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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Registered vessels</th>
<th>Number of fatalities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tennessee</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louisiana</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michigan</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohio</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alabama</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wisconsin</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texas</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*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>

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

Investigating Agency

Sheriff's Office 5 / 9%
FWC 51 / 91%

*56 fatal accidents
Boating Accidents Statistical Report

**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>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**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**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accident Type</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall in boat</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall on PWC</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire/explosion (fuel)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Struck underwater object</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Struck by skeg/prop</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capsizing</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collision with vessel</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flooding/swamping</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collision with fixed object</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Falls overboard</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

Operation at Time of Accident

- Wake/surf jumping: 1
- Docked/moored: 1
- Changing speed: 1
- Changing direction: 1
- Launching/loading: 2
- At anchor: 2
- Other: 4
- Rowing/paddling: 5
- Drifting: 11
- Cruising: 34

*62 vessels involved in 56 fatal accidents with 59 victims

Accident Site Location

- Port/harbor: 1
- Inlet/pass: 1
- Marsh/swamp: 2
- Ocean/gulf: 6
- Canal/cut: 7
- River/creek: 12
- Bay/sound: 13
- Lake/pond: 14

Restricted Area Accidents

- Manatee slow speed: 1
- Idle speed: 1
- MPH limit: 2
- Slow speed: 2
- Other: 10

*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%

Vessel Fuel & Hull Type

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

Vessel Propulsion, Length & Type

- Propeller: 45
- Water jet: 7
- Manual: 9
- Air Thrust: 1

- < 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

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

*59 total fatalities involving 62 vessels
2018 Fatality Data

Primary Cause of Death

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

Operator Gender

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

Operator Age (In Years)

- 51+ years: 35 / 56%
- 36 - 50: 16 / 26%
- 22 - 35: 8 / 13%
- 17 - 21: 1 / 2%
- Less than 17: 2 / 3%

Operator Experience (In Hours)

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

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

*62 operators

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

*62 operators
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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Range</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 17</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 - 21</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22-35</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36-50</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51+</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*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

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

*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*