

State of Alaska Department of Natural Resources



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Office of Boating Safety releases annual Alaska boat accident statistics

(Anchorage, AK) – The Alaska Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation’s Office of Boating Safety has released the State of Alaska’s 2017 boating accident statistics in advance of Safe Boating Week (May 19-25, 2018). Statistics include U.S. Coast Guard reportable accidents involving boats used for non-commercial purposes such as recreation, personal transportation, and subsistence.

In 2017, Alaska had 16 boating accidents that involved:

- 20 deaths;
- 3 injuries; and
- approximately \$58,700 dollars of damage to property.

The 20 fatalities in 2017 are an increase from 2016 (16) and 2015 (7). Alaska continues, however, to see a decrease in the five-year average number of fatalities. For 2013 to 2017, the five-year average was 11.8 fatalities, down from 14.4 fatalities from 2008 to 2012.

The primary cause of Alaska’s boating fatalities continues to be a cold-water immersion-related drowning or disappearance immediately following a capsizing, swamping, ejection, or fall overboard, involving a person not wearing a life jacket. Alaskans are reminded to always wear a life jacket when in an open boat or on an open deck. It is the law for persons under 13 years old.

Accidents that happen on waters outside State of Alaska jurisdiction, such as those in national parks and on military bases, are not included in these statistics.

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