

2022 PENNSYLVANIA BOATING ACCIDENT ANALYSIS

By Ryan C. Walt – Boating Accident Review Officer

The total number of reported recreational boating accidents in Pennsylvania in 2022 decreased by fifteen from 2021. Boaters and Waterways Conservation Officers reported 41 recreational boating accidents of all types, 27% less than 2021. The number of vessels involved in reported accidents totaled 48, a decrease of 38 from 2021. Accident reports indicated 30 injuries requiring medical treatment, which was seven less than in 2021. Property damage to vessels totaled \$88,750 which was \$293,503 less than the amount reported in the previous year. One vessel accident comprised \$25,000 or 28% of that total. Federal and state law requires that accidents involving death, disappearance, injuries requiring medical treatment beyond first aid, and/or property damage exceeding \$2,000 be reported to the state. Accidents with lesser property damage and/or minor injuries are not required to be reported.

Of the 41 reported accidents in 2022, the most common types of accidents were collisions with vessels and capsizing. The types of reported accidents were as follows:

Type	Quantity	Type	Quantity
Collision with vessel	7	Struck by prop	2
Capsizing	6	Sinking	2
Skier Mishap	5	Swamping	1
Person ejected from vessel	5	Grounding	1
Struck submerged/fixed/floating object	4	Person leaves vessel	1
Falls overboard	3	Fire/explosion	1
Dam	2	Unknown	1
TOTAL 41			

In 2022, nine recreational boating accidents resulted in 9 fatalities. This is the same from the previous year and below the last 10-year average of 11.6 victims. Factoring in the 2022 fatalities, Pennsylvania's new 10-year average is 11.4 victims. Three of the 9 victims in 2022 were wearing a life jacket at the time of the mishap that resulted in death.

The attached "Recap of 2022 Pennsylvania Boating Fatalities" is a summary of all fatal recreational boating accidents in the Commonwealth that year. The recap's last page details statistical information about 2022's fatal boating accidents. This recap is intended to provide information to illustrate the importance of safe boating practices and to help improve boating safety in the Commonwealth.

RECAP OF 2022 PENNSYLVANIA BOATING FATALITIES

1. 1 Fatality Conestoga River Lancaster County
 4/24/2022 1:00 P.M. Sunday

A 74-year-old male is deceased as a result of a kayak incident on the Conestoga River. The victim's wife dropped him off earlier in the day to go kayaking and, after a few hours, was no longer able to reach him by cell phone. The victim was later found deceased in the water. The victim was not wearing a lifejacket however there was one onboard. The victim had not taken a formal boating safety education course and was not familiar with the area he was kayaking. The victim had several known medical issues which may have been a factor.

2. 1 Fatality Swatara Creek Dauphin County
 5/4/2022 8:46 P.M. Wednesday

A 68-year-old male is deceased as a result of falling overboard from a 14-foot open motorboat while fishing on Swatara Creek. The victim was not wearing a lifejacket nor were there any onboard. The victim had not taken a formal boating safety education course. Alcohol use may have been a factor.

3. 1 Fatality Howard Eaton Reservoir Erie County
 5/23/2022 2:00 P.M. Monday

An 80-year-old male is deceased as a result of falling overboard from a 10-foot open motorboat on Howard Eaton Reservoir. While fishing, the victim stood up in the boat causing it to capsize. The victim and operator were both wearing life jackets at the time of the incident. The operator was transported to the hospital where he was treated for hypothermia and later released. It is unknown if the victim had any formal boating safety education. Cold water immersion may have been a factor in the victim's death.

4. 1 Fatality Juniata River (Raystown Branch) Bedford County
 5/21/2022 2:00 P.M. Saturday

A 59-year-old male is deceased as a result of capsizing his kayak on the Raystown Branch of the Juniata River. A group of paddlers were navigating the waters when conditions became turbulent and the victim's boat capsized. It is not known if the victim had any formal boating safety education. The victim was not wearing a lifejacket and there was no lifejacket onboard. Cold water immersion may have been a factor in the victim's death.

5. 1 Fatality Delaware River Bucks County
 5/22/2022 11:53 A.M. Sunday

A 38-year-old male is deceased as a result of capsizing his 8-foot kayak on the Delaware River. He was fishing with his father on the Delaware River between Lumberville (PA) and Washington's Crossing (PA). As the pair approached a dam, the victim paddled river right searching for safe passage. The current swept both over the dam and the victim was caught in the hydraulic boil and drowned. The

victim was an experienced paddler but had not taken a formal boating safety education course. The victim was wearing a lifejacket.

6.	1 Fatality 7/8/2022	Lake Hauto 4:25 P.M.	Schuylkill County Friday
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A 20-year-old male is deceased as a result of departing a 20-foot pontoon boat to go swimming on Lake Hauto. The boat was not at anchor when the victim and another passenger jumped off the boat to go swimming. The boat drifted away from the swimmers and the victim went underwater and did not resurface. The victim was not wearing a lifejacket nor was there a throwable flotation device onboard. The operator of the vessel had not taken a formal boating safety education course. Drug and alcohol use may have been factors.

7.	1 Fatality 7/7/2022	Lake Akiba 5:45 P.M.	Monroe County Friday
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A 19-year-old female is deceased as a result of falling off an 11-foot personal watercraft on Lake Akiba. The victim was the observer on a personal watercraft that was towing two passengers in a tube when she fell overboard and drowned. The victim was not wearing a lifejacket.

8.	1 Fatality 8/13/2022	Youghiogheny River 2:30 P.M.	Fayette County Saturday
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A 50-year-old female is deceased as a result of falling overboard from a 12-foot inflatable raft on the Youghiogheny River near Ohiopyle. All occupants of the raft were ejected when the raft struck Dimple Rock. The other occupants were rescued however the victim became trapped under a rock near the bottom of the rapid. Once located, the victim was extricated and transported to the hospital where she was later pronounced deceased. The victim and everyone else onboard the raft wore lifejackets.

9.	1 Fatality 11/05/2022	Private Pond 6:12 P.M.	Crawford County Saturday
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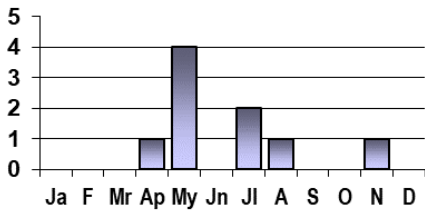
A 19-year-old male is deceased as a result of capsizing from a 10-foot kayak on a private pond. The victim was not wearing a lifejacket and there were none onboard. The victim had not taken a formal boating safety education course. The water temperature was approximately 48°F. The victim was later recovered. Cold water immersion, alcohol and drug use may have been factors.

TOTALS FOR 2022: There were 41 recreational boating accidents reported, 30 of which involved injuries requiring medical treatment and nine accidents resulted in 9 fatalities.

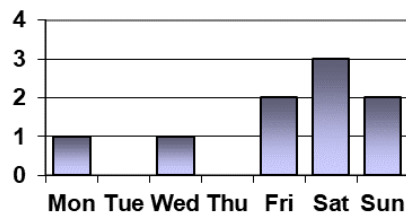
FATAL ACCIDENTS FATALITIES

LOCATION	Rivers	5	5
	Lakes	4	4
TYPE OF BOAT	Motorboat	4	4
(Carrying victim)	Paddlecraft	5	5
TYPE OF ACCIDENT	Falls overboard	4	4
	Capsizing	3	3
	Person leaves vessel	1	1
	Unknown	1	1
LIFE JACKETS	Worn	3	3
	None/Insufficient units onboard	5	5
	Onboard but not worn	1	1
HYPOTHERMIA OR COLDWATER SHOCK		3	3
(Possible factor)			
DRUGS/ALCOHOL		3	3
(Any proven use regardless of BAC)			

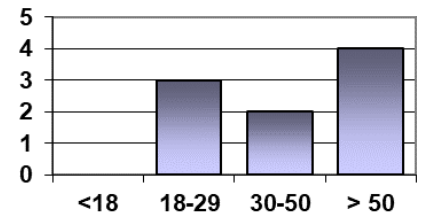
FATALITIES by MONTH



FATALITIES by DAY



FATALITIES by AGE



COLD WEATHER DATA

The first chart below shows the number of accidents and percentage of accidents resulting in fatalities from 2002 to 2011. The percentage of accidents resulting in fatalities was higher from November through April due to colder water temperatures resulting in coldwater shock to victims who ended up in the water as a result of the mishap. In 2012, a new regulation went into effect that required all boaters on boats less than 16 feet in length or any canoe or kayak to wear a life jacket from November 1st to April 30th of each year. The second chart below shows the same statistics from 2012 to present, to show the impact of the regulation change.

