

RECREATIONAL BOATING SAFETY FACTS

All figures are from the U.S. Coast Guard's 2018 Recreational Boating Safety Statistics, the latest official record of reported recreational boating accidents. Full report available: http://uscgboating.org/statistics/accident_statistics.php

Key Facts

- Drowning was reported as the cause of death in 77 percent of all fatalities (four out of five people died from drowning).
- Approximately 84 percent of those who drowned were not wearing life jackets.
- In 2018, the Coast Guard counted 4,145 accidents that involved 663 deaths, 2,511 injuries and approximately \$46 million dollars of damage to property as a result of recreational boating accidents.
- The fatality rate was 5.3 deaths per 100,000 registered recreational vessels. This rate represents a 3.6 percent decrease from the 2017 fatality rate of 5.5 deaths per 100,000 registered recreational vessels.
- Only 18 percent of deaths occurred on boats where the operator had received boating safety instruction.
- Operator inattention, improper lookout, operator inexperience, machinery failure, and excessive speed rank as the top five primary contributing factors in accidents.
- Alcohol use is the leading known contributing factor in fatal boating accidents. Where the primary cause was known, alcohol was listed as the leading factor in 19 percent of deaths.
- Where data was known, the most common types of vessels involved in reported accidents were open motorboats (46 percent), personal watercraft (19 percent) and cabin motorboats (15 percent).

Data Snapshot

- Fatalities: 633
- Drownings: 449
- Injuries (requiring medical treatment beyond first aid): 2,511
- Boating accidents: 4,145
- Property damage: \$46,000,000
- Number of registered recreational boats in the U.S.: 11,852,969

