ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
OFFICE OF LAW ENFORCEMENT

BOATING ACCIDENT REPORT

January 1, 2003 - December 31, 2003

A STATISTICAL SUMMARY OF THE REPORTABLE BOATING ACCIDENTS IN THE STATE OF ILLINOIS FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2003

ILLINOIS
DEPARTMENT OF
NATURAL
RESOURCES

ILLINOIS BOATING ACCIDENT REPORT-2003

In 2003, there were 84 accidents, resulting in 63 injuries and 13 deaths. In 2002, there were 135 accidents, resulting in 92 injuries and 23 deaths. This year *the Coast Guard's reporting criteria for property damage went from $500 to $2,000. While Illinois' law remained at $500, only accidents with $2,000 or more property damage were reported to the Coast Guard for the Annual Report.* Therefore, for comparison purposes, a look at the six-year injury and fatality rate provides a more accurate view of this year's statistics. During the past six years, the average number of injuries/year has been 83, while the average number of fatalities has been 15. Historically, boating accidents in Illinois have occurred on clear, sunny days, with light wind and good visibility. This is also the case for the national statistics. In 11 of the 13 fatal accidents, the victims were not wearing PFDs. Six of the persons (57%) who died would have likely survived the accident if they had been wearing a Coast Guard-approved personal flotation device (PFD), of the appropriate size. Alcohol/drug use was the main contributing factor (38%) of the fatal accidents, 25% of the injury accidents, and 9% of the total accidents. Reckless/careless operation was the second leading cause of the fatal accidents (15%). It is the leading cause of injury accidents (25%), and total reported accidents (17%). Sixty-one (61) percent of the persons that died in a boat accident had not completed any form of formal boater safety education. In 62% of the injury accidents, the operator had no formal boater safety education. Collision with another vessel was the number one cause of the total number of accidents and injuries. Capsizing/falls overboard was the number one cause of fatalities. Looking at the combination of the number of accidents, injuries, and fatalities, Lake Michigan has the highest frequency of incidents. The Illinois and Mississippi Rivers tied for second. Interestingly, Clinton Lake was number four in total accidents, number five in total injuries, and number four in total number of vessels involved.

Although not required by law, except for persons less than 13, and operators/passengers on personal watercraft or specialty prop-craft, wearing a Coast Guard-approved PFD that is the appropriate size and in serviceable condition remains the most proactive thing a boater can do to ensure their safety on the water. Collision with a vessel was the number one cause of accidents and the number one cause of injuries sustained in a boat accident. The contributing factors of these accidents were reckless/careless operation and rules to navigation violations. This illustrates the need for boaters to attend a state Boater Education Course to learn the Inland Navigation Rules, as well as the other topics taught.

I challenge our Officers and Volunteer Boat Safety Instructors to teach as many safety classes as possible, focusing on PFDs, Inland Rules to Navigation, Boating Under the Influence and Reckless/Careless Operation.

Boat Safe.

Captain Gregory P. Hunter, 273
Region I Commander
Illinois Boating Law Administrator

ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
BOATING ACCIDENT REPORT
2003

Total Accidents	-	**84**
# of Injuries	-	63
# of Fatalities	-	13

Fatalities		
#Died by Drowning	-	7
#Died from Trauma	-	5
# Other	-	1
# Unknown	-	0
Total	-	**13**

ACCIDENT TIMES

ACCIDENT STATISTICS BY DAY OF THE WEEK

Day Of Week	#Accidents	#Injuries	Fatalities	#Vessels
Sunday	21	14	4	31
Monday	5	3	1	7
Tuesday	4	3	1	6
Wednesday	5	6	0	7
Thursday	8	8	1	14
Friday	10	6	2	13
Saturday	31	23	4	44
Total	84	63	13	122

ACCIDENT STATISTICS BY MONTH OF THE YEAR

Month	#Accidents	#Injuries	#Fatalities	#Vessels
January	0	0	0	0
February	0	0	0	0
March	1	0	1	1
April	2	2	1	3
May	7	4	0	11
June	8	6	0	13
July	33	24	2	48
August	20	16	1	29
September	9	10	6	13
October	1	0	1	1
November	2	1	1	2
December	1	0	1	1
Total	84	63	13	122

ACCIDENT STATISTICS BY TIME OF DAY

Time	#Accidents	#Injuries	#Fatalities	#Vessels
Unknown	1	0	0	1
Midnight - 6:00 a.m.	3	5	0	3
6:01 a.m. - 12:00 noon	11	5	3	15
12:01 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.	36	25	2	55
6:01 p.m. - Midnight	33	28	8	48
Total	84	63	13	122

CONDITIONS AT THE TIME OF THE ACCIDENT

ACCIDENT STATISTICS BY WATER CONDITIONS

Water	#Accidents	#Injuries	#Fatalities	#Vessels
Calm (Waves < 6")	44	39	2	69
Choppy (Waves 6"-2')	20	13	6	29
Rough (Waves 2'-6')	12	9	1	13
Very Rough (Waves >6')	1	0	0	1
Unknown	7	2	4	10
Total	84	63	13	122

ACCIDENT STATISTICS BY WEATHER CONDITIONS

Weather	#Accidents	#Injuries	#Fatalities	#Vessels
Clear	64	51	8	93
Cloudy	13	11	2	20
Fog	0	0	0	0
Rain	2	1	0	2
Hazy	0	0	0	0
Unknown	5	0	3	7
Total	84	63	13	122

ACCIDENT STATISTICS BY WIND CONDITIONS

Wind	#Accidents	# Injuries	#Fatalities	#Vessels
None	9	6	0	14
Light (0-6 mph)	45	37	7	68
Moderate (7-14 mph)	18	15	1	26
Strong (15-25 mph)	5	3	1	5
Stormy (>25 mph)	1	0	0	1
Unknown	6	2	4	8
Total	84	63	13	122

ACCIDENT STATISTICS BY VISIBILITY

Visibility	#Accidents	#Injuries	#Fatalities	#Vessels
Good	73	59	10	110
Fair	5	3	0	5
Poor	1	1	0	0
Unknown	5	0	3	7
Total	84	63	13	122

ACCIDENT TYPE

ACCIDENT STATISTICS BY TYPE OF ACCIDENT

Type Of Accident	#Accidents	# Injuries	#Fatalities	#Vessels
Capsizing	5	1	4	6
Collision w/fixed object	11	11	5	11
Collision w/floating object	2	3	0	4
Collision w/vessel	23	19	1	46
Fall in boat	6	7	0	8
Falls overboard	7	6	2	8
Fire/Explosion (fuel)	2	1	0	2
Flooding/Swamping	6	1	0	7
Grounding	3	1	0	4
Sinking	2	0	0	3
Skier Mishap	3	4	0	4
Starting Engine	0	0	0	0
Struck submerged object	4	2	0	4
Struck by boat	4	4	0	7
Struck by motor/propeller	1	2	0	1
Other	5	1	1	7
Total	84	63	13	122

BOAT INFORMATION

ACCIDENT STATISTICS BY TYPE OF BOAT

Type Of Boat	#Injuries	#Fatalities	#Vessels
Auxiliary Sail	0	0	3
Cabin Motorboat	10	4	14
Houseboat	0	0	4
Open Motorboat	25	2	47
Personal Watercraft	21	1	30
Pontoon	2	0	4
Rowboat	4	2	3
Sail Only	0	0	0
Other	1	2	6
Unknown	0	2	11
Total	63	13	122

ACCIDENT STATISTICS BY OPERATION AT TIME OF ACCIDENT

Vessel Operation	#Injuries	#Fatalities	#Vessels
At Anchor	2	0	7
Changing Direction	9	0	17
Changing Speed	2	0	8
Cruising	31	6	50
Docking/Undocking	1	0	6
Drifting	9	1	1
Launching	0	0	0
Rowing/Padding	1	4	4
Sailing	0	0	0
Tied to Dock/mooring	2	0	3
Unknown	5	2	23
Other	1	0	3
Total	63	13	122

ACCIDENT CAUSES

ACCIDENT STATISTICS BY PRIMARY CAUSE OF ACCIDENT

Primary Cause	#Accidents	#Injuries	#Fatalities	#Vessels
Alcohol Use	8	9	5	12
Careless/Reckless Operation	14	16	2	23
Congested Waters	1	1	0	1
Equipment Failure	2	0	0	2
Electrical Wiring	1	0	0	1
Excessive Speed	1	2	1	1
Failure to Vent	1	1	0	1
Hazardous Waters	8	8	0	8
Hull Failure	3	0	0	4
Improper Anchoring	1	0	0	1
No Proper Lookout	1	1	0	1
Operator Inattention	12	7	0	22
Operator Inexperience	6	6	0	12
Restricted Vision	3	2	1	4
Sharp Turn	4	3	0	5
Standing/Sitting on gunwhales, bow	1	1	0	1
Struck Submerged/Floating Object	3	1	0	1
Wake	2	2	0	2
Weather (Heavy)	2	0	0	4
Other	7	1	2	6
Unknown	3	2	2	10
Total	84	63	13	122

OPERATOR INFORMATION

ACCIDENT STATISTICS BY OPERATOR EDUCATION

Operator Education	#Injuries	#Fatalities	#Vessels Operators
American Red Cross	1	0	3
Informal	1	0	4
State Course	6	0	8
U.S. Power Squadron	5	0	7
U.S.C.G. Auxiliary	1	0	5
None	39	8	13
Unknown	10	5	82
Total	63	13	122

ACCIDENT STATISTICS BY OPERATOR EXPERIENCE

Operator Experience	#Injuries	#Fatalities	#Vessel Operators
Under 10 hours	12	2	20
10 - 100 hours	12	0	17
Over 100 hours	28	5	52
Unknown	11	6	33
Total	63	13	122

ACCIDENT STATISTICS BY OPERATOR AGE

Operator Age	#Injuries	#Fatalities	#Vessels
< 10	0	0	0
10 - 12	1	0	1
13 - 17	5	1	9
18 - 19	3	1	7
20 - 29	21	2	24
30 - 39	12	6	22
40 - 49	11	1	21
50 - 59	4	0	8
60 - 69	3	0	10
70 +	0	1	1
Unknown	3	1	19
Total	63	13	122

ACCIDENT LOCATION

ACCIDENT STATISTICS BY BODY OF WATER

Body Of Water	#Accidents	#Injuries	#Fatalities	#Vessels
Bangs Lake	1	0	0	2
Braidwood Lake	1	0	0	1
Cal. Sag Channel	4	6	1	6
Carlyle Lake	3	2	0	4
Chicago River	1	0	0	1
Clinton Lake	5	5	0	8
Fox River	3	2	0	6
Governor Bond Lake	1	1	0	1
Grass Lake	1	2	0	2
Heidecke Lake	1	0	0	1
Illinois River	13	8	1	19
Kaskaskia River	1	0	0	1
Keiswetter Lake	1	1	1	1
Kinkaid Lake	1	1	0	1
Lake Glen Shoals	1	2	0	2
Lake Michigan	12	7	2	18
Lake Shelbyville	2	1	0	3
Lake Springfield	1	0	0	1
Lake Taylorville	1	1	0	1
Lake Vermilion	2	4	0	3
Matanzas Lake	1	2	0	2
Mississippi River	12	10	4	17
Nippersink Lake	1	1	0	2
Prairie East Lake	1	1	0	1
Private Pond	1	0	1	1
Quincy Country Club Lake	1	0	1	1
Rend Lake	2	2	0	3
Rock River	4	2	0	6
Sangamon River	1	0	1	1
Spoon Lake	1	1	0	2
Vermilion River	1	1	1	2
Wabash River	2	1	0	2
TOTAL	84	63	13	122

BODY OF WATER BROKEN DOWN BY COUNTY

Waterway	#Accidents	#Injuries	#Fatalities	#Vessels
Bangs Lake				
Lake County	1	0	0	2
Subtotal	1	0	0	2
Braidwood Lake				
Will County	1	0	0	1
Subtotal	1	0	0	1
Cal/Sag Channel				
Cook County	4	6	1	6
Subtotal	4	6	1	6
Carlyle Lake				
Clinton County	3	2	0	4
Subtotal	3	2	0	4
Chicago River				
Cook County	1	0	0	1
Subtotal	1	0	0	1
Clinton Lake				
DeWitt County	5	5	0	8
Subtotal	5	5	0	8
Fox River				
Kane County	1	1	0	2
McHenry County	2	1	0	4
Subtotal	3	2	0	6
Governor Bond Lake				
Bond County	1	1	0	1
Subtotal	1	1	0	1
Grass Lake				
Lake County	1	2	0	2
Subtotal	1	2	0	2
Heidecke Lake				
Grundy County	1	0	0	1
Subtotal	1	0	0	1
Illinois River				
LaSalle County	5	4	0	8
Marshall County	2	1	0	2
Peoria County	3	1	0	5
Tazewell County	2	1	1	2
Woodford County	1	1	0	2
Subtotal	13	8	1	19
Keiswetter Lake				
Tazewell County	1	1	1	1
Subtotal	1	1	1	1

Body of Water Broken Down By County cont.

Waterway	#Accidents	#Injuries	#Fatalities	#Vessels
Kaskaskia River				
St. Clair County	1	0	0	1
Subtotal	1	0	0	1
Kinkaid Lake				
Jackson County	1	1	0	1
Subtotal	1	1	0	1
Lake Glenn Shoals				
Montgomery County	1	2	0	2
Subtotal	1	2	0	2
Lake Michigan				
Cook County	8	5	2	11
Lake County	4	2	0	7
Subtotal	12	7	2	18
Lake Shelbyville				
Shelby County	2	1	0	3
Subtotal	2	1	0	3
Lake Springfield				
Sangamon County	1	0	0	1
Subtotal	1	0	0	1
Lake Taylorville				
Christian County	1	1	0	1
Subtotal	1	1	0	1
Lake Vermilion				
Vermilion County	2	4	0	3
Subtotal	2	4	0	3
Mantanzas Lake				
Mason County	1	2	0	2
Subtotal	1	2	0	2
Mississippi River				
Calhoun County	4	4	0	6
Carroll County	3	3	0	4
Hancock County	1	1	0	1
JoDaviess County	1	0	0	2
Madison County	1	2	4	1
Rock Island County	1	2	0	2
Whiteside County	1	0	0	1
Subtotal	12	10	4	17
Nippersink Lake				
Lake County	1	1	0	2
Subtotal	1	1	0	2
Prairie East Lake				
Edgar County	1	1	0	1
Subtotal	1	1	0	1

Body of Water Broken Down By County cont.

Waterway	#Accidents	#Injuries	#Fatalities	#Vessels
Private Pond				
Washington County	1	0	1	1
Subtotal	1	0	1	1
Quincy Country Club Lake				
Adams County	1	0	1	1
Subtotal	1	0	1	1
Rend Lake				
Franklin County	2	2	0	3
Subtotal	2	2	0	3
Rock River				
Ogle County	1	1	0	1
Rock Island County	1	1	0	1
Winnebago County	2	0	0	4
Subtotal	4	2	0	6
Sangamon River				
Sangamon County	1	0	1	1
Subtotal	1	0	1	1
Spoon Lake				
Knox County	1	1	0	2
Subtotal	1	1	0	2
Vermilion River				
Livingston County	1	0	1	2
Subtotal	1	0	1	2
Wabash River				
Lawrence County	1	1	0	1
Wabash County	1	0	0	1
Subtotal	2	1	0	2
TOTAL	84	63	13	122

ACCIDENT STATISTICS BY COUNTY

County	#Accidents	#Injuries	#Fatalities	#Vessels
Adams	1	0	1	1
Bond	1	1	0	1
Calhoun	4	2	0	6
Carroll	3	3	0	4
Christian	1	1	0	1
Clinton	3	2	0	4
Cook	13	11	3	18
DeWitt	5	5	0	8
Edgar	1	1	0	1
Franklin	2	2	0	3

Accident Statistics by County cont.

County	#Accidents	#Injuries	#Fatalities	#Vessels
Grundy	1	0	0	1
Hancock	1	1	0	1
Jackson	1	1	0	1
JoDaviess	1	0	0	2
Kane	1	1	0	2
Knox	1	1	0	2
LaSalle	5	4	0	8
Lake	7	5	0	13
Lawrence	1	1	0	1
Madison	1	2	4	1
Marshall	2	1	0	2
Mason	1	2	0	2
McHenry	2	1	0	4
Montgomery	1	2	0	2
Ogle	1	1	0	1
Peoria	3	1	0	5
Rock Island	2	3	0	3
Sangamon	2	0	1	2
Shelby	2	1	0	3
St. Clair	1	0	0	1
Tazewell	3	2	2	3
Vermilion	3	4	1	5
Wabash	1	0	0	1
Washington	1	0	1	1
Whiteside	1	0	0	1
Will	1	0	0	1
Winnebago	2	0	0	4
Woodford	1	1	0	2
TOTAL	84	63	13	122

COUNTIES BROKEN DOWN BY BODY OF WATER

County	#Accidents	#Injuries	#Fatalities	#Vessels
Adams County				
Quincy Country Club Lake	1	0	1	1
Subtotal	1	0	1	1
Bond County				
Governor Bond Lake	1	1	0	1
Subtotal	1	1	0	1
Calhoun County				
Mississippi River	4	2	0	6
Subtotal	4	2	0	6

Counties Broken Down By Body of Water cont.

County	#Accidents	#Injuries	#Fatalities	#Vessels
Carroll County				
Mississippi River	3	3	0	4
Subtotal	3	3	0	4
Christian County				
Lake Taylorville	1	1	0	1
Subtotal	1	1	0	1
Clinton County				
Carlyle Lake	3	2	0	4
Subtotal	3	2	0	4
Cook County				
Cal-Sag Channel	4	6	1	6
Chicago River	1	0	0	1
Lake Michigan	8	5	2	11
Subtotal	13	11	3	18
DeWitt County				
Clinton Lake	5	5	0	8
Subtotal	5	5	0	8
Edgar County				
Prairie East Lake	1	1	0	1
Subtotal	1	1	0	1
Franklin County				
Rend Lake	2	2	0	3
Subtotal	2	2	0	3
Grundy County				
Heidecke Lake	1	0	0	1
Subtotal	1	0	0	1
Hancock County				
Mississippi River	1	1	0	1
Subtotal	1	1	0	1
Jackson County				
Kincaid Lake	1	1	0	1
Subtotal	1	1	0	1
JoDaviess County				
Mississippi River	1	0	0	2
Subtotal	1	0	0	2
Kane County				
Fox River	1	1	0	2
Subtotal	1	1	0	2
Knox County				
Spoon Lake	1	1	0	2
Subtotal	1	1	0	2
LaSalle County				
Illinois River	5	4	0	8
Subtotal	5	4	0	8

Counties Broken Down By Body of Water cont.

County	#Accidents	#Injuries	#Fatalities	#Vessels
Lake County				
Bangs Lake	1	0	0	2
Grass Lake	1	2	0	2
Nippersink Lake	1	1	0	2
Lake Michigan	4	2	0	7
Subtotal	7	5	0	13
Lawrence County				
Wabash River	1	1	0	1
Subtotal	1	1	0	1
Madison County				
Mississippi River	1	2	4	1
Subtotal	1	2	4	1
Marshall County				
Illinois River	2	1	0	2
Subtotal	2	1	0	2
Mason County				
Matanzas Lake	1	2	0	2
Subtotal	1	2	0	2
McHenry County				
Fox River	2	1	0	4
Subtotal	2	1	0	4
Montgomery County				
Glenn Shoals Lake	1	2	0	2
Subtotal	1	2	0	2
Ogle County				
Rock River	1	1	0	1
Subtotal	1	1	0	1
Peoria County				
Illinois River	3	1	0	5
Subtotal	3	1	0	5
Rock Island County				
Mississippi River	1	2	0	2
Rock River	1	1	0	1
Subtotal	2	3	0	3
Sangamon County				
Lake Springfield	1	0	0	1
Sangamon River	1	0	1	1
Subtotal	2	0	1	2
Shelby County				
Lake Shelbyville	2	1	0	3
Subtotal	2	1	0	3
St. Clair County				
Kaskaskia River	1	0	0	1
Subtotal	1	0	0	1

Counties Broken Down By Body of Water cont.

County	#Accidents	#Injuries	#Fatalities	#Vessels
Tazewell County				
Illinois River	2	1	1	2
Keiswetter Lake	1	1	1	1
Subtotal	3	2	2	3
Vermilion County				
Lake Vermilion	2	4	0	3
Vermilion River	1	0	1	2
Subtotal	3	4	1	5
Wabash County				
Wabash River	1	0	0	1
Subtotal	1	0	0	1
Washington County				
Private Pond	1	0	1	1
Subtotal	1	0	1	1
Whiteside County				
Mississippi River	1	0	0	1
Subtotal	1	0	0	1
Will County				
Braidwood Lake	1	0	0	1
Subtotal	1	0	0	1
Winnebago County				
Rock River	2	0	0	4
Subtotal	2	0	0	4
Woodford County				
Illinois River	1	1	0	2
Subtotal	1	1	0	2
TOTAL	84	63	13	122

NARRATIVES

1. Two subjects were in a semi-V-bottom row boat dropping Christmas trees into a lake for fish habitat. The victim stood up and threw a tree overboard, then attempted to throw a cement block tied to the tree into the water. The block went overboard pulling the victim along with it. The boat capsized throwing the passenger into the water also. The passenger unsuccessfully attempted to pull the victim, who was not swimming well, to shore. Neither subject was wearing a PFD.

   Contributing Factors: Failure to wear PFD
   Unstable overweighted boat
   Careless Operation

2. A group of people were trespassing on a private lake and drinking. Two of them boarded a small rowboat and began rocking it from side to side in horse play. The boat capsized throwing the occupants into the water. Both subjects tried to crawl onto the upside down boat, but were unsuccessful. The surviving subject attempted to assist the victim; however, was unable to. The victim panicked and pulled the subject underwater with him. The survivor resurfaced and the victim disappeared under the surface of the water. The body was recovered the next day. The survivor had been drinking. The victim had not.

   Contributing Factors: Failure to wear PFD
   Careless//Reckless Operation

3. A group of four individuals went canoeing on the river when the water was high. All claimed to have canoeing experience, and the victim had completed Life Saving training. None of them had taken any boating safety classes. The group came upon a dam not realizing the danger or how far the drop would be. Both canoes paddled across the dam at the same time. One victim got out of the boil after going under three times and was able to go for help. Two others were rescued from the boil; however, the fourth victim disappeared. The drowning victim was observed going underwater with a life vest on; however, the PFD was found undamaged floating downstream. It was assumed to have fallen off when the victim went under the surface of the water.

   Contributing Factors: Dam/Lock
   Hazardous Waters
   Operator Inexperience

2003 Boat Accident Narratives continued

4. A group of people traveling in a cabin motorboat spent the day traveling the river visiting various drinking and eating establishments. Everyone on the boat had been drinking. As the vessel was returning to its original launch location later in the evening, it ran into a Lock and Dam gate killing the operator and three passengers. Two passengers survived. The operator's BAC was .188.

   Contributing Factors: Alcohol Use
   Excessive Speed
   Operator Inattention

5. As an open motorboat was attempting to maneuver around a break wall, it picked up speed and was hit by several large waves. The waves caused the boat to rock and flip to the side. A passenger fell out of his seat and onto the passenger seated to his left. The passengers held onto to one another until the boat stabilized. The operator fell into the passenger seated to his side and then into the water. One passenger jumped into the water in an attempt to rescue the operator; however, the operator was too large and the waves too high for the passengers to get the victim back into the boat. The victim suffered a cardiac arrest prior to arriving at the hospital. One passenger was admitted for internal injures and the others were treated and released for bruises and lacerations. The operator had no boating safety education.

   Contributing Factors: Excessive Speed
   Operator Inattention
   Operator Inexperience

6. Two people were traveling the river in a fourteen foot jon boat after dark. A spotlight was being used to assist with navigation. As the boat rounded a bend in the river, the operator requested that the spotlight be turned off, so travel could continue by moonlight along with only the boat's navigation lights. Immediately after turning off the spotlight, the boat hit a log in the river head on. The boat capsized throwing both the operator and passenger into the water. The passenger stated that he grabbed onto a snag sticking out of the water and saw the operator holding on to the side of the boat. The operator yelled and instructed the passenger to go get help, possibly indicating that he was injured. The passenger swam approximately 100 yards to shore and obtained assistance. By the time rescue crews arrived on the scene, the operator's body had disappeared. The victim's family indicated that he was a swimmer. Neither subject was wearing a PFD and both had been drinking earlier in the day.

   Contributing Factors: Restricted Vision
   Excessive Speed
   Alcohol Use
   Failure to wear PFD

2003 Boat Accident Narratives continued

7. A group of people in a cabin motorboat and one person on a pwc were cruising the river stopping at bars along the shoreline. The operator of the pwc accelerated after passing a no wake area, and sped away from the boat. The operator of the boat followed at approximately 40 mph but was unable to gain on the pwc. Passengers on the boat kept the pwc in sight with a spotlight then suddenly lost sight of it. The operator of the boat maintained his speed and collided with the unseen pwc. The operator of the boat did not notice the pwc adrift until the time of impact. After impact, the victim's body was floating face down near the bank of the river. It is believed that the operator of the pwc was in the water prior to the collision with the boat.

   Contributing Factors: Careless/Reckless Operation
   Alcohol Use
   Operator Inattention

8. An intoxicated individual ignored the advice of friends and boarded a canoe in the river. The subject paddled away downstream. Approximately twenty minutes after the victim left in the canoe, a witness saw the canoe floating downstream on its side. The victim's body was located two days later against the wickets on a lock and dam. Toxicology results showed the subject's bac to be .1898.

   Contributing Factors: Alcohol Use
   Operator Inexperience
   Failure to wear PFD

9. Two individuals stole a rowboat and began paddling with the back of the boat facing the direction in which they were traveling. Water flooded the boat and caused it to sink. The victim was intoxicated, unable to swim and was not wearing a pfd. The passenger was able to swim to shore.

   Contributing Factors: Alcohol Use
   Failure to wear PFD
   Operator Inexperience

10. A witness observed an object floating next to a boat on a pond. The floating object was sinking at a steady pace. The witness was aware that the victim was supposed to be fishing on the pond but was nowhere in sight. Rescue crews found the object to be the body of the missing fisherman. The boat was nearly full of water indicating that the victim may have attempted to climb back inside it prior to his death.

    Contributing Factors: Failure to wear PFD
    Operator Inexperience/Inattention