

Morbidity Data (Continued)

- **Accidents and Adverse Effects** are the fourth leading cause of death in the State. Deaths from this cause are not among the leading causes of death in Houston County. Deaths from accidents and adverse effects have the greatest impact on premature death in terms of “Years of Productive Life Lost.”
 - **Motor Vehicle Accidental Deaths** (1994) accounted for fifty (50) percent of deaths occurring by accident or adverse effects in Houston County. However, from 1993-1995 the county’s MVA death rates were the lowest in the State (averaging 1 per year); they were 54% lower than the State and 33% lower than the Year 2000 National Objective. It should be noted that the county rate would exceed the State rate and the Year 2000 National Objective by averaging two (2) MVA deaths per year as was true in the three-year average from 1992-1994. Since 1990, the MVA death rate has been highest in the 25-44 age group. Statewide statistics show the 15-24 age group MVA death rates are the highest (44.1). Houston County has had a 0.0 average in this age group since 1991.
- **Violent Death Rates** (motor vehicle accidents, homicides, and suicides) are higher in the county when compared to the Region and the State.
 - The **Motor Vehicle Accidental Death Rate** in the county (1993-1995) is the lowest in the State (averaging 1 per year); the county is 54% lower than the State and 33% lower than the Year 2000 National Objective. Preventive measures to reduce the MVA death rate include using seat belts, helmet laws, better design in both vehicles and roadways, traffic and drunk driving law enforcement, reduced highway speed, and safety education.
 - The **Homicide** rate (1993-1995) in the county is 10% higher than the Region but 42% lower than the State. The county rate is 4% lower than the Year 2000 National Objective.
 - The **Suicide** rate (1993-1995) in the county is 76% lower than the Region and 78% lower than the State rate. The county has the second lowest rate in the State. The county rate is 73% lower than the Year 2000 National Objective. Currently the most promising approach to suicide prevention is the early identification and treatment of persons suffering from mental disorders.
 - In the “1995 KIDS COUNT” material from the Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth, the **Teen Violent Death Rate** (ages 15-19) is 0 due to no violent deaths in 1994. It should be noted that the leading cause of teen violent death is motor vehicle accidents. The second leading cause of death is firearm-related deaths. One violent death in this age group in Houston County would place the county rate at nearly 2½ times above the State rate.
- **Infant Mortality** data reveals Houston County’s Infant Death rate (1993-1995) is 27% lower than the State rate. The county rate is 4% lower than the Year 2000 National Objective of 7.0 infant deaths per 1000 live births. Technology advancements plus early and comprehensive care have contributed to the improvement in infant survival over the past several decades.