2019 Boating Accident Statistical Report

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
Division of Law Enforcement
www.MyFWC.com
Officer Britton Corbin graduated from Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission Academy Class 23 in June 2014. He was assigned to his childhood hometown of Okaloosa County, where he continues to serve as a patrol officer.

Officer Corbin dedicates his energy to ensuring the safety of the public and the conservation of Florida’s natural resources. He views every day on patrol as an outreach opportunity, making sure he communicates with the public while displaying professionalism, honesty, and integrity. He engages young people with a smile and understands the importance of leaving them with a positive experience from their encounter with an FWC officer. Britton participates in volunteer and educational opportunities in the community. Recently he attended an event for the Destin Beach Safety Junior Lifeguards at Henderson Beach State Park. He discussed the importance of conservation, boating safety, PFD wear, and the responsibilities of being an FWC officer.

Officer Corbin exemplifies the meaning of leadership by example. His work ethic reveals his overall attitude, which is positive and contagious. He helps without being asked, accomplishes the goals he sets for himself and helps others achieve success and greatness. Britton distinguishes himself from others by seeking and accepting challenges through new learning experiences, career development courses and on-duty experience. This benefits the state, the agency, Floridians and visitors by providing a safer place for the boating public, fishermen and hunters.

Officer Corbin played a pivotal role with the success of Operation Hornet’s Nest, a concentrated BUI enforcement detail at Crab Island. This very popular shallow body of water in Destin attracts thousands of boats throughout the busy summer months. He has made 18 BUI arrests in the short span of the four-month summer boating season in the region. Officer Corbin implemented a detail, joining efforts with Fort Walton Beach Police regarding public safety concerns with anchored vessels at or near the Fort Walton Beach Landing. Operation Clean Landing focused on MSD compliance on area waterways.

2019 Boating Educator of the Year

Dan McIntyre has been a Coast Guard Auxiliarist since 2008. He is a veteran who served in the Coast Guard Reserve for 42 years, retiring in 2000 with the rank of Chief Warrant Officer, CW04. Dan was recalled to active duty in 2002 and served for another 2 1/2 years as a Performance Excellence Consultant at the U.S. Coast Guard Academy. He has had an exemplary record of service with the Auxiliary and has earned numerous awards and promotions as he has moved up the ranks. He was finally allowed to really retire in 2005.

In 2015 Dan found his calling when he became fully engaged in the area of Recreational Boating Safety Public Education. Motivated by the increasing number of drowning fatalities among children in Florida each year, he decided to seek a solution. He researched child water-related accidents and statistics and consulted with other Coast Guard Auxiliary and organizations. He finally adapted a syllabus that had been shared by Auxiliary Flotilla 14-1. Dan then envisioned teaching children how to be safe in the water, around boats and how to respond to water emergencies. His goal was to grow more responsible boating adults by developing a simple, yet impactful course that would instill basic water safety concepts in 9-year old students. That spring, Dan partnered with the Brevard County School Board to deliver a unique course to third grade elementary school students entitled "Boats N’ Kids”.

Since that humble beginning, the Brevard Schools have asked Dan to return every year with class sizes averaging 15 to 30 students. From 2015 to 2018, he served over 2,300 volunteer hours as a Recreational Boating Safety instructor or facilitator. Dan’s work has resulted in the delivery of 120 “Boats N’ Kids” classes at 31 Brevard County schools that have produced 1,959 third-grade graduates. Dan achieved this level of success while also delivering a full schedule of adult and youth “About Boating Safely” classes. During that same period, he taught or facilitated 52 adult classes at 14 schools resulting in the graduation of 619 adult, and 1,533 youth graduates under the age of 17.

As a result of Dan’s dedication and hard work, the “Boats’ N Kids” class safety initiative has become a 7th Coast Guard Auxiliary District priority after the 2019 National Executive Board Meeting. Dan is planning for implementation of a new program with instructor activities designed for 6 to 11-year old in groups. The program will focus on life jackets, dockside safety, boating safety, environmental stewardship, and basic emergencies, designed to be taught with a team of two or more instructors. In his current position as Assistant District Staff Officer for Public Education, Dan has embarked on an ambitious plan to export this class beyond Brevard to encompass schools throughout the Auxiliary 7th District Area of Responsibility which includes Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.
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.

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.

Resource Protection and Access:

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.

Boating and Waterways:

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 registered vessels, Florida leads the nation in that category. As a negative consequence of high vessel numbers and our mild climate, Florida also leads the nation in the number of boating fatalities 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 2019 Boating Accidents Statistical Report indicates there were 723 reportable boating accidents and 66 boating related fatalities in the calendar year. This total includes seven missing persons who at the end of 2019 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.
The 2019 Boating Accident 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 2019. With 961,266 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.

Officers Philippi and Angelis working the Gasparilla event in Tampa, January 2019. This event draws thousands of boaters annually. The FWC Gulf Sentry is pictured in the background.
2019 SUMMARY

BOATING ACCIDENT REVIEW
- Florida leads the nation with a total number of 961,266 registered vessels in 2019.
- There were 723 reportable boating accidents in 2019.

REPORTABLE BOATING ACCIDENT
- Collision with vessel was the leading type of accident with a total of 205 (28%).
- Towed watersport activities were involved in 9 accidents, resulting in 1 fatality and 12 injuries.
- Paddlecraft (canoes, kayaks, rowboats, paddleboards) were involved in 21 accidents resulting in 14 fatalities and 13 injuries.
- May was the month with the highest number of accidents (97).
- Monroe County reported the highest number of accidents and injuries (88 total accidents with seven fatalities and 57 injuries).

REPORTABLE BOATING FATALITIES
- 58 fatal accidents resulting in 65 fatalities.
- 40% of the fatal accidents resulted from falls overboard (23 accidents). Boaters falling overboard remains the leading type of boating fatality.
- The leading cause of death in fatal boating accidents was drowning with 43 fatalities (66%).
- October was the deadliest month in 2019 with 11 fatalities.
- Alcohol or drug-use is reported to have played a role in 32% boating fatalities.
- 91% (59) of the victims of fatal boating accidents were males.
- 68% (44) of the 65 operators involved in fatal accidents were age 36 or older.
- 67% (42) of all vessels involved in fatal accidents in 2019 were 21 feet in length or less.

REPORTABLE BOATING INJURIES
- There were 324 accidents that resulted in 453 injured persons. The rate of injury was 47 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 26% (186) of reportable boating accidents.
- Rented PWC represented 43% (105) of PWC involved in accidents.
- 47% (86) of PWC accidents involved a collision with another vessel.
- 36% of PWC accidents occurred in Miami-Dade (26), Monroe (21), and Pinellas (20) counties.
- 6 fatalities resulted from the 186 PWC accidents.
- 169 people were injured in PWC accidents.

BOATING EDUCATION STATISTICS
- FWC issued 54,472 Boating Safety Education ID Cards in 2019.
- 66% of the cards were issued to persons born on or after January 1, 1988.
- Of the 54,472 cards issued, 39,980 were to males, 14,479 were to females. 13 did not provide their gender. An additional 266 cards were printed for lost, damaged and information changes.
- 80% of the operators involved in fatal accidents had no formal boater education.

Boating accident statistics for 2019 were compiled on April 1, 2020. Reports received after that date were not included in the following data. In 2019, 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.
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Boating Accident Review
On August 10th, V1 was traveling North, the occupant was sitting in front of the console and observed V2 at anchor and that they were beginning to get close to it. According to the occupant he began to shout “there’s a boat” multiple times to alert the operator. When occupant noticed they still had not changed their course, he turned to face operator who was paying attention to his son sitting next to him on his left. The occupant then voluntarily jumped off V1 to avoid the impact. V1 struck V2 on its port side near the bow which caused the cap of V2 to separate and spin 180 degrees. V2 occupant was standing on the two captain’s chairs behind the helm and was assisting V2 operator re-wire the stern light above the vessels T-top. After the impact she fell off the chairs onto the vessel’s port side and hit her forehead on an unknown object. V2 operator was standing directly behind the helm and was thrown toward the starboard side of his vessel impacting with the console and falling overboard.
2019 Boating Accident Review

Number of Accidents - Top Ten States 2018 (Recreational)

- Florida: 607
- California: 322
- Texas: 204
- South Carolina: 182
- New York: 143
- North Carolina: 130
- Arizona: 129
- Ohio: 126
- Maryland: 122
- Missouri: 122

*Based on $2,000 damage threshold
Source: U.S. Coast Guard Boating Safety Division, 2019 data not available at time of publishing

Registered Vessels - Top Ten States 2018 (Recreational)

- Florida: 925,141
- California: 819,317
- Michigan: 795,374
- Minnesota: 819,317
- Texas: 670,102
- Wisconsin: 614,750
- Ohio: 573,050
- South Carolina: 551,477
- New York: 444,103
- North Carolina: 359,361

*Totals represent number of recreationally registered vessels in 2018
Source: U.S. Coast Guard Boating Safety Division
2019 Boating Accident Review

2015 - 2019 Florida Reportable Accidents

2015-2019 Total Florida Registered Vessels

*Totals represent all currently registered vessels for that year

Source: Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (DHSMV)
Reportable Boating Accidents
On 8/10/2019, A red 25-foot-Zodiac vessel (V2), with one occupant, was traveling southbound in the Atlantic Intercoastal Waterway marked channel near channel marker 140 when it was stuck by a 19-foot McKee Craft center console (V1) with two occupants on board. V1 was attempting to cross the ICW channel to enter a canal across from the Riverside Cafe when V1’s operator failed to keep a proper lookout and clear the area before making a turn to starboard and striking V2. Both occupants of V1 were ejected from the vessel as a result of the collision. Only minor injuries were reported by V1’s operator. Contributing factors to the collision are improper lookout, violation of navigation rules, and alcohol.
## 2019 Reportable Boating Accidents

<table>
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<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Recreational Vessels</th>
<th>Total Vessels</th>
<th>Reportable Accidents</th>
<th>Fatalities</th>
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*Accident Rate = # of Registered Vessels / # of Accidents

Top ten counties in bold print. Fields that equaled zero intentionally left blank.
## 2019 Reportable Boating Accidents

### 2019 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>Accident Rate*</th>
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*Accident Rate = # of Registered Vessels / # of Accidents

Those counties in bold print represent the top ten counties

Department of Highways Safety and Motor Vehicles (DHSMV) numbers represent registrations issued at main office instead of at the county level

Fields that equaled zero intentionally left blank.
2019 Reportable Boating Accidents

Top Ten Counties

- Monroe: 88
- Miami-Dade: 73
- Palm Beach: 65
- Lee: 47
- Pinellas: 46
- Broward: 30
- Martin: 30
- Okaloosa: 23
- Collier: 21
- Citrus: 20

Investigating Agency

- Sheriff: 49, 7%
- Police: 29, 4%
- Self-Report: 2, Less than 1%
- FWC: 643, 90%

Accidents by Month

- Jan: 40
- Feb: 53
- Mar: 71
- Apr: 77
- May: 97
- Jun: 80
- Jul: 81
- Aug: 53
- Sep: 46
- Oct: 51
- Nov: 36
- Dec: 38

*723 total accidents
2019 REPORTABLE BOATING ACCIDENTS

TIME OF DAY

0:00-1:59 am: 27
2:00-3:59 am: 7
4:00-5:59 am: 5
6:00-7:59 am: 10
8:00-9:59 am: 34
10:00-11:59 am: 72
12:00-1:59 pm: 105
2:00-3:59 pm: 141
4:00-5:59 pm: 164
6:00-7:59 pm: 83
8:00-9:59 pm: 50
10:00-11:59 pm: 25

*723 total accidents

ACCIDENT SITE LOCATION

Bay/sound: 167
Ocean/gulf: 140
River/creek: 120
Canal/cut: 108
Inlet/pass: 67
Lake/pond: 59
Port/harbor: 48
Marsh/swamp: 12
Other: 2

REstricted AREA ACCIDENTS

Other: 104
Slow speed: 60
Idle speed: 48
MPH limit: 30
Manatee slow speed: 9
Manatee idle speed: 7

*258 total accidents in restricted areas
"Other" may include areas where the regulation or local ordinance was not specified.
2019 Reportable Boating Accidents

Primary Type of Accident

- Collision with vessel: 205
- Collision with fixed object: 122
- Falls overboard: 61
- Flooding/swamping: 60
- Grounding: 50
- Capsizing: 41
- Other: 35
- Struck underwater object: 30
- Fall on PWC: 24
- Fall in boat: 21
- Vessel wake damage: 19
- Fire/explosion (fuel): 16
- Struck by skeg/prop: 10
- Fire/explosion (non-fuel): 10
- Collision floating object/person: 6
- Skier mishap/fall: 4
- Skier hit object: 4
- Sinking: 3
- Starting engine: 1
- Struck by boat (person): 1

*723 accidents involving 1,024 vessels (Based on first harmful event as determined by the state reviewing authority)

Secondary Type of Accident

- Falls overboard: 115
- Fall in boat: 64
- Struck by boat (person): 53
- Capsizing: 44
- Collision with fixed object: 41
- Other: 27
- Grounding: 23
- Sinking: 20
- Flooding/swamping: 17
- Struck by skeg/prop: 12
- Fall on PWC: 8
- Collision with vessel: 8
- Fire/explosion (fuel): 4
- Starting engine: 1
- Struck underwater object: 1
- Fire/explosion (non-fuel): 1

*284 of the 723 accidents did not have a secondary type of accident
2019 Reportable Boating Accidents

Operation at Time of Accident

- Cruising: 479
- Docked (moored): 138
- Changing direction: 91
- Drifting: 61
- Changing speed: 56
- Docking/undocking: 56
- At anchor: 52
- Other: 32
- Rowing/paddling: 16
- Unknown: 12
- Wake/surf jumping: 10
- Towing a boat: 8
- Launching/loading: 6
- Being towed: 5
- Sailing: 2

*1,024 vessels

Activity at Time of Accident

- Recreational cruising: 641
- No activity (docked, anchored): 134
- Recreational fishing: 88
- Other: 82
- Commercial purpose: 50
- Swimming/snorkling: 9
- Fueling: 5
- Starting engine: 5
- Boat pulling a tube: 4
- Making repairs: 4
- Racing (sanctioned): 1
- Hunting: 1

*1,024 vessels
2019 Reportable Boating Accidents

Vessel Count in Reportable Accidents

TOTAL NUMBER OF ACCIDENTS
*723 total accidents involving 1,024 vessels

FATAL ACCIDENTS
*65 fatal accidents involving 70 vessels

PERSONAL WATERCRAFT ACCIDENTS
*186 personal watercraft accidents involving 246 PWC

Vessel Type, Length & Propulsion

- Rowboat (Jon): 3
- Sail (only): 3
- Mini jet boat: 5
- Houseboat: 6
- Canoe/kayak: 16
- Pontoon boat: 25
- Airboat: 27
- Other: 33
- Sail (aux power): 37
- Cabin motorboat: 230
- Personal watercraft: 246
- Open motorboat: 393
- No info: 17
- < 12 Feet: 250
- 12 - 16 Feet: 89
- 17 - 21 Feet: 178
- 22 - 26 Feet: 151
- 27 - 40 Feet: 172
- 41 - 65 Feet: 122
- 66+ Feet: 45

- Sail: 20
- Manual: 23
- Air thrust: 27
- Water jet: 253
- Propeller: 701

*723 accidents involving 1,024 vessels
2019 Reportable Boating Accidents

Vessel Fuel & Hull Type

Vessel & Property Damage Figures (in millions)

Vessel Ownership

*723 accidents involving 1,024 vessels
2019 Reportable Boating Accidents

Primary Cause Assessed by Reviewing Authority

- No proper look-out/inattention: 199
- Operator inexperience: 88
- Excessive speed: 64
- Other: 59
- Machinery failure: 54
- Careless/reckless operation: 36
- Alcohol use: 35
- Weather: 30
- Hazardous water: 26
- Equipment failure: 17
- Skier/occupant behavior: 17
- Hull failure: 16
- Congested waters: 14
- Violation of Nav Rule: 13
- Vision obstructed: 11
- Sharp turn: 8
- Off throttle steering-jet: 7
- Improper anchoring: 6
- Improper loading: 6
- Overloading: 5
- Standing/sitting on gunwale, bow or transom: 5
- Failure to vent fumes: 3
- Ignition of fuel vapor: 3
- Dam or lock: 1

Operator Age

- No Info: 25 / 3%
- Less than 17: 22 / 2%
- 17 - 21: 68 / 8%
- 22 - 35: 233 / 26%
- 36 - 50: 204 / 23%
- 51+: 346 / 38%

Operator Experience (Hours)

- No info: 106 / 12%
- Less than 10 Hours: 126 / 14%
- 10 - 100 Hours: 468 / 52%
- 100+ Hours: 198 / 22%

Operator Gender

- Male: 768 / 85%
- Female: 97 / 11%

*723 accidents involving 898 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
### 2019 Reportable Boating Accidents

#### Operator/Occupant Swimming Ability

- **Could not swim**: 669 / 36%
- **Could swim**: 1,144 / 61%
- **No info**: 54 / 3%

*1,867 total occupants and operators

#### Operator/Occupant PFD Use

- **Wearing PFD**: 520 / 28%
- **Not wearing PFD**: 23 / 1%
- **No info**: 1,324 / 71%

#### Operator by Age with No Boater Education

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<th>22-35</th>
<th>36-50</th>
<th>51+</th>
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<td>29</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>108</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>172</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>166</td>
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*898 operators, 23 were unknown due to hit and run accidents
# 2019 Reportable Boating Accidents

## PFD Wear by Age

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<td>6–16</td>
<td>82</td>
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<tr>
<td>&lt;5</td>
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</table>

Age unknown: 4

*540 of 1,867 operators/occupants were wearing a PFD at time of the accident. One person did not provide an age.

## Victim Statistics

- **Fatal**: 59 / 3%
- **Injured**: 302 / 17%
- **Uninjured**: 1,421 / 80%
- **Total**: 1,867 persons involved in vessel accidents

*1,867 persons involved in vessel accidents, 1,867 operators/occupants and 4 swimmers

## State Waters vs. Offshore Waters (Accidents)

- **State waters**: 686 / 95%
- **Offshore**: 37 / 5%

*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.

## Victim Statistics (Ejected)

- **Ejected**: 403 / 22%
- **Not ejected**: 1,464 / 78%

*1,867 total operators and occupants
Boating Fatalities
On Friday, March 8, 2019, at approximately 7:00 pm, a 21-foot-vessel was operating on a plane in Hendry Creek. While proceeding upstream, the 52-year-old operator failed to successfully navigate a turn causing the vessel to run aground and collide with several mangrove trees. The operator was ejected without wearing a personal flotation device (PFD) and later recovered floating face down in the water. He was administered CPR by Lee County Sheriff’s Office (LCSO) and transported to Health Park Hospital by EMS, where he subsequently died from the extent of his injuries. According to the Medical Examiner’s Office, the preliminary cause of death was drowning. Conditions that contributed to his death were blunt trauma of the head and neck. Alcohol was a contributing factor in this accident, the operator had an unlawful blood alcohol level. Toxicology confirmed elevated ethanol concentrations (0.170 g/100 ml).
### 2019 Boating Fatalities

#### 2018 Fatalities - Top Ten States

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*2019 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

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<th>Year</th>
<th>Registered vessels</th>
<th>Fatality rate</th>
<th>Number of fatalities</th>
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<tr>
<td>2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>915,713</td>
<td>6</td>
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</table>

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

#### Investigating Agency

- **Sheriff’s Office**: 2 / 3%
- **FWC**: 56 / 97%

*58 fatal accidents*
2019 Boating Fatalities

Accidents By Month

Time of Day

Accident Types

*58 fatal accidents involving 65 fatalities
Fatality data includes four missing persons where their disappearance is associated with a boating accident

*58 fatal accidents involving 65 fatalities (Based on first harmful event)
2019 Boating Fatalities

Operation at Time of Accident

- Cruising: 28
- Rowing/paddling: 10
- Drifting: 10
- Other: 7
- Changing direction: 2
- At anchor: 2
- Changing speed: 1
- Docking/undocking: 1
- Docked/moored: 1
- Launching/loading: 1

*63 vessels involved in 58 fatal accidents with 65 victims

Accident Site Location

- Ocean/gulf: 15
- River/creek: 13
- Lake/pond: 12
- Bay/sound: 11
- Canal/cut: 4
- Port/harbor: 3

Restricted Area Accidents

- Other: 11
- Slow speed: 4
- Manatee slow speed: 1
- Idle speed: 1
- MPH limit: 1

*18 of 58 fatal accidents occurred in restricted areas. “Other” may include areas where the regulation or local ordinance was not specified.
2019 Boating Fatalities

Vessel Ownership

- Rented: 3 / 5%
- Borrowed (not in household): 9 / 14%
- Owned: 51 / 81%

Vessel Fuel & Hull Type

- Gasoline: 44
- None: 14
- Diesel: 3
- Electric: 2
- Fiberglass: 47
- Aluminum: 8
- Rubber/vinyl: 5
- Other: 2
- Steel: 1

Vessel Propulsion, Length & Type

- Propeller: 43
- Manual: 14
- Water jet: 6
- < 12 Feet: 14
- 12 - 16 Feet: 14
- 17 - 21 Feet: 14
- 22 - 26 Feet: 10
- 27 - 40 Feet: 10
- 41 - 65 Feet: 1
- 66+ Feet: 1
- Open motorboat: 34
- Canoe/kayak: 8
- Personal watercraft: 6
- Other: 5
- Cabin motorboat: 5
- Rowboat (Jon): 2
- Pontoon: 2
- Sail (aux): 1

*58 total fatal accidents involving 63 vessels
2019 Boating Fatalities

**Primary Cause of Death**

- Drowning: 43 / 66%
- Trauma: 12 / 19%
- Other: 10 / 15%

*65 fatalities, “Other” category includes 6 missing where cause of death is unknown

**Operator Gender**

- Male: 64 / 98%
- Female: 1 / 2%

*65 operators

**Operator Age (in years)**

- 51 + years: 32 / 49%
- 36 - 50: 12 / 18%
- 22 - 35: 16 / 25%
- 17 - 21: 4 / 6%
- Less than 17: 1 / 2%

**Operator Experience (in hours)**

- Over 100: 33 / 64.5%
- 10 - 100: Under 10 9 / 14%
- 12 / 14.5%
- 10 / 17%
2019 Boating Fatalities

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: 13 / 20%
- No boater education: 52 / 80%

Operators by Age Without Formal Boater Education

- Less than 17: 1
- 17 - 21: 4
- 22 - 35: 8
- 36 - 50: 9
- 51+: 30

Victim Statistics (Ejected)

- Not ejected: 32 / 49%
- Ejected: 33 / 51%

Victim Statistics (Wearing PFD)

- Wearing PFD: 8 / 12%
- Not wearing PFD: 57 / 88%

Victim Statistics (Swimming Ability)

- Cannot swim: 28 / 43%
- Can swim: 37 / 57%

*52 operators did not have any formal boater education

*58 fatal accidents involving 65 victims
2019 Boating Fatalities

Victim Residency

- Non resident: 8 / 12%
- Florida resident: 57 / 88%

Victim Gender

- Male: 59 / 91%
- Female: 6 / 9%

Victim Age

- Less than 6: 2 / 3%
- 6-16: 17 / 21%
- 17-21: 3 / 5%
- 22-35: 14 / 21%
- 36-50: 16 / 25%
- 51+: 28 / 43%

Alcohol/Drug Related Accidents

- Alcohol/drug use: 13 / 22%
- Other causes: 45 / 78%

Alcohol/Drug Related Victims

- Alcohol/drug use: 21 / 32%
- Other causes: 44 / 68%

*58 accidents involving 65 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)
2019 Boating Fatalities

Primary Cause of Accident by Reviewing Authority

- Other: 27
- Alcohol use: 10
- No proper look-out/inattention: 5
- Machinery failure: 3
- Operator inexperience: 2
- Excessive speed: 2
- Skier or occupant behavior: 2
- Standing on gunwale, bow or transom: 2
- Hull failure: 2
- Sharp turn: 1
- Overloading: 1
- Weather: 1

*58 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
Boating Injuries photo detail

Cover Photo: (Courtesy of FWC)

V-1 was anchored approximately nine miles E of the inlet at Montgomery Reef. V-2 was traveling at planning speed and collided with V-1. Operator of V2 said that he was putting the coordinates in his G.P.S to go to the south side of Montgomery Reef. When he looked up, he saw that he was heading toward a vessel that was in his direct path of travel. He made a sharp left turn crashing into the starboard side of V-1. He said that a young kid that was on V-1 either jumped or was ejected into the water but was able to swim back to the boat. Operator said that after he crashed into V-1, he went back to check on the other people. He exchanged information and headed back home because of the damage to his vessel.
2019 Boating Injuries

Total Injuries Recorded 2015-2019

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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Registered Vessels</th>
<th>Injury Rate</th>
<th>Number of Injuries</th>
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<td>2017</td>
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<td>2016</td>
<td>931,450</td>
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<td>421</td>
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<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>915,713</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>438</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

Types of Injury

- Amputation: 1
- Shock: 3
- Spinal injury: 5
- Hypothermia: 7
- Neck injury: 8
- Teeth and jaw: 9
- Sprain/strains: 12
- Burns: 16
- Back injury: 22
- Not specified: 22
- Internal injuries: 23
- Head injury: 43
- Broken bone(s): 71
- Contusions: 88
- Lacerations: 123

*324 accidents involving 453 injuries
2019 Boating Injuries

On Sunday, May 13, 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

- Operators: 194 / 43%
- Occupants: 255 / 56%
- Swimmers: 4 / 1%

*324 accidents involving 453 injured

Victim Statistics

- Could swim: 312 / 69%
- Could not swim: 141 / 31%

Victim Statistics

- Not wearing PFD: 254 / 56%
- Wearing PFD: 199 / 44%
2019 Boating Injuries

Victim Statistics (Ejected)

Not Ejected: 251
Ejected: 202

Victim Statistics (Alcohol/Drug Use)

None: 432 (95%)
Alcohol/Drug: 21 (5%)

Victim Statistics (Age)

<6: 4
6-16: 17 (21%)
17-21: 46
22-35: 149
36-50: 77
51+: 142

Injury Action

Impact with boat: 195
Impact with fixed object: 98
Other: 93
Struck by boat: 29
Impact with water: 18
Struck by skeg/prop: 18
Impact with floating object/person: 2

Page 25
Personal Watercraft Accidents
On March 10, a small group of family and friends took a vessel and a PWC out for a day of fun in Sarasota Bay. The group headed to a local waterside restaurant for dinner. Once dinner was finished the group was going to head back to the boat ramp. A 26-year-old female in the group operated the PWC for the return trip. While traveling back to the ramp the operator was playing around by changing directions to jump wakes and waves. The group on the vessel had to turn around to get the PWC to stop and head toward the ramp. On the second attempt to redirect the vessel had the PWC in front of them to keep an eye on her. The female operator made a sharp turn on the PWC and impacted the vessel on the right side. The PWC operator was ejected upon impact. She was checked out at a local hospital for possible concussion. The PWC operator had been consuming alcohol during the day and considered to be a contributing factor in the incident.
# 2019 Personal Watercraft Accidents

## 2019 Personal Watercraft Registration and Accidents by County

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

Top ten counties for PWC accidents in bold print. Fields that equaled zero intentionally left blank.
## 2019 PERSONAL WATERCRAFT ACCIDENTS

### 2019 PERSONAL WATERCRAFT REGISTRATION AND ACCIDENTS BY COUNTY

<table>
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<tr>
<th>County</th>
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<th>Rental</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>PWC Accidents</th>
<th>PWC Fatalities</th>
<th>PWC Injuries</th>
<th>Property Damage</th>
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</table>

**TOTAL** 134,830 3,583 138,440 186 6 169 $589,687 1:745

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

Top ten counties for PWC boating accidents in bold print

Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (DHSMV) represent registrations issued at the main office instead of at county level

Fields that equaled zero intentionally left blank.
2019 Personal Watercraft Accidents

Total Registered PWC

- PWC: 138,640 (14%)
- Other vessels: 822,626 (86%)

PWC Ownership by Registration

- PWC (private): 135,057 (97%)
- PWC (rental): 3,583 (3%)

Comparison of PWC to Vessels Involved in Accidents

- Private vessels: 744 (73%)
- Rented vessels: 34 (3%)
- PWC (rental): 105 (10%)
- PWC (private): 141 (14%)

Accidents 2015-2019

- 2015: 161
- 2016: 158
- 2017: 151
- 2018: 120
- 2019: 186

Top Ten Counties

- Miami-Dade: 26
- Monroe: 21
- Pinellas: 20
- Palm Beach: 11
- Lee: 10
- Okaloosa: 10
- Sarasota: 10
- Broward: 7
- Duval: 6
- Bay: 5

*1,024 vessels involved in accidents
2019 PERSONAL WATERCRAFT ACCIDENTS

ACCIDENT SITE LOCATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bay/sound</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ocean/gulf</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lake/pond</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inlet/pass</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>River/creek</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canal/cut</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Port/harbor</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

RESTRICTED AREA ACCIDENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPH limit</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slow speed</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manatee</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idle speed</td>
<td>5</td>
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</table>

OPERATION AT TIME OF ACCIDENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Number</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cruising</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changing direction</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changing speed</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drifting</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wake/surf jumping</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Docked (moored)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Docking/undocking</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Towing a boat</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being towed</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*52 PWC accidents occurred within a restricted area
"Other" may include areas where the regulation or local ordinance was not specified.

*246 PWC involved in 186 accidents
2019 Personal Watercraft Accidents

Primary Type of Accident

- Collision with vessel: 86
- Fall on PWC: 24
- Collision with fixed object: 24
- Falls overboard: 18
- Grounding: 12
- Other: 7
- Capsizing: 3
- Struck underwater object: 3
- Collision with floating object/person: 2
- Skier mishap/fall: 2
- Skier hit object: 2
- Fire/explosion (fuel): 1
- Flooding (swamping): 1
- Struck by boat (person): 1

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

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, where he later succumbed to his injuries.

Primary Cause Assessed by Reviewing Authority

- No proper look-out/inattention: 61
- Operator inexperience: 36
- Careless/reckless operation: 28
- Excessive speed: 25
- Off throttle steering-jet: 7
- Other: 4
- Skier or occupant behavior: 4
- Alcohol use: 4
- Machinery failure: 3
- Vision obstructed: 3
- Sharp turn: 3
- Hazardous water: 2
- Violation of nav rule: 2
- Improper anchoring: 1
- Weather: 1
- Ignition of fuel vapor: 1
- Hull failure: 1

PWC Ownership

- PWC (rented): 105 / 43%
- PWC (borrowed): 36 / 14%
- PWC (owner household): 105 / 43%
**2019 Personal Watercraft Accidents**

**Operator Education**

- Unknown: 6 / 2%
- No boater education: 141 / 58%
- Boater education: 97 / 40%

*186 PWC accidents involving 246 PWC and 244 operators.
Operator information for 6 PWC are unknown due to hit and run accidents or no operators at time of accident.

**Operators by Age Without Boater Education**

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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-16</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td>17-21</td>
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<td>22-35</td>
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<td>37</td>
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<td>36-50</td>
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<td>51+</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>51</td>
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</table>

**Operator Age**

- Unknown: 6 / 3%
- Less than 17: 14 / 6%
- 17-21: 49 / 20%
- 22-35: 103 / 42%
- 36-50: 51+ 30 / 12%
- 36-50: 42 / 17%

**Operator Experience (Hours)**

- Unknown: 28 / 11%
- <10: 100 / 41%
- 10-100: 73 / 30%
- 100+: 45 / 18%
2019 Personal Watercraft Accidents

Primary Injury Types

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Injury Type</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2015</th>
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<tr>
<td>Lacerations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contusions</td>
<td></td>
<td>39</td>
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<tr>
<td>Broken bones</td>
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<td>33</td>
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<tr>
<td>Head injury</td>
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<td></td>
<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Internal injury</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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<td>Back injury</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sprain/strain</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teeth and jaw</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Neck injury</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spinal injury</td>
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<td>Burns</td>
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<td>Shock</td>
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</table>

*186 accidents involving 169 injured persons

Injuries 2015-2019

Comparisons of PWC Injuries

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<th>Year</th>
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<td>2017</td>
<td>141</td>
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<td>2016</td>
<td>132</td>
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<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PWC injuries 169 / 37%
Other vessel injuries 284 / 63%

*453 injuries
2019 Personal Watercraft Accidents

Comparisons of PWC Fatalities

Other vessel fatalities: 59 / 91%
PWC fatalities: 6 / 9%

*65 Fatalities

Fatalities 2015-2019

2015: 4
2016: 6
2017: 11
2018: 7
2019: 6

Investigating Agency

Police Department: 5 / 3%
Sheriff’s Office: 19 / 10%
FWC: 162 / 87%

*186 PWC accidents

Accidents by Month

Jan: 1
Feb: 1
Mar: 6
Apr: 9
May: 13
Jun: 18
Jul: 26
Aug: 20
Sep: 6
Oct: 8
Nov: 6
Dec: 6

*186 PWC accidents
Officer Ronald Washington teaching boating safety and other boat handling techniques.

Officers Arbogast and Thurkettle attended the outreach at the Boys and Girls Club in Naples. They brought a vessel for viewing and hung out with the kids after their presentation.
2019 Boating Education Statistics

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

- Miami-Dade: 3,382
- Palm Beach: 2,549
- Broward: 2,492
- Hillsborough: 2,426
- Pinellas: 2,082
- Lee: 1,673
- Orange: 1,644
- Okaloosa: 1,480
- Brevard: 1,402
- Duval: 1,311

*54,472 cards issued in calendar year 2019 (does not include temporary certificates)
9,626 cards were issued to out-of-state residents

Boating Safety Education
I.D. Card Distribution by Age

- 0-16: 8,958
- 17-21: 10,751
- 22-35: 17,862
- 36-50: 6,866
- 51 and up: 10,000
- No age info*: 35

*54,472 new cards issued. An additional 266 cards issued as reprints for lost, damaged and change of information

I.D. Card Distribution by Gender

- Male: 39,980 / 73%
- Female: 14,479 / 27%
- Unknown: 13 / Less than 1%

*No data for ages 6-10 or 22-24.
2019 Boating Education Statistics

Operators Involved in Accidents-Education/Age

- **No info.** 23 / 3%
- **No boater education** 512 / 57%
- **Boater education** 363 / 40%

*898 operators

- Age unknown
- Less than 17
- 17 - 21
- 22 - 35
- 36 - 50

*898 operators, two did not provide date of birth
23 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

- **Boater education** 13 / 20%
- **No boater education** 52 / 80%

*65 operators

Less than 17
- 17 - 21
- 22 - 35
- 36 - 50
- 51 +
Violation Summary
Violation Summary photo detail

Cover Photos: (Courtesy of FWC)

Vessel grounded on the bicycle path of the Courtney Campbell Causeway. The operator stated he was texting on his phone while underway, the operator was arrested for Boating Under the Influence (BUI) after the responding officer noticed a few indicators during their interaction.
# 2019 Boating Violation Summary

## 2019 Uniform Boating Citation Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Citation</th>
<th>2019 FWC</th>
<th>2019 Other</th>
<th>2018 FWC</th>
<th>2018 Other</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aids to Navigation and Regulatory Markers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Uniform waterway markers for safety and navigation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mooring to or damaging markers or buoys</td>
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<td>38</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alcohol and Drugs</td>
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<td>Operation of a vessel under the influence of alcohol</td>
<td>617</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>536</td>
<td>29</td>
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<tr>
<td>Operation of a vessel while impaired</td>
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<tr>
<td>Boating Restricted Areas</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manatee protection rules</td>
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<tr>
<td>Public safety rules</td>
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<td>Local ordinances</td>
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<td>2,936</td>
<td>2,139</td>
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<td>Boating Safety Education</td>
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<td>Boating safety education I.D. cards</td>
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<td>1,134</td>
<td>555</td>
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<td>Livery Operations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rental without proper safety equipment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rental without boater education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rental to persons under 18 years of age</td>
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<td>76</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>27</td>
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<td>Negligent Operation of a Vessel</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reckless operation of a vessel</td>
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<tr>
<td>Careless operation of a vessel</td>
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<tr>
<td>Navigation rule violation resulting in an accident</td>
<td>496</td>
<td>252</td>
<td>445</td>
<td>128</td>
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<tr>
<td>Navigation rule violation not resulting in an accident</td>
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<tr>
<td>Failure to report an accident</td>
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<td>Personal Watercraft</td>
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<tr>
<td>Personal watercraft regulations</td>
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<td>128</td>
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<tr>
<td>Skiing and Diving</td>
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<tr>
<td>Skiing, aquaplaning and parasailing violations</td>
<td>335</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>373</td>
<td>49</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dive flag violations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registration and Numbering</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operation of unregistered/unnumbered vessels</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application, certificate, number or decal violation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special manufacturer and dealer numbers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violation relating to vessel titling</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violation relating to Hull Identification Numbers</td>
<td>3,251</td>
<td>1,381</td>
<td>2,278</td>
<td>1,113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety Equipment and Regulations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment and lighting requirements</td>
<td>4,825</td>
<td>747</td>
<td>3,920</td>
<td>761</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUB TOTAL</td>
<td>14,036</td>
<td>6,810</td>
<td>10,769</td>
<td>6,232</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL VIOLATIONS RECORDED</td>
<td>20,846</td>
<td>17,001</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A thorough review of the annual boating accident statistics has revealed that 61% of the reportable boating accidents during the 2019 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 2019

Legend

- Fatal Accident (29)
- Accident with Injury (191)
- Accident without Injury (223)
Known Locations of Accidents in Monroe County during 2019

Legend

- Fatal Accident (6)
- Accident with Injury (39)
- Accident without Injury (43)
1. Monroe County

**Type of Vessel**

- Sail (only): 1
- Pontoon boat: 1
- Canoe/kayak: 2
- Other: 3
- Sail (aux power): 15
- Cabin motorboat: 18
- Personal watercraft: 25
- Open motorboat: 51

**Vessel Length (in Feet)**

- Unknown: 1
- 66+: 3
- 41-65: 19
- 27-40: 22
- 22-26: 22
- 17-21: 15
- 12-16: 5
- Less than 12: 29

**Primary Cause of Accident**

- Unknown: 29
- Propr. look/assess/maintain: 15
- Over-speed: 8
- Other: 5
- Excessive speed: 4
- Accelerating/decelerating: 4
- Vibration of machinery, controls: 3
- Improper load: 3
- Equipment failure: 2
- Coll. with fixed object: 2
- Collision with vessel: 2
- Vision/obs.: 2
- Ignition of fuel vapor: 2
- Shorted/misfired: 1
- Gearshift/other: 1
- Driver's error: 1

- Underwater/struck: 6
- Coll. with fixed, normally not floating object: 6
- Coll. with floating object: 6
- Coll. with vessel: 6
- Collision with fixed object: 6
- Coll. with vessel: 6
-其它: 6

**Primary Type of Accident**

- Unknown: 20
- Grounded: 18
- Falls overboard: 9
- Fall in water: 9
- Coll. with fixed object: 6
- Coll. with vessel: 6
- Gearshift/other: 6
- Driver's error: 6
- Other: 6
- Stuck by anchor/prop: 6
- Stuck underwater/struck: 6
Known Locations of Accidents in Miami-Dade County during 2019

**Legend**
- Fatal Accident (2)
- Accident with Injury (31)
- Accident without Injury (40)
2. MIAMI-DADE COUNTY

**TYPE OF VESSEL**

- Other: 1
- Airboat: 1
- Pontoon boat: 1
- Mini jet boat: 2
- Houseboat: 3
- Personal watercraft: 35
- Open motorboat: 35
- Cabin motorboat: 45

**VESSEL LENGTH (IN FEET)**

- Less than 12: 35
- 12 - 16: 18
- 17 - 21: 18
- 22 - 26: 21
- 27 - 40: 19
- 41 - 65: 18
- 66+: 0

**PRIMARY CAUSE OF ACCIDENT**

- Weather: 20
- Operator error: 15
- Hull failure: 10
- Equipment failure: 10
- Buried object: 5
- Improper anchor: 4
- Improper wake: 3
- Improper lookout: 2
- Intoxication: 2
- Wet deck: 2
- Inattention: 1
- Other: 1

**PRIMARY TYPE OF ACCIDENT**

- Collision with vessel: 29
- Collision with fixed object: 19
- Fall into water: 18
- Intoxication: 17
- Fall from vessel: 13
- Other: 12
- Vessel capsized: 12
- Fall on or into water: 8
- Collision with & fixed object: 5
- Collision with & vessel: 2
Known Locations of Accidents in Palm Beach County during 2019

**Legend**
- Fatal Accident (1)
- Accident with Injury (25)
- Accident without Injury (39)

Map document created by FWC DLE GIS
3. Palm Beach County

**Type of Vessel**

- Airboat: 1
- Other: 5
- Sail (aux power): 6
- Personal watercraft: 15
- Cabin motorboat: 36
- Open motorboat: 38

**Vessel Length (in Feet)**

- Unknown: 4
- 66+: 2
- 41 - 65: 28
- 27 - 40: 19
- 22 - 26: 15
- 17 - 21: 13
- 12 - 16: 4
- Less than 12: 16

**Primary Cause of Accident**

- Collision with vessel: 20
- Vessel sank: 12
- Other: 8
- Falling off boat: 5
- Vessel knocked over: 3
- Struck by watercraft: 3
- Capsizing: 2
- Struck by floating object: 1
- Other: 1

**Primary Type of Accident**

- Collision with vessel: 19
- Vessel sank: 17
- Other: 8
- Falling off boat: 4
- Vessel knocked over: 3
- Struck by watercraft: 3
- Capsizing: 2
- Struck by floating object: 2
- Other: 1
Known Locations of Accidents in Lee County during 2019

**Legend**
- Fatal Accident (9)
- Accident with Injury (20)
- Accident without Injury (18)

Map document created by FWC DLE GIS
4. Lee County

Type of Vessel

Vessel Length (in feet)

Primary Cause of Accident

Primary Type of Accident
Known Locations of Accidents in Pinellas County during 2019

**Legend**

- Red: Fatal Accident (3)
- Blue: Accident with Injury (20)
- Green: Accident without Injury (23)
5. PINELLAS COUNTY

**Type of Vessel**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vessel Type</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sail (aux power)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Houseboat</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Airboat</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canoe/kayak</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cabin motorboat</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open motorboat</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal watercraft</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Vessel Length (in feet)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Length Range</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-65</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27-40</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22-26</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17-21</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12-16</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 12</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Primary Cause of Accident**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cause</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Collision with vessel</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flooding (waterproof)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Injury to self</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothermia</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improper loading</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overloading</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improper loading</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overloading</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collisions with vessel</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collisions with fixed object</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall overboard</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire/explosion (fuel)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grounding</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capping</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Primary Type of Accident**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Accident</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Collision with vessel</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flooding (waterproof)</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Injury to self</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothermia</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improper loading</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Overloading</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improper loading</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overloading</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collisions with vessel</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Known Locations of Accidents in Broward County during 2019

Legend

- Fatal Accident (1)
- Accident with Injury (12)
- Accident without Injury (17)

Map document created by FWC DLE GIS
6. Broward County

### Type of Vessel

- Houseboat: 1
- Sail (aux power): 1
- Airboat: 1
- Other: 2
- Open motorboat: 9
- Personal watercraft: 10
- Cabin motorboat: 29

### Vessel Length (in feet)

- Less than 12: 10
- 12 - 16: 3
- 17 - 21: 5
- 22 - 26: 2
- 27 - 40: 15
- 41 - 65: 12
- 65+: 6

### Primary Cause of Accident

- No proper lookout/distraction: 10
- Operator inexperience: 5
- Excessive speed: 3
- Radiation of navigation rules: 2
- Vessel or component failure: 2
- Equipment failure: 1
- Weather: 1
- Other: 1

### Primary Type of Accident

- Collision with vessel: 12
- Collision with fixed object: 9
- Vessel/wake damage: 3
- Flooding (swamping): 2
- Capsizing: 1
- Falls overboard: 1
- Fire/explosion (non-fuel): 1
- Other: 1
Known Locations of Accidents in Martin County during 2019

Legend
- Fatal Accident (2)
- Accident with Injury (12)
- Accident without Injury (16)
## 7. Martin County

### Type of Vessel

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Houseboat</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mini jet boat</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sail (aux power)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pontoon boat</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal watercraft</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cabin motorboat</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open motorboat</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Vessel Length (in feet)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Length</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>41 - 65</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 - 40</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 - 26</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 - 21</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 - 16</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 12</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Primary Cause of Accident

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cause</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No proper lookout</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alcological use</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operator inexperience</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skier or occupant behavior</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hull failure</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Careenage/rocked</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hazards/obstacles</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excessive speed</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment failure</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Primary Type of Accident

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Collision with vessel</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collision with fixed object</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Falling (sudden stop)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Struck underwater object</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vessel wake damage</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skier mishap</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Known Locations of Accidents in Okaloosa County during 2019

Legend
- Fatal Accident (2)
- Accident with Injury (12)
- Accident without Injury (9)
8. Okaloosa County

Type of Vessel

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vessel Type</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cabin motorboat</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pontoon boat</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open motorboat</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal watercraft</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Vessel Length (in feet)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Length (in Feet)</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 12</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 - 16</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 - 21</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 - 26</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 - 40</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41 - 65</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Primary Cause of Accident

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cause</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Operating inattention</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excessive speed</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Careless/malley</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collision with vessel</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Primary Type of Accident

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Collision with vessel</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Falling overboard</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flooding (unknown)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grounding</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Struck by an object</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collision with fixed object</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Known Locations of Accidents in Collier County during 2019

Legend
- Fatal Accident (0)
- Accident with Injury (10)
- Accident without Injury (11)
9. Collier County

**Type of Vessel**

- Airboat: 1
- Pontoon boat: 1
- Other: 2
- Personal watercraft: 6
- Cabin motorboat: 8
- Open motorboat: 9

**Vessel Length (in Feet)**

- Unknown: 1
- 66+: 1
- 41 - 65: 3
- 27 - 40: 8
- 22 - 26: 3
- 17 - 21: 5
- 12 - 16: 6
- Less than 12: 0

**Primary Cause of Accident**

- No proper lookout/watches: 5
- Operator-ineffectiveness: 5
- Machinery failure: 3
- Weather: 2
- Ignition of fuel or vapor: 1
- Excessive speed: 1
- Equipment failure: 1
- Grounded/wrecked: 1

**Primary Type of Accident**

- Collision with vessel: 5
- Collision with fixed object: 5
- Fall in boat: 3
- Falls overboard: 2
- Fire/explosion (fuel): 2
- Flooding (overflowing): 1
- Grounding: 1
- Vessel walk damage: 1
- Other: 1
Known Locations of Accidents in Citrus County during 2019

**Legend**

- Fatal Accident (3)
- Accident with Injury (10)
- Accident without Injury (7)


10. Citrus County

### Type of Vessel

- Pontoon boat: 1
- Personal Watercraft: 1
- Other: 3
- Airboat: 3
- Open motorboat: 15

### Vessel Length (in feet)

- Less than 12: 1
- 12 - 16: 5
- 17 - 21: 7
- 22 - 26: 8
- 27 - 40: 2
- 41 - 65: 4
- 66+: 1

### Primary Cause of Accident

- No proper lock-off/attenuation: 5
- Weather: 4
- Hazards in water: 4
- Alcohol or drug use: 1
- Vision obstructed: 1
- Sharp turn: 1
- Hull failure: 1
- Canal/structure/obstruction: 1
- Other: 1

### Primary Type of Accident

- Collision with fixed object: 4
- Falls overboard: 4
- Collision with vessel: 3
- Flooding (swimming): 3
- Grounding: 1
- Sinking: 1
- Start/Hit object: 1
Cover Photos: (Courtesy of FWC)

Photos of boating accidents in Palm Beach and Lake Counties.
2019 Trend Analysis

Reportable Accidents 2010-2019

Vessel Registration 2010-2019

800,000 820,000 840,000 860,000 880,000 900,000 920,000 940,000 960,000 980,000

Recreational vessels  Commercial/other vessels
2019 Trend Analysis

Fatalities 2010-2019

*Average number of fatalities per year: 65

Injuries 2010-2019

*Average number of injuries per year: 403
2019 Trend Analysis

Boating Safety Education I.D. Cards Issued
2010-2019

Fatalities by Quarter 2010-2019
**2019 Trend Analysis**

**Quarter 1 Fatalities**

*Q1 = JAN - MAR

**Quarter 2 Fatalities**

*Q2 = APR - JUN
2019 Trend Analysis

Quarter 3 Fatalities

Quarter 4 Fatalities

*Q3 = JUL - SEP

*Q4 = OCT - DEC
2019 Trend Analysis

Vessel Types 2015 - 2019

2019 Trend Analysis

Operator by Age 2010-2019
Glossary photo detail

Cover Photos: (Courtesy of FWC)

Top Picture

The operator stated that he had refueled the vessel and taken it out of Sara Bay Marina on Thursday, May 30th to test it out since he had not used it in a while. It had some engine problems which lead him to anchor it near shore in Bradenton. The operator returned to the vessel on Tuesday, and he tried to restart the vessel. He opened the engine compartments to try to ventilate any gas fumes but did not turn on any fans or blowers. After attempting several times to start the engines, there was an explosion. He attempted to use his fire extinguisher to put out the flames but stated it only made the fire worse. He then jumped into the water and swam to shore. He stated by the time he reached shore, the fire department was already on-scene, the fire department’s marine unit extinguished the flames with foam.

Bottom Picture

On April 28th, 2019 a rented vessel struck two boat lifts causing significant damaged to the lifts and the vessel. Investigation revealed the vessel was operating at a planing speed in a restricted speed zone. The vessel encountered the wake of another vessel and then impacted two boat lifts. The operator of the vessel fell to the deck and received minor lacerations on both knees. He was able to operate the vessel back to the rental location.
Definitions for Boating Accident Report Forms

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

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/oudrive. 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.

Let’s Get On Board