

BOATING REPORT



LIFESAVING SOCIETY®

The Lifeguarding Experts

2005

Statistics on boating fatalities show long-term trends in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador. Over the past 5 years a total of 48 people have lost their lives by drowning while participating in boating activities. Although numbers are down, boating continues to be the leading cause of preventable water-related deaths in Newfoundland and Labrador. In 2003, boating deaths accounted for 63% of all Newfoundland and Labrador drownings, increasing significantly from 38% in 2002.

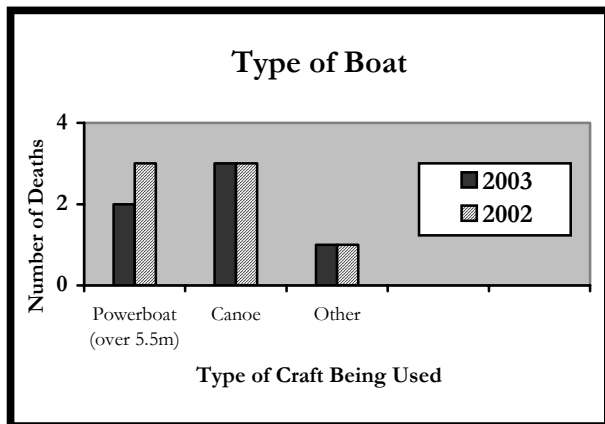
WHO?

Of the 48 boating fatalities in the past 5 years, all victims were male.

2002 had the first child drowning involving boating in over 5 years but fortunately there were no boating victims under the age of 18 in 2003. The 18-49 age group did, however, see 8 victims drowning deaths involving boating. This number has unfortunately increased this year following a decrease of 10 to 5 victims from 2001 to 2002. Luckily, the 50+ age group has decreased this year to 2 victims, down 50% from 4 victims in 2002.

WHAT?

In 50% of the drowning incidents in 2003 involving boating, the size of the powerboat being used could not be determined. It was known, however, that 20% were using a boat over 5.5m, or 18 feet. Luckily, 2003, like 2002, did not have any deaths involving kayaks.

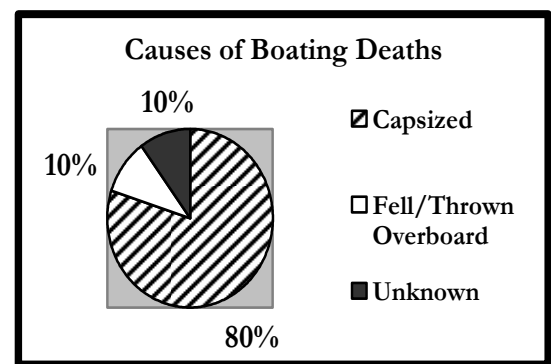


This year, 100% of boating-related drowning victims in 2002 were participating in recreational activities; this number is up 40% from last year. Powerboating ranked as the highest activity involving boating that caused death with 50%, this also increasing from 30% in 2002.

Fishing from a boat (10%), and canoeing

(20%) were also among the common recreational activities associated with boating deaths. Fortunately, this year there were no occupational or daily-living fatalities involving boating.

Of the 9 known causes of boating fatalities in 2003, 1 death was attributed to falling/being thrown overboard, down from 2 in 2002 and 8 deaths were also attributed to capsizing, which is a significant increase from the 2 deaths that occurred in 2002.

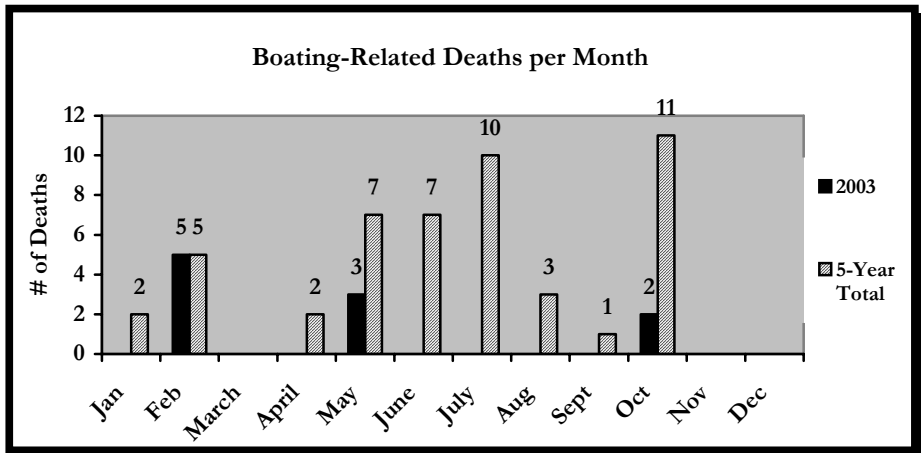


WHEN?

The summer months of June and July were most shocking in the monthly statistics for boating fatalities in 2003. Last year 50% of all boating fatalities in Newfoundland and Labrador occurred during June and July, this year, however, there were no boating victims during either of these months. February, rather, had the highest one-month total for the year, accounting for 5 of the 10 total boating deaths, followed by May with 3, and October with 2.

These 2003 statistics have completed changed the ongoing trend, that appeared for the past 5 years in this province, with the summer month of July having the highest 5-year total.

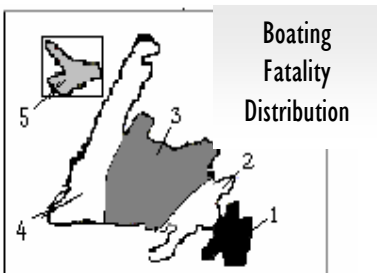
In 2003, 60% of all water-related boating fatalities occurred during the weekday (Monday thru Thursday). The remaining 40% occurred on the weekend (Friday thru Sunday). This year, however, 50% occurred on Monday alone, with another 40% on Sunday and the remaining 10% on Saturday. A review of the 5-year total show that Tuesdays now have the highest drowning rates over all other days of the week, with over 20% of boating fatalities alone, followed closely by Mondays and Saturdays with almost 19% each. Fishing continues to be the leading cause of weekend drownings in this province.



It is unknown at what exactly what time of day almost 47% of victims drowned. Statistics do show, however, that in 2003, 25% of boat-related drownings occur in the afternoon, 13% in the morning and night, and 6% in the evening. The drownings that occurred after midnight involved recreational activities and alcohol consumption.

WHERE?

In 2003, the two areas of the province that saw the highest boating-related drownings were Eastern and Central Newfoundland, with 5 and 3 deaths respectively. These numbers show a major increase for the Eastern region with 50% of the fatalities being boating-related, up 32% since 2002. For Western Newfoundland, the one and only drowning that occurred was boating related, while Labrador had no boating victims. Central saw a minimal increase of 3% from 27% to 30% in 2003 and the Avalon region had one boating-related drowning.

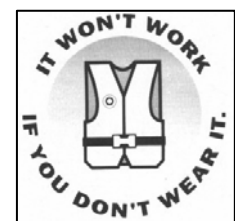


In 2002 70% of the total water-related boating fatalities occurred on the ocean, while the remaining 30% occurred on lakes/ponds. These statistics have remained the same through 2003. Lake/pond drownings have increased by 67% moving from 2001 through 2003. Five-year trends show consistency in relation to ocean deaths with an average of 75% of all boating fatalities occurring on the ocean.

WHY?

PFD/Lifejackets

Although it is unknown whether half of 2003's boating-related drowning victims were wearing lifejackets, the remaining statistics show that people still aren't wearing PFD's or lifejackets. 2003 statistics show that exactly 40% of the boating-fatalities were NOT wearing a lifejacket. Not wearing a lifejacket continues to be a major factor in boating fatalities. Only one of the 16 drowning victims were wearing a lifejacket. The lack of a PFD/lifejacket is more common among males and remains highest in the 18-49 age group.

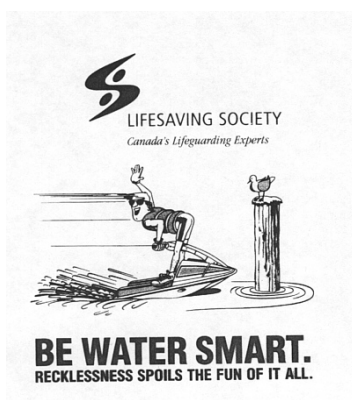


Alcohol

Alcohol continues to play a role in Newfoundland and Labrador's boating fatalities, being considered a factor in 30% of boating deaths in 2003, this number is actually down another 10% from 2002. In comparison to the 5 year total (27%), 2003's boating deaths are among the highest, but statistics show that while these numbers remain high, there has been a decrease from 2001.

Alone

5 year totals show that an average of 36% of all boating-related fatalities occur when only one person occupied a boat. 2003 experienced a small decrease of 7%, in comparison to 2002, in the number of incidences where drowning victims were boating alone.



The Future

Much drowning prevention work remains to be done in Newfoundland and Labrador. Risk-taking behaviors such as alcohol consumption, not wearing a lifejacket/PFD and the lack of boat operator training are the factors contributing to the high death rate among adult men. Initiatives such as new federal recreational boating safety regulations, which began to take effect in September 1999, and the LIFESAVING SOCIETY'S B.O.A.T. (Boat Operator Accredited Training) safety course will help reduce the drowning toll.

As well, the Society's Water Smart public education campaign educates Canadians on how to modify their high-risk behavior and assume greater responsibility for themselves and others when in, on, or near water.

The Society's Lifesaving and Lifeguarding training programs teach self-rescue and how to rescue others.

Be A Water Smart® Boater...

1) Know The Boating "Rules Of The Road"!

MORE DETAILS AVAILABLE FROM THE CANADIAN COAST GUARD (WWW.CCG-GCC.GC.CA), BUT YOU SHOULD KNOW THAT THE RULES HAVE CHANGED AS OF SEPTEMBER 1999:

- ✓ No child under 12 years of age may operate a powerboat with more than a 10 HP motor.
- ✓ Youth 12 to 15 years of age may only operate a powerboat with a motor over 40 HP if accompanied and directly supervised by someone 16 years or older.
- ✓ Minimum age for operating a personal watercraft (PWC) is 16 years of age.
- ✓ Operators of powerboats must have proof of operator competency. As of September 1999, this applied to any person under 16 years. As of September 2002, it applies to any person operating a powerboat less than 4 meters, including PWC's. As of September 2009, it applies to all operators of all powerboats and PWC's.

2) Get Trained On Boating Safety!

- ✓ Youth and adults can take the LIFESAVING SOCIETY'S B.O.A.T. (Boat Operator Accredited Training) safety course at a local facility.

3) Know Before You Go!

- ✓ Avoid potential danger by taking a few minutes with a simple checklist... What's the weather forecast? Any local hazards? Have your maps or charts? Have your PFD's? Have your first aid kit, tools and spare parts? Is all the safety equipment working? Have enough fuel? Have you let someone know where you are going and when to expect you back?

4) Always Wear A Lifejacket!

- ✓ Don't just have it in the boat, pick one and **wear** it!

5) Wear the Right Gear!

- ✓ Your PFD of course, but also good sunglasses and appropriate clothing.

6) Boat Sober... Don't Drink and Drive Your Boat!

- ✓ Alcohol intensifies the effect of fatigue, sun, wind and boat motion to adversely affect your balance, judgment and reaction time.

7) Drive Your Powerboat or PWC Responsibly!

- ✓ Look before you at, stay low, drive at moderate speeds, be aware of changing weather conditions, and drive with extreme caution and proper lights after dark.

For More Information Contact:

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