

CORONER

The Coroner is an elected law enforcement official who conducts independent investigations into violent and suspicious deaths that occur in the county. He is responsible for legally deciding if a death is a homicide, suicide, accident, or natural death; determining the cause of death such as suffocation, drug overdose, drowning, and all other causes of death; determining the legal identity of each and every person that dies a violent or suspicious death in the county; and notifies families when a violent or suspicious death occurs in the county. The Coroner uses DNA, dental records, fingerprints, x-rays, and other methods to make legal identification of the victim. The Coroner also has subpoena power to assist him in death investigations.

DEPT NUMBER: 1-9305	CORONER					
FUNDING SOURCE(S)	FY 2004/05 ACTUAL	FY 2005/06 ACTUAL	FY 2006/07 ACTUAL	FY 2007/08 BUDGET	FY 2008/09 BUDGET	INC/DEC FY 09 - 08
General Fund	705,269	874,412	845,553	908,720	859,362	(49,358)
EXPENDITURES						
Personnel Services Expenditures	317,993	360,647	391,178	395,610	401,502	5,892
Operating Expenditures	384,581	496,583	415,247	500,510	446,760	(53,750)
Capital Outlay	2,695	17,183	39,127	12,600	11,100	(1,500)
Other Expenditures	0	0	0	0	0	0
EXPENDITURE TOTAL	\$705,269	\$874,412	\$845,553	\$908,720	\$859,362	(\$49,358)
AUTHORIZED PERSONNEL	6	6	7	7	7	0

FY 2008/09 Budget Highlights & Initiatives

- Operating Expenditures are reduced \$53,750, from \$500,510 in FY 2007/08 to \$446,760 in FY 2008/09 based on historical data and projected need.

Additional Responsibilities

The Coroner's responsibilities in death investigation are the same whether one person is killed in an automobile collision or if a commercial airline crashes with hundreds of deaths. He uses toxicology and the results from a pathologist exam to determine the cause of death in each case. After reviewing all facts and collecting all of the evidence, the Coroner rules as to the manner of death – homicide, suicide, accident, or natural death.

Many cases are complex. Drug abuse in Spartanburg County now creates problems when deciding if an overdose is intentional or accidental. There are other types of cases involving drugs that are considered homicide; the Coroner must make a legal ruling in each of these deaths. He routinely investigates the following types of death: murder, suicide, fire, automobile collision, plane crash, boating accident, hunting accident, and any and all other violent and suspicious deaths including incidents such as individuals falling down the stairs in their homes and incidents where people fall from trees while trimming or fall from construction sites. Other types of investigations deal with lightning and electrical related deaths as well as farming accidents and animal attacks. He must also investigate medical errors, which result in the death of an individual. In each case, the Coroner must maintain a chain of evidence with all collected evidence as well as maintain an evidence room that preserves evidence for testing and court purposes.

The Coroner's office responds to each and every scene as calls are received. It is not unusual to receive three (3) calls in less than one (1) hour. This requires all employees to be on call seven (7)

**SPARTANBURG COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA
FY 2008/09 ADOPTED OPERATING BUDGET**

(CORONER'S OFFICE CONTINUED)

days a week, twenty-four (24) hours a day. The scene must be secured and protected until the Coroner's Investigator arrives to conduct an investigation. The Investigator must be in route within ten (10) minutes of receiving the call to investigate a death.