ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION

Boating Accident Report - 1971

The following information is contained in Boating Accident Reports submitted to this Department on 88 reportable accidents which occurred during the year 1971, involving 119 boats. There were 29 fatalities resulting from drownings. Injuries to 73 boaters also resulted. Property damage amounted to $73,800.15. Of the boating accidents reported, only three were rental boats. Fifty-six accidents involved one boat; thirty-two accidents involved two boats.

Type, Nature or Classification of Accident

Collision with vessel	29
Falls overboard	17
Capsizing	13
Collision with fixed object	9
Flooding and sinking	6
Grounding	5
Collision with submerged object	4
Collision with moored vessel	2
Attempting to pick up skier	1
Skiing, struck swimmer in area	1
Skiing, caught thumb in tow rope	1
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Cause of Accident or Drowning

Inattention and carelessness	7
High waves, rough water	6
Speed	6
Hit submerged object	5
Wake of boats	4
Mechanical failure	4
Dim lights	3
Unmarked hazard	3
Changing positions	2
Storm, rough weather conditions	2
Picking up skier	2
Low water level	2
Turning too fast	2
Confusion	2
Retrieving object	2
Leaning over edge of boat	2
Fire	1
Over the dam	1
Stood in boat	1
Strong wind	1
Inexperience	1
Flood conditions	1
Starting motor	1

Cause - cont.

Passing other boat	1
Failure to yield	1
Sick, falls overboard	1
Hand rail broke, falls overboard	1
Strong current	1
Drinking	1
No lights	1
Backing up	1
Watching skier	1
Caught thumb in rope	1
Lost control of ski	1
Hiking strap broke	1
Sudden wind	1
Cable snapped	1
Unknown	13
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DROWNINGS

Twenty-six accidents resulted in the drowning of 29 persons.

Month in which drowning occurred

March	2
April	2
May	3
June	3
July	3
August	9
September	2
November	2
	26

No life preservers on board	- 7
Life preservers not used*	- 7
Life preservers used	- 6
Unknown	- 6
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* - two seven-year-old boys drowned

Type and Cause Accident resulting in Drowning

Capsized, no life preservers	7 persons
Strong current, boat capsized	3 (two 7-year-olds)
Rough water and waves, falls overboard	2
Over the dam, boat capsized	2
Retrieving object, falls overboard	2
Boat out of control, falls overboard	1
Inexperience	1
Changing position, falls overboard	1
Boat grounded, falls overboard	1
Hiking strap broke, falls overboard	1
Sudden wind, boat capsized	1
Flooding	1
Collision	1
Capsized, life preserver used	1
Recovering drifted oar	1
Sick, falls overboard	1
Collision with submerged object	1
Hand rail broke, falls overboard	1
	29 persons

Accidents occurred in the following months and bodies of water in the State:

March	2	Rivers	32	Skokie Lagoons	1
April	3	Lake Michigan	20	Farm pond	1
May	8	Small Lakes	20	Between large island and island bay lane	1
June	14	Chain-O'- Lakes	6	Canal	1
July	21	Lake Carlyle	3		88
August	25	Crab Orchard Lake	1		
September	11	Abandoned mine or pit	2		
October	2				
November	2				
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Counties in which Accidents occurred

Cook	28	Carroll	1
Lake	6	Ogle	1
Rock Island	5	Pope	1
Will	5	Pike	1
Macon	4	Christian	1
Williamson	3	Putnam	1
Sangamon	3	Grundy	1
Clinton	3	Bond	1
Jersey	3	Marshall	1
Macoupin	2	Adams	1
McHenry	2	Alexander	1
Madison	2	Cass	1
Kankakee	2	Wabash	1
Effingham	1	Lee	1
Randolph	1	LaSalle	1
Whiteside	1	Franklin	1
Woodford	1		88

Weather Conditions

Clear and Calm	53
Clear and rough	10
Clear and choppy	4
Hazy and choppy	3
Rainy and rough	3
Cloudy and choppy	3
Hazy and rough	2
Clear, strong current	2
Cloudy and rough	2
Cloudy and calm	1
Rainy and choppy	1
Foggy and choppy	1
Unknown	3
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Age and Hours of Experience of Boat Operators Involved in Accidents

AGE	Less than 20	20 to 100	100 to 500	Over 500	Experience Unknown	TOTAL
Teenage	4	4	2	0	0	10
20-29	1	7	7	8	3	26
30-39	1	5	9	11	1	27
40-49	1	1	7	17	0	26
50-59	0	0	4	6	0	10
60 and over	0	0	2	0	0	2
Unknown	0	1	3	3	10	17
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Type of Boat

Open motorboat	56
Cabin motorboat	26
Sailboat	9
Rowboat	8
Canoe	3
Pontoon	2
Rubber raft	1
Float boat	1
Houseboat	1
Miniature tugboat	1
Runabout	1
Unknown	9
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Horsepower of Motor

Under 5	12
5 - 10	9
15 - 20	1
20 - 25	0
25 - 30	4
30 - 35	3
35 - 40	2
40 and over	76
unknown or none	11
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Length of Hull

Under 12	5
12 - 14	7
14 - 16	14
16 - 18	27
18 - 20	21
20 and over	33
Unknown	11
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Lifesaving Devices

None on board	10
On board; used	36
On board; not used	44
On board; not known if used	11
Unknown or not applicable	17
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SKIING ACCIDENTS

There were seven boating accidents related to water skiing, resulting in five injuries

CAUSE	RESULT
Attempting to pick up skier; skier under water hit head	one injury
Towing skier, operator turned too fast, falls overboard	one injury
Skier lost control of ski and ran aground	one injury
Inattention, boat grounded	No injury
Skier caught thumb in tow rope	Skier lost thumb
Operator going too fast in rough water; boat ruptured and sank	No injury
Skier struck a swimmer in an area where swimming not permitted	Swimmer injured