

Recap of 2007 Pennsylvania Boating Accident **FATALITIES** *by Dan Martin* *Director, Bureau of Boating and Access*

In 2007, 10 fatal recreational boating accidents resulted in 10 fatalities and one missing boater. This number is 14 fewer fatalities than the number reported in 2006 and fewer than the last 10-year average of 12.5. Two of the 11 victims were wearing personal flotation devices at the time of the mishaps that resulted in their deaths.

1. 2 Fatalities

Pymatuning Lake, Crawford County, 4/16/07, 8:30 p.m., Monday.

A 21-year-old angler and a 22-year-old angler lost their lives when their 14-foot open motorboat capsized. Neither victim wore a PFD. The water temperature was 38 degrees; air temperature was 35 degrees with winds up to 25 mph. Sudden immersion into cold water (cold-water shock) was a factor. Both men could swim.

2. 1 Fatality

Lake Erie (Presque Isle Bay), Erie County, 4/18/07, 11:30 a.m., Wednesday.

A 60-year-old angler lost his life when he fell overboard from a 14-foot open motorboat. Two men went fishing and were positioned 30 yards from shore when they decided to change anchors on the boat to adjust for the wind and waves. The wind turned the boat so that its gunnel was exposed to the incoming wave action. The victim attempted to hand the front anchor to the boat operator and fell overboard, causing the boat to capsize. The victim could swim. PFDs were onboard but not worn. The water temperature was 39 degrees, so sudden immersion into cold water (cold-water shock) was a factor.

3. 1 Fatality

Raystown Lake, Huntingdon County, 4/21/07, 5:30 p.m., Saturday.

A 69-year-old angler lost his life when he was ejected from an 18-foot open motorboat. Two anglers were cruising on the lake when a fishing net

blew back into the operator, causing him to let go of the wheel. The boat immediately turned sharply to starboard and ejected both men. PFDs were onboard but were not worn. Alcohol was involved. The water temperature was 47 degrees, so sudden immersion into cold water (cold-water shock) may have been a factor.

4. 1 Fatality

Susquehanna River, Lancaster County, 4/29/07, 2:30 p.m., Sunday.

A 16-year-old girl lost her life when the 16-foot open motorboat in which she was a passenger went over the Holtwood Dam. The drop over the dam is 60 feet. The water temperature was 49 degrees, so hypothermia or sudden immersion into cold water (cold-water shock) may have been factors.

5. 1 Fatality

Lake Arthur, Butler County, 5/19/07, 2:00 p.m., Saturday.

A 60-year-old man lost his life when he fell overboard from his 21-foot sailboat. Neither occupant was wearing a life jacket, although wearable Type II PFDs were onboard. The victim could swim and had some boating experience. The water was 62 degrees, so sudden immersion into cold water (cold-water shock) may have been a factor.

6. 1 Fatality

Hutchinson Mine Pond, Westmoreland County, 6/9/07, 9:15 p.m., Saturday.

A 22-year-old man lost his life when the 16-foot canoe in which he was a passenger capsized. Even though the victim was a below-average swimmer, there were no PFDs onboard. The water temperature was 60 degrees, so sudden immersion into cold water (cold-water shock) may have been a factor. Alcohol was also a factor.

7. 1 Fatality

Youghiogheny River, Somerset County, 6/16/07, 2:25 p.m., Saturday.

A 63-year-old man lost his life when he fell overboard from a 10-foot rented inflatable raft. There were four people on board. It lodged on a rock and the victim fell out. The victim was wearing a PFD. Cold-water shock was a factor because the water was only 52 degrees.

8. 1 Fatality

Allegheny Reservoir, Warren County, 8/17/07, 7:00 p.m., Friday.

A 56-year-old man lost his life when he apparently fell overboard from a 19-foot open motorboat. There are no known witnesses. The lake was rough with whitecaps on the day of the accident. PFDs were onboard but not worn. The victim was an experienced boater. Alcohol was a factor.

9. 1 Missing

Crooked Creek, Armstrong County, 11/27/07, Unknown, Tuesday.

A 45-year-old man is missing after he paddled upstream in a 16-foot canoe to go hunting. The creek was rain-swollen and full of debris. There were wind gusts of 15 to 25 miles per hour. The following day the missing boater's canoe and equipment were recovered in a strainer. The missing boater was a very experienced paddler. The water temperature was 40 degrees, so sudden immersion into cold water (cold-water shock) was a probable factor.

10. 1 Fatality

Pond, Beaver County, 12/29/07, 5:35 p.m., Saturday.

A 23-year-old man lost his life when the 15-foot canoe from which he was goose hunting capsized. He fired two shots at geese, which apparently caused him to capsize. The water temperature was 34 degrees, so sudden immersion into cold water (cold-water shock) was a factor. Alcohol may also have been a factor. The victim was a poor swimmer and an inexperienced boater without formal instruction in boating safety. ☐