

RECREATIONAL BOATING SAFETY FACTS

All figures are from the U.S. Coast Guard's 2019 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 79 percent of all boating fatalities.
- Approximately 86 percent of those who drowned were not wearing life jackets.
- In 2019, the Coast Guard counted 4,168 accidents that involved 613 deaths, 2,559 injuries and approximately \$55 million dollars of damage to property as a result of recreational boating accidents.
- The fatality rate was 5.2 deaths per 100,000 registered recreational vessels. This rate represents a 1.9 percent decrease from the 2018 fatality rate of 5.3 deaths per 100,000 registered recreational vessels.
- Only 20 percent of deaths occurred on boats where the operator had received boating safety instruction.
- Operator inattention, improper lookout, operator inexperience, excessive speed, and alcohol 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 23 percent of deaths.
- Where data was known, the most common types of vessels involved in reported accidents were open motorboats (45 percent), personal watercraft (19 percent) and cabin motorboats (16 percent).

Data Snapshot

- Fatalities: 613
- Drownings: 484
- Injuries (requiring medical treatment beyond first aid): 2,559
- Boating accidents: 4,168
- Property damage: \$55,000,000
- Number of registered recreational boats in the U.S.: 11,878,542

