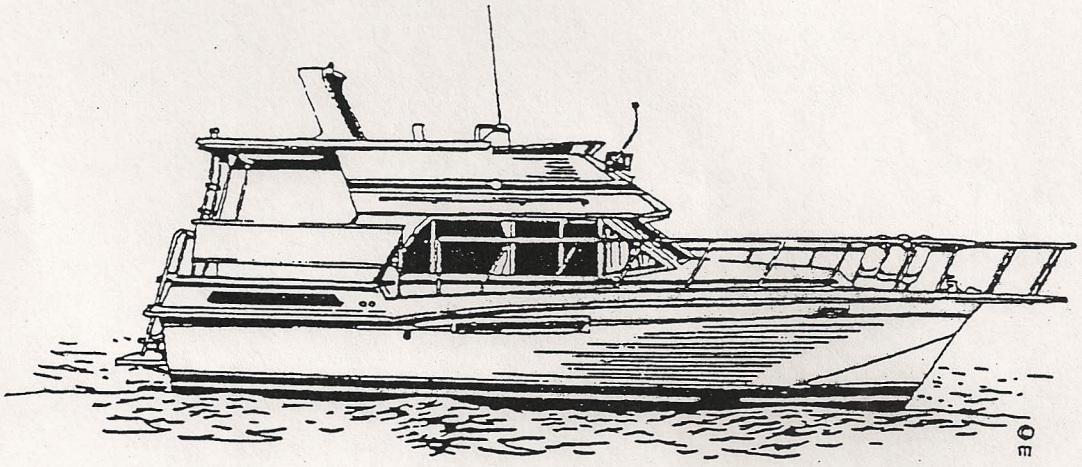
ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
OFFICE OF LAW ENFORCEMENT

BOATING ACCIDENT REPORT

January 1, 2000 - December 31, 2000



A STATISTICAL SUMMARY OF THE REPORTABLE BOATING ACCIDENTS IN THE STATE OF ILLINOIS FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2000

Illinois
Department of
Natural Resources

Illinois Boating Accident Report - 2000

Illinois has managed to hold the line on fatal accidents once again for 2000 although any life lost through an avoidable accident is a tragedy and we will keep working through education, safety patrols, and enforcement to make Illinois' waterways safer for recreational boaters. It is encouraging to note that alcohol was a direct factor in only one fatal accident as compared with eight of thirteen for the previous year.

Careless and reckless operation, as well as boat operator inattention and inexperience, were among the primary causes of boating accidents in Illinois last year. It is a fact that wearing an approved life jacket while boating can save your life, and there is no question that boaters who are sober, alert and paying attention to what they're doing can avoid mishaps on the water.

Statistics compiled by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources Office of Law Enforcement include 14 fatalities and 76 injuries as a result of boating accidents in Illinois in 2000. Those compare with 13 deaths and 75 injuries in boating accidents in the state in 1999, 19 fatalities and 107 injuries in 1998, 14 deaths and 81 injuries in 1997, and 27 fatalities and 90 injuries in 1996.

There were a total of 155 boating accidents involving 231 vessels in Illinois last year, compared with 159 boating accidents involving 238 vessels in 1999. There were a total of 176 boating accidents in 1998, 146 in 1997, and 155 in 1996.

Eleven of the 14 people who died in boating accidents in Illinois last year were not wearing life jackets. Accidents do happen on the water, but the chances of avoiding injury and surviving an accident are much greater if the boat operator and passengers are wearing life jackets.

Illinois law requires that life jackets, also known as personal floatation devices (PFDs), be available for each person aboard a boat or other watercraft. State law also requires anyone operating a personal watercraft to wear a life jacket, and anyone under the age of 13 must wear a life jacket while aboard any watercraft under 26 feet in length at all times the boat is underway, unless they are below deck in an enclosed cabin.

The IDNR offers free boating safety courses to review boating laws and provide instruction on safe and attentive operation of watercraft. These courses are taught by dedicated, trained volunteers who are certified by the IDNR to teach safe boating classes. Many carry additional certification in boating safety instruction from the US Coast Guard Auxiliary or the US Power Squadrons. Course schedules are available by contacting the IDNR Safety Education Office at 800/832-2599, Ameritech Relay 800/526-0844, TDD 217/782-9175, or by checking the IDNR web site at dnr.state.il.us.

Tom Wakolbinger, Chief
Illinois Conservation Police
IDNR, Office of Law Enforcement

ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
BOATING ACCIDENT REPORT
2000

Total Accidents	-	**155**	**Fatalities**		
# of Injuries	-	76	# Died by Drowning	-	11
# of Fatalities	-	14	# Died from Trauma	-	2
			# Died from Other	-	1
			Total	-	14

ACCIDENT TIMES

ACCIDENT STATISTICS BY DAY OF THE WEEK

Day Of Week	#Accidents	#Injuries	Fatalities	#Vessels
Sunday	48	13	3	77
Monday	22	13	2	29
Tuesday	11	5	1	18
Wednesday	5	1	1	6
Thursday	7	5	1	8
Friday	18	12	3	24
Saturday	44	27	3	69
Total	155	76	14	231

ACCIDENT STATISTICS BY MONTH OF THE YEAR

Month	#Accidents	#Injuries	#Fatalities	#Vessels
January	1	0	0	1
February	1	0	0	2
March	3	0	2	3
April	11	10	2	14
May	22	10	3	32
June	28	13	2	43
July	47	22	1	76
August	19	14	1	27
September	18	6	1	27
October	5	1	2	6
November	0	0	0	0
December	0	0	0	0
Total	155	76	14	231

ACCIDENT STATISTICS BY TIME OF DAY

Time	#Accidents	#Injuries	#Fatalities	#Vessels
Midnight - 6:00 a.m.	3	2	0	5
6:01 a.m. - 12:00 noon	15	4	2	20
12:01 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.	98	50	8	148
6:01 p.m. - Midnight	37	17	4	55
Unknown	2	3	0	3
Total	155	76	14	231

CONDITIONS AT THE TIME OF THE ACCIDENT

ACCIDENT STATISTICS BY WATER CONDITIONS

Water	#Accidents	#Injuries	#Fatalities	#Vessels
Calm (Waves < 6")	82	39	10	124
Choppy (Waves 6"-2')	57	30	2	88
Rough (Waves 2'-6')	7	5	0	7
Very Rough (Waves > 6')	1	0	0	2
Unknown	8	2	2	10
Total	155	76	14	231

ACCIDENT STATISTICS BY WEATHER CONDITIONS

Weather	#Accidents	#Injuries	#Fatalities	#Vessels
Clear	122	54	11	188
Cloudy	25	12	2	34
Fog	4	3	0	4
Rain	5	7	0	7
Snow	1	0	0	1
Hazy	1	0	0	1
Unknown	1	0	1	1
Total	159*	76	14	236*

*NOTE: These numbers are higher than the actual totals because more than one category of weather condition could be selected.

ACCIDENT STATISTICS BY WIND CONDITIONS

Wind	#Accidents	# Injuries	#Fatalities	#Vessels
None	19	11	0	29
Light (0-6 mph)	92	37	11	140
Moderate (7-14 mph)	23	12	0	31
Strong (15-25 mph)	9	4	0	14
Stormy (>25 mph)	4	5	0	5
Unknown	8	7	3	12
Total	155	76	14	231

ACCIDENT STATISTICS BY VISIBILITY

Visibility	#Accidents	#Injuries	#Fatalities	#Vessels
Good	134	65	11	202
Fair	14	9	1	20
Poor	3	1	0	4
Unknown	4	1	2	5
Total	155	76	14	231

ACCIDENT TYPE

ACCIDENT STATISTICS BY TYPE OF ACCIDENT

Type Of Accident	#Accidents	# Injuries	#Fatalities	#Vessels
Capsizing	13	11	6	13
Collision w/fixed object	10	7	1	11
Collision w/floating object	2	0	0	2
Collision w/vessel	71	25	2	143
Fall in boat	10	9	0	12
Falls overboard	4	3	1	4
Fire/Explosion (fuel)	4	0	0	4
Fire/Explosion (not fuel)	1	3	0	1
Flooding/Swamping	6	0	0	6
Grounding	6	5	0	6
Sinking	3	0	2	3
Skier Mishap	11	11	0	11
Struck submerged object	10	0	1	10
Struck by boat	2	2	0	3
Other	1	0	1	1
Unknown	1	0	0	1
Total	155	76	14	231

BOAT INFORMATION

ACCIDENT STATISTICS BY TYPE OF BOAT

Type Of Boat	#Injuries	#Fatalities	#Vessels
Airboat	0	0	1
Auxiliary Sail	0	0	3
Cabin Motorboat	15	1	28
Canoe/Kayak	0	1	1
Houseboat	8	2	8
Open Motorboat	21	7	84
Personal Watercraft	27	1	70
Pontoon	4	0	15
Sail Only	0	0	1
Other	1	0	3
Unknown	0	1	17
Total	76	14	231

ACCIDENT STATISTICS BY OPERATION AT TIME OF ACCIDENT

Vessel Operation	#Fatalities	#Injuries	#Vessels
At Anchor	0	1	9
Being Towed	0	0	1
Changing Direction	0	10	19
Changing Speed	1	10	16
Cruising	6	41	108
Docking/Undocking	0	1	10
Drifting	2	8	18
Launching	2	0	5
Rowing	3	0	2
Sailing	0	0	3
Tied to Dock	0	0	15
Unknown	0	4	22
Other	0	1	3
Total	14	76	231

ACCIDENT CAUSES

ACCIDENT STATISTICS BY PRIMARY CAUSE OF ACCIDENT

Primary Cause	#Accidents	#Injuries	#Fatalities	#Vessels
Alcohol Use	5	7	1	7
Careless/Reckless Operation	31	14	0	57
Congested Waters	4	1	0	8
Dam/Lock	2	0	3	2
Equipment Failure	3	3	1	3
Excessive Speed	9	6	0	12
Failure to Vent	2	0	0	2
Hazardous Waters	20	5	1	22
Hull Failure	1	0	1	1
Ignition of Spilled Fuel or Vapor	1	0	0	1
Improper Anchoring	1	0	0	2
Improper Loading	1	0	1	1
Lack of or Improper Boat Lights	1	2	0	2
Machinery Failure	4	1	0	8
No Proper Lookout	5	0	0	10
Operator Inattention	18	10	3	26
Operator Inexperience	19	6	0	30

Primary Cause of Accident cont.

Primary Cause	#Accidents	#Injuries	#Fatalities	#Vessels
Overloading	1	0	0	1
Passenger/Skier Behavior	8	8	0	8
Restricted Vision	1	0	1	1
Rules of the Road Infraction	4	2	0	8
Sharp Turn	2	2	0	3
Weather (Heavy)	5	5	0	8
Unknown	5	2	1	6
Other	2	2	1	2
Total	155	76	14	231

OPERATOR INFORMATION

ACCIDENT STATISTICS BY OPERATOR EDUCATION

Operator Education	#Injuries	#Fatalities	#Vessels Operators
American Red Cross	2	0	3
Informal	4	0	11
State Course	7	2	17
U.S. Power Squadron	4	0	8
U.S.C.G. Auxiliary	2	0	18
None	42	4	126
Unknown	15	8	48
Total	76	14	231

ACCIDENT STATISTICS BY OPERATOR EXPERIENCE

Operator Experience	#Injuries	#Fatalities	#Vessel Operators
Under 10 hours	7	0	29
10 - 100 hours	26	2	50
Over 100 hours	31	4	112
Unknown	12	8	40
Total	76	14	231

ACCIDENT STATISTICS BY OPERATOR AGE

Operator Age	#Injuries	#Fatalities	#Vessels
< 10	0	0	1
10 - 12	2	1	2
13 - 17	6	0	10
18 - 19	3	0	9
20 - 29	20	2	55
30 - 39	16	2	50
40 - 49	9	3	39
50 - 59	10	2	19
60 - 69	3	0	10
70 +	0	3	4
Unknown	7	1	32
Total	76	14	231

ACCIDENT LOCATION

ACCIDENT STATISTICS BY BODY OF WATER

Body Of Water	#Accidents	#Injuries	#Fatalities	#Vessels
Cal. Sag River Channel	4	2	0	6
Calumet River	1	2	0	1
Carlyle Lake	5	1	0	9
Cedar Lake	2	0	0	2
Chicago River	3	6	1	4
Clinton Lake	12	5	1	16
Crab Orchard Lake	1	0	0	1
Des Plaines River	2	1	1	3
DuPage River	1	0	1	1
East Fork Lake	2	1	0	3
Embarrass River	1	0	0	1
Fox Lake	1	0	0	1
Fox River	7	0	0	13
Holiday Shores Lake	1	1	0	2
Illinois River	29	17	1	39
Indian Point Campground Lake	1	0	1	1
Iroquois River	2	1	0	3
Kankakee River	7	5	2	12

Accidents Statistics by Body of Water cont.

Body Of Water	#Accidents	#Injuries	#Fatalities	#Vessels
Kaskaskia River	4	2	1	6
Kinkaid Lake	2	0	0	4
Lake Carroll	2	2	0	2
Lake Decatur	3	1	0	5
Lake Marie	2	1	0	4
Lake Michigan	10	6	0	16
Lake Sara	1	0	1	1
Lake Shelbyville	5	6	0	6
Lake Springfield	3	2	0	5
Lake Summerset	1	1	0	1
Lake Vandalia	1	0	0	2
Little Calumet River	1	0	0	2
Little Swan Lake	1	1	0	1
Millcreek Lake	1	0	0	2
Mississippi River	13	5	0	21
Nippersink Lake	1	0	0	2
Ohio River	2	0	2	2
Pecatonica River	1	0	1	1
Pinckneyville City Lake	1	0	1	1
Pistakee Lake	4	1	0	8
Powerton Lake	1	0	0	1
Rend Lake	3	0	0	5
Rock River	5	2	0	9
Spoon Lake	1	0	0	1
Squaw Creek	1	0	0	2
Wabash River	1	1	0	1
West Frankfort Lake	1	2	0	1
Unknown	1	1	0	1
TOTAL	155	76	14	231

BODY OF WATER BROKEN DOWN BY COUNTY

Waterway	#Accidents	#Injuries	#Fatalities	#Vessels
Cal. Sag River Channel				
Cook County	4	2	0	6
Subtotal	4	2	0	6
Calumet River				
Cook County	1	2	0	1
Subtotal	1	2	0	1
Carlyle Lake				
Clinton County	5	1	0	9
Subtotal	5	1	0	9

Body of Water Broken Down By County cont.

Waterway	#Accidents	#Injuries	#Fatalities	#Vessels
Cedar Lake				
Jackson County	2	0	0	2
Subtotal	2	0	0	2
Chicago River				
Cook County	3	6	1	4
Subtotal	3	6	1	4
Clinton Lake				
DeWitt County	12	5	1	16
Subtotal	12	5	1	16
Crab Orchard Lake				
Williamson County	1	0	0	1
Subtotal	1	0	0	1
Des Plaines River				
Cook County	1	1	1	1
Grundy County	1	0	0	2
Subtotal	2	1	1	3
DuPage River				
Will County	1	0	1	1
Subtotal	1	0	1	1
East Fork Lake				
Richland County	2	1	0	3
Subtotal	2	1	0	3
Embarrass River				
Coles County	1	0	0	1
Subtotal	1	0	0	1
Fox Lake				
Lake County	1	0	0	1
Subtotal	1	0	0	1
Fox River				
Kendall County	1	0	0	1
LaSalle County	1	0	0	2
Lake County	1	0	0	2
McHenry County	4	0	0	8
Subtotal	7	0	0	13
Holiday Shores Lake				
Madison County	1	1	0	2
Subtotal	1	1	0	2
Illinois River				
Calhoun County	2	1	0	3
Fulton County	1	0	1	1
Grundy County	4	1	0	8
Jersey County	3	3	0	3
LaSalle County	8	6	0	10
Marshall County	1	0	0	2
Mason County	3	1	0	4

Body of Water Broken Down By County cont.

Waterway	#Accidents	#Injuries	#Fatalities	#Vessels
Illinois River cont.				
Peoria County	4	3	0	5
Scott County	1	0	0	1
Tazewell County	2	2	0	2
Subtotal	29	17	1	39
Indian Point Campground Lake				
Knox County	1	0	1	1
Subtotal	1	0	1	1
Iroquois River				
Kankakee County	2	1	0	3
Subtotal	2	1	0	3
Kankakee River				
Kankakee County	3	3	0	8
Will County	4	2	2	4
Subtotal	7	5	2	12
Kaskaskia River				
Randolph County	2	0	1	3
St. Clair County	2	2	0	3
Subtotal	4	2	1	6
Kinkaid Lake				
Jackson County	2	0	0	4
Subtotal	2	0	0	4
Lake Carroll				
Carroll County	2	2	0	2
Subtotal	2	2	0	2
Lake Decatur				
Macon County	3	1	0	5
Subtotal	3	1	0	5
Lake Marie				
Lake County	2	1	0	4
Subtotal	2	1	0	4
Lake Michigan				
Cook County	4	3	0	6
Lake County	6	3	0	10
Subtotal	10	6	0	16
Lake Sara				
Effingham County	1	0	1	1
Subtotal	1	0	1	1
Lake Shelbyville				
Shelby County	5	6	0	6
Subtotal	5	6	0	6
Lake Springfield				
Sangamon County	3	2	0	5
Subtotal	3	2	0	5

Body of Water Broken Down By County cont.

Waterway	#Accidents	#Injuries	#Fatalities	#Vessels
Lake Summerset				
Stephenson County	1	1	0	1
Subtotal	1	1	0	1
Lake Vandalia				
Fayette County	1	0	0	2
Subtotal	1	0	0	2
Little Calumet River				
Cook County	1	0	0	2
Subtotal	1	0	0	2
Little Swan Lake				
Warren County	1	1	0	1
Subtotal	1	1	0	1
Millcreek Lake				
Clark County	1	0	0	2
Subtotal	1	0	0	2
Mississippi River				
Adams County	1	0	0	2
Carroll County	1	1	0	2
Henderson County	2	0	0	3
Jackson County	2	0	0	3
Jersey County	1	0	0	2
JoDaviess County	1	1	0	2
Rock Island	6	3	0	9
Subtotal	13	5	0	21
Nippersink Lake				
Lake County	1	0	0	2
Subtotal	1	0	0	2
Ohio River				
Pope County	1	0	1	1
Pulaski County	1	0	1	1
Subtotal	2	0	2	2
Pecatonica River				
Winnebago County	1	0	1	1
Subtotal	1	0	1	1
Pinckneyville City Lake				
Perry County	1	0	1	1
Subtotal	1	0	1	1
Pistakee Lake				
Lake County	3	0	0	6
McHenry County	1	1	0	2
Subtotal	4	1	0	8
Powerton Lake				
Tazewell County	1	0	0	1
Subtotal	1	0	0	1

Body of Water Broken Down By County cont.

Waterway	#Accidents	#Injuries	#Fatalities	#Vessels
Rend Lake				
Franklin County	2	0	0	4
Jefferson County	1	0	0	1
Subtotal	3	0	0	5
Rock River				
Lee County	1	0	0	2
Rock Island County	2	1	0	3
Winnebago County	2	1	0	4
Subtotal	5	2	0	9
Spoon Lake				
Knox County	1	0	0	1
Subtotal	1	0	0	1
Squaw Creek				
Lake County	1	0	0	2
Subtotal	1	0	0	2
Wabash River				
Crawford County	1	1	0	1
Subtotal	1	1	0	1
West Frankfort Lake				
Franklin County	1	2	0	1
Subtotal	1	2	0	1
Waterway Unknown				
Livingston County	1	1	0	1
Subtotal	1	1	0	1
TOTAL	155	76	14	231

ACCIDENT STATISTICS BY COUNTY

County	#Accidents	#Injuries	#Fatalities	#Vessels
Adams	1	0	0	2
Calhoun	2	1	0	3
Carroll	3	3	0	4
Clark	1	0	0	2
Clinton	5	1	0	9
Coles	1	0	0	1
Cook	14	14	2	20
Crawford	1	1	0	1
DeWitt	12	5	1	16
Effingham	1	0	1	1

Accident Statistics By County cont.

County	#Accidents	#Injuries	#Fatalities	#Vessels
Fayette	1	0	0	2
Franklin	3	2	0	5
Fulton	1	0	1	1
Grundy	5	1	0	10
Henderson	2	0	0	3
Jackson	5	0	0	7
Jefferson	1	0	0	1
Jersey	4	3	0	5
JoDaviess	1	1	0	2
Kankakee	5	4	0	11
Kendall	1	0	0	1
Knox	2	0	1	2
LaSalle	9	6	0	12
Lake	15	4	0	27
Lee	1	0	0	2
Livingston	1	1	0	1
Macon	3	1	0	5
Madison	1	1	0	2
Marshall	1	0	0	2
Mason	3	1	0	4
McHenry	5	1	0	10
Peoria	4	3	0	5
Perry	1	0	1	1
Pope	1	0	1	1
Pulaski	1	0	1	1
Randolph	2	0	1	3
Richland	2	1	0	3
Rock Island	8	5	0	12
Sangamon	3	2	0	5
Scott	1	0	0	1
Shelby	5	6	0	6
St. Clair	2	2	0	3
Stephenson	1	1	0	1
Tazewell	3	2	0	3
Warren	1	1	0	1
Will	5	2	3	5
Williamson	1	0	0	1
Winnebago	3	1	1	5
TOTAL	155	77	14	231

COUNTIES BROKEN DOWN BY BODY OF WATER

County	#Accidents	#Injuries	#Fatalities	#Vessels
Adams County				
Mississippi River	1	0	0	2
Subtotal	1	0	0	2
Calhoun County				
Illinois River	2	1	0	3
Subtotal	2	1	0	3
Carroll County				
Lake Carroll	2	2	0	2
Mississippi River	1	1	0	2
Subtotal	3	3	0	4
Clark County				
Millcreek Lake	1	0	0	2
Subtotal	1	0	0	2
Clinton County				
Carlyle Lake	5	1	0	9
Subtotal	5	1	0	9
Coles County				
Embarass River	1	0	0	1
Subtotal	1	0	0	1
Cook County				
Cal-Sag River Channel	4	2	0	6
Calumet River	1	2	0	1
Chicago River	3	6	1	4
Des Plaines River	1	1	1	1
Lake Michigan	4	3	0	6
Little Calumet River	1	0	0	2
Subtotal	14	14	2	20
Crawford County				
Wabash River	1	1	0	1
Subtotal	1	1	0	1
DeWitt County				
Clinton Lake	12	5	1	16
Subtotal	12	5	1	16
Effingham County				
Lake Sara	1	0	1	1
Subtotal	1	0	1	1
Fayette County				
Lake Vandalia	1	0	0	2
Subtotal	1	0	0	2
Franklin County				
Rend Lake	2	0	0	4
West Frankfort Lake	1	2	0	1
Subtotal	3	2	0	5

Counties Broken Down By Body of Water cont.

County	#Accidents	#Injuries	#Fatalities	#Vessels
Fulton County				
Illinois River	1	0	1	1
Subtotal	1	0	1	1
Grundy County				
Des Plaines River	1	0	0	2
Illinois River	4	1	0	8
Subtotal	5	1	0	10
Henderson County				
Mississippi River	2	0	0	3
Subtotal	2	0	0	3
Jackson County				
Cedar Lake	2	0	0	2
Kinkaid Lake	2	0	0	4
Mississippi River	1	0	0	1
Subtotal	5	0	0	7
Jefferson County				
Rend Lake	1	0	0	1
Subtotal	1	0	0	1
Jersey County				
Illinois River	3	3	0	3
Mississippi River	1	0	0	2
Subtotal	4	3	0	5
JoDaviess County				
Mississippi River	1	1	0	2
Subtotal	1	1	0	2
Kankakee County				
Iroquois River	2	1	0	3
Kankakee River	3	3	0	8
Subtotal	5	4	0	11
Kendall County				
Fox River	1	0	0	1
Subtotal	1	0	0	1
Knox County				
Indian Point Campground	1	0	1	1
Spoon Lake	1	0	0	1
Subtotal	2	0	1	2

Counties Broken Down By Body of Water cont.

County	#Accidents	#Injuries	#Fatalities	#Vessels
Lake County				
Fox Lake	1	0	0	1
Fox River	1	0	0	2
Lake Marie	2	1	0	4
Lake Michigan	6	3	0	10
Nippersink Lake	1	0	0	2
Pistakee Lake	3	0	0	6
Squaw Creek	1	0	0	2
Subtotal	15	4	0	27
LaSalle County				
Fox River	1	0	0	2
Illinois River	8	6	0	10
Subtotal	9	6	0	12
Lee County				
Rock River	1	0	0	2
Subtotal	1	0	0	2
Livingston County				
Unknown	1	1	0	1
Subtotal	1	1	0	1
Macon County				
Lake Decatur	3	1	0	5
Subtotal	3	1	0	5
Madison County				
Holiday Shores Lake	1	1	0	2
Subtotal	1	1	0	2
Marshall County				
Illinois River	1	0	0	2
Subtotal	1	0	0	2
Mason County				
Illinois River	3	1	0	4
Subtotal	3	1	0	4
McHenry County				
Fox River	4	0	0	8
Pistakee Lake	1	1	0	2
Subtotal	5	1	0	10
Peoria County				
Illinois River	4	3	0	5
Subtotal	4	3	0	5
Perry County				
Pinckneyville City Lake	1	0	1	1
Subtotal	1	0	1	1

Counties Broken Down By Body of Water cont.

County	#Accidents	#Injuries	#Fatalities	#Vessels
Pope County				
Ohio River	1	0	1	1
Subtotal	1	0	1	1
Pulaski County				
Ohio River	1	0	1	1
Subtotal	1	0	1	1
Randolph County				
Kaskaskia River	2	0	1	3
Subtotal	2	0	1	3
Richland County				
East Fork Lake	2	1	0	3
Subtotal	2	1	0	3
Rock Island County				
Mississippi River	6	3	0	9
Rock River	2	1	0	3
Subtotal	8	4	0	12
Sangamon County				
Lake Springfield	3	2	0	5
Subtotal	3	2	0	5
Scott County				
Illinois River	1	0	0	1
Subtotal	1	0	0	1
Shelby County				
Lake Shelbyville	5	6	0	6
Subtotal	5	6	0	6
St. Clair County				
Kaskaskia River	2	2	0	3
Subtotal	2	2	0	3
Stephenson County				
Lake Summerset	1	1	0	1
Subtotal	1	1	0	1
Tazewell County				
Illinois River	2	2	0	2
Powerton Lake	1	0	0	1
Subtotal	3	2	0	3
Warren County				
Little Swan Lake	1	1	0	1
Subtotal	1	1	0	1
Will County				
DuPage River	1	0	1	1
Kankakee River	4	2	2	4
Subtotal	5	2	3	5

Counties Broken Down By Body of Water cont.

County	#Accidents	#Injuries	#Fatalities	#Vessels
Williamson County				
Crab Orchard Lake	1	0	0	1
Subtotal	1	0	0	1
Winnebago County				
Pecatonica River	1	0	1	1
Rock River	2	1	0	4
Subtotal	3	1	1	5
TOTAL	155	76	14	231

NARRATIVES

2000 Boat Accident Narratives

1. An elderly fisherman was reported missing after he had gone fishing on Pinckneyville City Lake in Perry County. His boat was found unoccupied on the southwest portion of the lake. Both his truck and trailer were found submerged at the boat ramp. The victim's body was found a short distance away. Although the emergency brake in the truck was on, the transmission was in the "Drive" position. The passenger door rear view mirror was pushed into the door. It appeared that the victim was struck by the truck and trailer. The victim was not wearing a PFD but this was probably not a factor in his death.

   Contributing factors:
   -Although there were no witnesses, it appears that the primary cause was operator error/inattention in leaving the truck in gear while trying to launch the boat.

2. The deceased operator had taken his new fishing boat to the Pecatonica River in Winnebago County to try it out. When he didn't return home when expected, a search ensued. The victim's truck and boat trailer were found parked at the boat ramp. The boat was later located about 1000 ft. south of the boat ramp. The boat appeared to have struck a tree limb sticking out of the water. The boat then continued toward the bank until it struck the bank. The bow of the boat was buried in the dirt bank 8-10 inches. The victim's body was found snagged in debris about three feet south of the boat ramp. The victim was not wearing a PFD.

   Contributing factors:
   - Hazardous waters - submerged tree limb
   -Possibly restricted visibility depending on whether or not the victim was traveling in the dark.
   -Failure to wear a PFD.

Boat Accident Narratives cont.

3. A boat operator accompanied by one passenger launched their boat on the rain-swollen Des Plaines River in Cook County. The operator could not get the motor started and the boat was rapidly being pulled toward the dam by the current. The boat capsized and both occupants were thrown into the water. The passenger swam safely to shore. The operator held on to the capsized boat and rode it over the dam where he got caught in the boil and drowned. There were no PFDs available in the boat.

   Contributing factors:
   - -Hazardous waters - flood conditions
   - -Machinery failure - engine wouldn't start
   - -Failure to wear a PFD

4. The 81-year old operator/victim had been fishing from a canoe on the DuPage River in Will County. The canoe went over the Hammel Woods Forest Preserve dam and capsized. In spite of wearing a type V PFD work vest, the operator drowned.

   Contributing factors:
   - -Unknown. It is not known if the operator did not see the dam or if he was simply unable to avoid it after getting too close and caught in the current.

5. The operator/victim was fishing alone at Indian Point Campground Lake in Knox County. The subject fell overboard. Other boaters attempted to rescue the victim but could not get to him in time. The subject was not wearing a PFD. Witnesses speculated that the subject was attempting to unsnag a fishing line at the time that he fell overboard.

   Contributing factors:
   - -Failure to wear a PFD - there were other boaters who were attempting to rescue the victim but he disappeared under the surface of the water before they could reach him.

6. A canoe with two occupants went over the Wilmington dam on the Kankakee River in Will County. The canoe was a rental unit and both occupants were inexperienced canoeists. Both subjects were caught in the boil but were "kicked out" and removed from the water downstream. Both subjects died later at the hospital. There were two PFDs found in the water and it was not determined whether or not they had been worn at the time of the mishap. Although the area around the dam was posted with warning signs, it is speculated that neither occupant may have comprehended the meaning of "low head dam" since neither were fluent in English.

   Contributing factors:
   - -Operator inexperience
   - -Possible failure to wear a PFD

Boat Accident Narratives cont.

7. An elderly boat operator was thrown overboard when he made a sharp turn wile operating on Lake Sara in Effingham County. The subject was rescued but suffered a stroke at some point before reaching shore. The subject was hospitalized but died the next day. The subject was not wearing a PFD.

   Contributing factors:

   -Operator error - sharp turn
   -Failure to wear a PFD - although the operator was rescued, his struggling to stay afloat until rescued may have contributed to the stroke.

8. Two brothers went fishing on the Ohio River in Pulaski County. They had experienced some problems with their boat motor but thought they had the problem resolved. They decided to motor further south on the river to a new fishing spot. Shortly thereafter, they started to experience engine problems again and decided to turn around and go back to the boat ramp. A few moments later, they realized that the boat was taking on water. They were between two moored barges when their motor stalled and they came to an abrupt stop causing water to come over the transom. The boat sank very quickly. The operator and passenger attempted to get PFDs on but were unable to because the boat sank so quickly. Both subjects were in the water approximately 30-40 minutes when the operator was swept under a barge and disappeared. The passenger was rescued by an individual who came off the shore to assist. The victim's body was recovered later the same day.

   Contributing Factors:

   -Machinery failure - engine failure
   -Failure to wear a PFD

9. Two vessels collided on Clinton Lake in Dewitt County. Vessel 1 was pulling a skier/tuber. According to the operator, he was concentrating on the speedometer and checking on the tuber periodically. He did not see vessel 2 until his passenger started screaming for him to look out. He struck vessel 2 injuring one of the passengers who later died. Although the deceased was wearing a PFD, he died from the injuries sustained in the accident. The operator of vessel 1 was arrested for careless operation.

   Contributing Factors:

   -Careless operation

Boat Accident Narratives cont.

10. Survivors of the accident could not agree as to who was operating at the time of the accident. The boat was up on plane on the Chicago River in Cook County when it struck a moored barge. The deceased's BAC was .166 plus metabolites of cocaine were also found in his system. All of the operator suspects were under the influence. One subject was arrested for OUI with a BAC of .316. The investigation could not conclusively say if he was the operator at the time of the accident. All that could be proved is that he was operating OUI at some point during his intoxicated state. Although the deceased was not wearing a PFD, he died from head trauma and not from drowning.

    Contributing factors:
    -Alcohol use

11. The victim was waiting to lock his PWC through a dam on the Kaskaskia River in Randolph County. The current from the lock being emptied caused his PWC to overturn. In spite of wearing a PFD, the victim was then pulled under water by the current and drowned. The deceased was legally intoxicated with a BAC was .093.

    Contributing factors:
    -Alcohol use
    -Lock and dam - dangerous current

12. A vessel struck a submerged object on the Ohio River in Pope County. The impact threw the boat sideways and all three occupants were thrown out of the boat. The two brothers and their father attempted to swim to shore. The 83-year old father did not make it and drowned. There were PFDs in the boat but they were not used. Also, the operator did not have the kill switch lanyard attached so the boat kept circling after the occupants were thrown out.

    Contributing factors:
    -Submerged object
    -Failure to wear PFDs
    -Failure to attach lanyard to cut-off switch

13. The victim launched his boat on the Illinois River in Fulton County. The boat immediately began to take on water. It became apparent to the operator/victim that he had failed to put the boat plug in the drain hole. The operator was frantically looking for the drain plug as the boat continued to sink. Witnesses yelled at the operator, who was only 10-15 ft. from shore, to swim to shore. The operator yelled back that he could not swim. One of the witnesses attempted to rescue the victim but was unsuccessful. The victim was not wearing a PFD although one was available in the boat. It was unknown how much experience the operator had with boating.

    Contributing factors:
    -Operator error - failure to install boat's drain plug
    -Failure to wear PFD