2018 Boating Accident Statistical Report

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
Division of Law Enforcement
www.MyFWC.com
2018 Boating Officer of the Year

Officer Juan Blanco began doing volunteer work for the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) in 2010 and fell in love with the agency and mission. His love for the outdoors led him to study and receive a diploma in 2011 in wildlife and forestry conservation.

After graduating FWC's Academy Class 28, he returned to Miami-Dade County as an officer. Juan constantly refers to his job as “the career that I dreamed of”. Juan has taken a leadership role in Boating Under the Influence (BUI) and Driving Under the Influence (DUI) enforcement within his assigned patrol area. His passion for public safety through education and enforcement of impaired operators led him to become a Breath Test Operator and attend the Standardized Field Sobriety Task Proficiency training and Seated Battery Proficiency training. Juan’s services and expertise are routinely sought after by his fellow officers. Juan participated in multiple BUI saturation details in Miami-Dade County this year and he has personally made over 25 arrests for BUI. He also issued 124 boating citations and numerous resource and boating safety warnings. Even more impressive, is he assisted with multiple BUI investigations in which he mentored many officers in BUI procedures and has made 50 BUI arrests, collectively with his squad.

Juan has not only excelled in boating safety and BUI enforcement but also in resource protection. Juan has participated in commercial fisheries details and has taken a proactive approach in learning both commercial and recreational fishery regulations in his area. He worked with The National Park Service on multiple commercial fisheries inspections and enforcement.

Juan’s work ethic has influenced his peers to understand the importance of public service and public relations. He is a strong believer in education and has led and participated in over a dozen “Career Days” at local schools. He is constantly called upon by fellow officers to assist in public outreach events due to his passion to educate the public and reach the next generation. Juan also takes advantage of every encounter with the public as an opportunity to educate, recruit and simply have a positive interaction.

2018 Boating Educator of the Year

Steve Marshall has worked for FWC/Game and Freshwater Fish Commission for over 32 years. He has been working on FWC’s boating and fishing camps since 2006 and began working with FWC’s Florida Youth Conservation Center Network (FYCCN) since its inception in 2010.

Steve is currently a Partnership Coordinator for FYCCN and he works hard to develop and retain partnerships with organizations that provide outdoor experiences for youth in Florida and to make sure the kids experience the outdoors. Steve strives to make sure kids have a wonderful outdoor experience and learn how to participate in boating and fishing.

These camps were originally only fishing camps. Steve realized that many kids could someday use boats when they were fishing, so it made sense to incorporate boating safety into the camps. Several years ago, Steve began including the boating safety course into the camp curriculum. Kids (ages 9 to 15) get out in canoes, kayaks, or Jon boats powered by small electric motors. Youth campers can take a boating safety course at the end of the camp. The most important part is to experience boating in a safe atmosphere (on a small body of water with adult supervision) while learning about safe boating. For many of these kids, this was their first experience with boating and boating safety. The combination of practical boating experience, combined with the safety knowledge, is something that makes these camps different from many others.

Steve has also worked with the Florida Fishing Academy (FFA) in Palm Beach County in supporting their after-school youth programs. The FFA have used the boating instruction plan from FWC’s Fishing and Boating Camp as a platform to teach more than a thousand kids in 2017.

Steve is involved with the Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation (RBFF). He has worked to make sure the RBFF Hispanic outreach was established in Miami-Dade County in the form of the Vamos A Pescar (Take Me Fishing) event. Currently, Steve is working with Palm Beach County on a similar program that expands youth participation in boating and fishing. Overall, Steve has put a great deal of time and effort into ensuring that thousands of kids over his career have been introduced to boating and boating safety instruction. For many of these kids, this is the perfect time for them develop safe boating habits that will serve them well for the rest of their lives.
INTRODUCTION

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC), powered by science-based leadership, is committed to creating a sustainable and healthy future for Florida’s fish, wildlife, water and habitat resources. The FWC serves Floridians and visitors alike in a variety of ways, most of which revolve around our mission of managing fish and wildlife resources for their long-term well-being and the benefit of people. The Division of Law Enforcement (DLE) is perhaps the most visible tool within the FWC’s “tool belt” used to meet its goal of providing healthy resources for safe, satisfied customers.

THE DIVISION OF LAW ENFORCEMENT

Roles and Mission

The FWC is the only state agency in Florida tasked with the management of the state’s fish and wildlife resources. As a primary responsibility, the FWC’s Division of Law Enforcement focuses on enforcing regulations aimed at protecting and sustaining these resources both for their long-term well-being and the benefit of Florida’s residents and visitors, all the while blending in its unique and specialized public safety role. The Division’s mission is clear... “Protecting Florida’s natural resources and people through proactive and responsive law enforcement services.”

Responsibilities

The FWC Division of Law Enforcement provides protection to those who enjoy Florida’s natural resources, while also enforcing resource protection and boating safety laws. Officers patrol rural, wilderness, inshore and offshore areas, and where other law enforcement agencies do not routinely patrol. FWC officers have the authority to enforce all the laws of the state and are cross-deputized to enforce federal fisheries and wildlife laws.

In the course of carrying out their broad responsibilities, FWC officers seek every opportunity to educate and introduce Floridians and visitors to the wonders of Florida’s fish, wildlife, and natural resources, as well as safe boat operation and safety equipment requirements.

The Division also provides general law enforcement services as part of Florida’s statewide emergency response network. Because of their unique jurisdiction and specialized training and equipment, FWC is also charged with protecting the state’s waterways and critical infrastructure during times of heightened security threat levels. As seasoned first responders, FWC officers are trained to move fast and efficiently.

Moving forward into the future, FWC will continue to pursue and apply advances in technology to improve response to both conservation and general law enforcement incidents. When duty calls, FWC will always be among the first to respond, providing aid as needed. Until then, FWC will continue to lead the way in natural resource protection, proactive boating safety law enforcement and education are what we do best.

Uniquely prepared

On the water, in the woods and in the air, FWC law enforcement officers are uniquely situated and equipped to identify and respond to illegal activity and promote public safety, particularly in the maritime and wilderness areas.

Core Missions

The FWC protects Florida’s people and natural resources. The Division of Law Enforcement is an integral part of the agency and is vital in fulfilling the agency’s responsibilities. These core missions reflect the unique capabilities, training and equipment our personnel use to achieve those responsibilities.


Environmental Protection: State and federal environmental law enforcement. Cultural and natural resources protection and preservation. State lands and water quality protection. Investigations. Education and outreach programs developing the next generation that cares.


Public Safety: Provide a safe experience for residents and visitors engaged in outdoor activities. Interagency support and coordination. Specialized response units. Disaster response. Search and rescue. Intelligence and security. General and specialized law enforcement services. Critical incident investigations.
Intervention equals prevention on the water
FWC officers help to ensure Floridians and visitors are safe when they are on the water. The FWC accomplishes this through proactive law enforcement by initiating boating safety, fisheries, and hunting inspections and identifying and minimizing potential navigation or environmental hazards in the waterways.

FWC’s Boating and Waterways Section supports officer efforts by coordinating statewide boating safety efforts. Some examples of support include education campaigns, ensuring waterway markers are accurate and maintained, permitting and marking speed-regulated areas, coordinating initiatives aimed at removing derelict vessels and improving public boating access.

With close to a million vessels, Florida leads the nation in the number of registered vessels. As a negative consequence of high vessel numbers and our mild climate, Florida also leads the nation in the number of boating fatalities in the nation annually. The vast size of our inland, coastal and offshore patrol areas combined with a significant population of avid and diverse boaters, presents a unique and daunting challenge for FWC and our local and federal maritime enforcement partners.

Boating education is critical
The 2018 Boating Accidents Statistical Report indicates there were 628 reportable boating accidents and 59 boating related fatalities in the calendar year. This total includes four missing persons who at the end of 2018 have not been located or accounted for and their circumstances suggest that death or serious injury has occurred. Many of the deaths were due to victims falling overboard and drowning. A large number of the deaths could have been prevented if the victims had worn life jackets. FWC continues efforts to reduce the number of boating-related fatalities through education about the importance of wearing life jackets while boating.

Florida’s current boating safety education law only applies to boaters born on or after January 1, 1988 operating a motorized vessel of 10 horsepower or greater. The face-to-face contacts by FWC officers and our partner agencies are a critical part of our outreach efforts and education to the boating public. These statistics show us that the boat operator most likely to be involved in a boating accident is a middle-age or older male who has boating experience yet has never learned the most important safety considerations by having taken a boating safety course. When officers observe boating violations or perform resource enforcement activities, they conduct boating safety inspections aimed at both identifying and preventing violations or accidents. FWC officers make boating safer and ultimately save lives.

Safe boating is a choice
Florida is a leader in promoting boating accident prevention. The FWC, in association with the National Safe Boating Council, Bombardier Recreational Products Inc., West Marine, and the USCG has launched a statewide boating safety campaign as part of a national initiative. The “Wear It Florida” campaign encourages boaters to wear life jackets anytime they are on the water and educates boaters about the ease and convenience of inflatable life jackets. The campaign is designed to reach the public through a variety of methods including media events, exhibits, personal contacts, social media, radio and televised public service announcements.

--- Division of Law Enforcement Values ---

**Integrity**
We value candor, honesty and the highest standards of ethical behavior and are committed to upholding our positions of public trust.

**Professionalism**
We value the skillful performance which demonstrates a clear sense of commitment and direction in an environment that encourages teamwork and innovation.

**Dedication**
We value the motivation and dedication with which our members serve the visitors and residents of Florida.

**Adaptability**
We value our unique capability to adapt and respond appropriately to diverse circumstances in all environments.
ABOUT THIS REPORT

The 2018 Boating Accidents Statistical Report is compiled by the Boating and Waterways Section of the FWC’s Division of Law Enforcement. Most of the data contained in this report is gathered from boating accident investigative reports submitted by FWC officers and our marine law enforcement partners.

At the end of each calendar year, boating accident data is compiled and assembled into Florida’s annual report. The FWC’s Boating and Waterways Section analyzes this information and uses it to formulate proactive plans aimed at reducing the number of boating accidents and their related injuries, fatalities and property damage. This information is also reported to the USCG’s Boating Safety Division in Washington, D.C., to be included in the national database consisting of data from all U.S. states and territories.

The statistics reflect data from “reportable boating accidents” that occurred in Florida. Boating accidents must meet at least one of the five criteria below to be classified as reportable:

- A person dies.
- A person disappears under circumstances that indicate possible death or injury.
- A person receives an injury requiring medical treatment beyond immediate first aid.
- There is at least $2,000 aggregate property damage to the vessel(s) or other property.
- There is a total loss of a vessel.

The number of vessels registered in Florida increased slightly in 2018. With 950,740 registered vessels, Florida leads the nation in registered vessels. Additionally, it is estimated that up to one million non-registered vessels actively use Florida’s waters, and this segment of the boating population appears to still be growing. Our waterways show the strains of congestion as each year brings more residents and visitors together to utilize our abundant water resources and enjoy Florida’s boating lifestyle.

Officer Lane Kinney and Investigator John Brown rescuing a boater that had capsized his vessel after losing control of it on Holmes Creek. Officers conducted a Boating Under the Influence (BUI) investigation after noting the operator exhibited signs of intoxication. The officer’s investigation resulted in the operator being arrested for BUI.
2018 SUMMARY

BOATING ACCIDENT REVIEW
- Florida leads the nation with a total number of 950,740 registered vessels in 2018.
- There were a total of 628 reportable boating accidents in 2018.

REPORTABLE BOATING ACCIDENT
- Collision with vessel was the leading type of accident with a total of 178 (28%).
- Towed watersport activities were involved in 8 accidents, resulting in 8 injuries.
- Paddlecraft (canoes, kayaks, rowboats, paddleboards) were involved in 13 accidents resulting in nine fatalities and eight injuries.
- July was the month with the highest number of accidents (90).
- Monroe County reported the highest number of accidents and injuries (82 total accidents with five fatalities and 29 injuries).

REPORTABLE BOATING FATALITIES
- 56 fatal accidents for 2018 resulting in 59 fatalities.
- 32% of the fatal accidents were falls overboard (18 accidents). Boaters falling overboard remains the leading type of boating fatality.
- The leading cause of death in fatal boating accidents was drowning with 29 fatalities (49%).
- October was the deadliest month in 2018 with 8 fatalities.
- Alcohol or drug-use is reported to have played a role in 19% boating fatalities.
- 86% (51) of the victims of fatal boating accidents were males.
- 82% (51) of the 62 operators involved in fatal accidents were age 36 or older.
- 82% (51) of all vessels involved in fatal accidents in 2018 were 21 feet in length or less.

REPORTABLE BOATING INJURIES
- There were 628 accidents resulting in 307 injuries. The rate of injury was 32 injuries per 100,000 registered vessels.

REPORTABLE PERSONAL WATERCRAFT ACCIDENTS
- Personal watercraft (PWC) accounted for 14% of all registered vessels in Florida.
- PWC were involved in 10% (120) of reportable boating accidents.
- Rented PWC represented 45% (78) of PWC involved in accidents.
- 54% (65) of PWC accidents involved a collision with another vessel.
- 51% of PWC accidents occurred in Miami-Dade (20), Monroe (16), Pinellas (13), and Okaloosa (12) counties.
- 7 fatalities resulted from the 120 PWC accidents.
- 87 people were injured in PWC accidents.

BOATING EDUCATION STATISTICS
- FWC issued 48,771 Boating Safety Education ID Cards in 2018.
- 64% of the cards were issued to persons born on or after January 1, 1988.
- Of the 48,771 cards issued, 35,440 were to males, 13,281 were to females. 50 did not provide their gender. An additional 973 cards were printed for lost, damaged and information changes.
- 77% of the operators involved in fatal accidents had no formal boater education.

Boating accident statistics for 2018 were compiled on April 3, 2019. Reports received after that date were not included in the following data. In 2018, there were four missing persons reported. There has not been any updated information as to their status as of the date of this report compilation. The four missing persons have been included in the fatality data.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## I. Boating Accident Review

- Number of Accidents - 2017 Top Ten States ................................. 1
- Number of Recreational Registered Vessels, Top Ten States .......... 1
- Florida Reportable Accidents (2014-2018) ................................... 2
- Total Florida Registered Vessels (2014-2018) .......................... 2

## II. 2018 Reportable Boating Accidents

- 2018 Vessel Registration and Accident Statistics by County .......... 3-4
- Top Ten Counties ........................................................................ 5
- Investigating Agency ................................................................... 5
- Accidents by Month ..................................................................... 5
- Time of Day ............................................................................... 6
- Accident Site Location .............................................................. 6
- Restricted Area Accidents ........................................................... 6
- Primary Type of Accident ............................................................ 7
- Secondary Type of Accident ......................................................... 7
- Operation at Time of Accident ................................................... 8
- Activity at Time of Accident ......................................................... 8
- Vessel Count in Reportable Accidents ......................................... 9
- Vessel Type, Length & Propulsion .............................................. 9
- Vessel Fuel & Hull Type ............................................................... 10
- Vessel & Property Damage Figures (2014-2018) ....................... 10
- Vessel Ownership ...................................................................... 10
- Primary Cause Assessed by Reviewing Authority ..................... 11
- Boat Operator Age, Experience and Gender ............................... 11
- Operator/Occupant Swimming Ability and PFD Use .................. 12
- Operator Education ..................................................................... 12
- Operator by Age with No Boater Education (2014-2018) .......... 12
- PFD Wear by Age ...................................................................... 13
- Victim Statistics ......................................................................... 13
- State Waters vs. Offshore Waters Accidents ............................. 13
- Victim Statistics (Ejected) ............................................................. 13
II. 2018 Boating Fatalities

- Top Ten States 2017
- Florida Total Fatalities Recorded (2014-2018)
- Investigating Agency
- Accidents by Month
- Time of Day
- Accident Types
- Operation at Time of Accident
- Accident Site Location
- Restricted Area Fatal Accidents
- Vessel Ownership
- Vessel Fuel & Hull Type
- Vessel Propulsion, Length & Type
- Primary Cause of Death
- Operator Gender
- Operator Age and Experience
- Operator Education
- Operators by Age without Formal Boater Education
- Victim Statistics (Ejected, Wearing PFD, Swimming Ability)
- Victim Residency
- Victim Gender and Age
- Alcohol/Drug Related Accidents and Victims
- Primary Cause Assessed by Reviewing Authority
- State Waters vs. Offshore Waters

IV. 2018 Boating Injuries

- Total Injuries Recorded (2014-2018)
- Types of Injury
- Victim Statistics (Injured)
- Victim Swimming Ability and PFD Use

V. 2018 Personal Watercraft (PWC) Accidents

- PWC Registration and Accidents by County
- Total PWC Registration
- PWC Ownership by Registration
- Comparison of PWC to Vessels Involved in Accidents
- PWC Accidents (2014-2018)
- Top Ten Counties
- Accident Site Location
V. 2018 Personal Watercraft (PWC) Accidents (Continued)

- Restricted Area Accidents
- Operation at Time of Accident
- Primary Type of Accident
- Operator Age, Ownership and Experience
- Operator Education
- Operators by Age without Boater Education (2014-2018)
- Fatalities (2014-2018)
- Injuries (2014-2018)
- Primary Injury Types
- PWC Fatalities/Injuries vs. Total Fatalities/Injuries
- Primary Cause Assessed by Reviewing Authority
- Investigating Agency
- Accidents by Month

VI. 2018 Boating Education Statistics

- Top Ten Counties
- Card Distribution by Age and Gender
- Operators Involved in Accidents
- Operators Involved in Fatal Accidents

VII. 2018 Boating Violation Statistics

- Uniform Boating Citation Summary

VIII. 2018 Top Ten Counties Review

- Top Ten Counties Map
- Monroe County
- Miami-Dade County
- Pinellas County
- Palm Beach County
- Hillsborough County
- Lee County
- Broward County
- Sarasota County
- Collier County
- Volusia County
IX. Trend Analyses

- Reportable Accidents 2009-2018 ................................................................. 59
- Recreational Vessel Registration 2009-2018 ............................................. 59
- Fatalities 2009-2018 .................................................................................. 60
- Injuries 2009-2018 ..................................................................................... 60
- Boating Safety Education ID Cards Issued 2009-2018 ............................. 61
- Fatalities by Quarter 2009-2018 ................................................................. 61
- Fatalities- Quarters 1 and 2 ........................................................................ 62
- Fatalities- Quarters 3 and 4 ......................................................................... 63
- Vessel Types 2014-2018 ............................................................................ 64
- Operator by Age 2009-2018 ..................................................................... 65
- PWC Accidents, Fatalities, and Injured 2009-2018 ................................. 66

X. Glossary of Definitions for Boating Accident Report Forms ............ 67-70
On April 8th, an accident occurred on the St. John’s River at approximately 7:30 pm. A 33-foot center console vessel with 13 people on board travelling toward Ed Stone State Park. The vessel operator fell asleep at the helm while the vessel was traveling at approximately 30 to 40 mph. The operator reported being shaken awake by an occupant but did not have enough time to correct the vessel direction or speed. The vessel left the river impacting trees and stopped roughly 70 feet from the river bank. Three of the vessel occupants received minor injuries consisting of lacerations and contusions.
2018 Boating Accident Review

Number of Accidents - Top Ten States 2017 (Recreational)

- North Carolina: 117
- Ohio: 117
- Arizona: 123
- Missouri: 124
- Maryland: 147
- South Carolina: 151
- New York: 167
- Texas: 170
- California: 350
- Florida: 723

*Based on $2,000 damage threshold
Source: U.S. Coast Guard Boating Safety Division

Registered Vessels - Top Ten States 2017 (Recreational)

- North Carolina: 358,171
- New York: 444,710
- South Carolina: 534,726
- Ohio: 541,898
- Texas: 565,422
- Wisconsin: 624,753
- California: 745,641
- Michigan: 798,544
- Minnesota: 825,658
- Florida: 918,255

*Totals represent number of recreationally registered vessels in 2017
Source: U.S. Coast Guard Boating Safety Division
**2018 Boating Accident Review**

2014 - 2018 Florida Reportable Accidents

![Bar chart showing the number of reportable boating accidents from 2014 to 2018.](chart1)

**2014-2018 Florida Total Registered Vessels**

![Bar chart showing the number of total registered vessels from 2014 to 2018.](chart2)

*Totals represent all currently registered vessels for that year*

Source: Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (DHSMV)
Reportable Boating Accidents
Reportable Boating Accidents photo detail

Cover Photo: (Courtesy of FWC)

Around sunset on March 29, a 14-foot vessel was headed East on the Caloosahatchee River. The 59-year-old operator did not see two pilings that were used to hold up a slow speed/25 mph sign just east of the Edison bridge. The vessel wedged in between the pilings, crushing the sides of the vessel inward. At impact, the operator and occupant were thrown to the vessel floor. Alcohol was a contributing factor in this accident.
## 2018 Reportable Boating Accidents

### 2018 Vessel Registration and Accidents by County

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*Accident Rate = # of Registered Vessels / # of Accidents

Those Counties in bold print represent the top ten counties. Fields that equaled zero intentionally left blank.
## 2018 Reportable Boating Accidents

### 2018 Vessel Registration and Accidents by County

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Recreational Vessels</th>
<th>Total Vessels</th>
<th>Reportable Accidents</th>
<th>Fatalities</th>
<th>Injuries</th>
<th>Property Damage</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Accident Rate*</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
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<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
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<td><strong>950,740</strong></td>
<td><strong>628</strong></td>
<td><strong>59</strong></td>
<td><strong>307</strong></td>
<td><strong>$8,001,713</strong></td>
<td><strong>1:1,514</strong></td>
<td><strong>1:1,514</strong></td>
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</table>

*Accident Rate = # of Registered Vessels / # of Accidents

Those counties in bold print represent the top ten counties.

DHSMV numbers represent registrations issued at main office instead of at the county level.

Fields that equaled zero intentionally left blank.
2018 Reportable Boating Accidents

Top Ten Counties

- Volusia: 21
- Collier: 24
- Sarasota: 24
- Broward: 26
- Lee: 32
- Hillsborough: 32
- Palm Beach: 36
- Pinellas: 40
- Miami-Dade: 71
- Monroe: 82

Investigating Agency

- FWC: 568, 90%
- Sheriff: 49, 8%
- Police: 10, 2%
- Self-Report: 1, Less than 1%

Accidents by Month

- Jan: 31
- Feb: 46
- Mar: 63
- Apr: 66
- May: 66
- Jun: 65
- Jul: 90
- Aug: 54
- Sep: 44
- Oct: 43
- Nov: 30
- Dec: 37

*628 total accidents
2018 Reportable Boating Accidents

**Time of Day**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time of Day</th>
<th>Number</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:00-3:59 am</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:00-5:59 am</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:00-7:59 am</td>
<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td>8:00-9:59 am</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:00-11:59 am</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:00-1:59 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>2:00-3:59 pm</td>
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<td>10:00-11:59 pm</td>
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*628 total accidents

**Accident Site Location**

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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>River/creek</td>
<td>115</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ocean/gulf</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canal/cut</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lake/pond</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inlet/pass</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Port/harbor</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marsh/swamp</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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</table>

**Restricted Area Accidents**

<table>
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<th>Number</th>
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<tr>
<td>Manatee slow speed</td>
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<td>MPH limit</td>
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<tr>
<td>Idle speed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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<tr>
<td>Slow speed</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*194 total accidents in restricted areas

"Other" may include areas where the regulation or local ordinance was not specified.
2018 Reportable Boating Accidents

Primary Type of Accident

- Skier mishap/fall: 1
- Skier hit object: 13
- Sinking: 4
- Struck by boat (person): 4
- Collision floating object/person: 5
- Vessel wake damage: 7
- Struck by skeg/prop: 12
- Fire/explosion (non-fuel): 13
- Fall on PWC: 13
- Struck underwater object: 18
- Other: 19
- Fall in boat: 19
- Capsizing: 27
- Fire/explosion (fuel): 27
- Grounding: 29
- Falls overboard: 47
- Flooding/swamping: 66
- Collision with fixed object: 136
- Collision with vessel: 178

*628 accidents involving 896 vessels
(Based on first harmful event as determined by the state reviewing authority)

Secondary Type of Accident

- Starting engine: 1
- Collision with floating object/person: 1
- Struck underwater object: 2
- Fire/explosion (non-fuel): 4
- Fall on PWC: 5
- Grounding: 13
- Collision with vessel: 15
- Struck by skeg/prop: 16
- Other: 17
- Flooding/swamping: 19
- Collision with fixed object: 22
- Sinking: 25
- Fall in boat: 33
- Struck by boat (person): 36
- Capsizing: 45
- Falls overboard: 81

*293 of the 628 accidents did not have a secondary type of accident
2018 Reportable Boating Accidents

Operation at Time of Accident

![Bar chart showing operation at time of accident]

Activity at Time of Accident

![Bar chart showing activity at time of accident]
2018 Reportable Boating Accidents

Vessel Count in Reportable Accidents

TOTAL NUMBER OF ACCIDENTS
*628 total accidents involving 896 vessels

FATAL ACCIDENTS
*56 fatal accidents involving 62 vessels

PERSONAL WATERCRAFT ACCIDENTS
*120 personal watercraft accidents involving 172 PWC

Vessel Type, Length & Propulsion

*628 accidents involving 896 vessels
2018 REPORTABLE BOATING ACCIDENTS

VESSEL FUEL & HULL TYPE

VESSEL & PROPERTY DAMAGE FIGURES
(IN MILLIONS)

VESSEL OWNERSHIP

*628 accidents involving 896 vessels
# 2018 Reportable Boating Accidents

## Primary Cause Assessed by Reviewing Authority

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cause</th>
<th>Cases</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Dam or lock</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lack of proper lights</td>
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<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Failure to vent fumes</td>
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<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overloading</td>
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<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Improper loading</td>
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<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Standing/sitting on gunwale, bow or transom</td>
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<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improper anchoring</td>
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<tr>
<td>Equipment failure</td>
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<td>7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hull failure</td>
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<td>9%</td>
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<td>Skier/occupant behavior</td>
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<td>Congested waters</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ignition of fuel vapor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Off throttle steering-jet</td>
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<tr>
<td>Violation of navigation rule</td>
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<td>Vision obstructed</td>
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<td>Alcohol use</td>
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<tr>
<td>Careless/reckless operation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Weather</td>
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<td>41%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Excessive speed</td>
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<td>Other</td>
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<td>Operator inexperience</td>
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## Operator Age

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<td>36 - 50</td>
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<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Operator Experience (Hours)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experience</th>
<th>Cases</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 10</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 - 100</td>
<td>432</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100+</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Operator Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Cases</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>683</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*628 accidents involving 757 operators

Vessels may have been docked, anchored, or involved in a hit and run accident which would result in no operator information. Also, some information may not be provided by operators.
2018 REPORTABLE BOATING ACCIDENTS

**Operator/Occupant Swimming Ability**

- Could not swim: 570 (32%)
- Could swim: 1,162 (65%)
- No info: 44 (3%)

*1,776 total occupants and operators

**Operator/Occupant PFD Use**

- Wearing PFD: 463 (26%)
- Not wearing PFD: 1,292 (73%)
- No info: 21 (1%)

**Operator by Age With No Boater Education**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0-16</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>17-21</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>22-35</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>36-50</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>51+</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Age unknown</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Boat Operator Education**

- Boater education: 287 (38%)
- No boater education: 449 (59%)
- No info: 21 (3%)

*757 operators, 21 were unknown due to hit and run accidents

*Two operators did not provide date of birth (DOB)
2018 Reportable Boating Accidents

PFD Wear by Age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>PFD Wearing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>51+</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36–50</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22–35</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17–21</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6–16</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;5</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Victim Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fatal</td>
<td>59 / 3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Injured</td>
<td>302 / 17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uninjured</td>
<td>1,421 / 80%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Victim Statistics (Ejected)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ejected</td>
<td>343 / 19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not ejected</td>
<td>1,433 / 81%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

State Waters vs. Offshore Waters (Accidents)

- Offshore: 19 / 3%
- State waters: 609 / 97%

*Offshore is defined as the edge of the Gulfstream or three miles from shore, whichever is greater, in the Atlantic and more than nine miles out in the Gulf of Mexico*

*463 of 1,776 operators/occupants were wearing a PFD at time of the accident. One person did not provide an age*

*1,782 persons involved in vessel accidents: 1,776 operators/occupants and 6 swimmers*

*1,776 total operators and occupants*
Boating Fatalities
Boating Fatalities photo detail

Cover Photos: (Courtesy of FWC)

On April 13, at approximately 4:20 pm, a 24-foot vessel was on plane traveling on the Little Saint Marks River in Franklin County. The 71-year-old operator became distracted while showing the occupant a place to put a drinking cup on the vessel console. The operator looked up and noticed the vessel was heading toward the shoreline. There was not enough time to correct the direction or speed of the vessel. The vessel impacted the tree line along the edge of the river, ejecting the operator and occupant. The vessel rebounded from the impact and continued back out into the river unmanned. The vessel began turning in circles and clipped some additional trees then ran aground on the western bank of the river. The operator succumbed to injuries sustained from being ejected and impacting a tree along the river bank. The occupant was treated at the hospital and later released.
2018 Fatality Data

2017 Fatalities - Top Ten States

Tennessee  16
Louisiana  19
Michigan  20
Ohio  20
Alabama  21
New York  22
Wisconsin  25
California  50
Texas  63
Florida  66

*2018 statistics for top 10 states were not available at time of printing
Source: U.S. Coast Guard Boating Safety Division (recreational fatalities)

Florida Total Fatalities Recorded

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Registered vessels</th>
<th>Fatality rate</th>
<th>Number of fatalities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>950,740</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>944,162</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>931,450</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>915,713</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>899,635</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Investigating Agency

*Fatality Rate – Number of fatalities per 100,000 registered vessels

Sheriff’s Office 5 / 9%
FWC 51 / 91%

*56 fatal accidents
**2018 Fatality Data**

### Accidents By Month

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Accidents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jun</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jul</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sep</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*56 fatal accidents involving 59 fatalities

Fatality data includes four missing persons where their disappearance is associated with a boating accident.

### Time of Day

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time of Day</th>
<th>Accidents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0:00-1:59 am</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:00-3:59 am</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:00-5:59 am</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:00-7:59 am</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:00-9:59 am</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:00-11:59 am</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:00-1:59 pm</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:00-3:59 pm</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:00-5:59 pm</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:00-7:59 pm</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:00-9:59 pm</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:00-11:59 pm</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Accident Types

- Fall in boat: 1
- Fall on PWC: 1
- Fire/explosion (fuel): 1
- Struck underwater object: 1
- Struck by skeg/prop: 2
- Other: 4
- Capsizing: 5
- Collision with vessel: 6
- Flooding/swamping: 8
- Collision with fixed object: 9
- Falls overboard: 18

*56 fatal accidents involving 59 fatalities (Based on first harmful event)
2018 Fatality Data

Operation at Time of Accident

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wake/surf jumping</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Docked/moored</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changing speed</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changing direction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Launching/loading</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At anchor</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rowing/paddling</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drifting</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cruising</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*62 vessels involved in 56 fatal accidents with 59 victims

Accident Site Location

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Port/harbor</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inlet/pass</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marsh/swamp</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ocean/gulf</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canal/cut</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>River/creek</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bay/sound</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lake/pond</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Restricted Area Accidents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speed Category</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Manatee slow speed</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idle speed</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPH limit</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slow speed</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*16 of 56 fatal accidents occurred in restricted areas. “Other” may include areas where the regulation or local ordinance was not specified.
**2018 Fatality Data**

### Vessel Ownership

- **Owned**: 50 / 81%
- **Rented**: 3 / 5%
- **Borrowed (not in household)**: 9 / 14%

*59 total fatalities involving 62 vessels*

### Vessel Fuel & Hull Type

- **Electric**: 1
- **Diesel**: 2
- **None**: 9
- **Gasoline**: 50
- **Other**: 6
- **Aluminum**: 11
- **Fiberglass**: 45

### Vessel Propulsion, Length & Type

- **Propeller**: 45
- **< 12 Feet**: 12
- **12 - 16 Feet**: 20
- **17 - 21 Feet**: 19
- **22 - 26 Feet**: 5
- **27 - 40 Feet**: 4
- **41-65 Feet**: 1
- **66+ Feet**: 1

- **Airboat**: 1
- **Rowboat (Jon)**: 2
- **Pontoon**: 2
- **Cabin motorboat**: 6
- **Personal watercraft**: 7
- **Canoe/kayak**: 11
- **Open motorboat**: 33
2018 Fatality Data

Primary Cause of Death

- Trauma: 20 / 34%
- Drowning: 29 / 49%
- Other: 10 / 17%

*59 fatalities, “Other” category includes four missing where cause of death is unknown

Operator Gender

- Male: 58 / 94%
- Female: 4 / 6%

*62 operators

Operator Age (in Years)

- Under 10: 5 / 8%
- 10 - 100: 8 / 13%
- Over 100: 40 / 64.5%
- Unknown: 9 / 14.5%
- 22 - 35: 8 / 13%
- 36 - 50: 16 / 26%
- 17 - 21: 1 / 2%
- Less than 17: 2 / 3%
- 51 + years: 35 / 56%

Operator Experience (in Hours)

- Under 10: 5 / 8%
- 10 - 100: 8 / 13%
- Over 100: 40 / 64.5%
- Unknown: 9 / 14.5%
**2018 Fatality Data**

On July 28th at approximately 9:00 PM, two vessels were on the Indian River in a head on situation. V1, an 18-foot open motorboat, and V2, a 20-foot open motorboat, both turned to the east side of the river. V1 struck the port bow of V2 and ramped on to V2 striking both occupants. The 51-year-old male operator of V2 was ejected and died because of injuries at the hospital. The 53-year-old female occupant received lacerations and contusions from being struck by V1. A female occupant on V1 jumped overboard with a child before impact, she received contusions and sprains from impact with the water, the child and operator of V1 were uninjured.

**Operator Education**

- Boater education: 14 / 23%
- No boater education: 48 / 77%

**Operators by Age Without Formal Boater Education**

- Less than 17: 2
- 17 - 21: 1
- 22-35: 6
- 36-50: 13
- 51+: 26

*48 operators did not have any formal boater education

**Victim Statistics (Ejected)**

- Not ejected: 26 / 44%
- Ejected: 33 / 56%

**Victim Statistics (Wearing PFD)**

- Wearing PFD: 12 / 20%
- Not wearing PFD: 47 / 80%

**Victim Statistics (Swimming Ability)**

- Cannot swim: 23 / 39%
- Can swim: 36 / 61%

*56 fatal accidents involving 59 victims*
2018 Fatality Data

Victim Residency

Victim Gender

Male 51 / 86%
Female 8 / 14%

Victim Age

Less than 17 2 / 3%
17 - 21 1 / 2%
22 - 35 8 / 14%
36 - 50 13 / 22%
51+ 35 / 59%

Alcohol/Drug Related Accidents

Alcohol/drug use 10 / 18%
Other causes 46 / 82%

Alcohol/Drug Related Victims

Alcohol/drug use 11 / 19%
Other causes 48 / 81%

*56 accidents involving 59 fatalities
(Alcohol/drug related refers to any accidents in which alcohol or drug use may have been a contributing factor, whether legally impaired or not)
# 2018 Fatality Data

## Primary Cause of Accident by Reviewing Authority

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cause</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sharp turn</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standing/sitting on gunwale, bow or transom</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ignition of fuel vapor</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hazardous water</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overloading</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improper anchoring</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violation of navigation rule</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Careless/reckless operation</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skier or occupant behavior</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operator inexperience</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol use</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weather</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excessive speed</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No proper look-out/inattention</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*56 fatal accidents

## State Waters vs. Offshore Waters

*Offshore defined as the edge of the Gulf Stream or three miles from shore, whichever is greater, in the Atlantic and more than nine miles out in the Gulf*
Boating Injuries
On September 9, Vessel #1 (top picture) was drifting, in neutral at dusk on Lake Minneola. Vessel #2 (bottom picture) was traveling west on plane from the east side of the lake. The occupants of vessel #1 were eating dinner when they noticed the sound of a boat motor drawing close to them. The operator of Vessel #1, observed Vessel #2 approaching them at a high rate of speed and operating with no navigation lights. Vessel #2 collided with vessel #1, its bow penetrating the hull of Vessel #1 just above the water line. The impact caused the occupants on Vessel #2 to fall in their boat and were knocked unconscious and sustain injuries. Operator of vessel #2 admitted to drinking alcoholic beverages earlier in the day, but field sobriety tasks did not indicate legal impairment.
**2018 Injury Data**

**Total Injuries Recorded 2014-2018**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Registered vessels</th>
<th>Injury rate</th>
<th>Number of injuries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>950,740</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>307</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>944,162</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>437</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>931,450</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>421</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>915,713</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>438</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>899,635</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>365</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Injury Rate – Number of injuries per 100,000 recreational registered vessels

**Types of Injury**

- Shock: 2
- Dislocations: 2
- Neck injury: 2
- Amputation: 2
- Teeth and jaw: 3
- Spinal injury: 3
- Sprain/strain: 6
- Hypothermia: 9
- Internal injuries: 15
- Burns: 15
- Back injury: 21
- Not specified: 24
- Head injury: 26
- Broken bone(s): 49
- Contusions: 53
- Lacerations: 75

*628 accidents involving 307 injuries
2018 Injury Data

On Sunday, May 13, 2018, at approximately 8:30 pm a 30-foot open motorboat was nearing the entrance to St. Andrew Bay when it struck the jetty. All persons onboard were thrown around inside the boat resulting in multiple injuries. The 27-year-old operator was able to back the boat off the jetty however due to the damage to the hull it quickly took on water and capsized in the channel. Multiple agencies had responded to the accident and everyone was recovered from the water and taken to the hospital for treatment of their injuries. Alcohol was a contributing factor in this accident.

Victim Statistics (Injured)

- Operators: 125 / 41%
- Occupants: 176 / 57%
- Swimmers: 6 / 2%

*628 accidents involving 307 injured

Victim Statistics (Swimming Ability)

- Could swim: 224 / 73%
- Could not swim: 83 / 27%

Victim Statistics (PFD Use)

- Wearing PFD: 108 / 35%
- Not wearing PFD: 199 / 65%
Personal Watercraft Accidents
Cover Photos: (Courtesy of FWC)

On May 12, at approximately 2:30 pm, two personal watercraft (PWC) were operating in Biscayne Bay. The PWC were jumping the wakes of other vessels in the area. PWC #1 jumped the wake of a vessel and subsequently landed on PWC #2. The operator of PWC #2 was ejected by the impact. The operator of PWC #1 assisted him back onto his PWC and notified emergency services. Both operators were examined by Fire-Rescue for minor injuries. Both declined transport to a medical facility as they felt their injuries were not serious.
## 2018 PERSONAL WATERCRAFT DATA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Pleasure</th>
<th>Rental</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>PWC Accidents</th>
<th>PWC Fatalities</th>
<th>PWC Injuries</th>
<th>Property Damage</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Accident Rate*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alachua</td>
<td>804</td>
<td></td>
<td>804</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baker</td>
<td>236</td>
<td></td>
<td>236</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bay</td>
<td>2,042</td>
<td>279</td>
<td>2,321</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>$12,200</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1:387</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bradford</td>
<td>262</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>263</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brevard</td>
<td>3,641</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3,658</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>$8,000</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1:1,829</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broward</td>
<td>9,357</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>9,399</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td>$11,400</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1:3,133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calhoun</td>
<td>55</td>
<td></td>
<td>55</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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*Accident Rate = # of Registered Vessels / # of Accidents

Those Counties in bold represent the top ten counties for PWC accidents. Fields that equaled zero intentionally left blank.
## 2018 PERSONAL WATERCRAFT DATA

### 2018 PERSONAL WATERCRAFT REGISTRATION AND ACCIDENTS BY COUNTY

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<th>PWC Fatalities</th>
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*Accident Rate = # of Registered Vessels / # of Accidents

Those Counties in bold print represent the top ten counties for PWC boating accidents in 2018. DHSMV numbers represent registrations issued at the main office instead of at county level. Fields that equaled zero intentionally left blank.
2018 PERSONAL WATERCRAFT DATA

TOTAL REGISTERED PWC

- PWC: 131,157 (14%)
- Other vessels: 819,583 (86%)

PWC OWNERSHIP BY REGISTRATION

- PWC (private): 128,319 (98%)
- PWC (rental): 2,838 (2%)

- PWC (rental) 78 / 9%
- Rented vessels 30 / 3%
- Private vessels 694 / 77%

COMPARISON OF PWC TO VESSELS INVOLVED IN ACCIDENTS

- 896 vessels involved in accidents

ACCIDENTS 2014-2018

- 2018: 120
- 2017: 151
- 2016: 158
- 2015: 161
- 2014: 104

TOP TEN COUNTIES

- Monroe: 16
- Volusia: 4
- Miami-Dade: 20
- Okaloosa: 12
- Pinellas: 13
- Hillsborough: 7
- Collier: 4
- Sarasota: 4
- Bay: 6
2018 Personal Watercraft Data

Accident Site Location

- Port/harbor: 3
- Inlet/pass: 9
- Lake/pond: 10
- Canal/cut: 11
- River/creek: 16
- Ocean/gulf: 23
- Bay/sound: 48

Restricted Area Accidents

- Manatee: 1
- Slow speed: 4
- Idle speed: 6
- MPH limit: 9
- Other: 10

*30 PWC accidents occurred within a restricted area

Operation at Time of Accident

- Docking/undocking: 3
- Docked (moored): 4
- Other: 8
- Drifting: 11
- Wake/surf jumping: 13
- Changing speed: 16
- Changing direction: 20
- Cruising: 97

*172 PWC involved in 120 accidents
## 2018 Personal Watercraft Data

### Primary Type of Accident

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*120 PWC accidents (Based on first harmful event as determined by the state reviewing authority)*

### Operator Age

- Less than 17: 6 / 3%
- 17-21: 21 / 12%
- 22-35: 48 / 28%
- 36-50: 51+ / 28%
- Unknown: 4 / 2%

### Ownership

- PWC (owner household): 69 / 40%
- PWC (rented): 78 / 45%
- PWC (borrowed): 25 / 15%

### Operator Experience (Hours)

- Unknown: 23 / 13%
- <10: 100+ / 32%
- 55 / 32%
- 40 / 23%

---

On October 13th, at approximately 3:45 PM in Marathon a single PWC accident occurred. The 30-year-old male operator was traveling at a high rate of speed when he hit a boat wake and the PWC ramped off the wake. Upon landing, he hit his head on the handlebars, causing injuries to his head and neck before falling overboard. He was retrieved from the water unresponsive. CPR was performed, and he was transported to the hospital, he later succumbed to his injuries.

*120 PWC accidents involving 172 PWC and 168 operators
Operator information for four PWC are unknown due to hit and run accidents or no operators at time of accident*
2018 PERSONAL WATERCRAFT DATA

OPERATOR EDUCATION

- Boater education: 53% / 32%
- No boater education: 111% / 66%
- Unknown: 4% / 2%

*120 accidents involving 168 operators

OPERATORS BY AGE

WITHOUT BOATER EDUCATION

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<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

INJURIES 2014-2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Injuries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## 2018 Personal Watercraft Data

### Primary Injury Types

![Bar chart showing primary injury types.]

- Shock: 1
- Teeth and jaw: 1
- Spinal injury: 2
- Sprain/strain: 2
- Back injury: 2
- Burns: 3
- Internal injury: 5
- Other: 7
- Head injury: 10
- Contusions: 16
- Lacerations: 17
- Broken bone(s): 21

*120 accidents involving 87 injured persons

### Comparisons of PWC Fatalities

- PWC fatalities: 7 / 12%
- Other vessel fatalities: 52 / 88%

*59 Fatalities

### Comparisons of PWC Injuries

- PWC injuries: 87 / 28%
- Other vessel injuries: 220 / 72%

*307 injuries
2018 Personal Watercraft Data

Primary Cause Assessed by Reviewing Authority

- Vision obstructed: 1
- Weather: 1
- Ignition of fuel vapor: 1
- Failure to vent fumes: 1
- Sharp turn: 1
- Hazardous waters: 1
- Alcohol use: 1
- Machinery failure: 2
- Violation of navigation rule: 2
- Congested waters: 2
- Other: 4
- Off throttle steering-jet: 11
- Excessive speed: 14
- Operator inexperience: 15
- Careless/reckless operation: 25
- No proper look-out/inattention: 38

Investigating Agency

- FWC: 112 / 93%
- Sheriff's Office: 6 / 5%
- Police Department: 2 / 2%

Accidents by Month

- *120 PWC accidents*
Boating Education
Statistics

Let's Get On Board

Florida

Boating Safety Education Certificate

This is to certify that the individual has successfully completed a boating course as defined or approved by the State of Florida.

Expiration Date: LIFETIME
Officer Specialists Bryce Phillippi and Damon Pulaski recently taught boater safety to the Pasco County Sheriff’s Office Junior Explorer program. The children enjoyed learning about safe boating and will hopefully obtain boater education cards.

Brian Rehwinkel and Ivey Dockery of FWC’s Boating Safety Unit gave a presentation at a Boating Safety Instructor Workshop. The Boating Safety Unit provides training around the state to boating safety instructors from multiple organizations such as U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary and America’s Boat Club (formerly U.S. Power Squadron).
2018 Boating Education

Top Ten Counties-Boating Safety Education Identification (I.D.) Cards Issued

- Duval: 1,320
- Brevard: 1,389
- Orange: 1,491
- Okaloosa: 1,521
- Lee: 1,545
- Pinellas: 2,034
- Broward: 2,216
- Hillsborough: 2,302
- Palm Beach: 2,593
- Miami-Dade: 3,671

*48,771 cards issued in calendar year 2018 (does not include temporary certificates)
3,581 cards were issued to out-of-state residents

Boating Safety Education
I.D. Card Distribution by Age

- 0-16: 8,144
- 17-21: 9,584
- 22-35: 15,442
- 36-50: 6,503
- 51 and up: 9,068
- No age info*: 30

*48,771 new cards issued. An additional 973 cards issued as reprints for lost, damaged and change of information

I.D. Card Distribution by Gender

- Male: 35,440 (73%)
- Female: 13,281 (27%)
- Unknown: 50 (Less than 1%)

*50 / Less than 1%
**2018 Boating Education**

**Operators Involved in Accidents-Education/Age**

*757 operators, two did not provide date of birth
21 additional were unknown due to hit and run accidents or information was not entered, they are not included in this table

**Operators Involved in Fatal Accidents-Education/Age**

*62 operators
Violation Summary photo detail

Cover Photos: (Courtesy of FWC)

Photos of alcoholic beverages found onboard vessels involved in boating accidents.
# Violation Summary

## 2018 Uniform Boating Citation Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Citation</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Aids to Navigation and Regulatory Markers</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uniform waterway markers for safety and navigation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mooring to or damaging markers or buoys</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Alcohol and Drugs</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operation of a vessel under the influence of alcohol</td>
<td>536</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operation of a vessel while impaired</td>
<td>374</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Boating Restricted Areas</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manatee protection rules</td>
<td>2,139</td>
<td>3,060</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public safety rules</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local ordinances</td>
<td>1,858</td>
<td>2,129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Boating Safety Education</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boating safety education I.D. cards</td>
<td>555</td>
<td>883</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Livery Operations</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rental without proper safety equipment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rental without boater education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rental to persons under 18 years of age</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Negligent Operation of a Vessel</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reckless operation of a vessel</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Careless operation of a vessel</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Navigation rule violation resulting in an accident</td>
<td>445</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Navigation rule violation not resulting in an accident</td>
<td>431</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Failure to report an accident</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Personal Watercraft</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal watercraft regulations</td>
<td>354</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Skiing and Diving</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skiing, aquaplaning and parasailing violations</td>
<td>373</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dive flag violations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Registration and Numbering</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operation of unregistered/unnumbered vessels</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application, certificate, number or decal violation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special manufacturer and dealer numbers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violation relating to vessel titling</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violation relating to Hull Identification Numbers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Safety Equipment and Regulations</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment and lighting requirements</td>
<td>3,920</td>
<td>761</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SUB TOTAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL VIOLATIONS RECORDED</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10,769</td>
<td>6,232</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9,291</td>
<td>4,136</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| TOTAL VIOLATIONS RECORDED | 17,001 | 13,427 |
A thorough review of the annual boating accident statistics has revealed that 62% of the reportable boating accidents during the 2018 calendar year occurred in 10 Florida counties.

The information on the following pages represents a breakdown of the accident data from each of these top 10 counties. The graphs show the type of vessels involved, the length, the primary cause of each accident and the primary type of accident for each county. There is also a map of each county with points designating the accident locations.

The information found in this section will provide a basis for future boating safety awareness efforts implemented by the FWC Division of Law Enforcement, Boating and Waterways Section.
Florida Top 10 Counties of Boating Accidents during 2018
Known Locations of Accidents in Monroe County during 2018

**Legend**
- Fatal Accident (5)
- Accident with Injury (21)
- Accident without Injury (56)
# 1. Monroe County

## Type of Vessel

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Vessel</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Canoe/kayak</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mini jet boat</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sail (only)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sail (aux power)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal watercraft</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cabin motorboat</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open motorboat</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Vessel Length (in feet)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vessel Length</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66+</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41 - 65</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 - 40</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 - 26</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 - 21</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 - 16</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 12</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Primary Cause of Accident

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary Cause of Accident</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stumble</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Struck by another boat</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Struck by PWC</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall in water</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hit by object</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Primary Type of Accident

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary Type of Accident</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collision with person</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flooded (swimming)</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall overboard</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grounding</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capsizing</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Struck by person</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Struck by PWC</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall in boat</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hit by object</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hit by underwater object</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Known Locations of Accidents in Miami-Dade County during 2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Legend</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>▢ Fatal Accident (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>◆ Accident with Injury (23)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>◈ Accident without Injury (43)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Map document created by FWC DLE GIS
2. MIAMI-DADE COUNTY

**Type of Vessel**

- Cabin motorboat: 44
- Open motorboat: 38
- Rowboat (jon): 1
- Sail (only): 1
- Mini jet boat: 1
- Airboat: 1
- Pontoon boat: 2
- Sail (aux power): 2
- Other: 4
- Personal watercraft: 26

**Vessel Length (in feet)**

- Unknown: 2
- 66+: 9
- 41 - 65: 14
- 27 - 40: 30
- 22 - 26: 15
- 17 - 21: 15
- 12 - 16: 8
- Less than 12: 27

**Primary Cause of Accident**

- Other: 9
- Weather: 7
- Alcohol use: 7
- Improper anchoring: 7
- Haze/obstruction: 3
- Ignition of fuel vapor: 2
- Failure to see/tunnel: 2
- Violation of navigation rule: 2
- Hull failure: 1
- Collision with vessel: 1

**Primary Type of Accident**

- Other: 10
- Falls/overboard: 7
- Collision: 6
- Vessel was Defense: 5
- Fire/explosion: 4
- Fall of person: 3
- Struck by object: 2
- Struck under water object: 1
Known Locations of Accidents in Pinellas County during 2018

**Legend**
- Fatal Accident (1)
- Accident with Injury (14)
- Accident without Injury (25)

Map document created by FWC DLE GIS
3. PINELLAS COUNTY

**TYPE OF VESSEL**

- Personal watercraft: 22
- Open motorboat: 21
- Cabin motorboat: 10
- Sail (aux power): 6
- Mini jet boat: 1
- Other: 1
- Rowboat (jon): 1

**VESSEL LENGTH (IN FEET)**

- Less than 12: 22
- 12 - 16: 1
- 17 - 21: 7
- 22 - 26: 10
- 27 - 40: 12
- 41 - 65: 7
- 66+: 1

**PRIMARY CAUSE OF ACCIDENT**

- Collisions with vessels: 12
- Collisions with fixed object: 7
- Falling overboard: 6
- Flooding/swamping: 5
- Sharp turn: 3
- Capsizing: 2
- Grounding: 2
- Foul weather: 1
- Sharp turn: 1
- Other: 1

**PRIMARY TYPE OF ACCIDENT**

- Collisions with vessels: 18
- Collisions with fixed object: 6
- Falling overboard: 5
- Flooding/swamping: 3
- Sharp turn: 2
- Capsizing: 2
- Grounding: 1
- Foul weather: 1
- Sharp turn: 1
- Other: 1
Known Locations of Accidents in Palm Beach County during 2018

**Legend**
- Fatal Accident (1)
- Accident with Injury (14)
- Accident without Injury (21)
4. Palm Beach County

Type of Vessel

Vessel Length (in feet)

Primary Cause of Accident

Primary Type of Accident
Known Locations of Accidents in Hillsborough County during 2018

Legend

- Fatal Accident (11)
- Accident with Injury (7)
- Accident without Injury (14)

Map document created by FWC DLE GIS
5. Hillsborough County

**Type of Vessel**

- Mini jet boat: 1
- Rowboat (jon): 1
- Pontoon boat: 1
- Canoe/kayak: 2
- Cabin motorboat: 6
- Personal watercraft: 11
- Open motorboat: 20

**Vessel Length (in feet)**

- Less than 12: 12
- 12 - 16: 6
- 17 - 21: 11
- 22 - 26: 4
- 27 - 40: 9

**Primary Cause of Accident**

- No proper look-out/attention: 8
- Other: 5
- Alcohol use: 3
- Operator inexperience: 3
- Excessive speed: 3
- Violation of navigation rule: 3
- Careless/reckless: 1
- Improper anchoring: 1
- Sharp turn: 1
- Hull failure: 1
- Vision obscured: 1
- Overloading: 1

**Primary Type of Accident**

- Collision with vessel: 9
- Collision with fixed object: 8
- Falls overboard: 4
- Struck underwater object: 2
- Grounding: 2
- Capsize: 2
- Fire/explosion (fuel): 1
- Other: 1
Known Locations of Accidents in Lee County during 2018

Legend
- Fatal Accident (1)
- Accident with Injury (8)
- Accident without Injury (23)
6. LEE COUNTY

**Type of Vessel**

- Sail (only): 1
- Sail (aux power): 1
- Pontoon boat: 2
- Other: 3
- Cabin motorboat: 11
- Open motorboat: 30

**Vessel Length (in feet)**

- Unknown: 2
- 41 - 65: 4
- 27 - 40: 13
- 22 - 26: 14
- 17 - 21: 12
- 12 - 16: 1
- Less than 12: 2

**Primary Cause of Accident**

- No proper lookout/attention: 8
- Operator inexperience: 7
- Excessive speed: 4
- Equipment failure: 3
- Vision obstructed: 2
- Alcohol use: 1
- Hazardous water: 1
- Propeller entanglement: 1
- Hull failure: 1
- Other: 1

**Primary Type of Accident**

- Collision with vessel: 10
- Foul play: 5
- Fall in water: 5
- Grounding: 3
- Struck underwater object: 2
- Struck by wave/prop: 2
- Falls overboard: 1
- Skidding: 1
- Fire/explosion (fuel): 1
- Other: 1
Known Locations of Accidents in Broward County during 2018

Legend
- Fatal Accident (2)
- Accident with Injury (6)
- Accident without Injury (18)

Map document created by FWC DLE GIS
7. Broward County

**Type of Vessel**

- Other: 3
- Airboat: 5
- Personal watercraft: 6
- Open motorboat: 14
- Cabin motorboat: 20

**Vessel Length (in feet)**

- Unknown: 3
- 66+: 3
- 41 - 65: 9
- 27 - 40: 14
- 22 - 26: 4
- 17 - 21: 3
- 12 - 16: 5
- Less than 12: 7

**Primary Cause of Accident**

- No proper lookout/distracted: 4
- Machinery failure: 4
- Excessive speed: 3
- Ignition of flammable liquid: 3
- Anomaly in vessel: 2
- Vessel collision (with another vessel): 2
- Vessel collision (with fixed object): 1
- Vessel damage: 1
- Flooded (sinking): 1
- Explosion (normal): 1
- Retrieved by boat personnel: 1
- Sinking: 1

**Primary Type of Accident**

- Collision with vessel: 9
- Vessel wake damage: 7
- Flooding (sinking): 3
- Explosion (normal): 2
- Struck by boat personnel: 1
- Struck by vessel: 1
- Struck by vessel: 1
- Struck by vessel: 1
- Struck by vessel: 1
- Struck by vessel: 1
- Struck by vessel: 1
Known Locations of Accidents in Sarasota County during 2018

Legend

- **Fatal Accident (5)**
- **Accident with Injury (7)**
- **Accident without Injury (12)**
8. SARASOTA COUNTY

**Type of Vessel**

- Other: 1
- Canoe/kayak: 2
- Pontoon boat: 3
- Sail (aux power): 6
- Cabin motorboat: 6
- Personal watercraft: 7
- Open motorboat: 12

**Vessel Length (in feet)**

- Less than 12: 8
- 12 - 16: 1
- 17 - 21: 5
- 22 - 26: 6
- 27 - 40: 11
- 41 - 65: 5
- 66+: 1

**Primary Cause of Accident**

- No proper look-out/attention: 7
- Excessive speed: 4
- Machinery failure: 4
- Sear of occupant behavior: 3
- Weather: 2
- Operator inexperience: 1
- Carelessness/drunkeness: 1
- Vision obstructed: 1

**Primary Type of Accident**

- Collision with vessel: 5
- Falls overboard: 4
- Flooding (sinking): 3
- Stuck underwater object: 3
- Fire/explosion (non-nuclear): 2
- Capsizing: 2
- Grounding: 1
- Stuck by anchor: 1
Known Locations of Accidents in Collier County during 2018

Legend
- Fatal Accident (0)
- Accident with Injury (15)
- Accident without Injury (9)
9. Collier County

Type of Vessel

- Open motorboat: 15
- Cabin motorboat: 6
- Airboat: 3
- Personal watercraft: 4
- Mini jet boat: 2
- Pontoon boat: 2
- Other: 1

Vessel Length (in feet)

- 66+: 1
- 41 - 65: 3
- 27 - 40: 3
- 22 - 26: 11
- 17 - 21: 7
- 12 - 16: 3
- Less than 12: 5

Primary Cause of Accident

- No proper lookout/attention: 5
- Alcohol use: 5
- Operating/maintaining vessel: 2
- Excessive speed: 2
- Congested waters: 2
- Weather: 2
- Lack of proper lights: 1
- Slower or occupant behavior: 1
- Violation of speed limit: 1
- Machinery failure: 1

Primary Type of Accident

- Collision with vessel: 6
- Collisions with fixed objects: 4
- Fall in boat: 3
- Running aground: 3
- Falling overboard: 2
- Struck by boat: 2
- Fall on PWC: 1
- Other: 1
Known Locations of Accidents in Volusia County during 2018

Legend
- Fatal Accident (4)
- Accident with Injury (9)
- Accident without Injury (8)
10. Volusia County

**Type of Vessel**

- Open motorboat: 12
- Personal watercraft: 7
- Cabin motorboat: 2
- Sail (aux power): 1
- Canoe/kayak: 1
- Airboat: 1
- Other: 1

**Vessel Length (in feet)**

- Less than 12: 7
- 12 - 16: 7
- 17 - 21: 6
- 22 - 26: 1
- 27 - 40: 2
- 41 - 65: 2
- 66+: 1

**Primary Cause of Accident**

- No proper lookout/attention: 4
- Violation of navigation rules: 3
- Weather: 2
- Machinery failure: 2
- Operational inexperience: 1
- Improper anchoring: 1
- Equipment failure: 1

**Primary Type of Accident**

- Collision with vessel: 4
- Falls overboard: 3
- Flightsophisticated (fool): 3
- Flooding/swamping: 2
- Fall in boat: 2
- Grounding: 1
- Capstoring: 1
Trend Analysis
Trend Analysis photo detail

Cover Photos: (Courtesy of FWC)

Photos of boating accidents in Collier and Monroe Counties.
2018 Trend Analysis

Reportable Accidents 2009-2018

Vessel Registration 2009-2018

Recreational vessels
Commercial/other vessels
2018 Trend Analysis

Fatalities 2009-2018

*Average number of fatalities per year: 65

Injuries 2009-2018

*Average number of injuries per year: 402
2018 Trend Analysis

Boating Safety Education I.D. Cards Issued
2009-2018

Fatalities by Quarter 2009-2018

Q1= JAN-MAR  Q2=APR-JUN  Q3=JUL-SEP  Q4=OCT-DEC
2018 Trend Analysis

Quarter 1 Fatalities

Quarter 2 Fatalities

*Q₁ = JAN - MAR

*Q₂ = APR - JUN
2018 Trend Analysis

Quarter 3 Fatalities

*Q3 = JUL - SEP

Quarter 4 Fatalities

*Q4 = OCT - DEC
2018 Trend Analysis

Vessel Types 2014 - 2018

- Paddlecraft
- Pontoon boat
- Airboat
- Personal watercraft
- Cabin motorboat
- Open motorboat
2018 Trend Analysis

Operator by Age 2009-2018
2018 Trend Analysis

PWC Accidents, Fatalities, Injured
2009-2018
Glossary
Glossary photo detail

Cover Photos: (Courtesy of FWC)

Top Picture

A 46-year-old operator, with no boating experience, attempted to travel under the Seven Mile Bridge. The operator lost control of the vessel in the tidal current, abruptly accelerated and the vessel collided with the bridge scaffolding. The vessel capsized after impact. The operator was not significantly injured.

Bottom Picture

A PWC attempted to jump the wake of a large fishing vessel on Choctawhatchee Bay in Okaloosa County. Upon the PWC ramping the wake, the operator and occupant were separated from the PWC. The operator and occupant landed on the back on top of the PWC. The occupant was injured when caught between the PWC and the body of the operator.
GLOSSARY OF DEFINITIONS

**ALCOHOL/DRUG RELATED** – Refers to any accidents in which alcohol/drug use may have been a contributing factor, whether or not legally impaired.

**AT ANCHOR** – Held in place in the water by an anchor, includes “moored” to a buoy or anchored vessel and “dragging anchor.”

**BOATING ACCIDENT** - A collision, accident, or casualty involving a vessel, in or upon, or entering into or exiting from the water, includes capsizing, collision with another vessel or object, sinking, personal injury, death or disappearance of any person from onboard under circumstances which indicate the possibility of death or injury or property damage to any vessel or dock.

**CABIN MOTORBOAT** - Motorboats with a cabin which can be completely closed by means of doors or hatches. Large motorboats with cabins, even though referred to as yachts, are considered to be cabin motorboats.

**CAPSIZING** - Overturning of a vessel.

**CARELESS OPERATION** – Operation of a vessel in a manner that is not reasonable and prudent, having no regard for other waterborne traffic, posted speed and wake restrictions, and all other attendant circumstances so as not to endanger the life, limb, or property of any person.

**COLLISION WITH ANOTHER VESSEL** - Any striking together of two or more vessels, regardless of operation at time of the accident, is a collision. (Also includes colliding with the tow of another vessel, regardless of the nature of the tow, e.g., surfboard, ski ropes, skier, tow line, etc.)

**COLLISION WITH FIXED OBJECT** - The striking of any fixed object above or below the surface of the water.

**COLLISION WITH A FLOATING OBJECT** - Collision with any waterborne object (except another vessel), above or below the surface, that is free to move with the tide, current or wind.

**CRUISING** - Proceeding normally, unrestricted, with an absence of drastic rudder or engine changes.

**DOCUMENTED VESSEL** - A vessel of five or more net tons, owned by a citizen of the United States, for which a certificate of documentation is issued by the United States Coast Guard, pursuant to 46 C.F.R. part 67. Documented vessels are not required to display an assigned registration number.

**DRIFTING** - Underway, but not proceeding over the bottom with use of engines, oars or sails, being carried along only by the tide, current or wind.

**FALLS OVERBOARD** - A person who unintentionally exits the vessel.

**FAULT OF OPERATOR** - Speeding, overloading, improper loading, not properly seating occupants of boat, no proper look-out, carelessness, failure to heed weather warnings, operating recklessly in a congested area, not observing the rules of the road, unsafe fueling practices, lack of experience, ignorance of aids to navigation, lack of caution in an unfamiliar area of operation, improper installation or maintenance of hull, machinery or equipment, poor judgment, recklessness, overpowering the boat, panic, proceeding in an unseaworthy craft, operating a motorboat near persons in the water, starting the engine with clutch engaged or throttle advanced or irresponsible boat handling (such as quick, sharp turns).
FIBERGLASS (PLASTIC) HULL - Hulls of fiber-reinforced plastic. The laminate consists of two basic components: the reinforcing material (glass filaments) and the plastic or resin in which it is embedded.

FIRE/EXPLOSION (FUEL) - Accidental combustion of vessel fuel or liquids (including their vapors).

FIRE/EXPLOSION (OTHER) - Accidental burning or explosion of any material onboard, except, vessel fuels or their vapors.

FLORIDA INTRACOASTAL WATERWAY - The Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway from the Georgia state line north of Fernandina to Miami, the Port of Canaveral lock and canal to the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway; the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway, Miami to Key West; the Okeechobee Waterway, Stuart to Fort Myers; the St. Johns River, Jacksonville to Sanford; the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway, Anclote to Fort Myers; the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway, Carrabelle to Tampa Bay; Carrabelle to Anclote open bay section (using Gulf of Mexico); the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway, Carrabelle to the Alabama state line west of Pensacola; and the Apalachicola, Chattahoochee and Flint rivers in Florida.

FLOODING - Filling with water, regardless of method of ingress, but retaining sufficient buoyancy to remain on the surface.

FUELING - Any stage of the fueling operation, primarily concerned with introduction of explosive or combustible vapors or liquids onboard.

GROUNDING - Running aground of a vessel, striking or pounding on rocks, reefs or shoals, "stranding."

IMPROPER LOADING - Loading, including weight shifting of the vessel, causing instability, limited maneuverability or dangerously reduced freeboard.

INBOARD/OUTBOARD - Also referred to as inboard/outdrive. Regarded as inboard because the power unit is located inside the boat and has a stern-mounted propulsion unit.

INFLATABLE LIFE JACKET - A sleeveless jacket or vest with inflatable chambers designed to keep a person afloat in the water. May also be manufactured to resemble a belt or fanny pack when not inflated.

LIFE JACKET — A sleeveless jacket or vest that is filled with buoyant material designed to keep a person afloat in the water.

MANEUVERING - Changing of course, speed or similar boat handling action during which a high degree of alertness is required or the boat is imperiled because of the operation, such as docking.

MOTORBOAT - Any vessel which is propelled or powered by machinery and which is used or capable of being used as a means of transportation on water and any vessel equipped with propulsion machinery and not more than sixty-five feet in length.


NON-RESIDENT - A citizen of the United States who has not established residence in this state and has not continuously resided in this state for one year and in one county for the six months immediately preceding the initiation of a vessel titling or registration action.

NO PROPER LOOK-OUT - No proper watch, the failure of the operator to perceive danger because no one was serving as look-out or the person so serving failed in that regard.
NUMBERED VESSEL - An undocumented vessel numbered by a state with a numbering system approved by the United States Coast Guard under Chapter 123, Title 46, U.S.C.

OPEN MOTORBOAT - Craft of open construction specifically built for operating with a motor, including boats canopied or fitted with temporary partial shelters.

OPERATE - To be in charge of or in command of or in actual physical control of a vessel upon the waters of this state, or to exercise control over or to have responsibility for a vessel's navigation or safety while the vessel is underway upon the waters of this state, or to control or steer a vessel being towed by another vessel upon the waters of this state.

OWNER - A person, other than a lien holder, having the property or title to a vessel. The term includes a person entitled to the use or possession of a vessel subject to an interest in another person, reserved or created by agreement and securing payment of performance of an obligation, but the term excludes a lessee under a lease not intended as security.

OUTBOARD - An engine not permanently affixed to the structure of the craft, regardless of the method or location used to mount the engine; e.g., motor wells, kicker pits, motor pockets, etc.

OVERLOADING - Excessive loading of the vessel causing instability, limited maneuverability, dangerously reduced freeboard, etc.

PERSONAL FLOATATION DEVICE (PFD) - A life jacket or similar buoyancy aid. See also LIFE JACKET.

PERSONAL WATERCRAFT - A vessel less than 16 feet in length which uses an inboard motor powering a water jet pump as its primary source of motive power and which is designed to be operated by a person sitting, standing or kneeling on the vessel, rather than in the conventional manner of sitting or standing inside the vessel.

RECKLESS OPERATION - A person is guilty of reckless operation of a vessel who operates any vessel, or manipulates any water skis, aquaplane or similar device, in willful or wanton disregard for the safety of persons or property at a speed or in a manner as to endanger, or likely to endanger, life or limb, damage the property of or injure any person.

REGISTRATION - A state operating license on a vessel which is issued with an identifying number, an annual certificate of registration and a decal designating the year for which a registration fee was paid.

REPORTABLE BOATING ACCIDENT - An accident that results in personal injury requiring medical treatment beyond immediate first aid, death, disappearance of any person from onboard under circumstances which indicate the possibility of death or injury or damage to any vessel or other property in an apparent aggregate amount of at least $2,000 or total loss of a vessel.

RESIDENT - A citizen of the United States who has established residency in this state and has continuously resided in this state for one year and in one county for the six months immediately preceding the initiation of a vessel titling or registration action.


SAILBOAT OR AUXILIARY SAILBOAT - Any vessel whose sole source of propulsion is the natural element (i.e., wind), or a craft intended to be propelled primarily by sail, regardless of size or type.

SINKING - Losing enough buoyancy to settle below the surface of the water.
SPEEDING - Operating at a speed, possibly below the posted speed limit, above that which a reasonable and prudent person would operate under the circumstances.

STEEL HULL - Hulls of sheet steel or steel alloy, not those of steel ribs and wood, canvas or plastic hull coverings.

STRUCK BY BOAT OR PROPELLER - Striking of a victim who is outside of the boat, but not necessarily a swimmer.

SWAMPING - Filling with water, particularly over the side, but retaining sufficient buoyancy to remain on the surface.

TOWED WATER SPORT MISHAP – A water sport accident associated with vessel passenger(s) or person(s) being towed or surfing the wake created by a vessel. Includes, but is not limited to, water skiing, wakeboarding, tubing, parasailing, etc.

TOWING - Engaged in towing any vessel, fishing gear or object other than a person.

VESSEL - Is synonymous with boat as referenced in S.1 (b), Article VII of the State Constitution, and includes every description of watercraft, barge and airboat, other than a seaplane on the water, used or capable of being used as means of transportation on water.

WOOD HULL - Hulls of plywood, molded plywood, wood planking or any other wood fiber in its natural consistency, including those of wooden construction that have been "sheathed" with fiberglass or sheet metal.
IMPORTANT
boating safety messages to remember

Always know what’s going on around your boat.
Most boating accidents involve collisions.
Staying alert is critical!

Develop a “Life Jacket Habit.”
Most people who die in boating accidents drown. Try out an inflatable life jacket and, most of all, wear it!

Alcohol use is a leading cause of boating deaths.
Alcohol and boating really don’t mix, so save it for later. When you drink, you don’t think!

From your friends at the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
620 South Meridian Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1600
Boating and Waterways Section
Phone: (850) 488-5600
www.MyFWC.com

FWC reminds you to not spoil your boating fun.
Slow down and look around.