

Personal Watercraft Accidents



Personal Watercraft Accidents photo detail

Cover Photos: (Courtesy of FWC)

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									
County	Pleasure	Rental	Total	PWC Accidents	PWC Fatalities	PWC Injuries	Property Damage	Rank	Accident Rate*
Alachua	811		813	1		2	500	29	1:813
Baker	244	1	245						
Bay	2,139	252	2,392	5		3	\$23,000	10	1:478
Bradford	288	1	289						
Brevard	3,841	21	3,869	3		3	\$11,950	17	1:1,289
Broward	9,842	115	9,969	7		7	\$25,900	8	1:1,424
Calhoun	64	1	65						
Charlotte	1,875	55	1,930	1			\$5,000	27	1:1,930
Citrus	1,060		1,060	1		1	\$0	31	1:1,060
Clay	1,814	12	1,827						
Collier	3,459	347	3,812	5		4	\$8,300	13	1:762
Columbia	247	1	248						
Desoto	161		163						
Dixie	62		62						
Duval	4,448	22	4,479	6		6	\$21,500	9	1:747
Escambia	1,981	28	2,015	4		5	\$6,750	16	1:504
Flagler	821		823	1		1	\$0	32	1:823
Franklin	125	15	141	1		1	\$0	33	1:141
Gadsden	85		85						
Gilchrist	135		135						
Glades	28		28						
Gulf	128	8	141						
Hamilton	30		30						
Hardee	107	3	110						
Hendry	227	2	229						
Hernando	1,303		1,306						
Highlands	1,155		1,155						
Hillsborough	6,567	30	6,605	5		7	\$12,900	11	1:1,321
Holmes	61	1	62						
Indian River	908	1	909						
Jackson	212	1	213						
Jefferson	53		53						
Lafayette	47		47	1		1	\$500	30	1:47
Lake	2,718	13	2,731	2		1	\$10,250	21	1:1,366
Lee	5,182	222	5,410	10		11	\$51,704	6	1:541
Leon	724	4	728						
Levy	220		220						

*Accident Rate = $\frac{\text{\# of Registered Vessels}}{\text{\# of Accidents}}$ Top ten counties for PWC accidents in bold print. Fields that equaled zero intentionally left blank.

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County	Pleasure	Rental	Total	PWC Accidents	PWC Fatalities	PWC Injuries	Property Damage	Rank	Accident Rate*
Liberty	33		33						
Madison	46		46						
Manatee	2,839	65	2,906						
Marion	2,148	4	2,153	2		1	\$8,200	22	1:1,077
Martin	1,800	69	1,870	5		5	\$9,600	12	1:374
Miami-Dade	15,891	429	16,348	26		25	\$90,833	1	1:629
Monroe	2,014	468	2,484	21	2	18	\$39,300	2	1:118
Nassau	711	8	720						
Okaloosa	3,374	427	3,807	10		7	\$14,000	7	1:381
Okeechobee	242		242						
Orange	8,352	74	8,435	4		2	\$19,800	14	1:2,109
Osceola	2,378	16	2,395	3	1	4	\$2,500	19	1:798
Palm Beach	6,433	85	6,532	11		11	\$39,800	4	1:594
Pasco	4,474	18	4,492	1		1	\$0	34	1:4,492
Pinellas	9,628	391	10,046	20	2	16	\$59,600	3	1:502
Polk	3,608	12	3,624	4		2	\$16,100	15	1:906
Putnam	536	1	537						
Santa Rosa	2,283	143	2,427	2		2	\$0	25	1:1,214
Sarasota	2,426	120	2,552	10		9	\$53,950	5	1:255
Seminole	3,510	7	3,521	2		2	\$1,100	23	1:1,761
St. Johns	2,037	15	2,063	3		4	\$11,000	18	1:688
St. Lucie	1,493	5	1,498	2		2	\$0	25	1:749
Sumter	331		331						
Suwannee	201		201	1		1	\$42,000	26	1:201
Taylor	75		75						
Union	62		63						
Volusia	3,078	52	3,146	3		3	\$0	20	1:1,048
Wakulla	188		188						
Walton	766	12	783	2	1	1	\$150	24	1:392
Washington	148		148	1			\$3,500	28	1:148
DHSMV	553	6	570						
TOTAL	134,830	3,583	138,640	186	6	169	\$589,687		1:745

*Accident Rate = $\frac{\text{\# of Registered Vessels}}{\text{\# of Accidents}}$

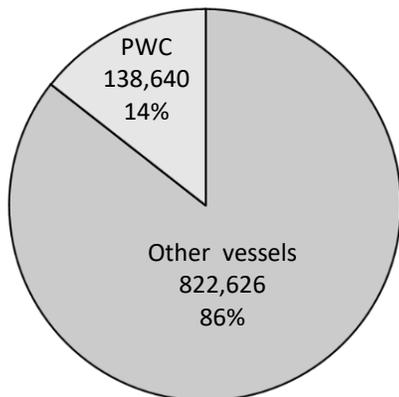
Top ten counties for PWC boating accidents in bold print

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

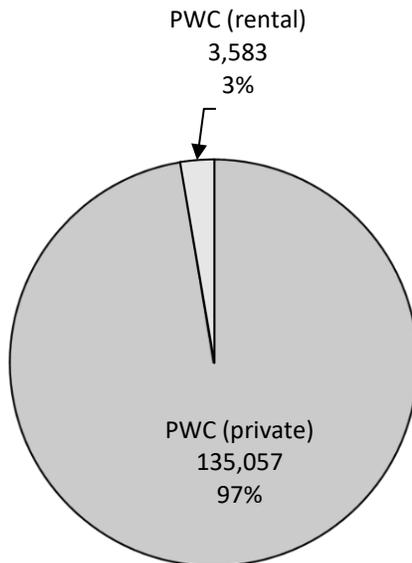
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2019 PERSONAL WATERCRAFT ACCIDENTS

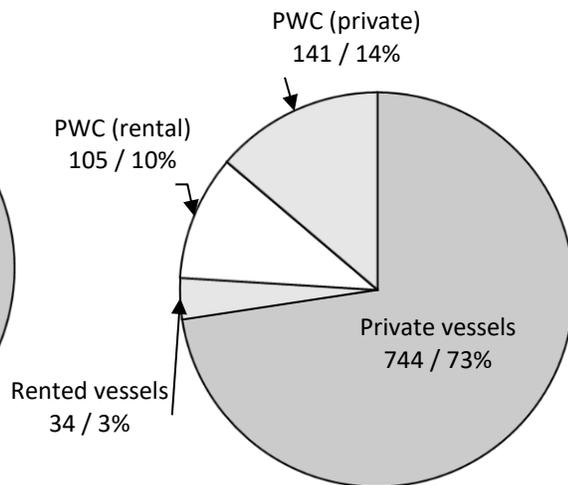
TOTAL REGISTERED PWC



PWC OWNERSHIP BY REGISTRATION

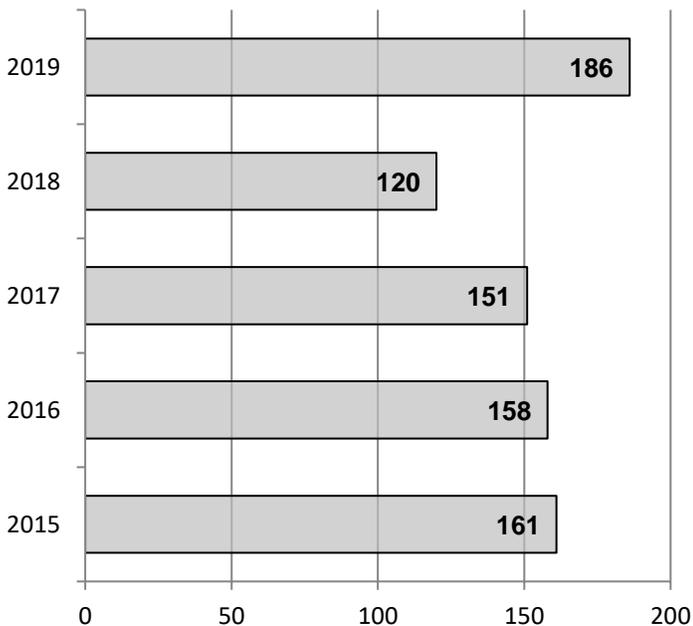


COMPARISON OF PWC TO VESSELS INVOLVED IN ACCIDENTS

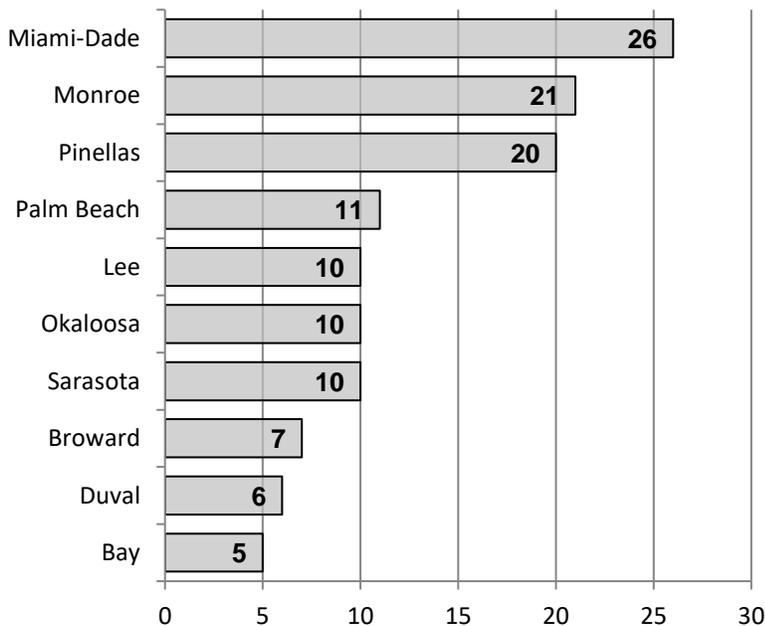


*1,024 vessels involved in accidents

ACCIDENTS 2015-2019

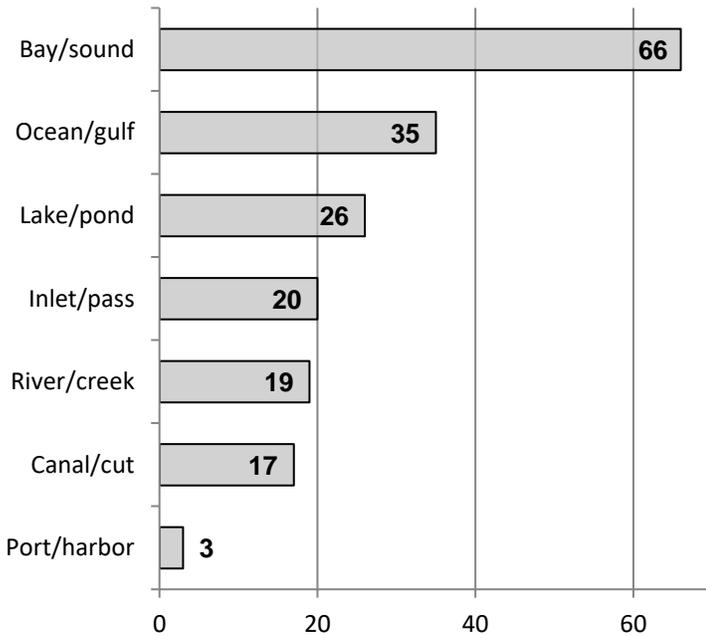


TOP TEN COUNTIES

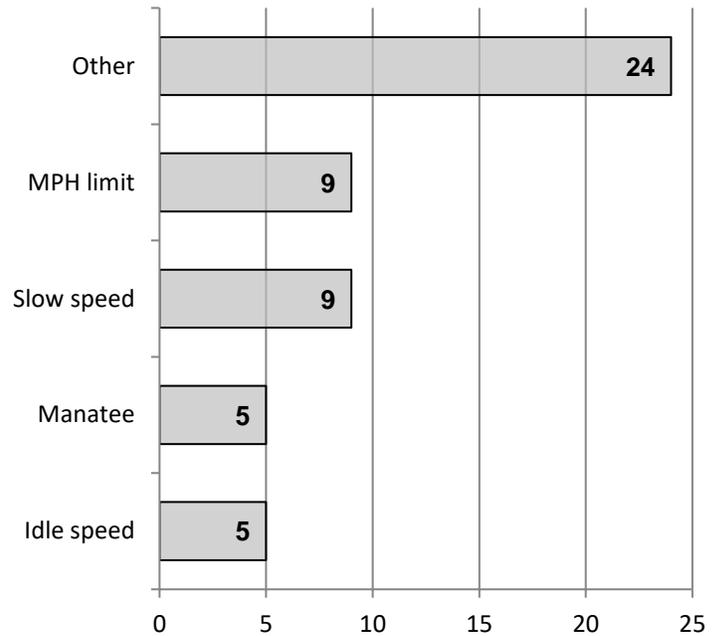


2019 PERSONAL WATERCRAFT ACCIDENTS

ACCIDENT SITE LOCATION

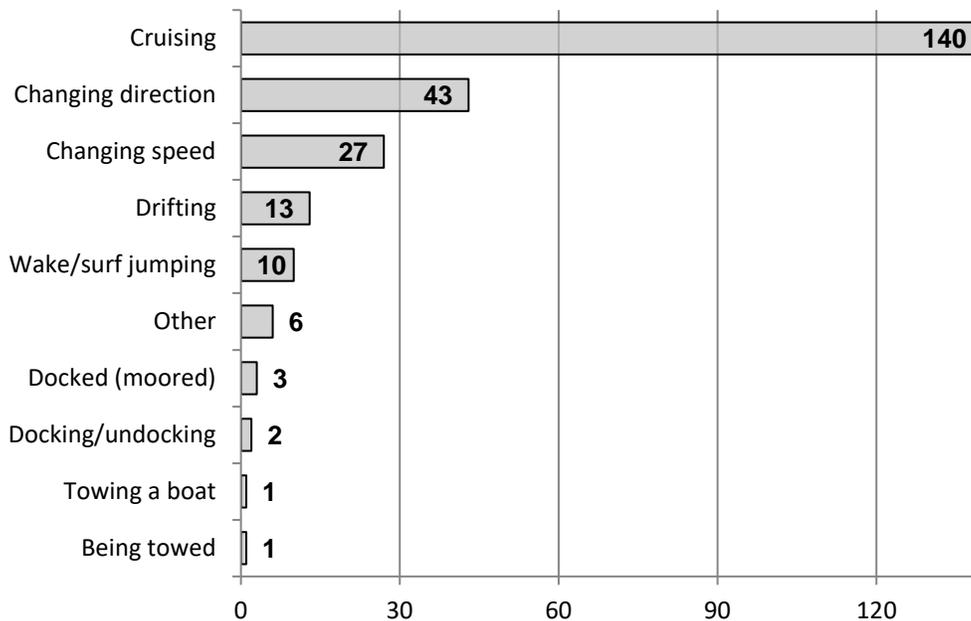


RESTRICTED AREA ACCIDENTS



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

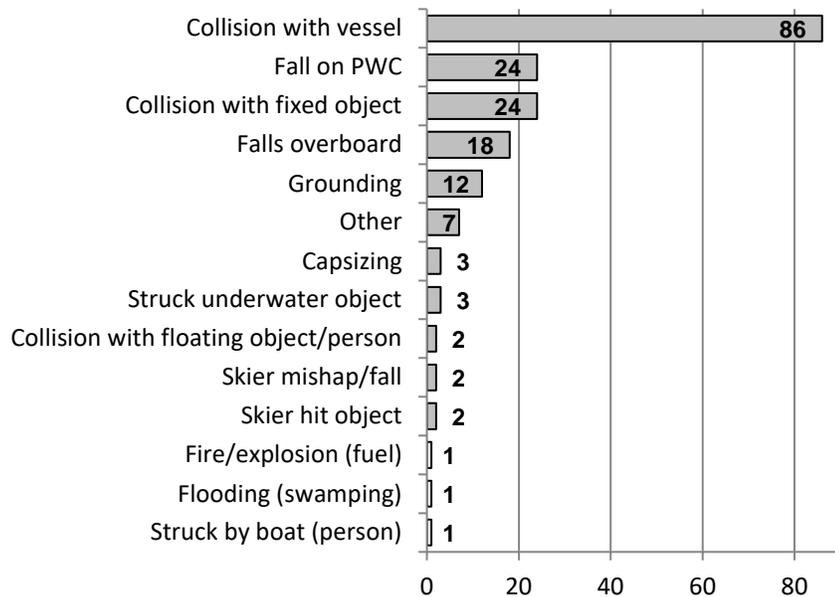
OPERATION AT TIME OF ACCIDENT



*246 PWC involved in 186 accidents

2019 PERSONAL WATERCRAFT ACCIDENTS

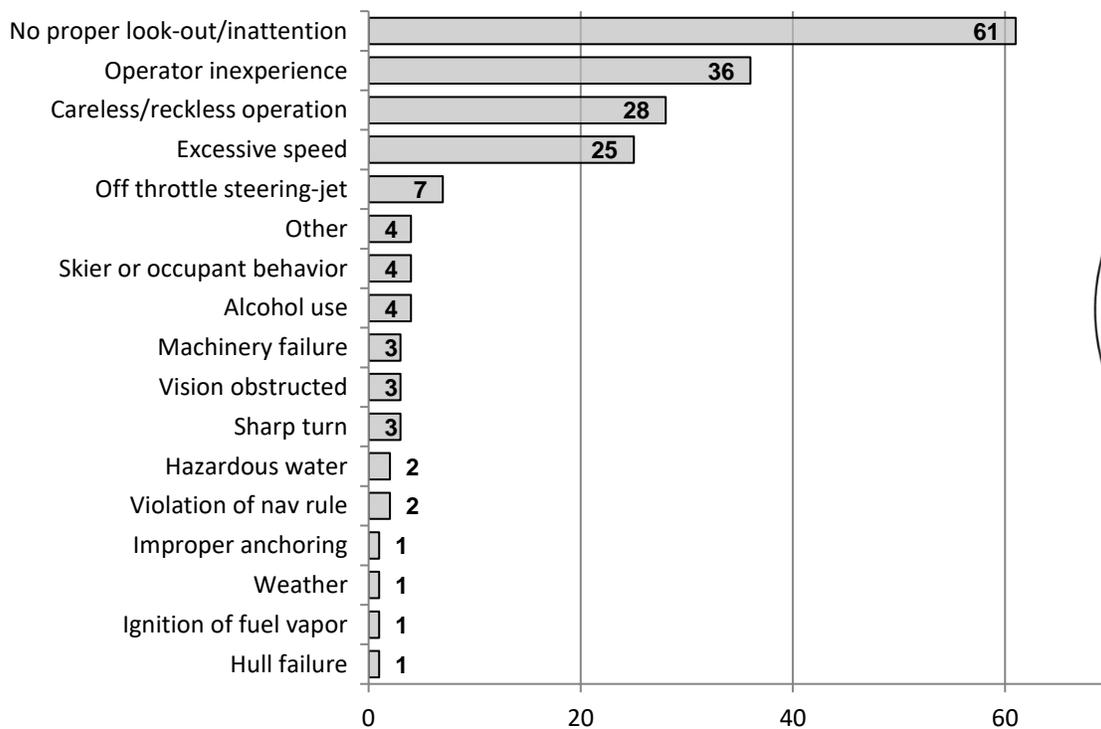
PRIMARY TYPE OF ACCIDENT



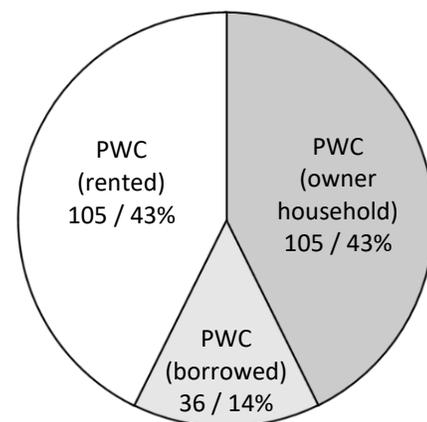
*186 PWC accidents (Based on first harmful event as determined by the state reviewing authority)

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

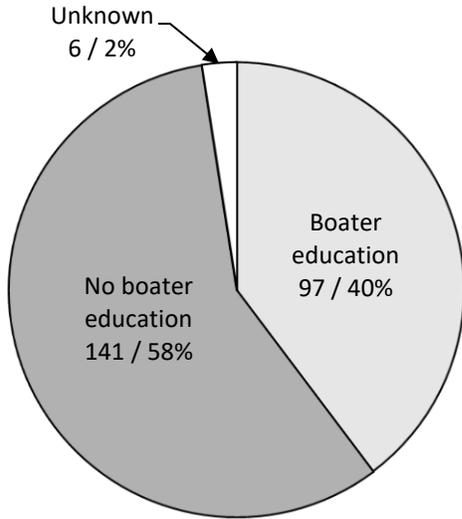


PWC OWNERSHIP



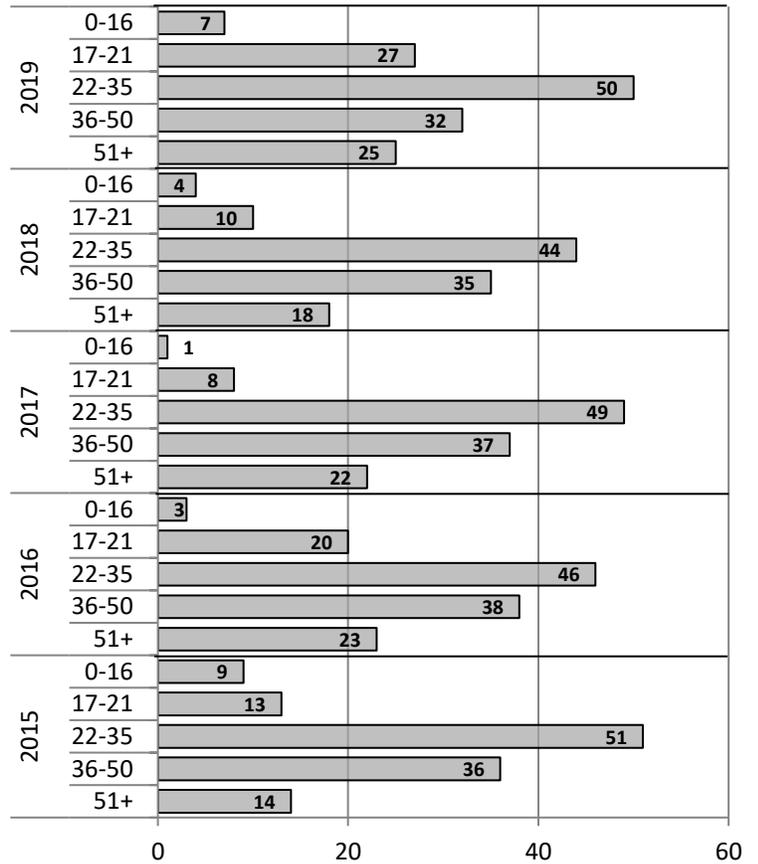
2019 PERSONAL WATERCRAFT ACCIDENTS

OPERATOR EDUCATION

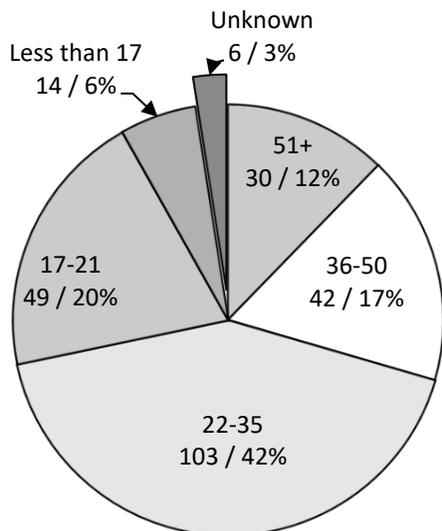


*186 PWC accidents involving 246 PWC and 244 operators
Operator information for 6 PWC are unknown due to hit and run accidents or no operators at time of accident

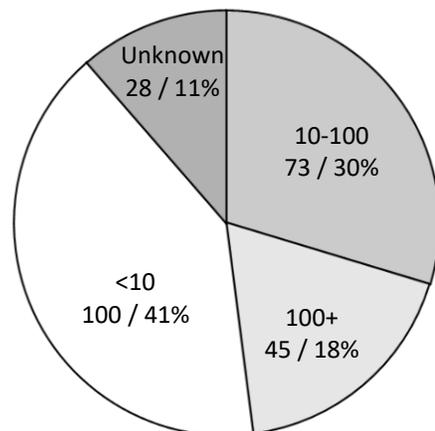
OPERATORS BY AGE WITHOUT BOATER EDUCATION



OPERATOR AGE

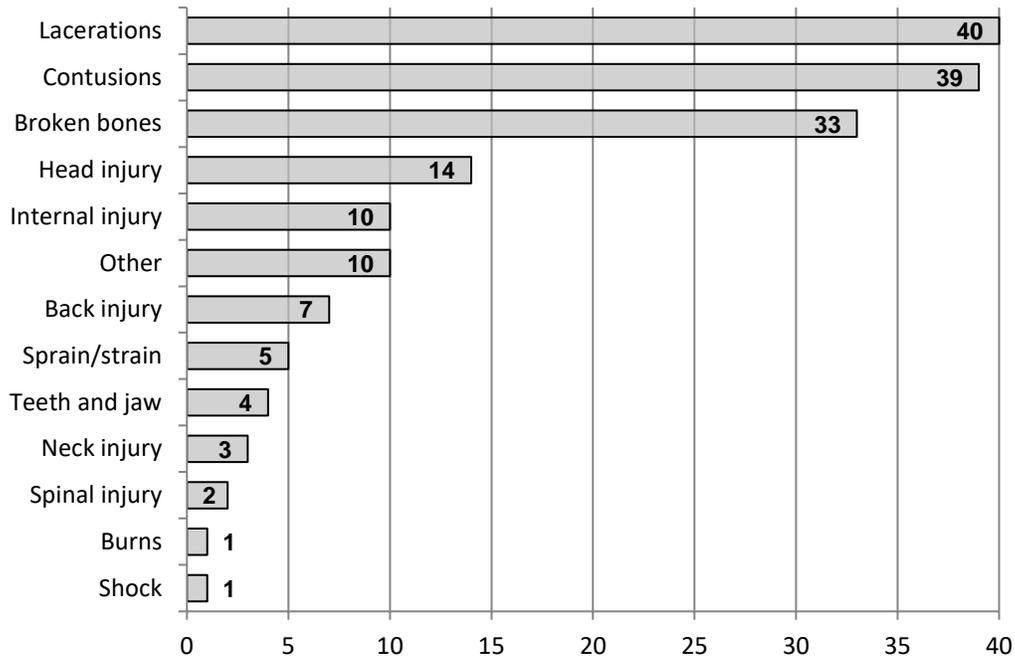


OPERATOR EXPERIENCE (HOURS)



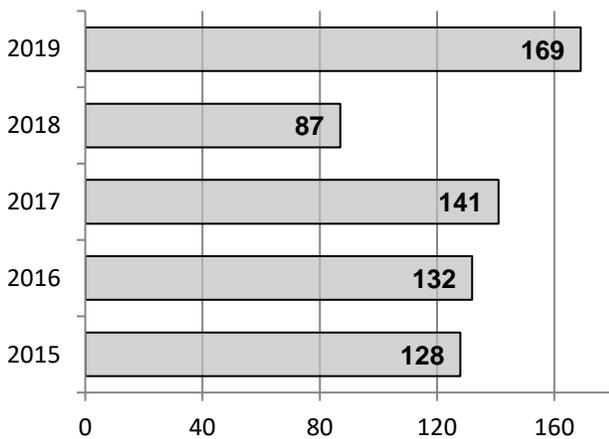
2019 PERSONAL WATERCRAFT ACCIDENTS

PRIMARY INJURY TYPES

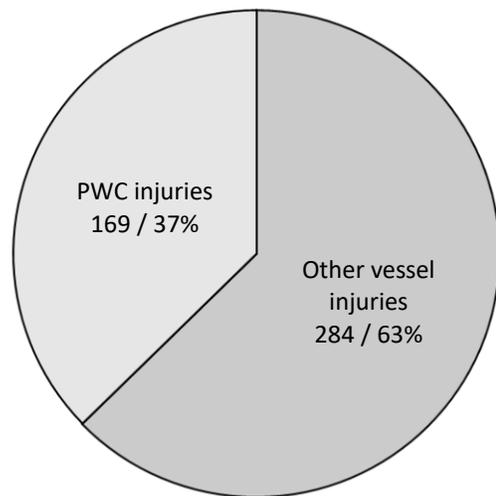


*186 accidents involving 169 injured persons

INJURIES 2015-2019



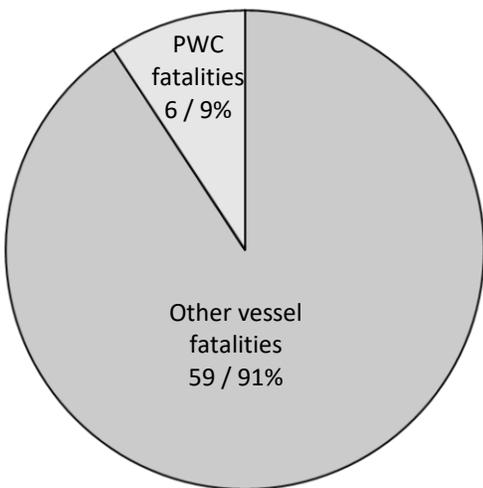
COMPARISONS OF PWC INJURIES



*453 injuries

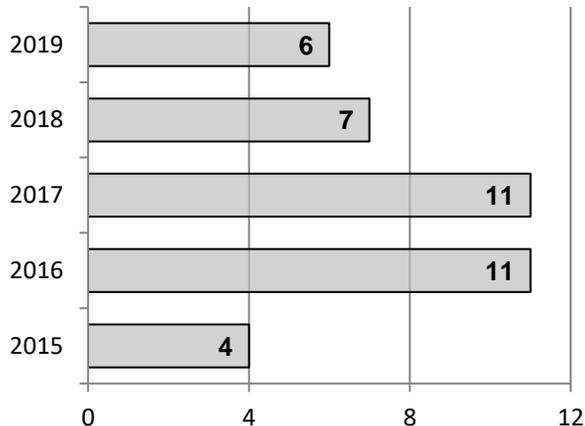
2019 PERSONAL WATERCRAFT ACCIDENTS

COMPARISONS OF PWC FATALITIES

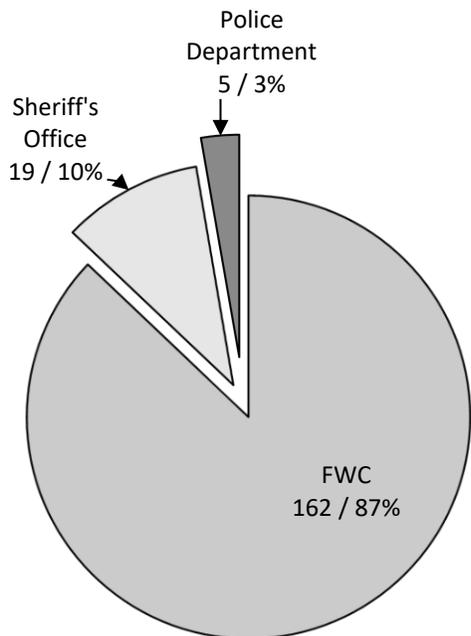


*65 Fatalities

FATALITIES 2015-2019



INVESTIGATING AGENCY



*186 PWC accidents

ACCIDENTS BY MONTH

