ILLINOIS

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Boating Safety Education & Lifejackets

Save Lives!

BOATING ACCIDENT REPORT

2008

Compiled by Federal Fiscal Year 2008
Updated: February 10, 2009

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FOREWORD

Boating Accidents 2008 contains statistics on recreational boating accidents, recreational boating enforcement, boating safety, and boat registering activities. For the first time in 2008, Illinois' Boating Accident Report (BAR) was compiled to reflect the Federal Fiscal Year (10/01/2007 – 09/30/2008). This publication is a result of the coordinated effort of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) and those jurisdictions which investigate recreational boating accidents and enforce boating laws in the State of Illinois.

Boating Accidents 2008 may be copied freely in the interest of boating safety. For questions and suggestions regarding content, availability of the current or back issues, use the address or telephone number at the top of this page. For an electronic copy, visit the Illinois Department of Natural Resources Web Site at http://dnr.state.il.us/law3/

MISSION

The Office of Law Enforcement supports the Department's programs designed to protect Illinois' natural and recreational resources through enforcement of those portions of the Illinois Compiled Statutes enacted for that purpose. Conservation Police Officers are vested with full state-wide police authority and are trained to the highest standards for law enforcement professionals in Illinois. In addition to enforcement responsibilities, Conservation Police Officers (CPO) serve as an important link between the Department and its various constituencies (civic groups, sportsmen's groups, sport shows, etc.). CPOs are called upon to assist outside agencies in emergency situations or rescue operations. They participate in the instruction of conservation related statutes to outside agencies, law enforcement organizations, and educational institutions upon request.

Law Enforcement Creed

"To serve, protect, educate, and assist the public in its outdoor recreational endeavors."
"To be a vigilant guardian of the natural resources on behalf of the citizens of the State of Illinois."
"To encourage the wise use of our natural resources and to insure no harm to public safety, or to the environment, in this pursuit."
"To educate the inadvertent violator of Conservation Law and to take the appropriate level of enforcement action to achieve this goal."
"To relentlessly pursue the unrepentant offender and bring him before the court for judgement."
"To conduct our personal outdoor recreational activities in an exemplary manner, above reproach, and serve as a role model of outdoor ethics to our peers and to the general public."
"This we pledge to the citizens of Illinois."

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INTRODUCTION

SCOPE

This report contains statistics on recreational boating accidents, registered boats, boating enforcement, and information on boating safety activities for Federal Fiscal Year 2008 (10/01/2007 – 09/30/2008). Data used to compile the recreational boating accident statistics comes from two sources: (1) Boating Accident Reports of IDNR investigations of boating accidents that occurred on waters within the State; and (2) reports forwarded to the IDNR by other jurisdictions within the State. In the absence of investigations, information is collected from accident reports filed by boat operators. Data used to compile the boating enforcement statistics comes from three sources: (1) IDNR Conservation Police Officer Daily Activity Reports, (2) CPO Operating Under the Influence Reports, and (3) reports forwarded to the IDNR by other jurisdictions within the State.

USE OF THE STATISTICS

Users of the statistics in this report need to be aware of the following facts that may affect results of analyses of accident report data:

1. Some accidents are not in the system because they are not required to be reported. Many more accidents are not reported because boaters are not aware of the accident reporting regulations as well as the difficulty law enforcement agencies encounter in enforcing those regulations. We believe only a small fraction of boating accidents occurring in the State of Illinois are not reported to the IDNR or local law enforcement agencies. However, we believe nearly all fatal recreational boating accidents are included in this report. Overall, the more serious the accident, the more frequent the reporting.

2. Non-fatal accidents cannot be assumed to have occurred in numbers proportional to the reported statistics because the act of reporting an accident is not a random sampling of accidents in the statistical sense. Rather, selection is based on the ability and willingness of those involved to file a report.

3. Fluctuations from year to year in statistics may be caused by factors other than the change in the total number of recreational watercraft. A seemingly small change in the low reporting rate may cause a relatively large change in the statistics.

4. Recreational boating enforcement is not a random sampling of arrests in the statistical sense. Rather, selection is based on arrests the Conservation Police and other law enforcement agencies involved report to the IDNR.

ACCIDENTS EXCLUDED FROM THE REPORT

This report does not include the following:

1. Accidents involving only property damage of less than $2000;

2. Accidents involving only slight injury which did not require medical treatment beyond first aid;

3. Accidents which were not caused or contributed to by a vessel, its equipment, or its appendages;

4. Accidents where a person died or was injured from natural causes while aboard a vessel;

5. Accidents where a person died or was injured while swimming to retrieve an object or a vessel that was adrift from its mooring or dock, having departed from the shore or pier;

6. Accidents involving damage, injury, or death on a docked or moored vessel that resulted from storms, or swell conditions

7. Accidents where a person died or was injured while swimming for pleasure from a vessel that WAS NOT underway (i.e., the vessel was anchored, moored, or docked). In those cases, the vessel was being used as a platform for other activities, such as swimming or diving, and was not involved in any event that contributed to the casualty.

ACCIDENTS THAT ARE INCLUDED IN THIS REPORT

This report includes the following boating accidents involving a swimmer, a recreational vessel and its operation:

1. A person dies or is injured while swimming because of carbon monoxide poisoning;

2. A person dies or is injured while swimming because a vessel is improperly connected to shore power and resultant stray electrical current enters the water causing electrocution;

3. A person dies or is injured after leaving a vessel that is underway to swim for pleasure because the vessel IS NOT anchored, moored, or docked and the swimmer is unable to get back to the vessel;

4. A person is struck by a vessel, or its associated equipment, where the vessel serves as the instrument striking the person.

Accident reports for thirteen (13) fatalities were entered into the IDNR System that satisfy the reporting requirements above for inclusion in this report.

BOAT ACCIDENTS AT A GLANCE

Between 1993 - 2008, the State of Illinois registered 5,896,868 recreational boats. During these years, 2,089 boating accidents were reported that resulted in 274 fatalities and 1,318 injuries. For comparison purposes, the following represents the number of reportable boating accidents, injuries, fatalities, and vessels for the past 16 years:

Year	Total Number of Accidents	Total Number of Injuries	Total Number of Fatalities	Total Number of Vessels	Total Number of Registered Boats	Number of Fatalities per 100,000 Registered Boats
1993	134	94	32	163	371,000	8.6
1994	157	131	17	211	381,864	4.5
1995	178	88	16	228	386,500	4.1
1996	155	90	27	214	390,000	6.9
1997	145	81	14	223	397,000	3.5
1998	176	107	19	249	395,500	4.8
1999	159	75	13	238	394,108	3.3
2000	155	76	14	231	370,568	3.8
2001	112	75	8	171	368,047	2.2
2002	135	92	23	188	364,075	6.3
2003	84	63	13	122	360,252	3.6
2004	78	45	18	103	356,305	5.0
2005	115	100	16	152	342,745	4.7
2006	79	66	18	119	343,591	5.2
2007	107	57	13	146	339,288	3.8
2008	120	78	13	174	336,025	3.9
Total	**2089**	**1318**	**274**	**2932**	**5,896,868**	**4.6**

***** In 2003, Coast Guard's reporting criteria for property damage went from $500 to $2,000.

* In 2006, IDNR's reporting criteria for property damage went from $500 to $2,000.

* In 2008, Boating Accident Report was compiled to reflect the Federal Fiscal Year (10/01/2007 – 09/30/2008).

* The total number of registered boats was based on calendar year 2008.

BOATING SAFETY EDUCATION COURSE

Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) boating safety courses are offered free to the public. The courses 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 volunteers 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, or TDD 217/782-9175. IDNR Safety Education provides course schedules and offers courses over the internet which can be accessed through the IDNR web site at http://dnr.state.il.us.

Classroom-style courses continue to be offered at various times and locations throughout the state. The on-line version of Boater Education continues to be a positive avenue for the public to gain needed information and certification. In 2007, the Department of Natural Resources (IDNR), certified 2,573 out of 2,906 boating safety students. The Boat-Ed internet course offered to the citizens of Illinois had 1,687 individuals take the exam, 1,358 passed and 313 failed.

2008 Safety Education course numbers:

Volunteer Instructors: 157

Traditional classroom courses:	47 classes	certified 857	failed 13
Internet course:	1,699 exams issued	certified 1,362	failed 313
Totals:		2,219	326

Approximately 90% of all reported fatalities occurred on boats where the operator had not received, or it was unknown if the operator had received, boating safety instruction.

The Illinois Department of Natural Resources is concerned by the lack of boating safety education. Accident statistics demonstrate our current boating safety education requirement may not be reaching those age groups involved in the majority of accidents. The State of Illinois requires boating safety education for persons 12 to 17 years of age. Persons at least 18 years of age or older are not required to have boating safety education. The boating accident statistics show since 2000, 80% of injuries, 61% of fatalities, and 72% of watercraft involved in accidents were operated by persons between 20 and 59 years of age. The lack of boating safety education among operators between the ages of 20 and 59 is apparent in the accident statistics. In 2007, operators between the ages of 20 and 59 were involved in 74% of the boating accidents and 38% were involved in fatal boating accidents. This trend has continued in FFY 2008.

The Department of Natural Resources challenges all Conservation Police 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, Reckless/Careless Operation, and the danger associated with Carbon Monoxide poisoning.

REPORTING CRITERIA AND GUIDELINES FOR WATERCRAFT ACCIDENTS

A recreational boating accident means a recreational vessel, a numbered vessel, or a documented vessel is being used by its operator for recreational purposes and one or more of the following events occur involving the vessel or its equipment:

1. A person dies; or
2. A person disappears; or
3. A person has an injury that requires medical treatment greater than first aid; or
4. Damages resulting to the vessel(s) / property involved equal or exceed $2,000; or
5. A total loss of vessel

AND

The accident involved a recreational vessel, documented vessel being used for recreational purposes, OR a vessel that was required to be numbered BUT NOT required to be United States Coast Guard inspected.

AND

The accident involved the vessel, or its associated equipment, in one of the following occurrences:

- Grounding;
- Capsizing;
- Flooding / Swamping;
- Falls within or overboard a vessel;
- Person(s) ejected from a vessel;
- Person leaves a vessel that is underway to swim for pleasure;
- Person leaves a vessel in an attempt to retrieve a lost item, another person, or another vessel;
- Sinking;
- Fire or Explosion;
- Skier Mishap;
- Collision with another vessel;
- Collision with object;
- The vessel, propeller, propulsion unit, or steering machinery strikes a person;
- Carbon Monoxide asphyxiation

As a general guideline, if any of the above events occur and there is a reasonable likelihood that as a result of the event(s) – an injury, death, or property damage occurs – the incident is a recreational boating accident.

Boat operators are required to report their accidents to authorities in the jurisdiction where the accident occurred. In cases involving personal injury, and/or property damage in excess of $2,000, the operator must file a Boating Accident Report Form (BAR) with the IDNR within 5 days of the date of the accident. Accidents resulting in death must be reported to the IDNR on a BAR within 2 days of the accident.

NON-REPORTABLE GUIDELINES

The following guidelines list occurrences directly or indirectly involving a vessel where vessel activities or operation DID NOT contribute to a boating accident. While these occurrences may be reported in the State of Illinois, they will be classified as "non-reportable recreational boating accidents."

a. A person dies or is injured from self-inflicted wounds, alcohol poisoning, ingestion of drugs, controlled substances or poison; or from gunshot wounds.

b. A person dies or is injured from assault by another person or persons while aboard a vessel.

c. A person dies or is injured from natural causes while aboard a vessel.

d. A person dies or is injured while swimming for pleasure from a vessel that IS NOT underway (the vessel is anchored, moored, or docked). CAUTION needs to be exercised to confirm the vessel was used as a swimming platform only. The following are REPORTABLE boating accidents involving a swimmer, a recreational vessel and its operation:

- A person dies or is injured while swimming because of Carbon Monoxide asphyxiation;
- A person dies or is injured while swimming because a vessel is improperly connected to shore power and resultant stray electrical current enters the water causing electrocution;
- A person dies or is injured after leaving a vessel that is underway to swim for pleasure because the vessel IS NOT anchored, moored, or docked and the swimmer is unable to get back to the vessel.

e. A person dies or is injured in swimming to retrieve an object or a vessel that is adrift from its mooring or dock, having departed from the shore or pier.

f. A person dies or is injured after falling or jumping from a swim raft that is moored or anchored for use as a swimming platform or other purpose.

g. A person dies, is injured, or property damage occurs while preparing a vessel for launching or retrieving a vessel AND the vessel is not in or upon the water.

h. Damage, injury, or death results from a fire on shore or a pier that spreads to a vessel or vessels.

i. A person dies, is injured, or property damage results from an "ice boat" accident. An ice boat is a sail-powered device which rides on runners/blades over the ice on frozen lakes and rivers and carries at least the operator. It cannot be used as a conventional sailboat on open water.

j. Damage, injury, or death on a docked or moored vessel resulting from storms or swell conditions

k. Damage to a docked or moored vessel due to theft or any vandalism.

l. Death, injury, or damage on a docked, moored, or anchored non-propelled houseboat or other vessel used primarily as a permanent residence.

m. A person dies or is injured while using underwater breathing apparatus (i.e., snorkeling or scuba diving) and the vessel did not contribute to the casualty.

BOAT REGISTRATION

Illinois requires every watercraft, other than sailboards, on waters within the jurisdiction of this State to be numbered. No person may operate, or give permission for the operation of, any watercraft on such waters unless the watercraft is numbered in accordance with the Boat Registration & Safety Act, or in accordance with applicable Federal law, or in accordance with a Federally-approved numbering system of another State, and (1) the certificate of number awarded to such watercraft is in full force and effect, and (2) the identifying number set forth in the certificate of number is displayed on each side of the bow of such watercraft.

The owner of each watercraft requiring numbering by this State shall file an application for number with the Department of Natural Resources on forms approved by it. The application shall be signed by the owner of the watercraft and shall be accompanied by a fee as follows:

A. Class A (all canoes and kayaks).....$13

B. Class 1 (all watercraft less than 16 feet in length, except canoes / kayaks).....$22

C. Class 2 (all watercraft 16 feet or more but less than 26 feet in length except canoes/kayaks)..$52

D. Class 3 (all watercraft 26 feet or more but less than 40 feet in length)...$82

E. Class 4 (all watercraft 40 feet in length or more).....$107

*** Registration is valid for three years**

BOATING STATISTICAL SUMMARY

In 2008, for the first time, Illinois' Boating Accident Report (BAR) was compiled to reflect the Federal Fiscal Year (10/01/2007 – 09/30/2008). Illinois had 120 USCG Reportable Accidents in FFY08, resulting in 78 injuries and 13 fatalities. The total number of registered boats (336,025) was based on calendar year 2008. This equates to 23.0 injuries and 3.9 fatalities per 100,000 registered boats. The number of reportable accidents and injuries increased from 2007. Illinois had 107 USCG Reportable Accidents in 2007, resulting in 57 injuries and 13 fatalities. The sixteen year Illinois average is 82.2 injuries and 17 fatalities per year.

Boating enforcement is considered to be a high priority and maximum available coverage was provided. In FFY08, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources Office of Law Enforcement worked 39,998 hours on the Recreational Boat Safety Program (RBS). This was an increase of 8,614 hours from FFY07. Conservation Police were re-directed from recreational boat duties to respond to 6 natural disasters caused by flooding in FFY08. Several counties in Illinois were flooded and declared Federal Disaster Areas as a result.

During the 2008 recreational boating season, Conservation Police Officers (CPOs) made 154 operating under the influence (OUI) of alcohol or drugs arrests. Other Law Enforcement agencies made 31 OUI arrests, for a total of 185 OUI arrests. CPO emphasis on OUI enforcement remains a high priority. All officers have been trained in OUI detection and arrest procedures. There was an overall increase in citations and written warnings issued in FFY 2008. Conservation Police Officers issued 1,603 citations and 3,695 warnings for various infractions of the Boat Registration & Safety Act. CPOs inspected 12,505 vessels, provided assistance to a combination of 1,141 persons and vessels, and conducted 65 search and rescue missions. CPOs also conducted 70 enforcement details throughout the State. The details focused on alcohol, PFD, and reckless/careless operation violations. The only category seeing a decrease was careless/reckless operation, which was down by 10 arrests (from 45 to 35). Officer presence through 6,394 additional on-the-water hours, as well as enforcement details, may have contributed to the overall decrease.

Boating accident reports indicate the majority of accidents occur between June and August, on Saturday or Sunday, between 12 p.m. and 6 p.m. Conditions are usually clear with good visibility, light winds, and calm water. Most accidents involve operators between the ages of twenty and forty who have over one hundred hours of boating experience but have little or no classroom boating safety instruction. They also involve open motorboats cruising in a careless/reckless manner culminating in a collision with another boat.

Thirteen people died in Illinois boating accidents in 2008. In this reporting period, most fatalities occurred during the week between 6 p.m. and 12 a.m. with clear conditions and calm waters. The winds were calm to light with good visibility. 10 of the 13 fatalities involved open motorboats less than 16 feet in length. In the majority of fatalities, the operators had no formal boat safety education.

Once again, the factor that would have saved lives this past season would have been for people to wear their Personal Floatation Devices (PFD). Of 13 fatalities, 10 may have survived if they had worn their PFDs. Two people died from blunt force trauma and other injuries. The leading type of accidents involving fatalities were collisions with fixed objects and flooding / swamping.

The State of Illinois does not require a Coast Guard-approved PFD to be worn. However, persons under the age of 13, and operators/passengers on personal watercraft or specialty prop-craft, are required to wear a Coast Guard-approved PFD. The most proactive action a boater can do to ensure his/her safety on the water is wear a Coast Guard-approved PFD of the appropriate size and in serviceable condition.

BOATING ACCIDENT REPORT – Federal Fiscal Year 2008

Illinois' Boating Accident Report (BAR) was compiled to reflect the Federal Fiscal Year (10/01/2007 – 09/30/2008).

Total Accidents	**120**	**Fatalities**		**Registered Watercraft**	336,025
# of Injuries	78	#Died by Drowning	10		
# of Fatalities	13	#Died from Trauma	0	**# of Injuries per 100,000 Registered Watercraft**	23.0
# of Vessels	174	# Other	1		
		# Unknown	2	**# of Fatalities per 100,000 Registered Watercraft**	3.9
		Total	**13**		

ACCIDENT STATISTICS BY DAY OF THE WEEK

Day of Week	#Accidents	#Injuries	#Fatalities	#Vessels
Sunday	36	21	2	60
Monday	8	4	1	9
Tuesday	7	4	1	9
Wednesday	12	6	3	18
Thursday	8	5	3	11
Friday	15	14	2	16
Saturday	34	24	1	51
Total	**120**	**78**	**13**	**174**

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	0	1
April	6	2	2	6
May	10	12	1	13
June	23	14	2	35
July	35	27	1	53
August	34	16	4	50
September	3	3	0	5
October	3	2	0	5
November	3	1	1	4
December	2	1	2	2
Total	**120**	**78**	**13**	**174**

ACCIDENT STATISTICS BY TIME OF DAY

Time	#Accidents	#Injuries	#Fatalities	#Vessels
Unknown	1	0	1	1
12:01 a.m. - 6:00 a.m.	4	4	0	6
6:01 a.m. - 12:00 noon	10	11	3	13
12:01 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.	74	49	3	110
6:01 p.m. - 12:00 a.m.	31	14	6	44
Total	**120**	**78**	**13**	**174**

ACCIDENT STATISTICS BY WATER CONDITIONS

Water	#Accidents	#Injuries	#Fatalities	#Vessels
Calm (Waves < 6")	61	31	8	95
Choppy (Waves 6"-2')	35	25	2	50
Rough (Waves 2'-6')	14	8	0	17
Very Rough (Waves >6')	2	9	0	2
Strong /Swift Current	5	4	2	6
Unknown	3	1	1	4
Total	**120**	**78**	**13**	**174**

ACCIDENT STATISTICS BY WEATHER CONDITIONS

Weather	#Accidents	#Injuries	#Fatalities	#Vessels
Clear	103	60	10	154
Cloudy	12	8	2	13
Fog	0	0	0	0
Rain	1	7	0	1
Hazy	0	0	0	0
Unknown	4	3	1	6
Total	**120**	**78**	**13**	**174**

ACCIDENT STATISTICS BY WIND CONDITIONS

Wind	#Accidents	#Injuries	#Fatalities	#Vessels
None	10	1	4	15
Light (0-6 mph)	62	51	5	91
Moderate (7-14 mph)	23	8	2	34
Strong(15-25 mph)	11	5	0	14
Stormy (>25 mph)	1	7	0	1
Unknown	13	6	2	19
Total	**120**	**78**	**13**	**174**

ACCIDENT STATISTICS BY VISIBILITY

Visibility	#Accidents	#Injuries	#Fatalities	#Vessels
Good	108	64	11	158
Fair	8	12	1	10
Poor	0	0	0	0
Unknown	4	2	1	6
Total	**120**	**78**	**13**	**174**

ACCIDENT STATISTICS BY TYPE OF ACCIDENT

Type Of Accident	# Injuries	# Fatalities	#Vessels
Capsizing	3	1	5
Collision w/vessel	26	1	91
Collision w/fixed object	6	0	13
Collision w/floating object	0	1	1
Fall in boat	7	0	5
Falls overboard	1	4	7
Fire/Explosion (fuel)	2	0	3
Fire/Explosion (Other than fuel)	0	0	2
Flooding/Swamping	5	3	15
Grounding	0	0	3
Person Departed Vessel	1	0	2
Person Ejected from a Vessel	1	0	2
Sinking	7	0	1
Skier Mishap	5	0	5
Starting Engine	3	0	2
Struck by boat	4	0	3
Struck submerged object	3	0	2
Unknown	0	2	8
Other	4	1	4
Total	**78**	**13**	**174**

ACCIDENT STATISTICS BY TYPE OF BOAT

Type Of Boat	#Injuries	#Fatalities	#Vessels
Auxiliary Sail	0	0	5
Cabin Motorboat	12	1	25
Houseboat	0	0	1
Open Motorboat	41	7	73
Personal Watercraft	21	0	43
Pontoon	1	0	12
Rowboat	0	1	1
Sail Only	0	0	1
Other	3	4	6
Unknown	0	0	7
Total	**78**	**13**	**174**

ACCIDENT STATISTICS BY OPERATION AT TIME OF ACCIDENT

Vessel Operation	#Injuries	#Fatalities	#Vessels
At Anchor	4	1	8
Changing Direction	4	0	17
Changing Speed	9	0	17
Cruising	40	4	73
Docking/Undocking	2	1	8
Drifting	5	2	20
Launching	0	0	1
Rowing/Padding	2	2	3
Sailing	0	0	1
Tied to Dock/mooring	4	0	14
Unknown	3	3	7
Other	5	0	5
Total	**78**	**13**	**174**

ACCIDENT STATISTICS BY VESSEL LENGTH IN FEETS

Vessel Length in Feet	#Injuries	#Fatalities	#Vessels
Less than 10 feet	6	3	16
10 feet to less than 16 feet	27	7	51
16 feet to less than 20 feet	13	1	29
20 feet to less than 26 feet	19	1	44
26 feet to less than 40 feet	9	0	16
Over 40 feet	2	0	9
Unknown	2	1	9
Total	**78**	**13**	**174**

ACCIDENT STATISTICS BY
PRIMARY CAUSE OF ACCIDENT

Primary Cause	# Injuries	#Fatalities	#Vessels
Alcohol Use	1	1	4
Careless/Reckless Operation	4	0	21
Congested Waters	2	0	4
Dam/Lock	2	2	3
Equipment Failure	2	1	5
Excessive Speed	3	0	4
Failure to Vent	3	0	2
Force of Wake	7	0	9
Hazardous Waters	2	0	5
Hull Failure	0	1	1
Ignition of Spilled Fuel or Vapors	0	0	1
Improper Loading	0	1	1
Machinery Failure	1	0	11
Medical Condition	0	2	3
No Proper Lookout	0	0	1
Operator Inattention	6	0	17
Operator Inexperience	6	0	9
Other Vessel Fault	13	1	34
Overloading	1	1	1
Passenger/Skier Behavior	5	0	5
Sharp Turn	3	0	7
Standing/Sitting in Inappropriate Position	2	0	3
Weather (Heavy)	11	0	12
Other	3	0	3
Unknown	1	3	8
Total	**78**	**13**	**174**

OPERATOR INFORMATION

ACCIDENT STATISTICS BY OPERATOR EDUCATION

Operator Education	#Injuries	#Fatalities	#Vessels
American Red Cross	0	0	0
Informal	5	2	16
State Course	9	1	15
U.S. Power Squadron	1	0	4
U.S.C.G. Auxiliary	3	0	11
None	38	4	73
Unknown	22	6	55
Total	**78**	**13**	**174**

ACCIDENT STATISTICS BY OPERATOR EXPERIENCE

Operator Experience	#Injuries	#Fatalities	#Vessels
Under 10 hours	10	2	18
10 - 100 hours	12	1	31
Over 100 hours	41	4	82
Unknown	15	6	43
Total	**78**	**13**	**174**

ACCIDENT STATISTICS BY OPERATOR AGE

Operator Age	#Injuries	Fatalities	#Vessels
< 10	0	0	0
10-12	0	0	0
13-17	7	1	11
18-19	1	0	5
20-29	21	3	36
30-39	21	0	32
40-49	12	1	32
50-59	8	2	23
60-69	6	2	15
70 +	2	3	5
Unknown	0	1	15
Total	**78**	**13**	**174**

ACCIDENT STATISTICS BY BODY OF WATER

Body Of Water	#Accidents	#Injuries	#Fatalities	#Vessels
Angler's Lake	1	0	1	1
Bluff Lake	1	0	0	2
Cal Sag River	1	2	0	1
Carlyle Lake	5	8	0	8
Clinton Lake	7	5	0	9
Coffeen Lake	1	0	0	1
Des Plaines River	1	0	1	1
Diamond Lake	2	3	0	2
Dunns Lake	1	0	0	2
Fox Lake	4	4	0	7
Fox River	6	6	1	9
Horseshoe Lake	1	0	0	1
Illinois River	15	7	1	22
Kankakee River	3	3	0	4
Kinkaid Lake	3	0	0	4
Lake Bloomington	1	0	1	1
Lake Carroll	2	1	0	2
Lake Decatur	2	2	0	2
Lake Holiday	1	0	0	2
Lake Lou Yeager	2	1	0	3
Lake Marie	2	0	0	4
Lake Michigan	23	13	2	34
Lake of Egypt	1	0	0	1
Lake Shelbyville	1	0	0	1
Lake Springfield	4	4	0	7
Lake Taylorville	1	0	0	2
LaSalle Lake	3	2	0	3
Mississippi River	12	11	2	19
Otter Lake	1	0	0	2
Pistakee Lake	2	0	0	4
Private Pond	2	0	2	2
Rend Lake	2	1	0	3
Rock River	2	0	1	2
Round Lake	1	1	0	2
South Wilmington Incline	1	1	0	1
Vermilion River	1	2	0	1
Wonder Lake	1	1	1	2
Total	**120**	**78**	**13**	**174**

BODY OF WATER BROKEN DOWN
BY COUNTY

Waterway	#Accidents	#Injuries	#Fatalities	#Vessels
Angler's Lake				
St. Clair County	1	0	1	1
Subtotal	**1**	**0**	**1**	**1**
Bluff Lake				
Lake County	1	0	0	2
Subtotal	**1**	**0**	**0**	**2**
Cal Sag River				
Cook County	1	2	0	1
Subtotal	**1**	**2**	**0**	**1**
Carlyle Lake				
Clinton County	5	8	0	8
Subtotal	**5**	**8**	**0**	**8**
Clinton Lake				
Dewitt County	7	5	0	9
Subtotal	**7**	**5**	**0**	**9**
Coffeen Lake				
Montgomery County	1	0	0	1
Subtotal	**1**	**0**	**0**	**1**
Des Plaines River				
Cook County	1	0	1	1
Subtotal	**1**	**0**	**1**	**1**
Diamond Lake				
Lake County	2	3	0	2
Subtotal	**2**	**3**	**0**	**2**
Dunns Lake				
Lake County	1	0	0	2
Subtotal	**1**	**0**	**0**	**2**
Fox Lake				
Lake County	4	4	0	7
Subtotal	**4**	**4**	**0**	**7**
Fox River				
Kane County	3	4	0	4
Lake County	1	2	0	2
McHenry County	2	0	1	3
Subtotal	**6**	**6**	**1**	**9**

Body of Water Broken Down By County cont.

Waterway	#Accidents	#Injuries	#Fatalities	#Vessels
Horseshoe Lake				
Madison County	1	0	0	1
Subtotal	**1**	**0**	**0**	**1**
Illinois River				
Grundy County	4	3	0	7
Jersey County	1	1	0	2
LaSalle County	5	0	0	8
Marshall County	1	1	0	1
Peoria County	3	2	1	3
Tazewell County	1	0	0	1
Subtotal	**15**	**7**	**1**	**22**
Kankakee River				
Kankakee County	1	1	0	1
Will County	2	2	0	3
Subtotal	**3**	**3**	**0**	**4**
Kinkaid Lake				
Jackson County	3	0	0	4
Subtotal	**3**	**0**	**0**	**4**
Lake Bloomington				
Fulton County	1	0	1	1
Subtotal	**1**	**0**	**1**	**1**
Lake Carroll				
Carroll County	2	1	0	2
Subtotal	**2**	**1**	**0**	**2**
Lake Decatur				
Macon County	2	2	0	2
Subtotal	**2**	**2**	**0**	**2**
Lake Holiday				
LaSalle County	1	0	0	2
Subtotal	**1**	**0**	**0**	**2**
Lake Lou Yeager				
Montgomery County	2	1	0	3
Subtotal	**2**	**1**	**0**	**3**
Lake Marie				
Lake County	2	0	0	4
Subtotal	**2**	**0**	**0**	**4**

Body of Water Broken Down By County cont.

Waterway	#Accidents	#Injuries	#Fatalities	#Vessels
Lake Michigan				
Cook County	11	5	1	18
Lake County	11	8	0	15
Unknown	1	0	1	1
Subtotal	**23**	**13**	**2**	**34**
Lake of Egypt				
Williamson County	1	0	0	1
Subtotal	**1**	**0**	**0**	**1**
Lake Shelbyville				
Shelby County	1	0	0	1
Subtotal	**1**	**0**	**0**	**1**
Lake Springfield				
Sangamon County	4	4	0	7
Subtotal	**4**	**4**	**0**	**7**
Lake Taylorville				
Christian County	1	0	0	2
Subtotal	**1**	**0**	**0**	**2**
LaSalle Lake				
LaSalle County	3	2	0	3
Subtotal	**3**	**2**	**0**	**3**
Mississippi River				
Carroll County	2	1	1	2
Jersey County	1	1	0	2
JoDaviess County	1	2	0	2
Rock Island County	5	4	1	9
Whiteside County	3	3	0	4
Subtotal	**12**	**11**	**2**	**19**
Otter Lake				
Macoupin County	1	0	0	2
Subtotal	**1**	**0**	**0**	**2**
Pistakee Lake				
Lake County	2	0	0	4
Subtotal	**2**	**0**	**0**	**4**
Private Pond				
Peoria County	1	0	1	1
Saline County	1	0	1	1
Subtotal	**2**	**0**	**2**	**2**

Body of Water Broken Down By County cont.

Waterway	#Accidents	#Injuries	#Fatalities	#Vessels
Rend Lake				
Franklin County	2	1	0	3
Subtotal	**2**	**1**	**0**	**3**
Rock River				
Henry County	1	0	1	1
Winnebago County	1	0	0	1
Subtotal	**2**	**0**	**1**	**2**
Round Lake				
Lake County	1	1	0	2
Subtotal	**1**	**1**	**0**	**2**
South Wilmington Incline				
Grundy County	1	1	0	1
Subtotal	**1**	**1**	**0**	**1**
Vermilion River				
LaSalle County	1	2	0	1
Subtotal	**1**	**2**	**0**	**1**
Wonder Lake				
McHenry County	1	1	1	2
Subtotal	**1**	**1**	**1**	**2**
Total	**120**	**78**	**13**	**174**

ACCIDENT STATISTICS BY COUNTY

County	#Accidents	#Injuries	#Fatalities	#Vessels
Carroll County	4	2	1	4
Christian County	1	0	0	2
Clinton County	5	8	0	8
Cook County	13	7	2	20
DeWitt County	7	5	0	9
Franklin County	2	1	0	3
Fulton County	1	0	1	1
Grundy County	5	4	0	8
Henry County	1	0	1	1
Jackson County	3	0	0	4
Jersey County	2	2	0	4
JoDaviess County	1	2	0	2
Kane County	3	4	0	4
Kankakee County	1	1	0	1
Lake County	25	18	0	40
LaSalle County	10	4	0	14
Macon County	2	2	0	2
Macoupin County	1	0	0	2
Madison County	1	0	0	1
Marshall County	1	1	0	1
McHenry County	3	1	2	5
Montgomery County	3	1	0	4
Peoria County	4	2	2	4
Rock Island County	5	4	1	9
Saline County	1	0	1	1
Sangamon County	4	4	0	7
Shelby County	1	0	0	1
St. Clair County	1	0	1	1
Tazewell County	1	0	0	1
Whiteside County	3	3	0	4
Will County	2	2	0	3
Williamson County	1	0	0	1
Winnebago County	1	0	0	1
Unknown	1	0	1	1
Total	**120**	**78**	**13**	**174**

COUNTIES BROKEN DOWN BY BODY OF WATER

County	#Accidents	#Injuries	#Fatalities	#Vessels
Carroll County				
Lake Carroll	2	1	0	2
Mississippi River	2	1	1	2
Subtotal	**4**	**2**	**1**	**4**
Christian County				
Lake Taylorville	1	0	0	2
Subtotal	**1**	**0**	**0**	**2**
Cook County				
Cal Sag River	1	2	0	1
Des Plaines River	1	0	1	1
Lake Michigan	11	5	1	18
Subtotal	**13**	**7**	**2**	**20**
Dewitt County				
Clinton Lake	7	5	0	9
Subtotal	**7**	**5**	**0**	**9**
Franklin County				
Rend Lake	2	1	0	3
Subtotal	**2**	**1**	**0**	**3**
Fulton County				
Lake Bloomington	1	0	1	1
Subtotal	**1**	**0**	**1**	**1**
Grundy County				
Illinois River	4	2	0	7
South Wilmington Incline	1	1	0	1
Subtotal	**5**	**3**	**0**	**8**
Henry County				
Rock River	1	0	1	1
Subtotal	**1**	**0**	**1**	**1**
Jackson County				
Kinkaid Lake	3	0	0	4
Subtotal	**3**	**0**	**0**	**4**
Jersey County				
Illinois River	1	1	0	2
Mississippi River	1	1	0	2
Subtotal	**2**	**2**	**0**	**4**
JoDaviess County				
Mississippi River	1	2	0	2
Subtotal	**1**	**2**	**0**	**2**

Counties Broken Down By Body of Water cont.

County	#Accidents	#Injuries	#Fatalities	#Vessels
Kane County				
Fox River	3	4	0	4
Subtotal	**3**	**4**	**0**	**4**
Kankakee County				
Kankakee River	1	1	0	1
Subtotal	**1**	**1**	**0**	**1**
Lake County				
Bluff Lake	1	0	0	2
Diamond Lake	2	3	0	2
Dunns Lake	1	0	0	2
Fox Lake	4	4	0	7
Fox River	1	2	0	2
Lake Michigan	11	8	0	15
Lake Marie	2	0	0	4
Pistakee Lake	2	0	0	4
Round Lake	1	1	0	2
Subtotal	**25**	**18**	**0**	**40**
LaSalle County				
Illinois River	5	0	0	8
Lake Holiday	1	0	0	2
LaSalle Lake	3	2	0	3
Vermillion River	1	2	0	1
Subtotal	**10**	**4**	**0**	**14**
Macon County				
Lake Decatur	2	2	0	2
Subtotal	**2**	**2**	**0**	**2**
Macoupin County				
Otter Lake	1	0	0	2
Subtotal	**1**	**0**	**0**	**2**
Madison County				
Horseshoe Lake	1	0	0	1
Subtotal	**1**	**0**	**0**	**1**
Marshall County				
Illinois River	1	1	0	1
Subtotal	**1**	**1**	**0**	**1**
McHenry County				
Fox River	2	0	1	3
Wonder Lake	1	1	1	2
Subtotal	**3**	**1**	**2**	**5**

Counties Broken Down By Body of Water cont.

County	#Accidents	#Injuries	#Fatalities	#Vessels
Montgomery County				
Coffeen Lake	1	0	0	1
Lake Lou Yeager	2	1	0	3
Subtotal	**3**	**1**	**0**	**4**
Peoria County				
Illinois River	3	2	1	3
Private Pond	1	0	1	1
Subtotal	**4**	**2**	**2**	**4**
Rock Island County				
Mississippi River	5	4	1	9
Subtotal	**5**	**4**	**1**	**9**
Saline County				
Private Pond	1	0	1	1
Subtotal	**1**	**0**	**1**	**1**
Sangamon County				
Lake Springfield	4	4	0	7
Subtotal	**4**	**4**	**0**	**7**
Shelby County				
Lake Shelbyville	1	0	0	1
Subtotal	**1**	**0**	**0**	**1**
St Clair County				
Angler's Lake	1	0	1	1
Subtotal	**1**	**0**	**1**	**1**
Tazewell County				
Illinois River	1	0	0	1
Subtotal	**1**	**0**	**0**	**1**
Whiteside County				
Mississippi River	3	3	0	4
Subtotal	**3**	**3**	**0**	**4**
Will County				
Kankakee River	2	2	0	3
Subtotal	**2**	**2**	**0**	**3**
Williamson County				
Lake of Egypt	1	0	0	1
Subtotal	**1**	**0**	**0**	**1**
Winnebago County				
Rock River	1	0	0	1
Subtotal	**1**	**0**	**0**	**1**
Unknown				
Lake Michigan	1	0	1	1
Subtotal	**1**	**0**	**1**	**1**
Total	**120**	**78**	**13**	**174**

2008 Fatal Boat Accident Narratives

1. A passenger onboard a 15 foot Starcraft was killed when the boat she was riding in, at night, was struck by an 18 foot Sea Ray. The operator of the Sea Ray claimed he did not see functioning navigation lights on the Starcraft. Findings of the investigation were inconclusive as to whether or not the Starcraft was properly displaying navigational lights prior to the collision. The operator of the Sea Ray was arrested for OUI. His BAC was .179%. The cause of death, as indicated by the coroner's report, was blunt trauma of the chest, abdomen, and pelvis sustained as a result of a boating crash.

   Contributing Factors: Alcohol Use
   Improper, or no, look out
   Violation of Navigational Rules – Overtaking
   Improper lighting – indicated as "possible contributing factor" in report

2. Witness statements indicate a jon boat was traveling upriver when the operator fell off the boat into the water. The operator was alone in the boat at the time of the accident. A nearby witness paddled her canoe to the scene within 3 – 4 minutes of the fall overboard. The witness found the victim floating face down, unresponsive, and without a pulse. The cause of death, as indicated by the coroner's report, was drowning. Additionally, it was the opinion of the coroner that a preexisting heart condition could've contributed to the man's death.

   Contributing Factors: Fall overboard
   Failure to wear a PFD
   Preexisting medical condition

3. A 60 year old man was boating with his wife and two sons. While at anchor fishing, he fell out of his boat after the stem on the pedestal seat broke as he was attempting to "set the hook" on a fish. Attempts to rescue the man were unsuccessful. The man was not wearing a PFD at the time he fell overboard. As a result, he drowned.

   Contributing Factors: Equipment failure
   Fall overboard
   Failure to wear a PFD

4. A grandfather and his 2 year old grandson were preparing for a boat ride. As he readied the boat for use, the grandfather had a hypoglycemic event rendering him incapacitated. At some point, the 2 year old fell into the river from the boat, or the dock, and was later found floating face down 200 yards downstream. The juvenile was not wearing a life vest at the time he fell into the river. Efforts to revive the youth were unsuccessful. The coroner attributed the boy's death to drowning.

   Contributing Factors: Sudden medical condition
   Fall overboard
   Failure to wear a PFD

2008 Fatal Boat Accident Narratives

5. Three men attempted to access an island in the Fox River via a rented, 14 foot, row boat, during hazardous river levels. The crossing was attempted upriver of a low head dam. The current, intensified by the high river level, drew the boat toward the dam causing the boat to strike the upriver side of the dam. Two occupants of the row boat fell into the river. One man was wearing a PFD, the other was not. The boater without the PFD drowned as a result of the accident.

   Contributing Factors: Hazardous waters
   Operator inexperience
   Failure to wear a PFD
   Dam / Lock

6. While fishing, at a private pond with a group of friends, two men attempted to cross the pond on a paddle boat. The hull of the paddle boat was damaged. Subsequently, water filled the hull and caused the boat to become unstable. The men entered the water in an attempt to swim to shore without wearing PFD's. One of the men was unable to make it to shore. The coroner's report listed the cause of death as drowning. Toxicology tests indicated the presence of cannabis in the deceased's system.

   Contributing Factors: Hull failure
   Operator inexperience
   Failure to wear a PFD
   Drug use

7. The lone occupant of a watercraft went missing on the Mississippi River while traveling to a friend's house. The ensuing investigation revealed the boater contacted his friend by cellular phone to tell him he had struck an object in the river disabling his boat and possibly breaking his nose. During that conversation, the injured man claimed he was going to try to paddle the boat to shore. The friend offered to contact emergency personnel but the subject refused; due to the fact that, he was under the influence of alcohol. Approximately 6 weeks after the date of the accident, the man's body was found floating in the river. The coroner's report listed the cause of death as probable drowning. Toxicology tests determined the subject had a BAC of .147%.

   Contributing Factors: Alcohol use
   Hazardous waters
   Hull failure
   Failure to wear a PFD

8. The U.S. Coast Guard recovered the body of an adult female that went missing while kayaking on Lake Michigan. The lady was said to be an experienced kayaker and was reported missing by family members after she failed to return home. For unknown reasons, she ended up in the water and drowned.

   Contributing Factors: Failure to wear a PFD

2008 Fatal Boat Accident Narratives

9. A man went over a low head dam on a river in a small, rubber raft and got caught in the boil at the base of the dam. After several minutes, the boil released the man and he was swept down stream. The man was not wearing a PFD. When emergency responders recovered the man, he was unconscious and not breathing. He drowned as result of the incident.

   Contributing Factors: Hazardous waters
   Dam / lock
   Failure to wear a PFD

10. Two men were using a hovercraft to transport them to an ice fishing spot on a river. En route, an equipment failure caused the hovercraft to stall, become unstable, and begin to fill with water. The men rolled the craft over and climbed on top of it. The operator of the vessel attempted to swim to shore without wearing a PFD. The passenger, had a PFD on, and chose to stay with the boat. The operator was unable to make it to shore and drowned.

    Contributing Factors: Overloading
    Equipment failure
    Failure to wear a PFD
    Hazardous waters

11. A man drowned while fishing from a small jon boat on a private pond. A search was conducted after his wife called police and reported he had not come home from fishing. The man was found seated at the rear of his submerged boat. He was not wearing a PFD.

    Contributing Factors: Improper loading
    Standing / sitting in an inappropriate position
    Failure to wear a PFD
    Swamping / flooding

12. A man drowned while goose hunting on a private pond. A search was conducted after the man was overdue from hunting and was reported missing. A small jon boat was found, overturned in the pond, near a location where indicia of hunting was present. The subject's body was recovered from the pond. He was not wearing a PFD.

    Contributing Factors: Standing / sitting in an inappropriate position
    Hazardous waters
    Failure to wear a PFD

13. A man died while boating with friends on Lake Michigan. For unknown reasons, he ended up in the water and drowned. Toxicology results indicated the victim had a high BAC at the time of the incident.

    Contributing Factors: Alcohol use
    Failure to wear a PFD