3rd Fl, Marquardt Bldg., Augusta, Maine 04333-0159 • Web: [www.maineosa.org](http://www.maineosa.org) • Email: [osa.ircosa@maine.gov](mailto:osa.ircosa@maine.gov)

1-800-499-0027 or (207) 287-8900

TTY: 1-800-215-7604 or (207) 287-4475