

**U.S. Coast Guard releases 2012 Recreational Boating Statistics Report**  
*Report shows lowest number of fatalities on record, overall drop in accidents and injuries*

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Coast Guard released its 2012 Recreational Boating Statistics Monday, revealing that boating fatalities that year totaled 651, the lowest number of boating fatalities on record.

From 2011 to 2012, deaths in boating-related accidents decreased from 758 to 651, a 14.1 percent decrease; injuries decreased from 3,081 to 3,000, a 2.6 percent reduction; and the total reported recreational boating accidents decreased from 4,588 to 4,515, a 1.6 percent decrease.

The fatality rate for 2012 of 5.4 deaths per 100,000 registered recreational vessels reflected a 12.9 percent decrease from the previous year's rate of 6.2 deaths per 100,000 registered recreational vessels. Property damage totaled approximately \$38 million.

"We're very pleased that casualties are lower, and thank our partners for their hard work over the past year," said Capt. Paul Thomas, director of Inspections and Compliance at U.S. Coast Guard Headquarters. "We will continue to stress the importance of life jacket wear, boating education courses and sober boating."

The report states alcohol use was the leading contributing factor in fatal boating accidents; it was listed as the leading factor in 17 percent of the deaths. Operator inattention, operator inexperience, improper lookout, machinery failure and excessive speed ranked as the top five primary contributing factors in accidents.

Almost 71 percent of all fatal boating accident victims drowned, with 84 percent of those victims not reported as wearing a life jacket. Approximately 14 percent of deaths occurred on vessels where the operator had received boating safety instruction. The most common types of vessels involved in reported accidents were open motorboats, personal watercraft and cabin motorboats.

The Coast Guard reminds all boaters to boat responsibly while on the water: wear a life jacket, take a boating safety course, get a free vessel safety check and avoid alcohol consumption.

To view the 2012 Recreational Boating Statistics, go to [http://www.uscgboating.org/statistics/accident\\_statistics.aspx](http://www.uscgboating.org/statistics/accident_statistics.aspx).

For more information on boating responsibly, go to <http://www.uscgboating.org/>.

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