



2024 PENNSYLVANIA BOATING INCIDENT ANALYSIS

The total number of reported recreational boating incidents in Pennsylvania in 2024 increased by 11 from 2023. Boaters and Waterways Conservation Officers reported 59 recreational boating incidents of all types, 18% more than 2023. The number of vessels involved in reported accidents totaled 76, an increase of 17 from 2023. Incident reports indicated 38 injuries requiring medical treatment, which was four less than in 2023. Property damage to vessels totaled \$196,400 which was \$12,199 less than the amount reported in the previous year. One vessel incident comprised \$40,000 or 20% of that total. Federal and state law requires that incidents involving death, disappearance, injuries requiring medical treatment beyond first aid, and/or property damage exceeding \$2,000 be reported to the state. Incidents with lesser property damage and/or minor injuries are not required to be reported.

Of the 59 reported accidents in 2024, the most common types of incidents were collisions with vessels and capsizing. The types of reported accidents were as follows:

Type	Quantity	Type	Quantity
Collision with vessel	15	Struck by prop	3
Capsizing	6	Person ejected from vessel	2
Struck submerged/fixed/floating object	6	Person leaves vessel	2
Skier Mishap	6	Fall in boat	2
Grounding	6	Sinking	1
Falls overboard	4	Swamping	1
Fire/explosion	4	Unknown	1
TOTAL INCIDENTS: 59			

In 2024, 10 recreational boating incidents resulted in 10 fatalities. This is an increase of two fatalities from the previous year and is below the 10-year average of 10.6 victims. Factoring in the 2024 fatalities, Pennsylvania's new 10-year average is 9.9 victims. Four of the 10 victims in 2024 were wearing a life jacket at the time of the mishap that resulted in death.

The attached "Recreational Boating Fatalities Recap" is a summary of all fatal recreational boating incidents in the Commonwealth that year. The recap's last page details statistical information about 2024's fatal boating accidents. This recap is intended to provide information to illustrate the importance of safe boating practices and to help improve boating safety in the Commonwealth.

2024 RECREATIONAL BOATING FATALITIES RECAP

These brief recaps are intended to provide awareness of fatal recreational boating incidents. Details are subject to change pending a full investigation. Annual incident analyses and updated fatality recaps may be found on the Commission's website at: <https://www.pa.gov/agencies/fishandboat.html>.

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|----|--------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. | 1 Fatality
02/16/2024 | Susquehanna River
9:24 A.M. | Dauphin County
Friday |
|----|--------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------|

A 44-year-old male is deceased after he fell overboard from his 12-foot anchored kayak in cold water. The victim was reported to be an accomplished kayaker. He was wearing a manual inflatable lifejacket which was not activated and waders at the time of the incident. The victim was later recovered after several days of search and rescue efforts by first responders. The victim did not have any formal boating safety education. Sudden coldwater immersion may have been a factor.

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| 2. | 1 Fatality
03/15/2024 | Juniata River
9:30 P.M. | Juniata County
Friday |
|----|--------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|

A 45-year-old male is deceased after he fell overboard from his 16-foot open motorboat in cold fast water while attempting to anchor. The other three passengers also fell overboard but were rescued from the water. None of the individuals were wearing lifejackets. The victim did not have any formal boating safety education. Sudden coldwater immersion, alcohol, and drug use may have all been factors.

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| 3. | 1 Fatality
04/20/2024 | Susquehanna River
7:55 P.M. | Union County
Saturday |
|----|--------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------|

A 37-year-old female is deceased after she fell overboard from a 13-foot open motorboat while approaching a boat access ramp. The other two passengers also fell overboard but both were able to swim ashore. The individuals were wearing lifejackets but the victim's came off when she fell overboard. The victim did not have any formal boating safety education. Sudden coldwater immersion may have been a factor.

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| 4. | 1 Fatality
04/30/2024 | Schuylkill River
2:15 P.M. | Montgomery County
Tuesday |
|----|--------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|

A 70-year-old male is deceased after he separated from his 10-foot kayak while fishing above Norristown Dam on the Schuylkill River. It is believed that the victim was wearing a lifejacket but did not any formal boating safety education.

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| 5. | 1 Fatality
05/19/2024 | Shermans Creek
8:00 A.M. | Perry County
Sunday |
|----|--------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|

A 36-year-old male is deceased when he became entangled in the anchor line after the 14-foot canoe swamped. The water was high and swift due to recent rainfall. The victim was not wearing a lifejacket and had no formal boating safety education.

6.	1 Fatality 07/06/2024	Schuylkill River 5:17 P.M.	Berks County Saturday
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A 41-year-old male is deceased after capsizing from his 10-foot sit-on-top kayak. The victim was not wearing a lifejacket and there were none onboard. The victim did not have any formal boating safety education. Alcohol use may have been a factor.

7.	1 Fatality 07/13/2024	Monongahela River 10:13 A.M.	Washington County Saturday
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A 39-year-old male is deceased while barefoot water skiing from a 20-foot open motorboat. During a maneuver the victim slid into a docked boat after letting go of the tow rope. The victim contacted the docked boat and was unresponsive. The occupants of the boat rendered aid to the unresponsive skier until first responders arrived. The victim did have formal boating safety education and was wearing a waterskiing wetsuit at the time of the incident.

8.	1 Fatality 07/27/2024	Hammond Lake 8:17 A.M.	Tioga County Saturday
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A 16-year-old male is deceased after falling overboard from his 12-foot kayak while fishing. The victim did not have any formal boating safety education. The victim was not wearing a lifejacket but there was one onboard.

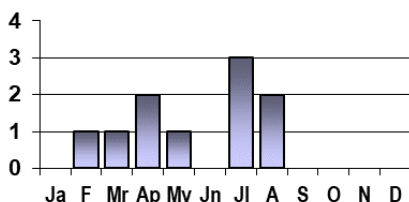
9.	1 Fatality 08/10/2024	Yellow Breeches Creek 4:53 P.M.	Cumberland County Saturday
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A 10-year-old male is deceased after capsizing from his kayak. There was a group of kayakers, three adults and four children. There was a tree down across the creek. As the group was trying to get out of the water above the log, the victim got caught against the log and capsized his kayak. He went underwater and never resurfaced. The water was high and swift due to recent rainfall. The victim was not wearing a lifejacket and there were none onboard. The victim did not have any formal boating safety education.

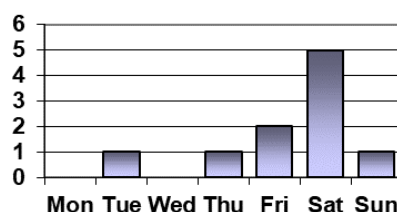
10.	1 Fatality 08/15/2024	Susquehanna River 10:36 P.M.	Lancaster County Thursday
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A 39-year-old male is deceased after leaving his 20-foot open motorboat that had run out of fuel and had drifted aground on a rock shelf. The victim left the boat voluntarily to swim to shore and seek help. Witnesses say they watched him swim and then go underwater and not resurface. The victim was not wearing a lifejacket and there were none onboard. The victim was an experienced boat operator and had formal boating safety education.

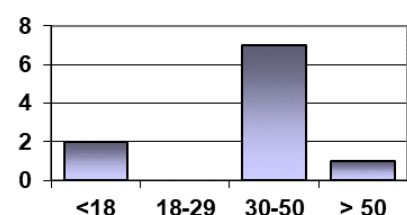
FATALITIES by MONTH



FATALITIES by DAY



FATALITIES by AGE



TOTALS FOR 2024: There were 59 recreational boating incidents reported, 38 of which involved injuries requiring medical treatment, and 10 accidents that resulted in 10 fatalities.

		FATAL INCIDENTS	FATALITIES
LOCATION	Rivers	9	9
	Lakes	1	1
TYPE OF BOAT (Carrying victim)	Motorboat	4	4
	Paddlecraft	6	6
TYPE OF ACCIDENT	Falls overboard	4	4
	Capsizing	4	4
	Person leaves vessel	1	1
	Unknown	1	1
LIFE JACKETS	Worn	4	4
	None/Insufficient #	2	2
	Onboard but not worn	4	4
HYPOTHERMIA OR COLDWATER SHOCK (Possible factor)		3	3
DRUGS/ALCOHOL (Any proven use regardless of BAC)		2	2