Chicago saw a 15 percent increase in the number of homicides from 2011 to 2012—and about a 20 percent rise in the number of victims—in their 2012 report according to a RedEye analysis of police data and information from the Cook County Medical Examiner’s Office.

Chicago logged 513 homicides in 2012, up from 495 killings in 2011, according to RedEye data. A police spokesman told RedEye that the city’s department is still tallying for 2013. Unlike the police department, RedEye counts homicides by the date of incident, not the date of death. RedEye also includes in its count fatal shootings that police deem to be accidental or in self-defense.

The last time Chicago topped 500 homicides was in 2006.

Chicago Police Supt. Garry McCarthy has attributed the spike in killings last year to gang and drug violence.

Gunshot homicides rose by 17 percent from 2011 to 2012, RedEye determined.

Gunshot killings comprised about 86 percent of Chicago homicides last year, according to RedEye data.

Much of the violence occurred in the South and West sides. And while some traditional homicide hotspots, including Englewood, West Englewood and Humboldt Park, saw a drop in the number of killings, other communities, such as New City and Chicago Lawn, didn’t see a softening of the violent year.

Neither did 44 community areas. There were 44 more homicide victims in 2012 than there were in 2011, RedEye determined. The police have tied more than 40 percent of 2011 homicides to street gang violence.

Still, Chicago showed signs of improvement at the end of the year: When homicides from October through December were down 17 percent over the same period in 2011. In the first three months of the year, they were up 14 percent.

The police posted their best month, 235 homicides, in December, which represented a 2 percent drop in killings compared to December 2011, according to RedEye data.