

## Be a Water Smart™ Boater!

1) **KNOW THE BOATING “RULES OF THE ROAD”!** More details are available from the Canadian Coast Guard ([www.ccg-gcc.gc.ca](http://www.ccg-gcc.gc.ca)), but you should know that the rules changed as of September 1999:

- No child under 12 years of age may operate a powerboat with more than a 10 HP motor.
- Youths 12 to 15 years of age may only operate a boat 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.
- New small vessel safety equipment and safety precautions requirements for boaters include a new “careless operation of a vessel” offence which requires boaters to travel safely and avoid putting themselves and others at risk.
- 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. Youth and adults can take the LIFESAVING SOCIETY’S B.O.A.T.™ (Boat Operator Accredited Training) safety course at a local facility.

### 2) **KNOW BEFORE YOU GO**

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

### 3) **ALWAYS WEAR A LIFEJACKET**

- Don’t just have it in the boat, pick one and **wear** it!
- In addition to your PFD, also wear good sunglasses and appropriate clothing.

### 4) **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.

## Be Water Smart™ on Ice!

- **DON’T WALK, PLAY OR SNOWMOBILE ON THIN OR UNKNOWN ICE!**
- **RIDE SOBER AND DON’T DRIVE YOUR SNOWMOBILE ON ICE AFTER DARK!**
- **LEARN MORE ABOUT ICE SAFETY AND ICE RESCUE...GET THE LIFESAVING SOCIETY’S ICE SAFETY RESOURCE GUIDE “ICE: THE WINTER KILLER”.**

## Be a Water Smart™ Swimmer!

- **LEARN TO SWIM!**
- **NEVER DIVE INTO SHALLOW WATER!**
- **DON’T GO IN THE WATER ALONE!** ... Always swim with a buddy.
- **ALWAYS SUPERVISE YOUNG CHILDREN NEAR WATER!** ... If you’re not within arm’s reach, you’ve gone too far!
- **PLAY AND SWIM IN SUPERVISED AREAS!**
- **LEARN LIFESAVING SKILLS!**

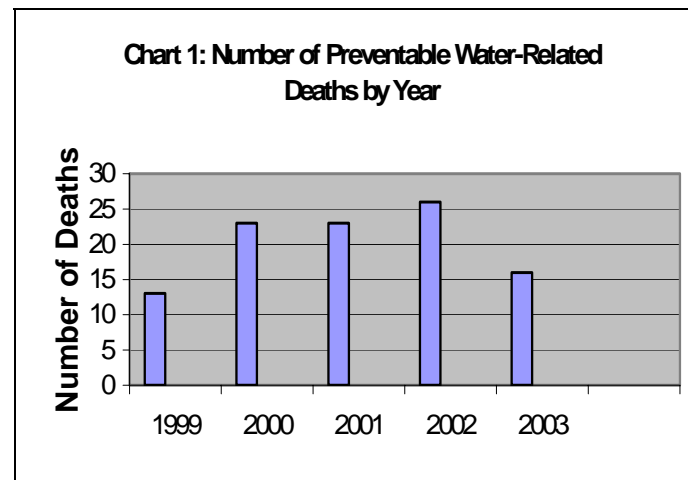
Go further...take a LIFESAVING SOCIETY Canadian Swim Patrol, Bronze Star, Bronze Medallion, Bronze Cross, National Lifeguard Service or other lifesaving program at your local pool or aquatic facility.



# Newfoundland & Labrador Drowning Trends 2005

## Newfoundland Drownings

The number of drownings and preventable water-related deaths in Newfoundland and Labrador in 2003 (the most recent year for which new data is available) has dramatically decreased by 62% to 16 in comparison to the previous year, contributing 26 deaths. (See Chart 1) This year will mark the first decline in 5 years.



### Inside This Report...

- 2002 Drowning Statistics
- 5 Year Comparison of Drownings in Newfoundland & Labrador
- Drowning Distribution Across Newfoundland & Labrador
- Boating Related Statistics
- Water Smart® Tips
- Contact Us

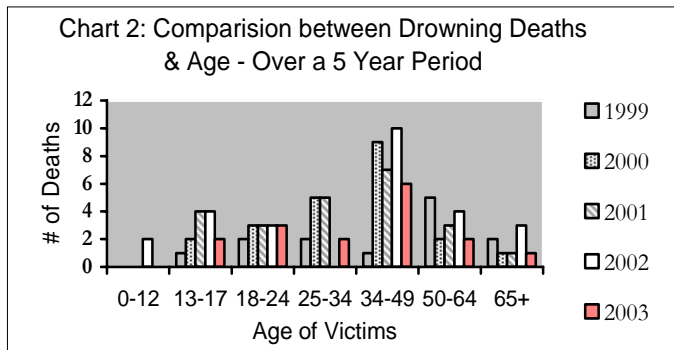
In 2003, Newfoundland and Labrador experienced a high number of deaths during the months of February and May each with 5 and 4 respectively. The incidents taking place in these months have increased from only 1 victim each month in 2002. Oddly enough, June, July and August, which increased slightly from 10-14 in 2001-2002, has now taken a complete turnaround with the month of June claiming one (1) life and July and August with none, these numbers are down almost 48%. Likewise there were no incidents of drownings in January, November or December.

A shocking reality arose in this years' statistics; **100%** of all drowning victims were male. Statistics show that the number of female victims has jumped drastically from 2001 to 2002, from 1 to 7 female fatalities, but this year there have been no reported incidents of female drownings.

As well this year, there were no child victims under the age of 13, which again has decreased from last year. (See Chart 2) The number of deaths in the 18-24 age group has remained steady from last year with 3 deaths, while the drowning totals in the 30-34 range has increased from 0 last year to 2 this year.



The 35-49 age group still remains to be the high-risk group, with 37.5% of drownings. While this age group still remains high-risk, 2003 has seen the lowest number of deaths from males aged 35-49 in 4 years with a 40% decrease in drownings, down from 10-6 victims. More good news is seen in the males aged 50-64 with a 50% drop from 4-2 drownings as well as the 65+ age group which has also decreased 66% from 3-1 victims.



Boating, usually in the ocean, accounted for almost 63% of all Newfoundland and Labrador water-related deaths in 2003. Ten (10) out of 16 people drowned while boating, this number is up 25% from 2002. In addition, 19% of drowning deaths occurred during transportation other than boating, which actually decreased 8% since last year.

## Newfoundland & Labrador Fact & Figures

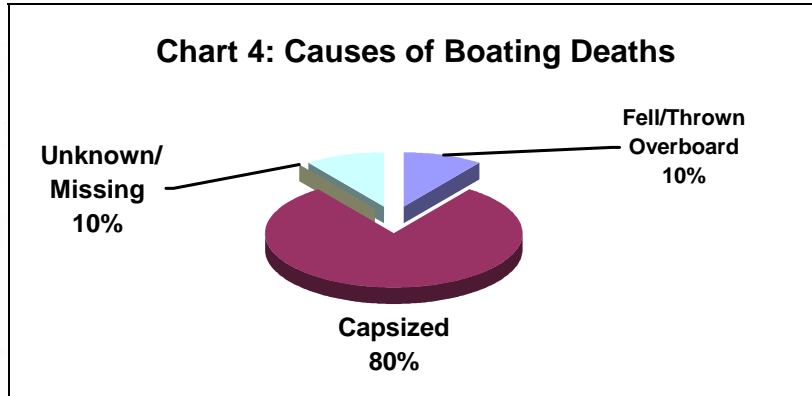
### Preventable Water-Related Deaths: 1999-2003 (Five-Year Total)

#### Total Number of Deaths: 101

WHO	Day of Week:	WHY
<b>Age of Victims:</b>		<b>Contributing Factors:</b>
0-4 years	Monday 12	Alcohol Involved 28
5-12	Tuesday 14	Drugs Involved 9
13-17	Wednesday 15	Alone 36
18-24	Thursday 12	Non/Weak Swimmer 14
25-34	Friday 9	PDF Not Worn 37
35-49	Saturday 18	PDF worn Improperly 2
50-64	Sunday 21	After Dark 20
65+	8	Rough Wave Conditions 14
	<b>WHAT</b>	
<b>Gender of Victims:</b>	<b>Type of Activity:</b>	
Male 92	Recreational 64	
Female 9	Occupational 20	
	Daily Living 15	
	Attempt to Rescue 1	
<b>WHERE</b>		<b>The Lifesaving Society acknowledges assistance in preparing the Newfoundland &amp; Labrador Drowning Report from:</b>
<b>Geographic District:</b>	<b>Recreational Activities:</b>	
District 1 20	Swimming 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Office of the Chief Forensic Pathologist, Newfoundland Department of Justice</li> <li>• Canadian Red Cross Society (CRCS)</li> <li>• Lifesaving Society and CRCS volunteers and staff</li> <li>• Royal Newfoundland Constabulary</li> <li>• Royal Canadian Mounted Police</li> <li>• Canadian Coast Guard</li> <li>• Environment Canada</li> </ul>
District 2 24	Fishing 8	
District 3 24	Powerboating 16	
District 4 19	Non-power boating 4	
District 5 14	Canoeing 4	
	Snowmobiling 8	
	Hunting 10	
<b>Aquatic Setting:</b>	<b>Occupational Activities:</b>	
Ocean 60	Commercial Fishing 16	
Lakes/Ponds 23	Other 4	
Streams/Rivers/Creeks 16		
Bathtub 2		
	<b>Daily Living Activities:</b>	
	Automobile Travel 8	
	Bathing 2	
	Boat Travel 1	
	Snowmobile Travel 2	
	Travel on Foot 1	
	Other 1	
		<b>For More Information Contact:</b>
<b>WHEN</b>		<b>Lifesaving Society</b>
<b>Month of Year:</b>		<b>Newfoundland &amp; Labrador Branch</b>
January 6		<i>P.O. Box 8065, Station "A"</i>
February 7		<i>St. John's, NL</i>
March 10		<i>A1B 3M9</i>
April 7		<i>Telephone: (709) 576-1953</i>
May 9		<i>Fax: (709) 738-1475</i>
June 12		<i>E-Mail: <a href="mailto:LIFEGUARD@NL.ROGERS.COM">LIFEGUARD@NL.ROGERS.COM</a></i>
July 15		
August 8		
September 5		
October 14		
November 5		
December 3		

# Boating Fatalities

Boating continues to be the leading cause of water-related deaths among people in Newfoundland and Labrador. Ten (10) boating fatalities occurred in 2003, the same as in 2002. Most of these drowning happened in our oceans (70%), while the remaining occurred in lakes/ponds (30%). From 2001 to 2003 Newfoundland and Labrador has seen a 20% increase in deaths in ponds/lakes. The most startling boating statistic is that the majority of all boating deaths are caused by the capsizing of boats, that's up 60% from 2002. (See Chart 4)



Although boating fatalities have remained constant since last year, statistics show that not wearing a lifejacket continues to be a leading factor. In 2002 only 20% of boating-related drowning victims were not wearing a PFD, down over 60% from 2001 but this year, 2003, that number has decreased further to a mere 10%, which means only 1 of the 10 boating-related drowning victims were wearing a PFD or lifejacket. The lack of a PFD/lifejacket is more common among males and remains highest in the 18-49 age group.

Another factor commonly associated with boating fatalities in Newfoundland and Labrador is alcohol consumption. Alcohol involvement in boating fatalities increased this year, up to 50%, after a 10% drop last year. Weather, including strong winds and rough water, also played a role in 100% of boating fatalities. To ensure safety when boating it is important to be prepared. Ensure the weather forecast is appropriate for a boating excursion, in addition, always wear a lifejacket/PFD and be sure it is used correctly. Finally, never drink and drive and make certain you are not an occupant of a boat with an intoxicated driver.

Another increase seen was among snowmobiling fatalities which went from 0 to 2 victims this year. Even more startling is the increase among hunting activity fatalities which went from 1 to 5 victims in 2003. These numbers are up almost 36% from 2002.



Alcohol continues to play a role in the drowning statistics of this province, being considered a factor in almost one-third (32%) of the drowning cases reported in 2003. Alcohol related incidents have been declining since 1996, this year, unfortunately, they are on the rise again; up 5% from last year.

Another factor commonly associated with drowning in this province is the lack of personal floatation devices used when in, on or around water. Out of the known situations in Newfoundland and Labrador where a lifejacket would be expected, only 7% of drowning victims were wearing a PFD in 2003 as opposed to 25% in 2002. Many times when they are worn, however, they are not worn properly and are therefore ineffective as lifesaving tools.

## What Activities Caused Deaths?

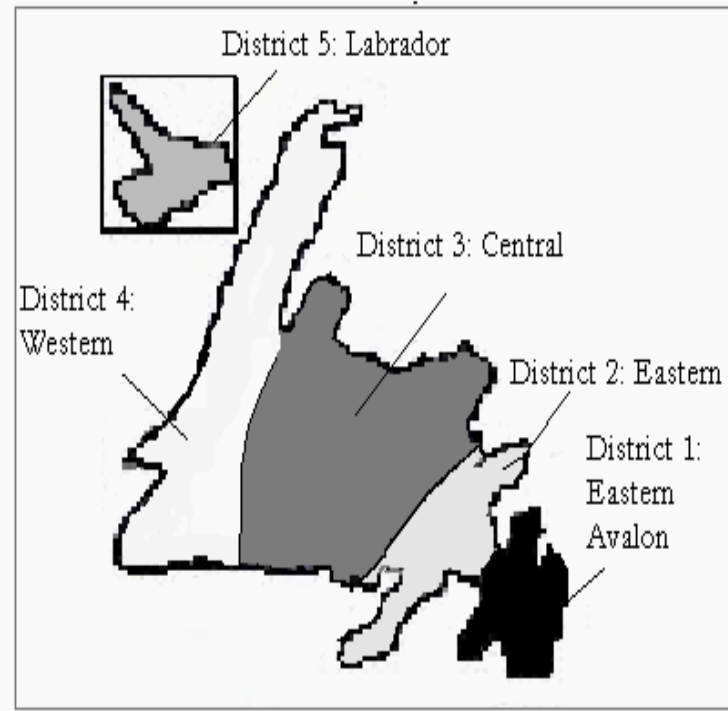
Recreational activities such as boating, swimming, and fishing account for 88% (14 deaths) of all drowning incidents in 2003. This statistic has increased over 30% from last year. (See Chart 3).

**Chart 3: Number of Preventable Water-Related Deaths By Purpose of Activity**

	1996-2001(Avg.)	2002	2003
Recreational	15	13	14
Occupational	5	3	1
Daily Living	4	9	0

A continuous decline can be seen, however, in the number of drownings resulting from occupation activities. NL started with 8 in 2000, down to 6 in 2001, 3 in 2002, and now just 1 in 2003. Daily-living activity fatalities saw its first increase last year in over 10 years, but is back on track this year with no lives lost to drownings.

## Where Did Fatalities Occur In The Province?



The drownings that occurred in 2003 were distributed all throughout Newfoundland and Labrador. The highest number of drownings occurred in the Eastern area with 6 deaths, up 22% from last year, followed by the Avalon and Central areas with 4 deaths each, up 6% and 2% respectively. While these districts did increase, the Western and Labrador region both decreased to only 1 victim each, down 17% and 13%.

Fishing related deaths occurred only in the areas of Eastern and Central, which also reported a high number of boating-related fatalities. 50% of all drownings were boating-related in the Eastern region while 30% were boating-related in the Central area. Five-year statistics show that Central has had the highest number of alcohol-related drownings. This trend continued in 2002 as two-thirds (4/6) of centrals water-related fatalities involved alcohol consumption but has decreased somewhat this year with 1/4 deaths being alcohol-related. Of the 16 people that drowned province wide, 5 of those involved alcohol with each incident spread evenly over each of the 5 districts. This means that each of the 1 drownings that occurred, or 100%, in the Western and Labrador, areas involved alcohol.

Districts	1	2	2	4	5
2002 Drownings	5	4	6	6	5
2003 Drownings	4	6	4	1	1
Total Drownings In 5 Years	29	26	29	28	20
Drownings In Ocean	0	3	3	0	3
2002	1	6	2	1	0
2003	2	1	3	4	0
Drownings In Lakes & Ponds	2	0	2	0	0
2002	1	2	3	1	3
2003	1	5	3	1	0
Boating Related Deaths	0	0	2	0	1
2002	0	0	2	0	1
2003	0	0	1	0	0
Fishing Related Deaths	1	1	4	1	0
2002	1	1	4	1	0
2003	1	1	1	1	1
Deaths Involving Alcohol	1	1	1	1	1
2002	1	1	1	1	1
2003	1	1	1	1	1