



2022 Recreational Boating Incident Summary



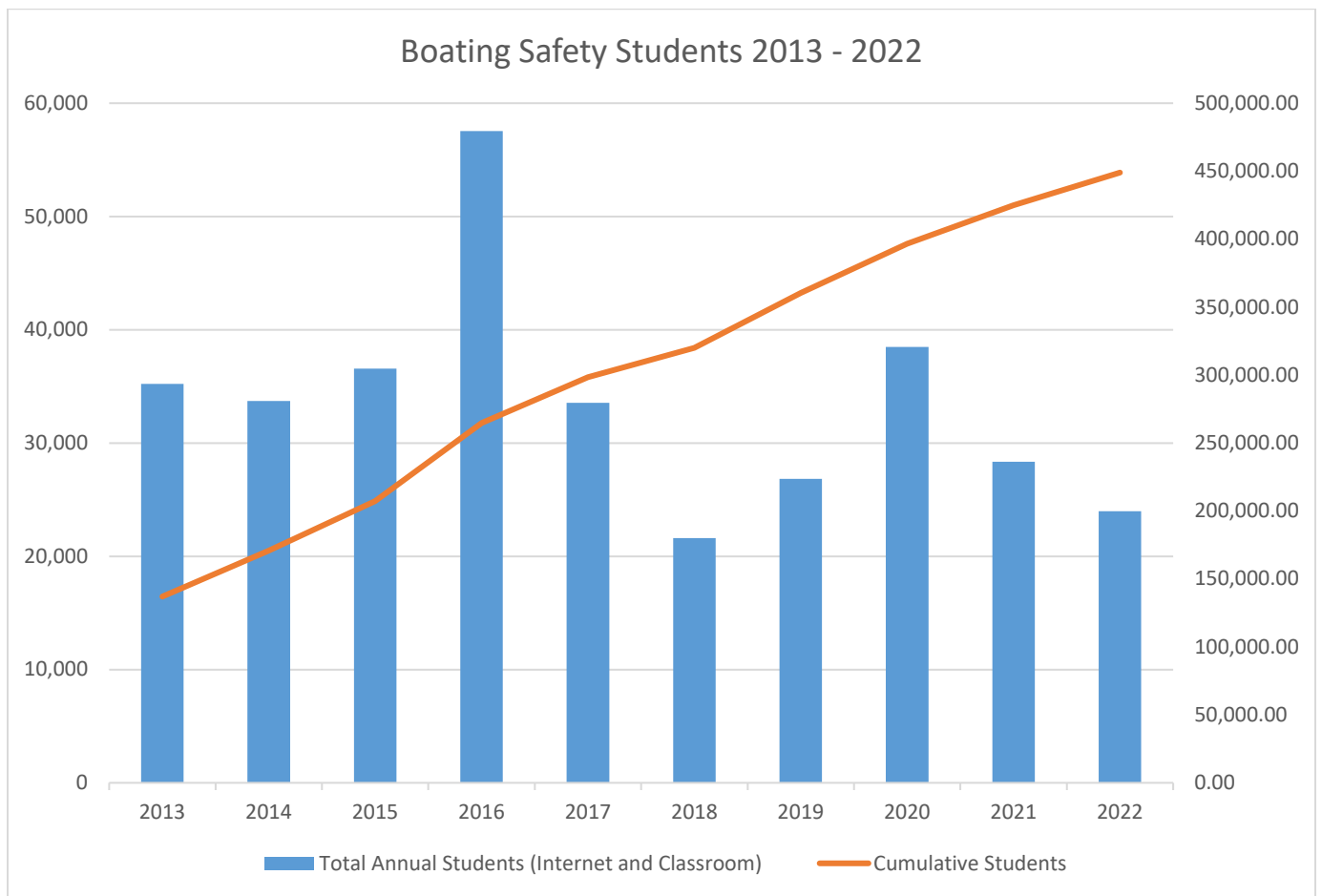
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Introduction

The 2022 Recreational Boating Incident Summary is compiled by the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources (DWR), Boating Division. The data used in this report is retrieved by Reportable Boating Incident reports submitted by DWR Conservation Police, Virginia Marine Resources Commission Marine Police, and local law enforcement agencies. Data included in this report is for incidents which occurred during the 2022 calendar year.

To be considered a “reportable boating incident”, an incident must involve death, missing person, an injury which requires or should have required treatment beyond first aid, or property damage of \$2,000 or more. Virginia requires operators involved in an incident to immediately notify DWR and provide information to the investigating officer.

DWR works to ensure Virginians and visitors are safe when enjoying the water. This is accomplished through proactive law enforcement patrols and statewide boating safety efforts.



Boating in Virginia

- River Miles – 52,225 miles (source VDEQ)
- Coastline – 132 miles (source VIMS)
- Tidal Shore – 7,213 (source VIMS)
- Inland Lakes – 116,364 acres (source VDEQ)

Incidents that are required to be Reported to the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources

- Damage over \$2,000 by or to the vessel or its equipment
- Injury requiring medical assistance beyond first aid
- Loss of life
- Disappearance of any person from a vessel

2022 Virginia Boating Incident Summary *

- **Number of Incidents = 87**
- **Number of Vessels Involved = 114**
- **Number of Injured Persons = 39**
- **Number of Fatalities = 17**
 - **Alcohol was a factor in 23% of fatal incidents**.**
 - **Paddlecraft (canoes and kayaks) were involved in 29% of fatal incidents.**
 - **In 94% of fatal incidents no life jacket was worn**
- **Property Damage = \$ 448,962**

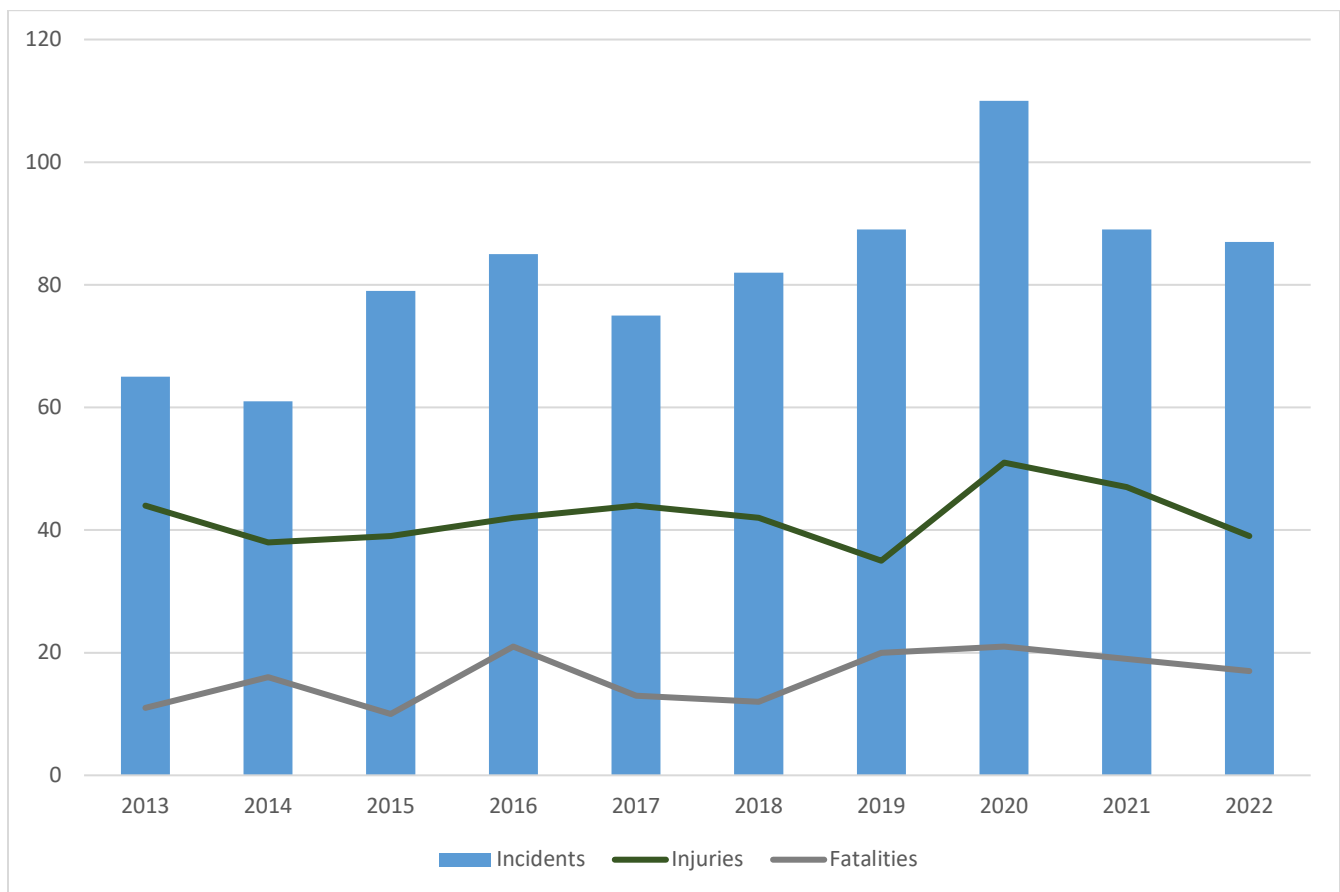
* reported to DWR

** Primary, secondary, or tertiary factor

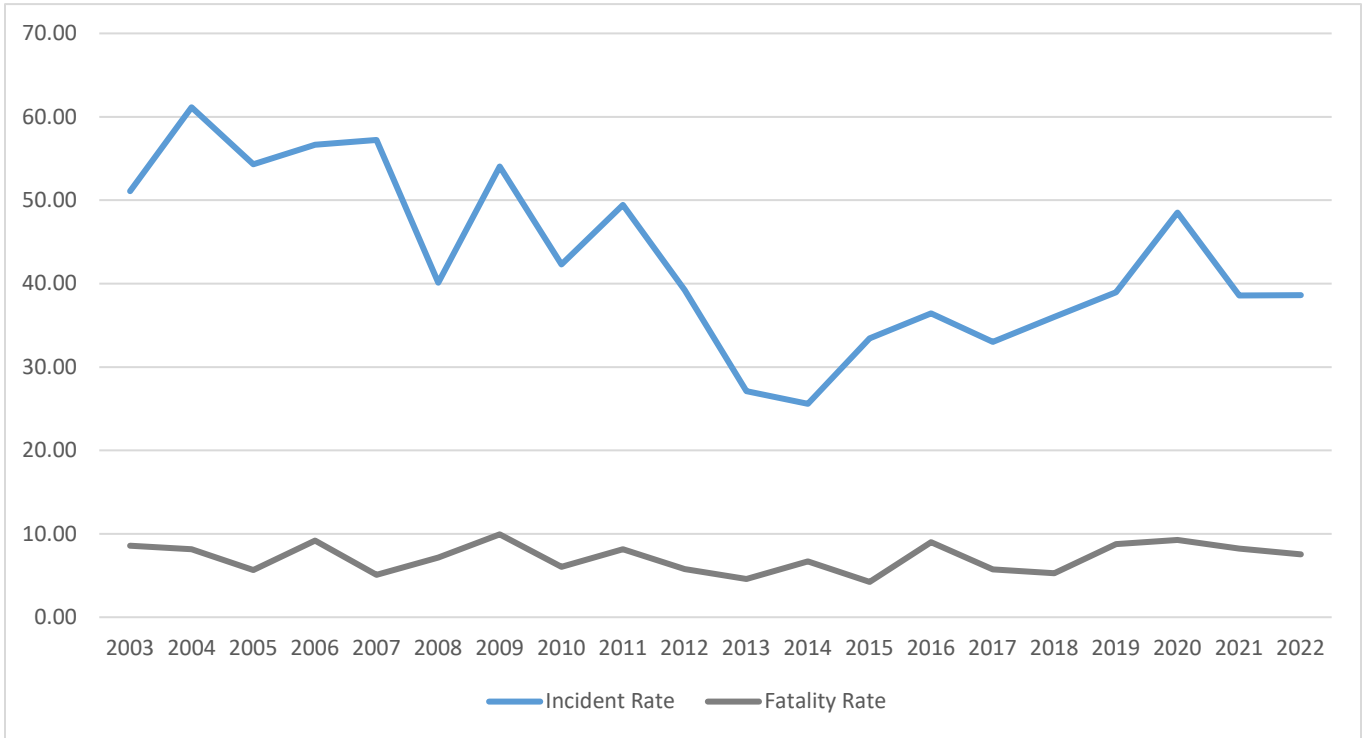
10 Year Boat Incident Summary

Year	Incidents	Injuries	Fatalities	Property Damage
2013	65	44	11	\$981,945
2014	61	38	16	\$617,916
2015	79	39	10	\$441,301
2016	85	42	21	\$576,546
2017	75	44	13	\$308,160
2018	82	42	12	\$411,961
2019	89	35	20	\$572,456
2020	110	51	21	\$641,143
2021	89	47	19	\$624,887
2022	87	39	17	\$454,450

10 Year Boat Incident Statistics



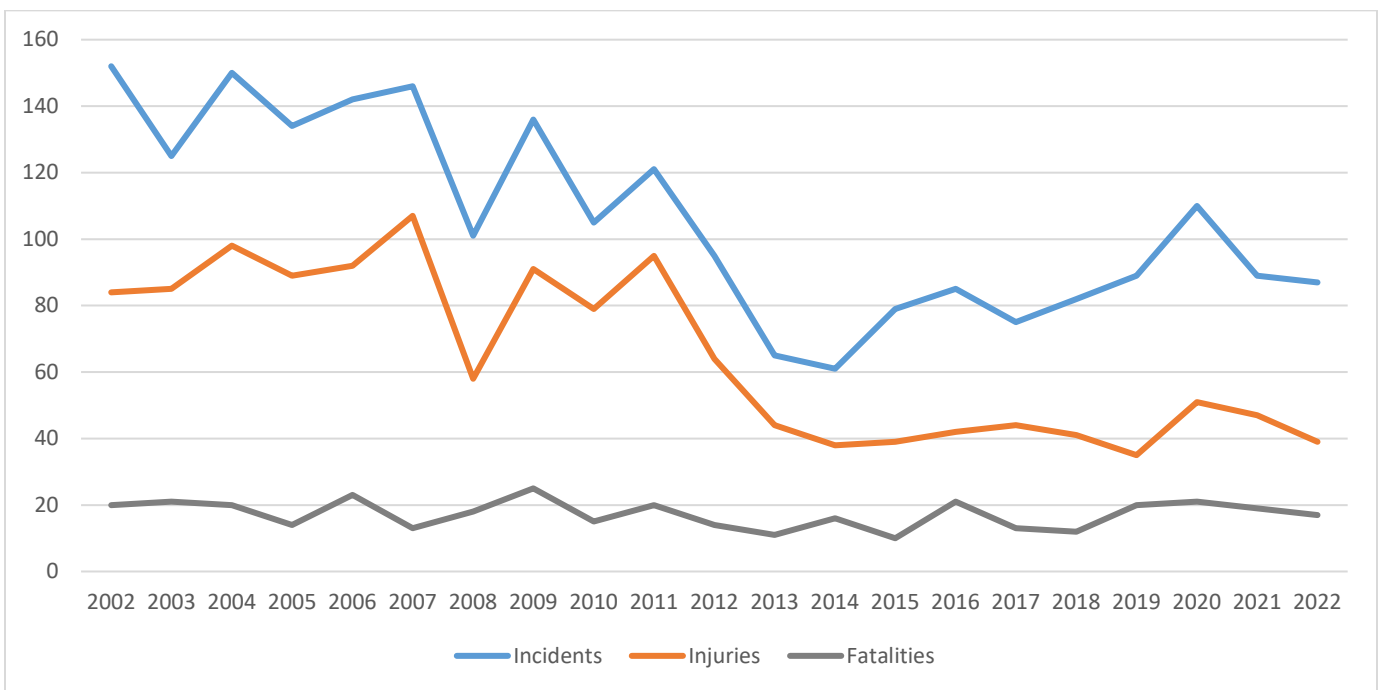
Annual Recreational Boating Incident Rate* 2003 - 2022 (per 100,000 Virginia Registered Boats)



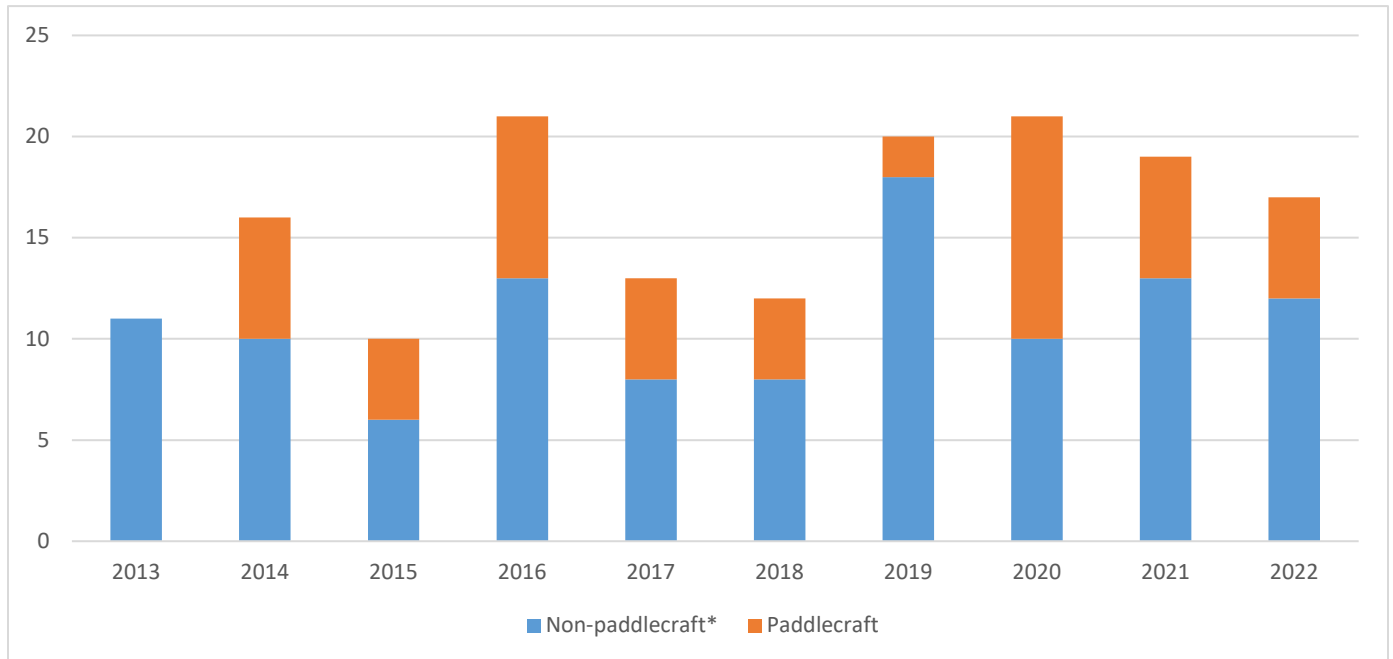
* These rates include paddlecraft incidents/fatalities although paddlecraft are not registered in Virginia.

* These rates include incidents/fatalities involving boats registered in another state that were involved in incidents on Virginia’s waters.

Fatalities, Injuries, and Incidents by Year 2002 – 2022



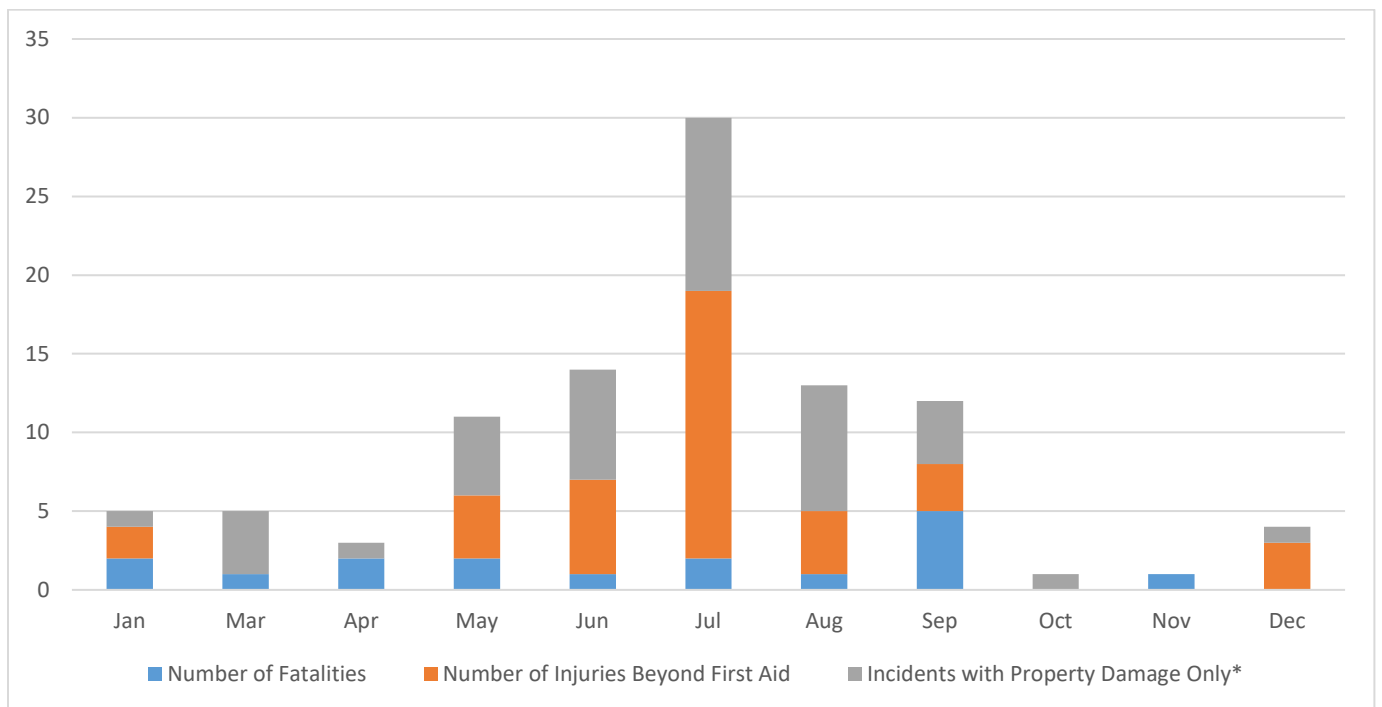
Fatalities – Paddlecraft and Powered Vessels Last 10 Years



* Non-paddlecraft includes motorized vessels, sailboats, jon boats

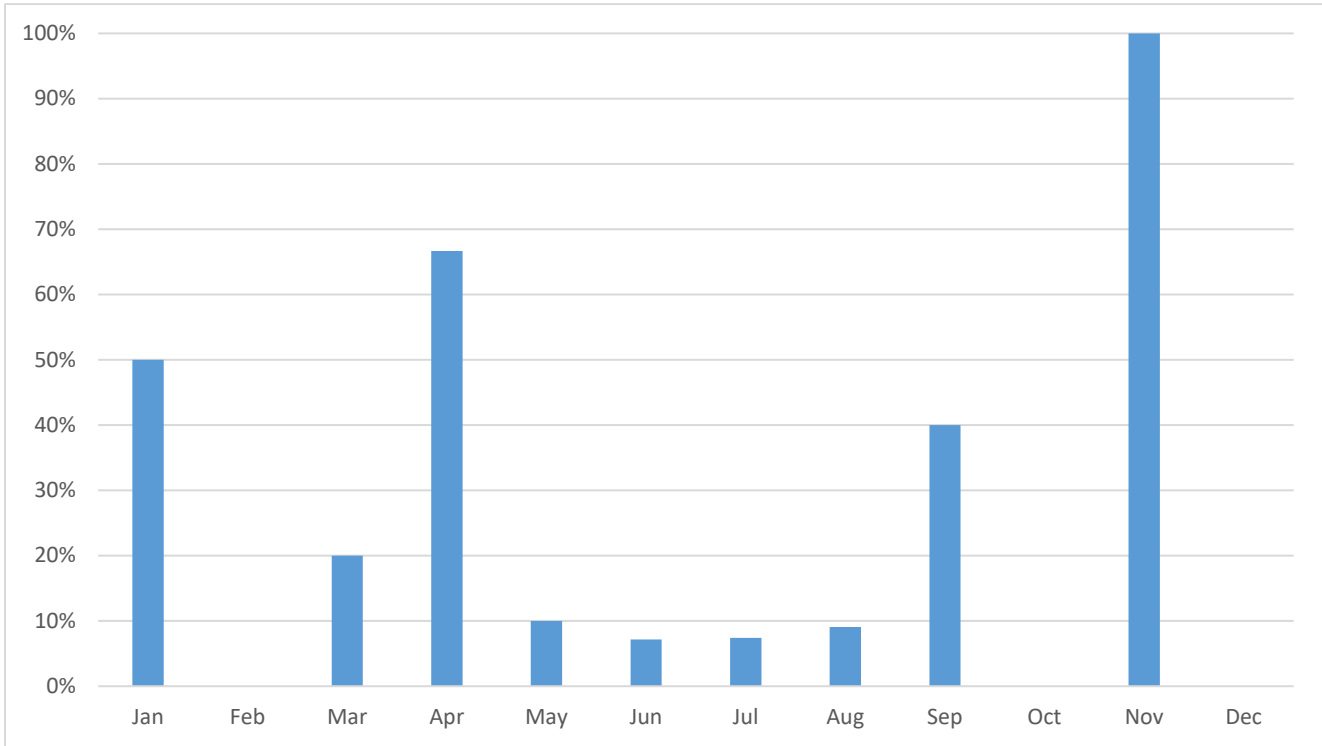
** Paddlecraft includes canoes, kayaks, stand-up paddleboards, and cataracts

2022 Boating Incidents and Fatalities - By Month

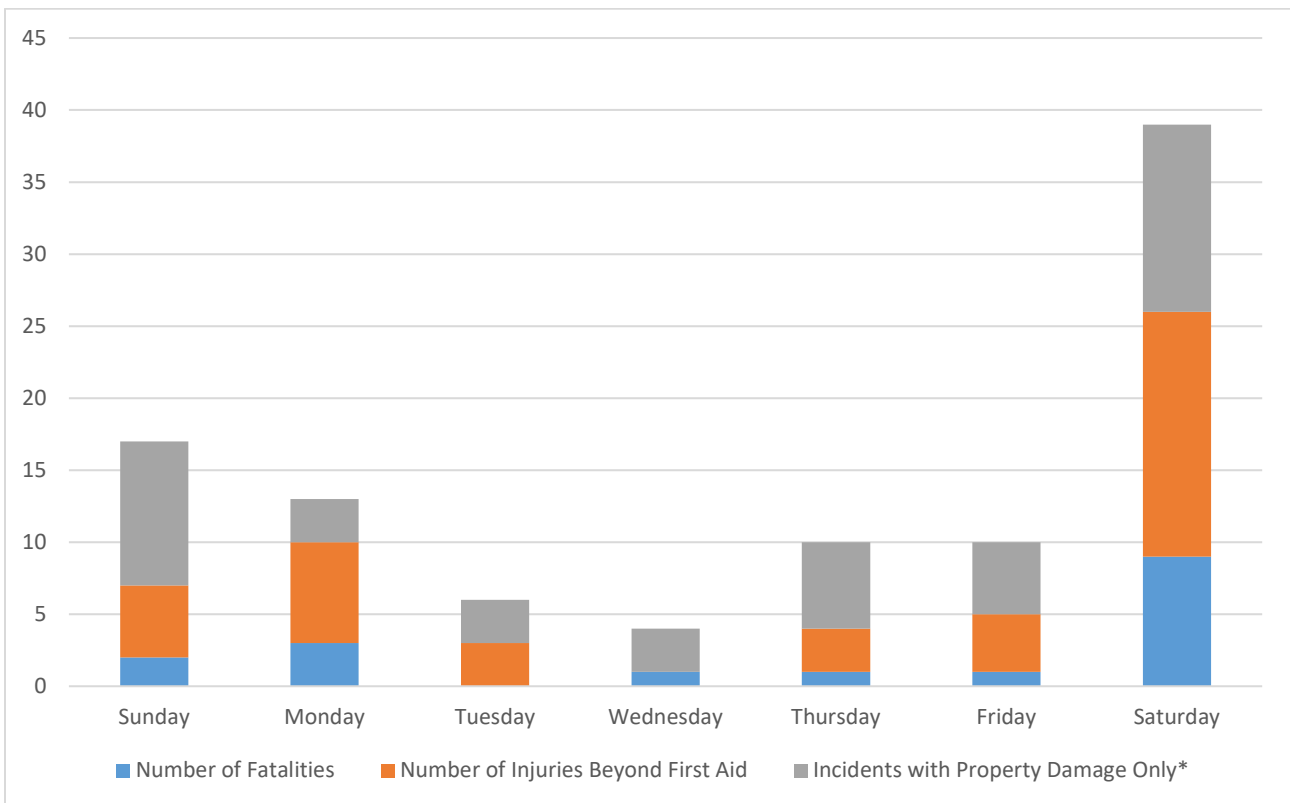


- Including total loss of vessel

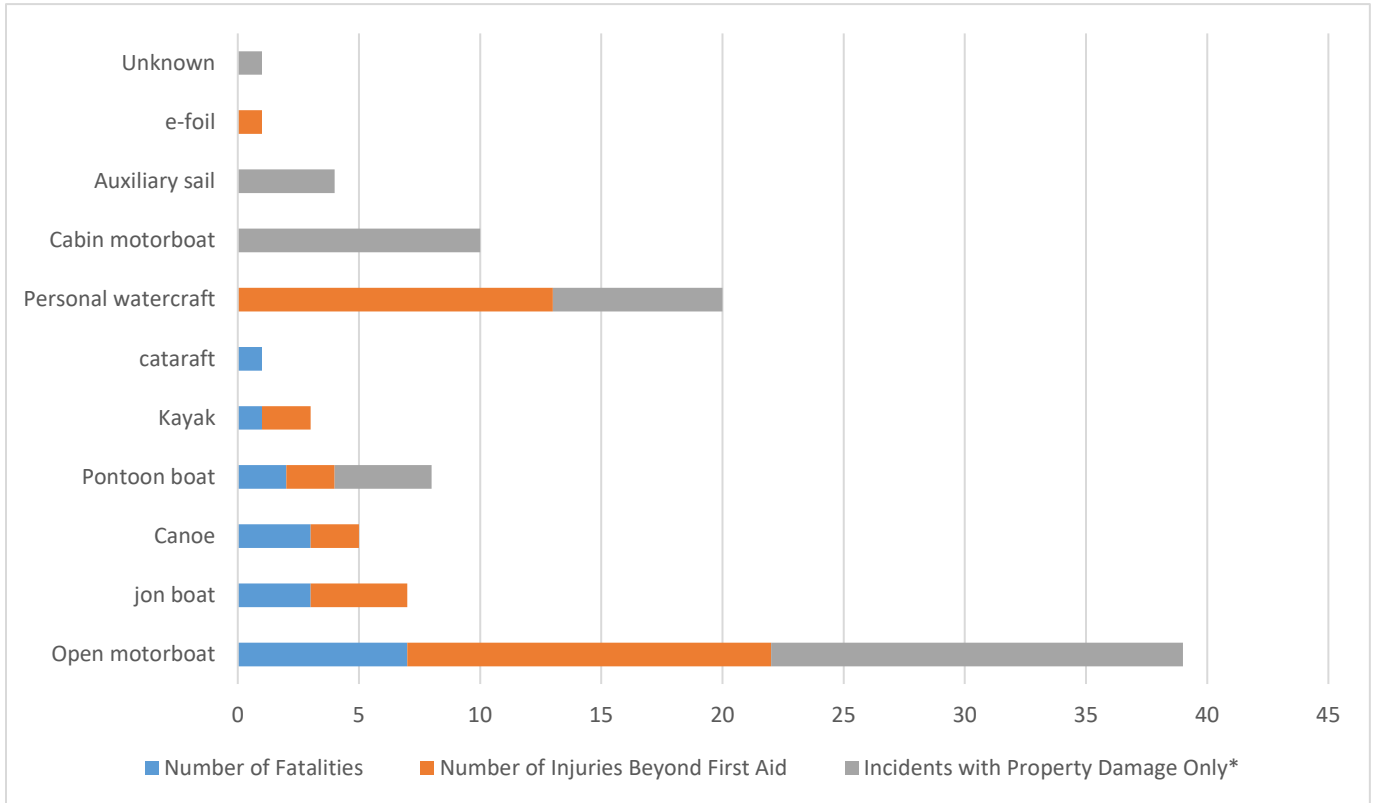
2022 Percentage of Incidents Each Month that were Fatal



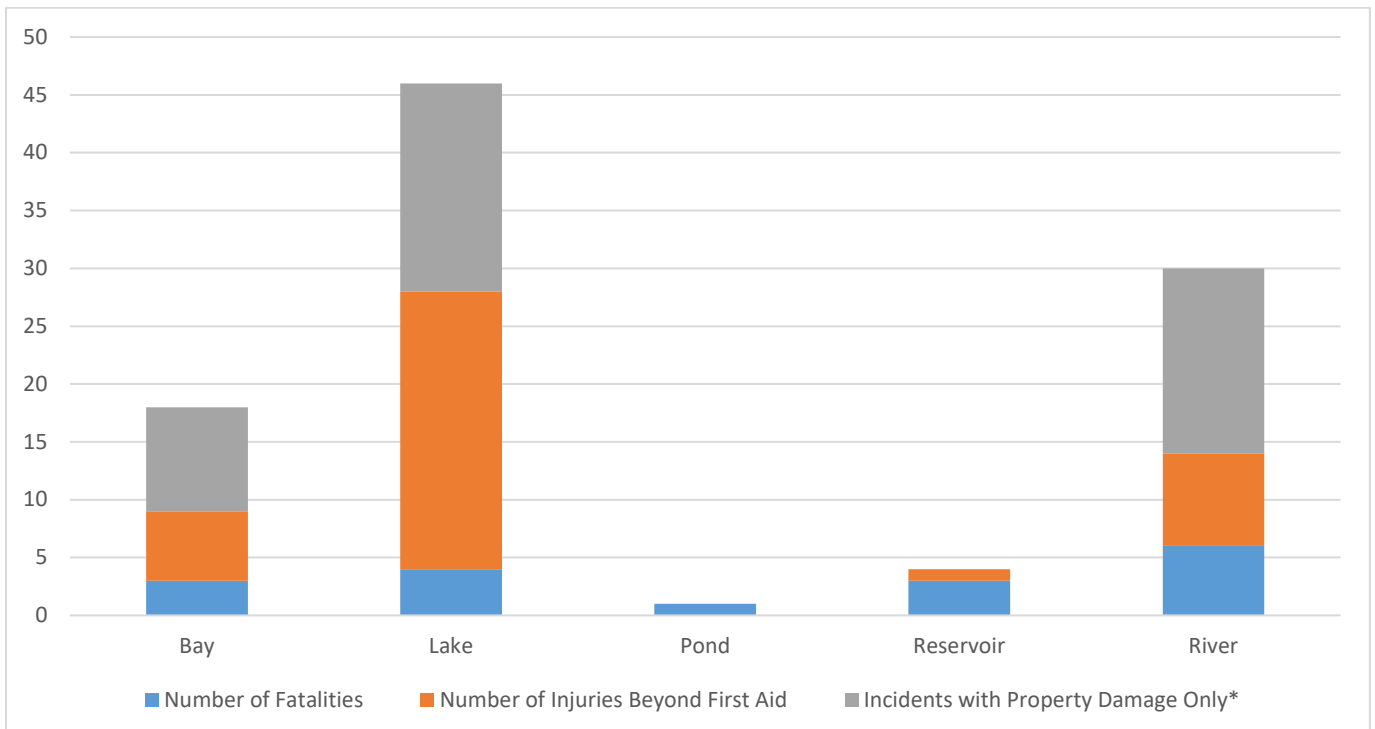
2022 Boating Incidents by Day of Week



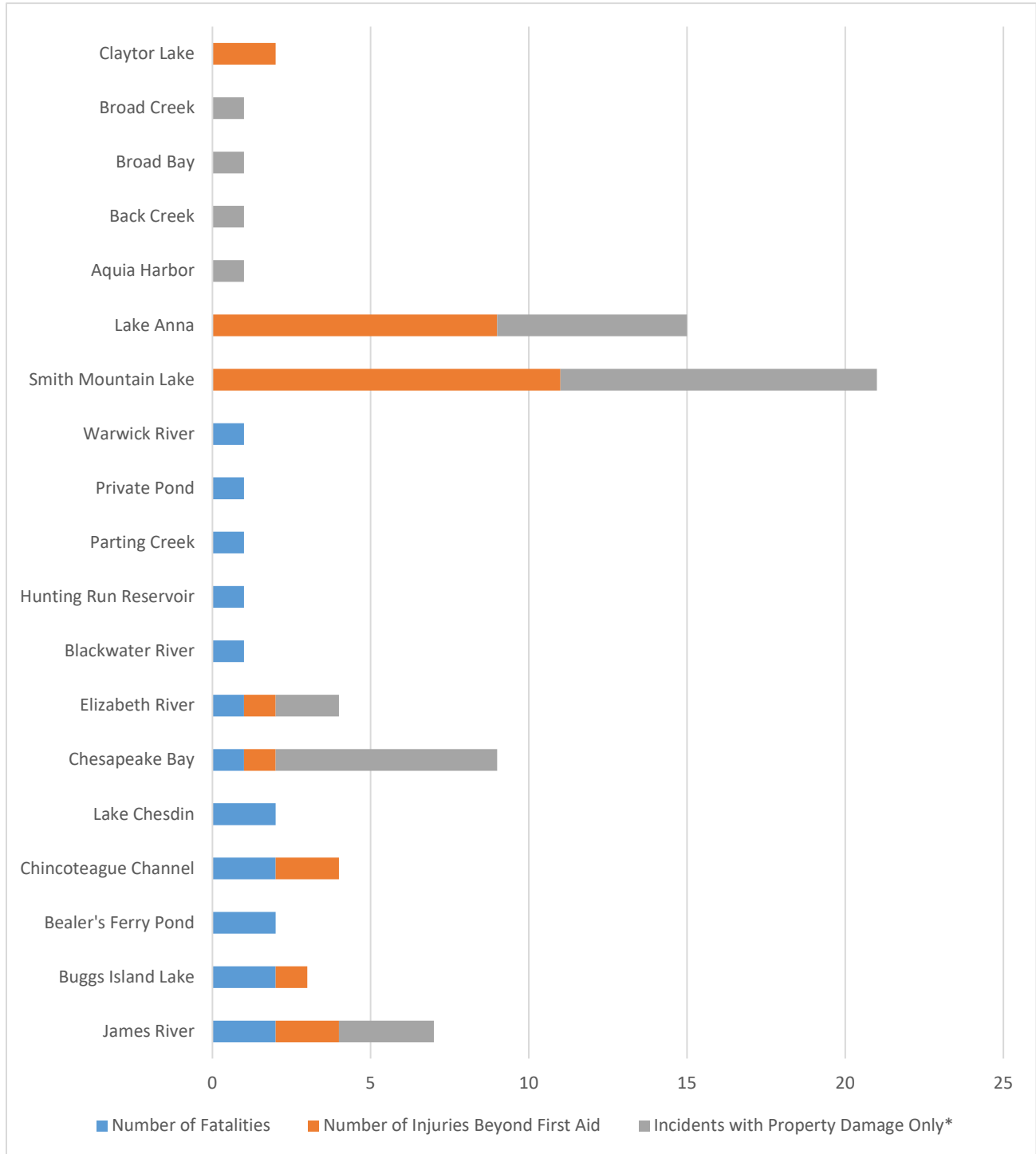
2022 Boating Incidents by Vessel Type



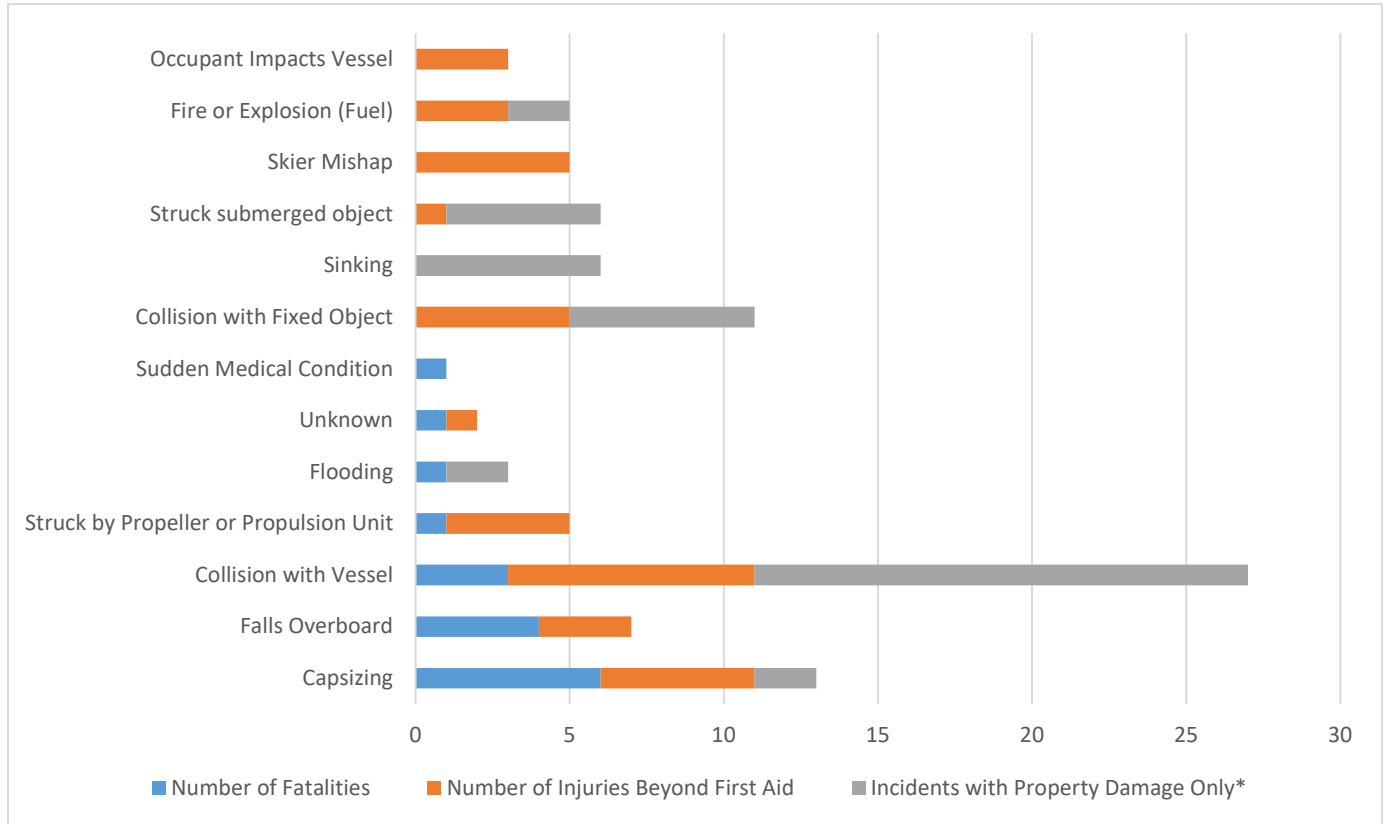
2022 Boating Incidents and Fatalities by Water Body Type



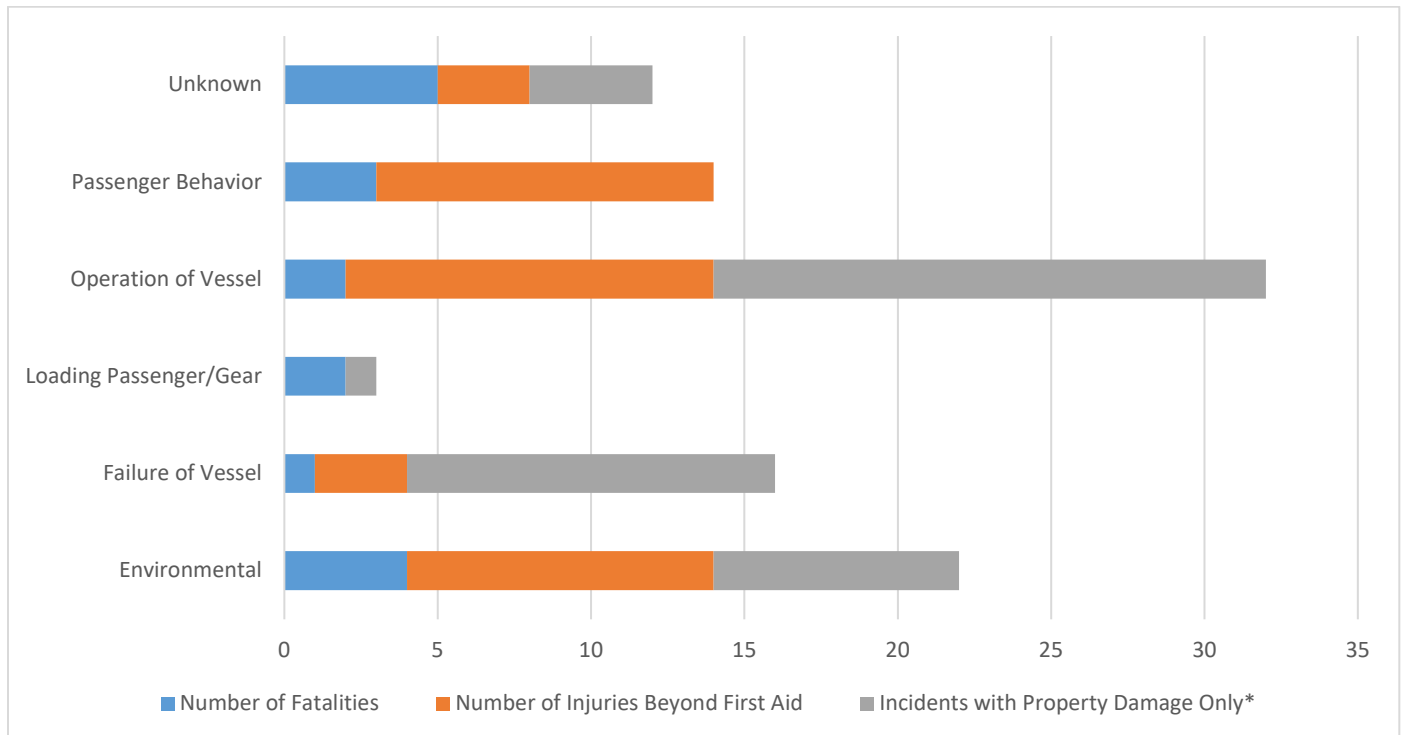
2022 Boating Incidents and Fatalities - Top Locations of Incidents



2022 Boating Incidents and Fatalities - Top Primary Incident Types

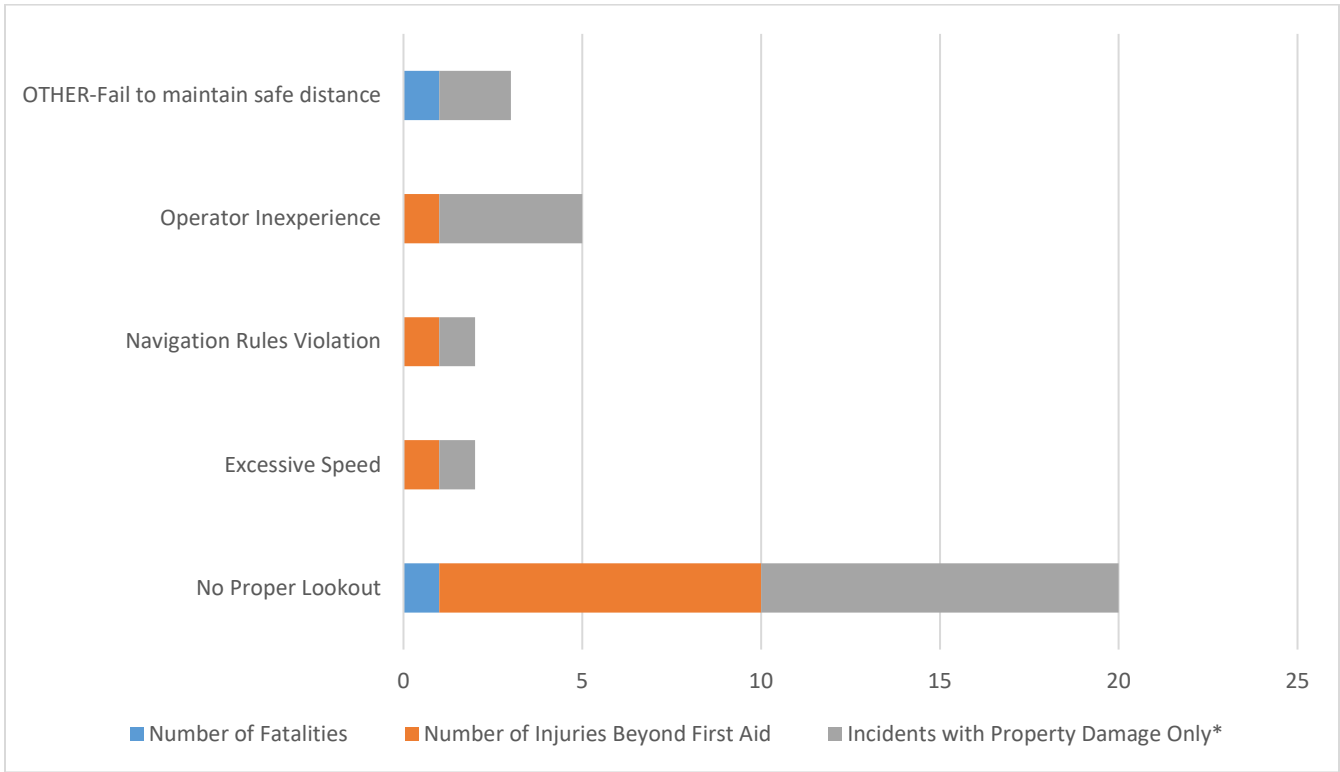


2022 Boating Incidents and Fatalities – Contributing Factor (by Category)

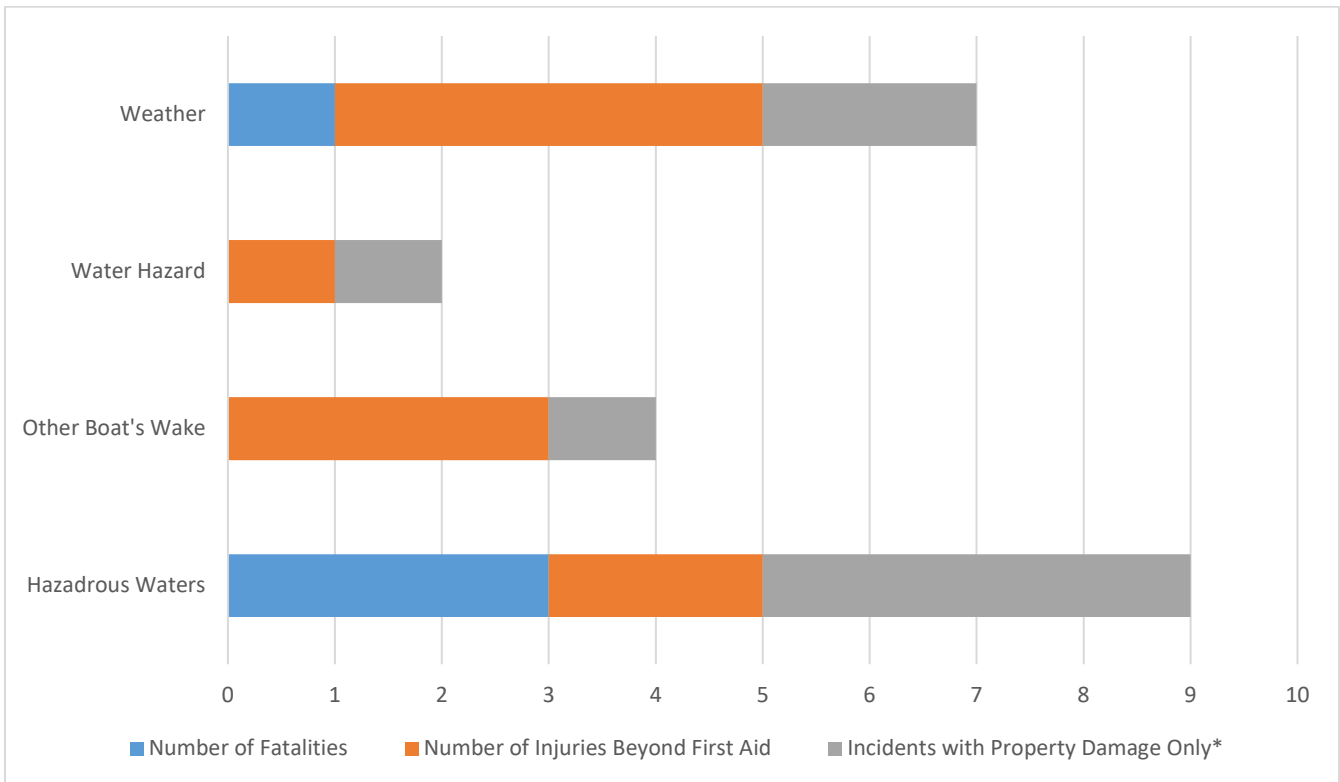


2022 Boating Incidents and Fatalities – Contributing Factor (detailed)

Operation of Vessel

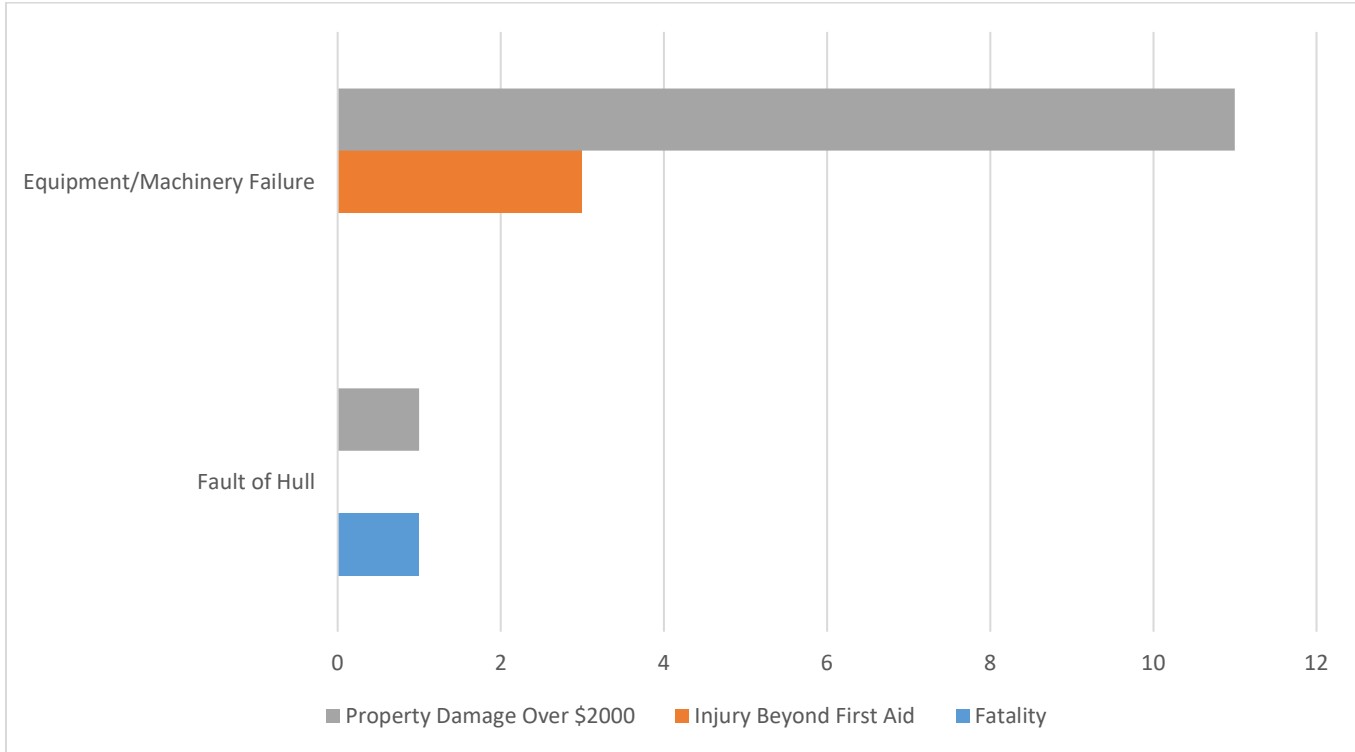


Environmental

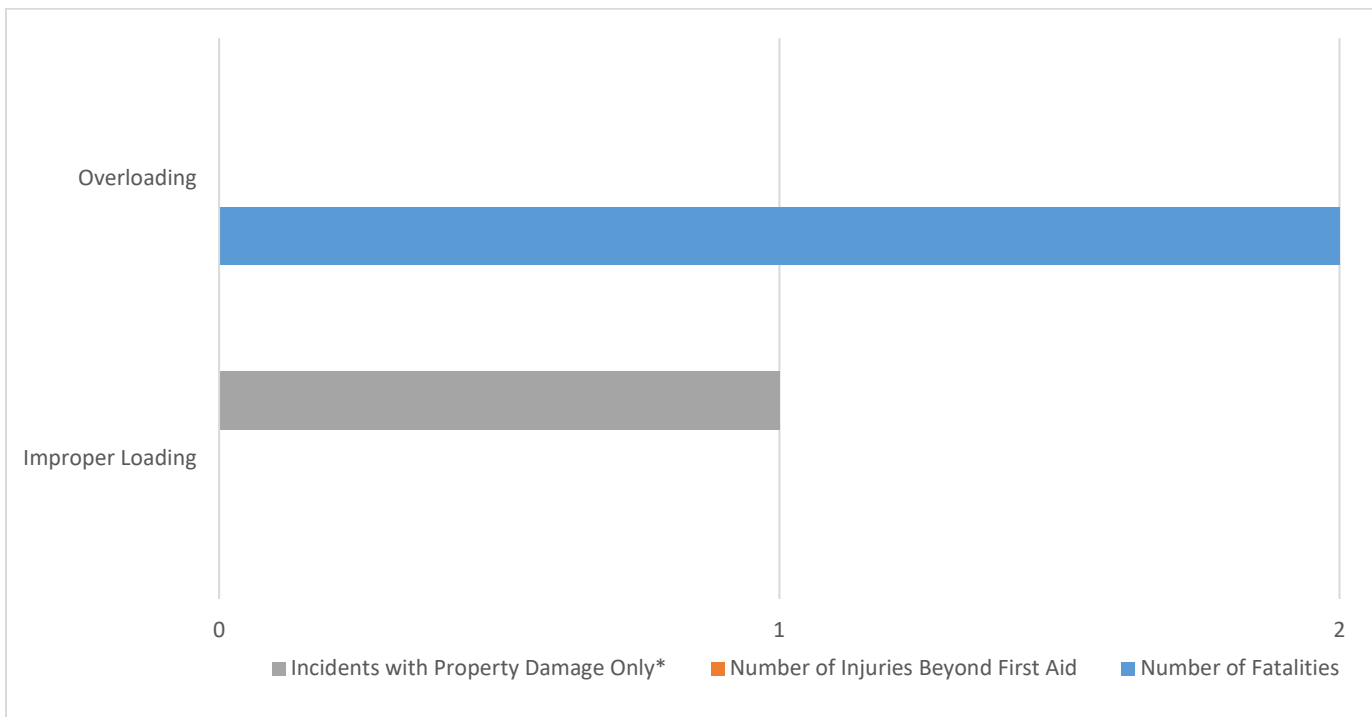


2022 Boating Incidents and Fatalities – Contributing Factor (detailed)

Failure of Vessel

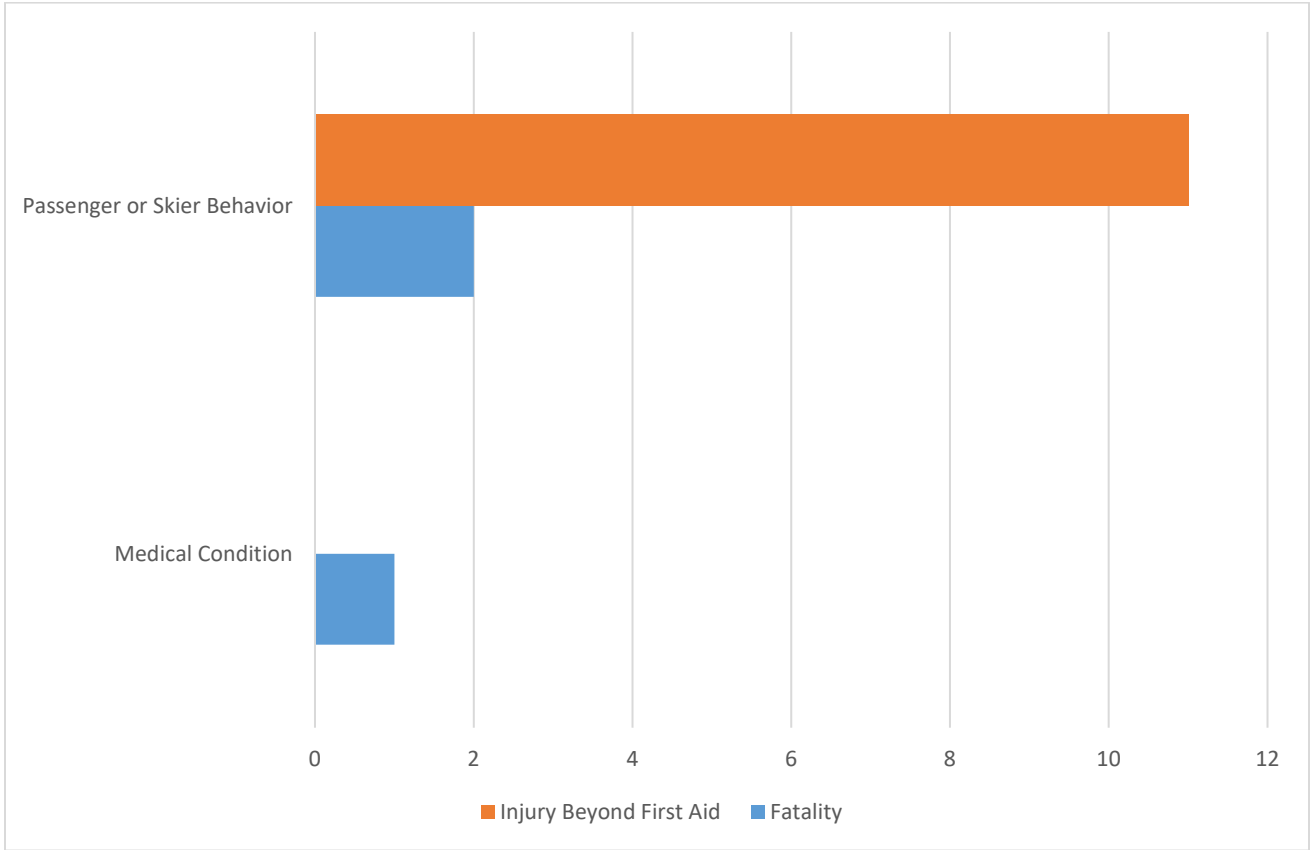


Loading Passenger/Gear

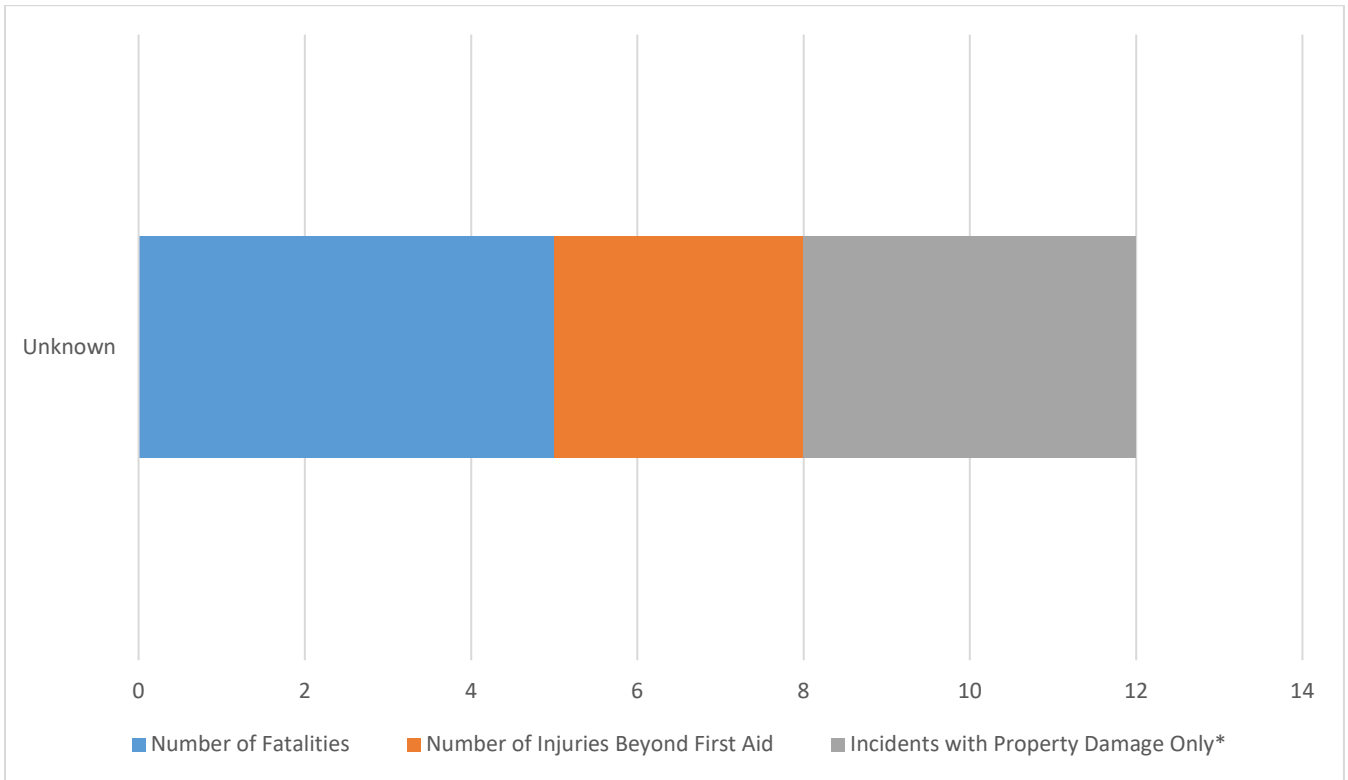


2022 Boating Incidents and Fatalities – Contributing Factor (detailed)

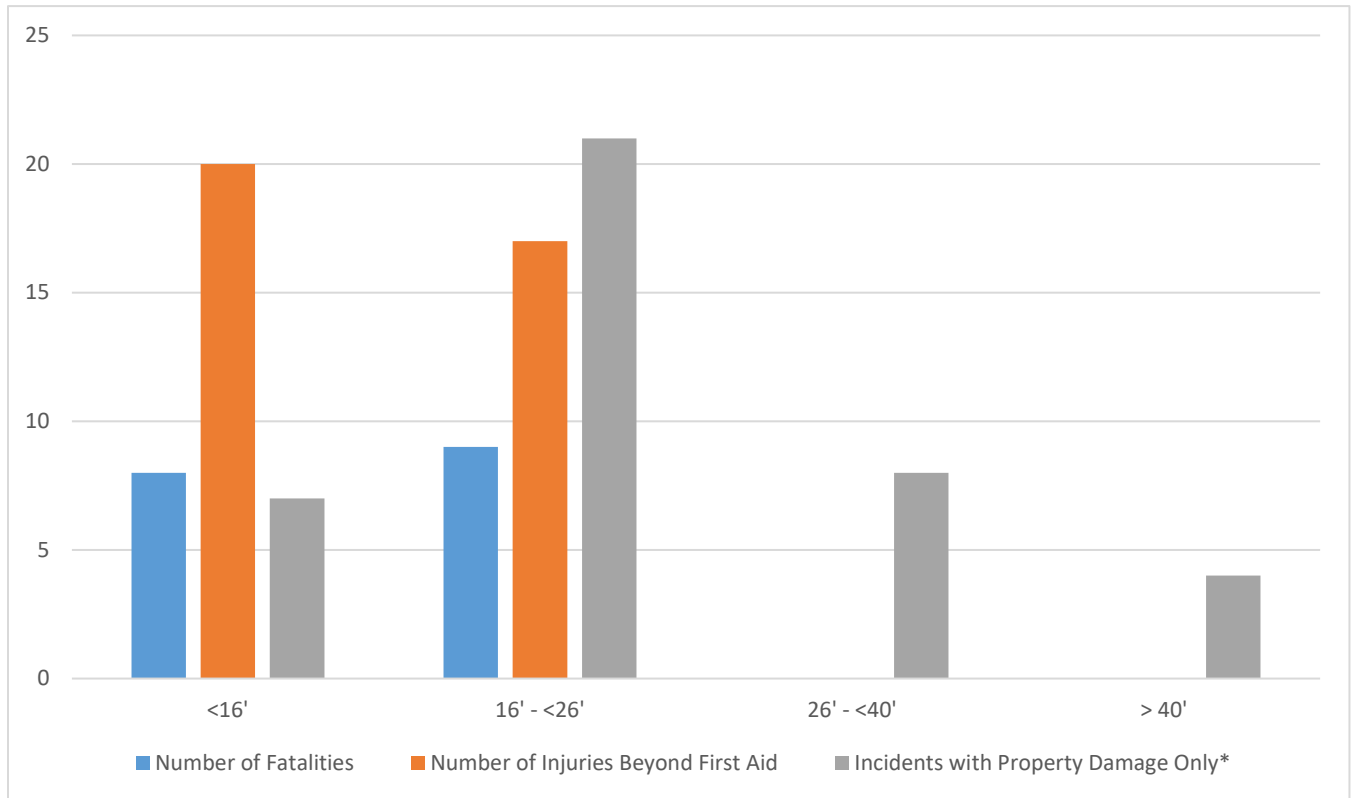
Pasenger Behavior



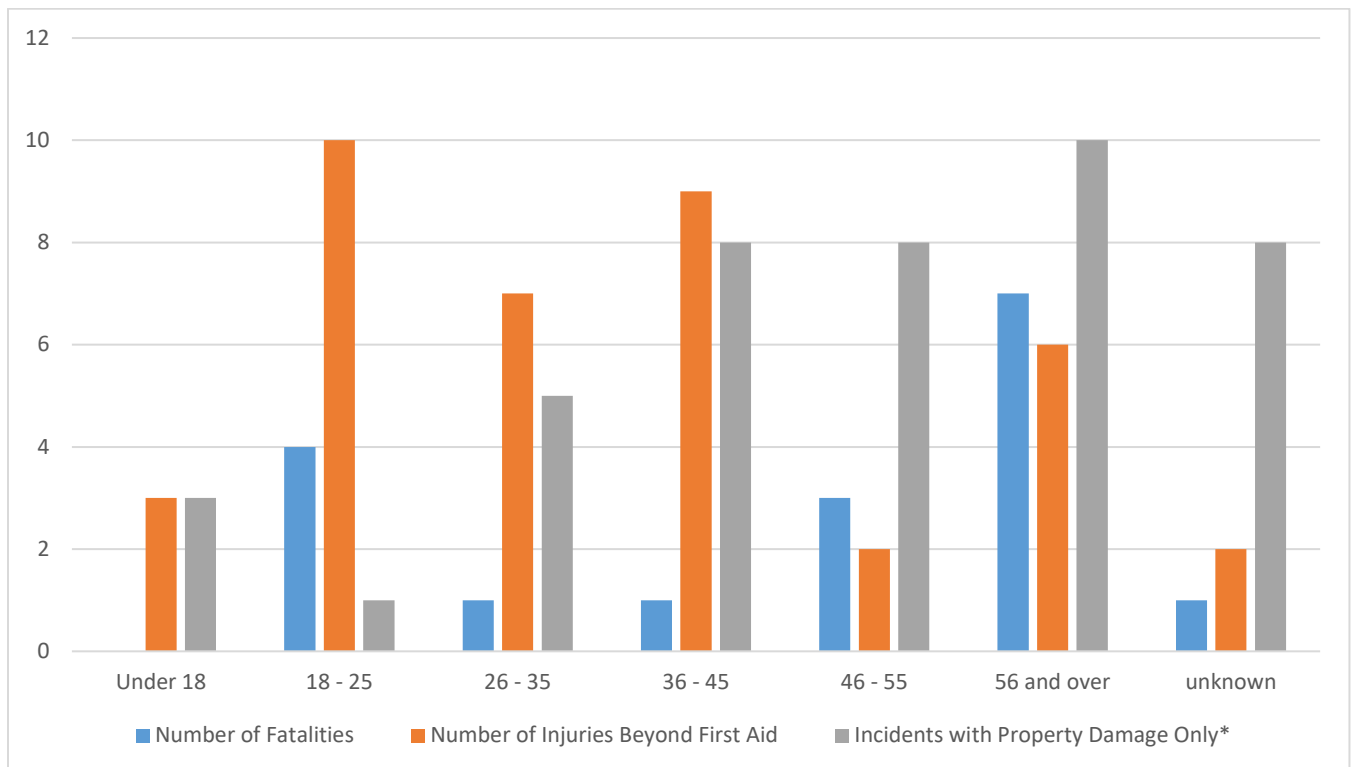
Unknown



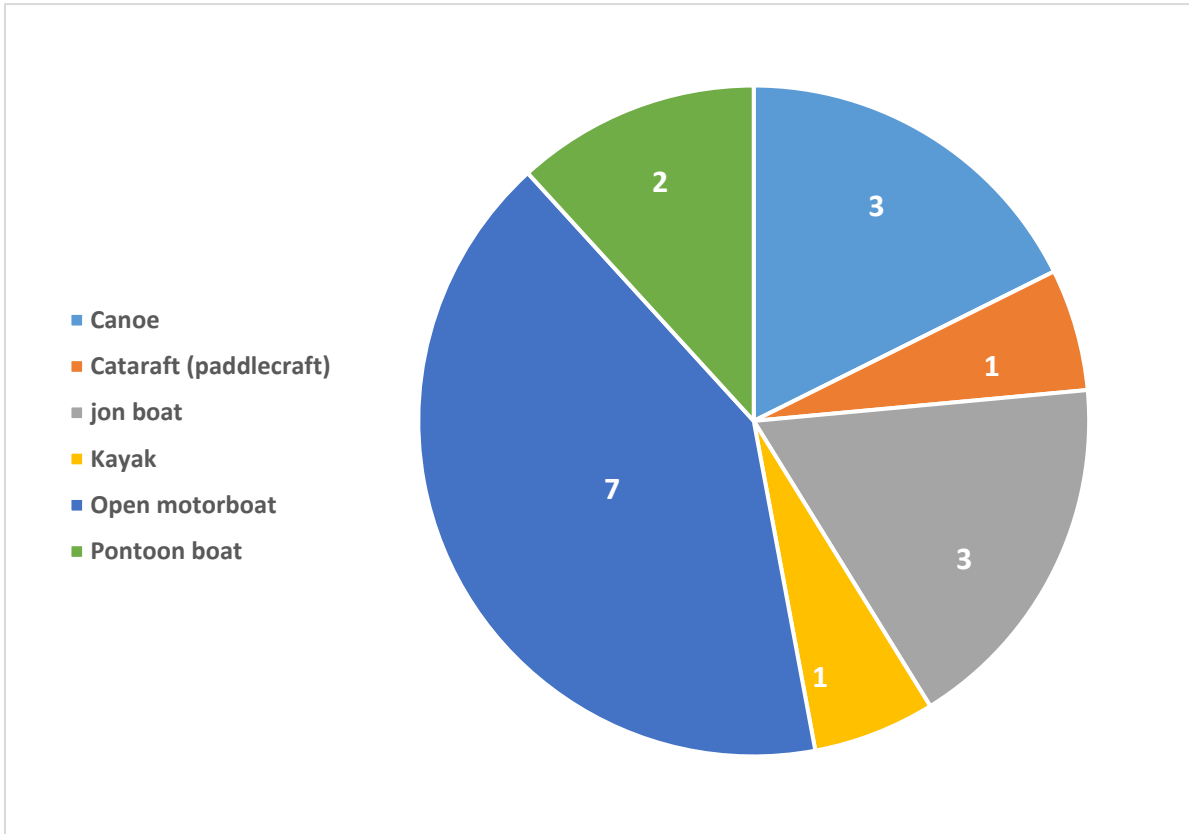
2022 Boating Incidents and Fatalities by Vessel Size



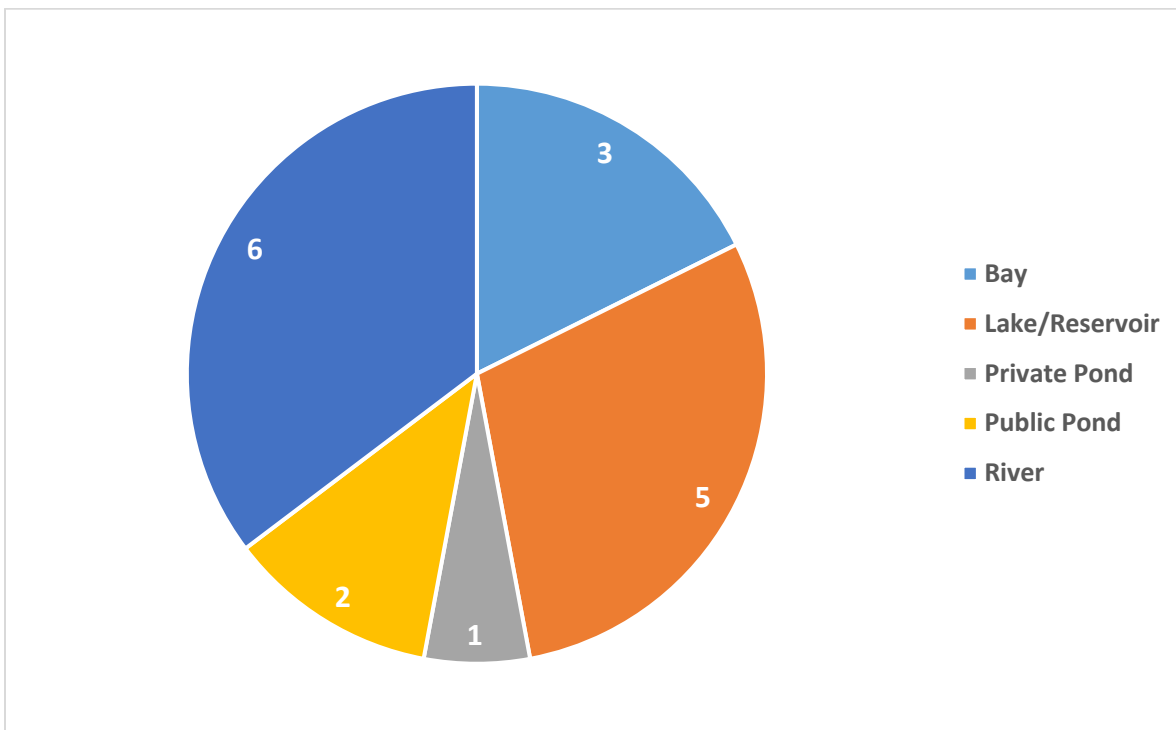
2022 Boat Incidents Age of Operators



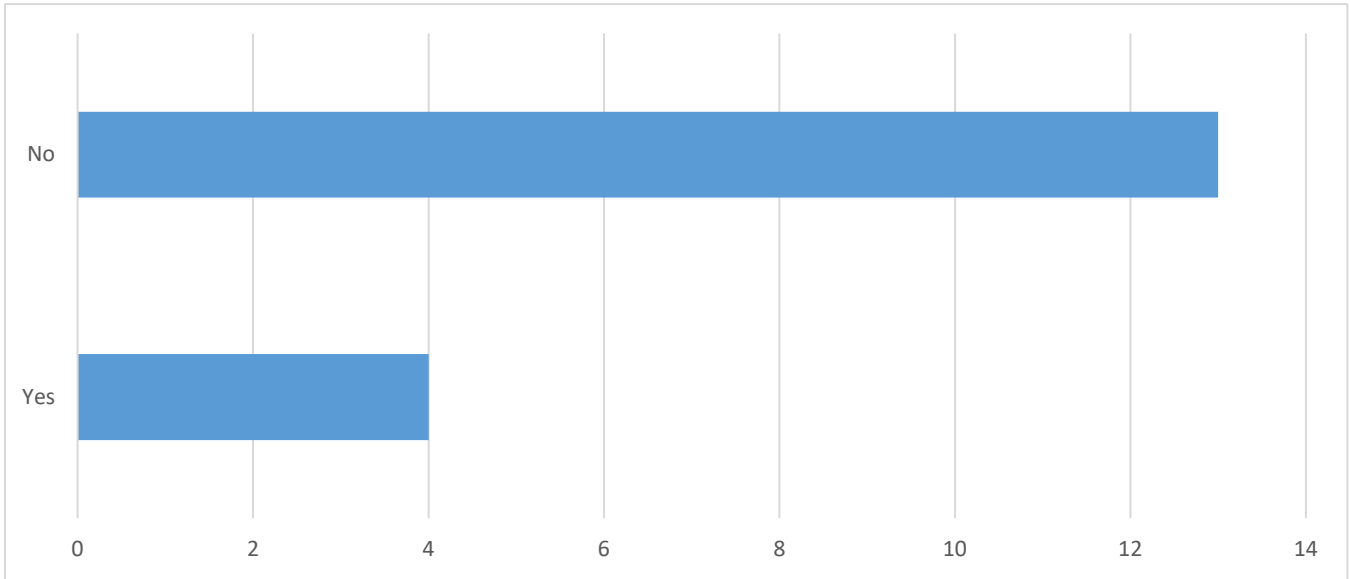
2022 Boating Fatalities – By Vessel Type



2022 Boating Fatalities – By Waterbody Type

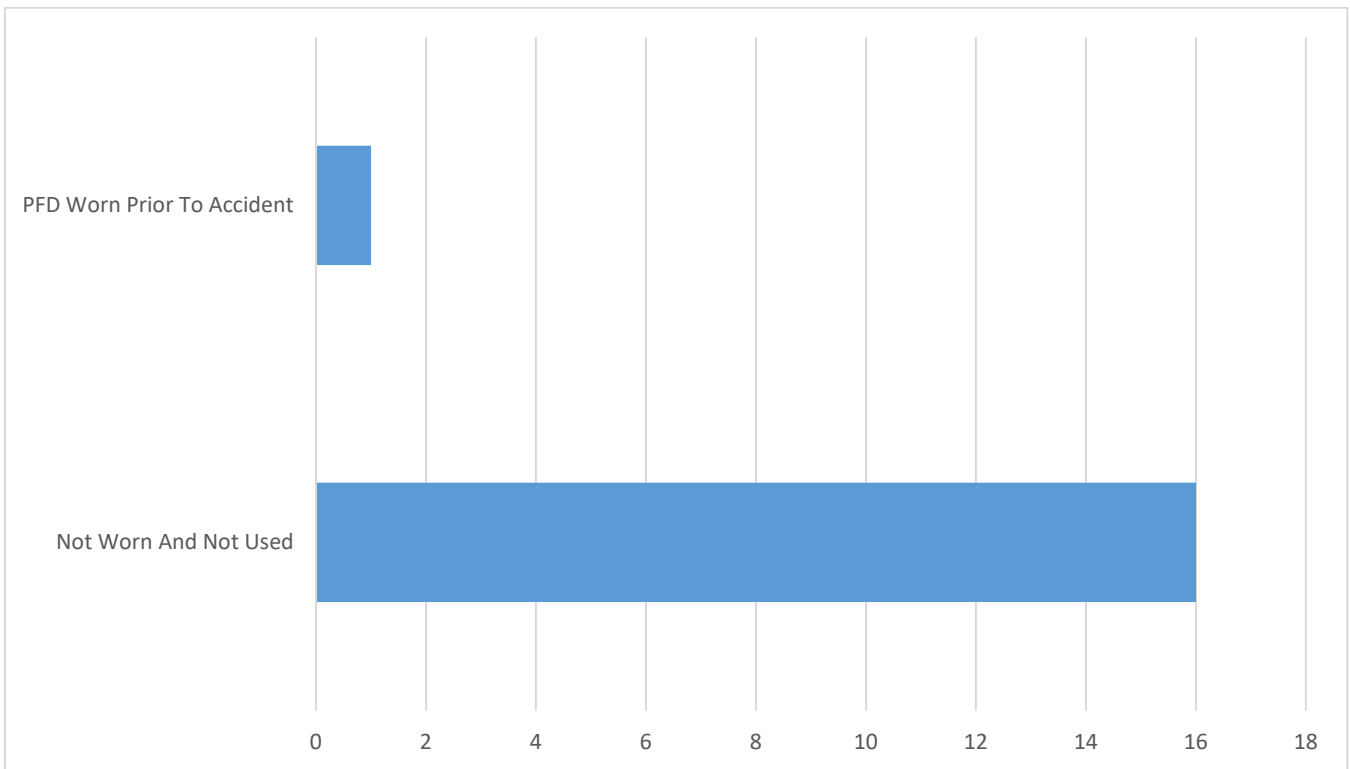


2022 Boating Fatalities – Alcohol/Drug Use**

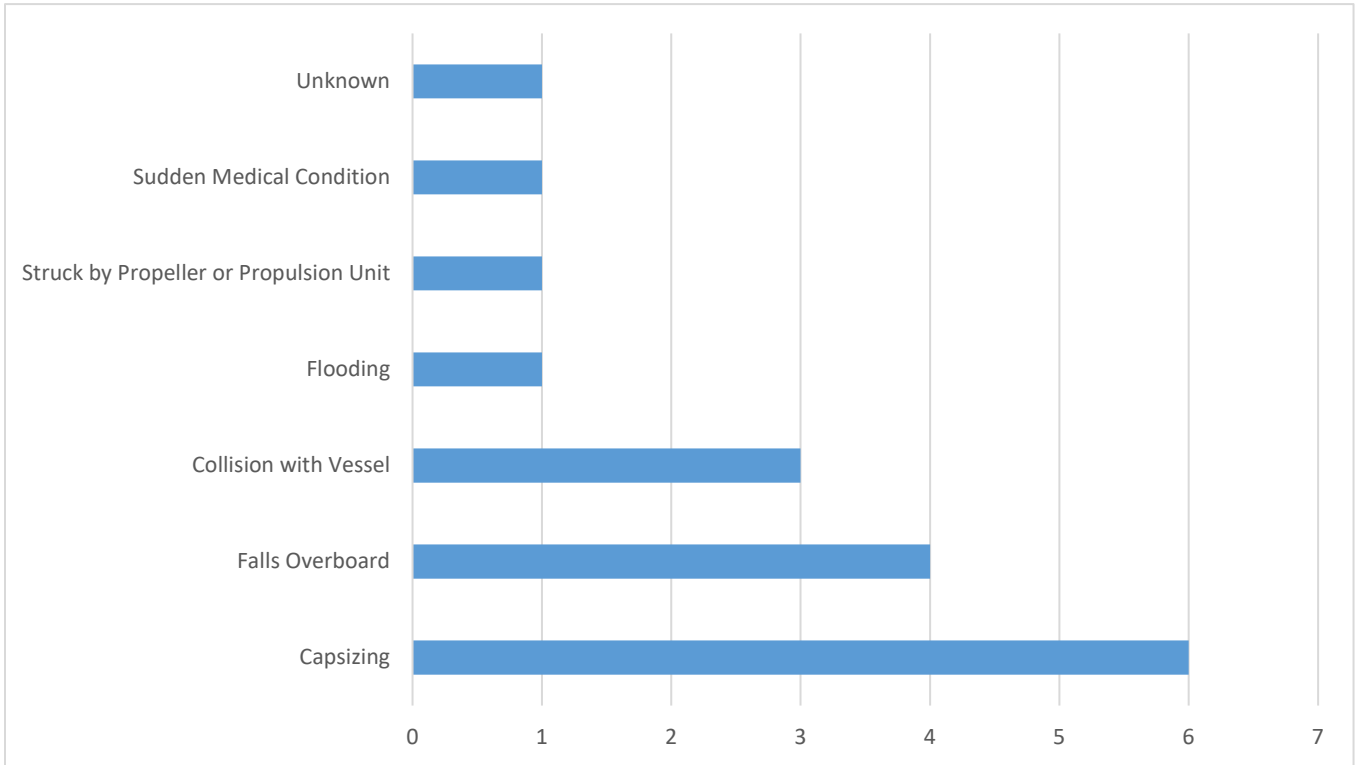


** Primary, secondary, or tertiary factor

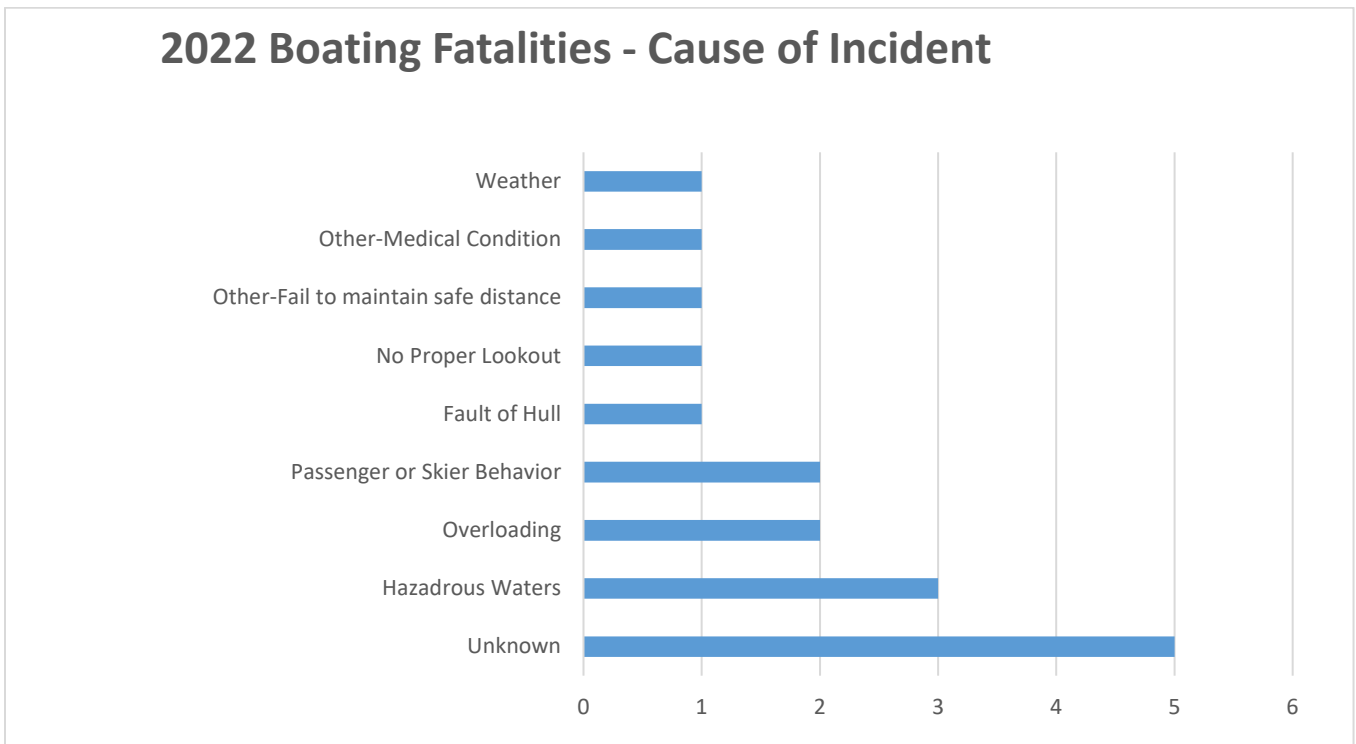
2022 Boating Fatalities – Life Jacket Use



2022 Boating Fatalities – Type of Incident



2022 Boating Fatalities – Cause of Incident



2022 Boating Fatalities Summaries

1/22/2022 – Chincoteague Channel, Accomack County

A 16-foot aluminum jon boat with four persons on board was returning from duck hunting when it took waves over the bow, then stern causing the outboard motor to fail. As it was sinking all four hunters jumped over the side. Two of the hunters were able to make it back to the overturned vessel and the other two were unable to make it back to the vessel due to the current and were last seen drifting north. The two survivors were rescued by good samaritans and were transported to a hospital and treated for hypothermia. The 19-year-old operator of the vessel and a 17-year-old passenger, both males, drown. No life jackets were worn. Weather was a contributing factor to the boat capsizing.

3/27/2022 – Warwick River, Newport News

The 15-foot open motorboat was at the entrance to the Warwick River when the passenger, a 58-year-old female, decided to relieve herself over the port side of the vessel. Upon standing up she fell into the operator, knocking both overboard. The operator was able to swim back to and re-enter the vessel. The passenger was not. No life jackets were worn. Weather and alcohol use contributed to the fall overboard.

4/25/2022 – Parting Creek, Northampton

A report of an overdue 21' open motorboat with an 80-year-old male was reported late in the day. The operator, a commercial waterman, was found deceased on the floor of his vessel. The operator died of a cardiac arrest, but it is unknown if the boating activity contributed to the fatality.

4/30/2022 – Hunting Run Reservoir, Spotsylvania

Three males took a 14' canoe out on a county reservoir during the early morning hours without any life jackets. One of the occupants jostled the canoe hard to the starboard side, which allowed water to enter the vessel. The occupants attempted to stabilize the canoe and paddle to shore, but the bow was weighted down from water inside the canoe. The canoe bow submerged into the water, allowing more water to enter and fully submerge the canoe. The canoe capsized, leaving the occupants in the water. Two of the occupants managed to swim to shore, but the third, a 41-year-old male, was not able to make it to shore, and drowned. The three individuals engaged in consuming alcohol prior to taking the canoe out onto the reservoir and took alcohol with them on the canoe.

5/7/2022 – Bealer's Ferry Pond, Page

Three brothers went out on a 15' canoe on Bealer's Ferry Pond to go fishing. The canoe tipped over casting all three occupants, none of whom were wearing life jackets, into the water. The canoe was overloaded, and the weather also contributed to the canoe capsizing. One of the occupants was able to make it to the bank of the pond, but the other two occupants, ages 20 and 21, were unable to make it to safety and drowned.

6/13/2022 – Private Pond, Bedford County

The victim, a 63-year-old male was fishing on an 18' pontoon boat with no railing. For an unknown reason, the victim fell overboard and drown. No life jackets were worn.

7/2/2022 – James River, Chesterfield County

The operator of a 21' open motorboat was approaching a towed watersports participant after she fell off her inner tube. The operator stated a large wake pushed his vessel on top of the 17-year-old female before he could react. Because the operator failed to maintain a safe distance from a person in the water and the boat was still in gear, the victim was struck by the propeller causing her fatal injuries.

7/27/2022 – Elizabeth River, Chesapeake

A 14' open motorboat collided into a moored barge on the Southern Branch of the Elizabeth River and the operator was thrown overboard. An observer noted the operator never slowed or changed course prior to the collision. The operator, a 51-year-old male was not wearing a life jacket and drown. The collision was caused by the lack of a proper lookout and alcohol use.

8/14/2022 – Blackwater River, Sussex County

Two males were fishing on a 13' jon boat on the Blackwater River. They attempted to tie-off to a tree to stay in the same spot to fish. While the victim tried to grab a limb to tie off, it snapped and caused him to fall overboard. The boat capsized and both men ended up in the water. One of the occupants was able to swim to shore, but the passenger, a 33-year-old male drown. No life jackets were used.

9/12/2022 – Chesapeake Bay, Virginia Beach

The victim, a 27-year-old male, departed from Lynnhaven Inlet on a 9' kayak to spread his father's ashes near the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. He failed to return home at the preplanned time frame and the family was unable to contact him. The vessel was found the next day and the subject was found 4 days later. No life jackets were used.

09/16/2022 – Buggs Island Lake, Mecklenburg County

Two subjects were fishing in a 16' open motorboat that was tied to a bridge pillar. The vessel began to take on water due to a fault of the hull, and the operator attempted to operate the vessel back to the boat ramp. The vessel began to sink and both subjects attempted to swim to shore. The passenger of the vessel made it safely to shore but the operator, a 73-year-old male, drowned. No life jackets were worn.

9/17/2022 – Lake Chesdin, Chesterfield

A 16' open motorboat and a 19' open motorboat collided on Lake Chesdin in Chesterfield County. Each boat was likely traveling on a path that would lead the vessels to collide head on, or slightly starboard to starboard. Both vessels were travelling at a rate of speed that contributed to the occurrence of the collision. The two males, ages 27 and 33, on the 16' boat ended up in the water. One of the occupants drown and the other died of blunt force trauma. No life jackets were worn by the victims on this vessel.

9/22/2022 - Buggs Island Lake, Mecklenburg County

Two individuals were fishing on a 21' pontoon boat at Buggs Island Lake. They had tied the boat to the third bridge pillar, but when it broke, the passenger went to retie the rope. The operator stated that he turned to the stern and when he looked back to the bow, the passenger was missing. The 38-year-old male had been drinking, fell overboard and drown. No life jackets were worn.

11/12/2022 – James River, Amherst County

The operator of an 11' cataraft (paddlecraft) was paddling downstream on the James River through Balcony Falls. The river was running about 5' over normal levels, but not at flood stage. The operator, a 61-year-old male, was ejected from his vessel and was recovered 25 days later. No life jackets were worn. It is unknown how the victim ended up in the water, but high water and hazardous waters are the most likely cause.

Incident Summaries from Selected Boating Injuries

5/30/2022 – South River, Rockingham County

Three kayakers launched at 12:30 pm to float the South River. Two of the kayakers were novice kayakers. While the kayakers had consulted current temperatures and weather, they did not check with river forecast. All three kayakers capsized in the river due to a strainer caused by a tree in the high waters and went through the rapids. One of the kayakers sustained significant contusions and lacerations which required treatment beyond first aid. Only one of the kayakers was wearing a life jacket.

7/2/2022 - Lake Anna, Spotsylvania County

A towed watersports participant was wake boarding behind a motorboat when she jumped a large wake causing her to fall striking her head and face on her wake board. She received four (4) stitches as a result of this incident.

7/21/2022 – Smith Mountain Lake, Bedford County

At approximately 8:00 pm, a PWC impacted the side of a moving motorboat, which caused the motorboat to begin sinking. The PWC operator was ejected into the water and was treated for serious injuries including head trauma, chest injuries, and a broken jaw and arm.

7/23/2022 – Timberneck Creek – Gloucester County

At approximately 9:02 pm, a report of a boat incident was made. A 15' jon boat had struck a pylon with a no wake sign. The operator was knocked unconscious and thrown into the water. The victim was recovered from the water by a good samaritan and treated at a local hospital for head trauma. Low light conditions were believed to have been the main cause of the incident.

7/31/2022 - Northampton County, Chesapeake Bay

The operator was towing a 7-year-old boy on a tube behind an open motorboat. The operator thought the boat was in neutral, but it was not. As the 7-year-old swam to the boat to re-enter the boat, his leg was caught by the propeller and received a significant laceration to his thigh.

12/17/2022 – Nomini Bay, Westmoreland County

At approximately 11:17 am, a vessel had capsized with two occupants in the water. The occupants stated that the canoe they were in took on water which caused them to fall overboard. They decided to swim to shore. Neither occupant was wearing a life jacket, and both were treated for hypothermia.