Boating Fatalities
Boating Fatalities

Cover Photos: (Courtesy of FWC)

Top picture
On May 24, 2014 at approximately 3:00 a.m., two 27-year-old males and a 28-year-old female launched a canoe into Wells Lake from the shoreline at the Mariners Wharf Apartments. They paddled approximately 120 yards from shore when the canoe capsized. All three subjects were ejected into the water. One of the men was able to swim to shore and the other was found floating with the assistance of a cooler and later rescued by Clay County Sheriff Office. The female was unable to swim to shore and slipped below the surface. Clay County Sheriff office dive team searched from 7:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. on 5/24/2014 and 5/25/2014. Both occupants advised that all three had been consuming alcohol throughout the night. On 5/26/2014 at approximately 5:15 a.m., the female was found deceased approximately 40 feet from the western shoreline of Mariners Wharf Apartments. There were no lifejackets or other safety equipment onboard at the time of the accident.

Bottom picture
On October 2, 2014, a father and son launched their 16 foot bass boat from the Dunnellon Boat Ramp on the Withlacoochee River in Dunnellon, Florida. They traveled south on the river (up-river) approximately 3 ½ miles with the son, 59-years-old, as the operator of the boat. While traveling around a right curve in the river, the boat went under some overhanging tree limbs along the west bank, and struck a cypress tree head on. The impact caused the son to be thrown from the steering console onto the floor near the front deck. The father, 79-years-old, was ejected from the vessel into the water. Citrus County Deputies used a Good Samaritan vessel to recover both victims and transport them to home close by where Citrus EMS provided emergency assistance and transport. The son was transported to Citrus Memorial Hospital where he was pronounced deceased. The father was transported to Ocala Regional Hospital with non-life threatening injuries.
## 2014 Fatality Data

### 2013 Fatalities - Top Twelve States

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Registered vessels</th>
<th>Number of fatalities</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>51</td>
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<tr>
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<td>California</td>
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<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Twenty states due to ties for 10th place. 2014 statistics for top 12 states were not available at time of printing
Source: U.S. Coast Guard Division of Auxiliary and Boating Safety (recreational fatalities)

### Florida Total Fatalities Recorded

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Registered vessels</th>
<th>Fatality rate</th>
<th>Number of fatalities</th>
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<tr>
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<td>899,635</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>73</td>
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<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>896,632</td>
<td>6.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>901,969</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>56</td>
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</table>

### Investigating Agency

- **Sheriff's Office**: 3 / 5%
- **Police**: 1 / 1%
- **FWC**: 60 / 94%

*64 fatal accidents

*Fatality Rate – Number of fatalities per 100,000 registered vessels*
2014 Fatality Data

Fatal Accidents By Month

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
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</table>

*64 fatal accidents involving 73 fatalities
Fatality data includes four missing persons where their disappearance is associated with a boating accident.

Time of Day

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

Accident Types

- Struck by skeg/prop: 1
- Fire/explosion (non-fuel): 1
- Fall in boat: 1
- Collision with floating object/person: 1
- Other: 3
- Flooding (swamping): 6
- Collision with vessel: 8
- Collision with fixed object: 9
- Capsizing: 12
- Falls overboard: 22

*64 fatal accidents involving 73 fatalities (Based on first harmful event.)
2014 FATALITY DATA

OPERATION AT TIME OF ACCIDENT

- Docking/undocking: 1
- Other: 3
- Changing speed: 5
- At anchor: 6
- Changing direction: 7
- Rowing/paddling: 8
- Drifting: 12
- Cruising: 32

*74 vessels involved in 64 fatal accidents with 73 victims

ACCIDENT SITE LOCATION

- Inlet/pass: 3
- Canal/cut: 6
- River/creek: 11
- Lake/pond: 14
- Ocean/gulf: 15
- Bay/sound: 15

RESTRICTED AREA FATAL ACCIDENTS

- Slow speed: 2
- Mph limit: 1
- Other: 1

*4 of 64 fatal accidents occurred in restricted areas
2014 Fatality Data

Vessel Ownership

- Owned: 55 / 74%
- Rented: 7 / 10%
- Borrowed (not in household): 12 / 16%

Vessel Fuel & Hull Type

- None: 13
- Gasoline: 53
- Electric: 2
- Diesel: 6
- Wood: 1
- Rubber/vinyl: 1
- Other: 8
- Aluminum: 12
- Fiberglass: 52

Vessel Propulsion, Length & Type

- Air Thrust: 1
- Sail: 3
- Manual: 11
- Water jet: 11
- Propeller: 48
- < 12 Feet: 12
- 12 - 16 Feet: 25
- 17 - 21 Feet: 16
- 22 - 26 Feet: 7
- 27 - 40 Feet: 9
- 41 - 65 Feet: 5
- Airboat: 1
- Mini jet boat: 1
- Rowboat (jon): 2
- Sail (aux power): 3
- Cabin motorboat: 7
- Personal watercraft: 9
- Canoe/kayak: 12
- Open motorboat: 39

*73 total fatalities involving 74 vessels
2014 Fatality Data

Primary Cause of Death

- Drowning: 51 / 70%
- Trauma: 17 / 23%
- Other: 5 / 7%

*73 fatalities

Operator Gender

- Male: 66 / 93%
- Female: 5 / 7%

*71 operators

Operator Age

- 51 + years: 42 / 59%
- 36 - 50: 11 / 15%
- 22 - 35: 16 / 23%
- 17 - 21: 2 / 3%

Operator Experience (in hours)

- Over 100: 41 / 58%
- 10 - 100: 21 / 29%
- Under 10: 5 / 7%
- Unknown: 4 / 6%
2014 Fatality Data

Marion County, 9/21/14: Three adults and two children were in a 16 foot canoe on Halfmoon Lake. Movement in the canoe caused it to take on water, capsize and sink. The adult passengers began to assist the two children to stay afloat. Good Samaritans in a nearby boat heard their calls for help and came over to assist and called 911. They were able to pull everyone onboard except for a 29-year-old male who could not be located. Once onshore, one of the adult occupants, a 51-year-old woman, stopped breathing. She was transported to Munroe Regional Medical Center where she was pronounced deceased. There were no lifejackets or other safety equipment on the canoe at the time of the accident. The 29-year-old’s body was recovered the next day.

Operators by Age Without Formal Boater Education

Victim Statistics (Ejected)

Victim Statistics (Wearing PFD)

Victim Statistics (Swimming Ability)

*64 fatal accidents involving 73 victims
2014 Fatality Data

Victim Residency

Florida resident 65 / 89%
Non resident 8 / 11%

Victim Gender

Male 63 / 86%
Female 10 / 14%

Victim Age

Less than 17 4 / 5%
17 - 21 1 / 1%
22 - 35 16 / 22%
36 - 50 10 / 14%
51+ 42 / 58%

Alcohol/Drug Related Accidents

Alcohol/drug use 7 / 11%
Other causes 57 / 89%

Alcohol/Drug Related Victims

Alcohol/drug use 12 / 16%
Other causes 61 / 84%

*64 accidents involving 73 fatalities
(Alcohol/drug related refers to any accidents in which alcohol or drug use may have been a contributing factor, whether or not legally impaired.)
2014 Fatality Data

Primary Cause of Accident by Reviewing Authority

- Vision obstructed: 1
- Lack of vessel flotation: 1
- Improper anchoring: 1
- Hull failure: 2
- Violation of nav rule: 2
- Standing/sitting on gunwale, bow or transom: 2
- Sharp turn: 2
- Hazardous waters: 2
- Overloading: 3
- Operator inattention: 3
- No proper look-out: 3
- Equipment failure: 3
- Weather: 4
- Skier/occupant behavior: 4
- Operator inexperience: 4
- Careless/inattention: 4
- Excessive speed: 4
- Alcohol use: 7
- Other: 12

*64 fatal accidents

State Waters vs. Offshore Waters

- State: 60 / 94%
- Offshore: 4 / 6%

*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.