

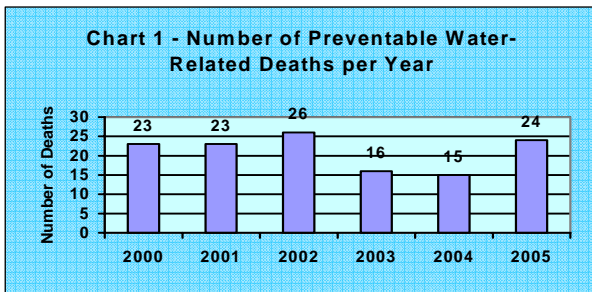


Newfoundland and Labrador Drowning Report 2007

First increase in drownings in three years in province

The number of preventable water related drownings in Newfoundland and Labrador is on the up swing according to the 2005 statistics (the most recent year for which data is available). The number of drownings and preventable water-related deaths during 2005 (24) has increased over the 2004's statistics (15). This marks the first increase since 2003. (See Chart # 1)

Taking population into consideration, the 24 (all male), Newfoundland and Labrador deaths in 2005 translates to a preventable water-related death rate of 2.4 deaths per 100,000 population. Males are more likely to be at risk of drowning than females, due to increased exposure to water activities and high risk behaviour, such as swimming alone, and drinking before water based activities. This indicates that the Lifesaving Society needs to continue with education in water safety and drowning prevention to change behaviours in, on and around water.



Although there were increases among all age groups during 2005, there were no child victims under the age of 13, (See Chart #2). The number of deaths in the 18-34 range has increased by 37.5% (8 victims) over last year. The 35-49 age group still remains the high risk group with 42% (10) of the total deaths. The 50-65+ age group has seen a 40% increase, with 5 drowning victims, compared to 3 in the previous year.

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... And More

Most Fatalities Happened During Occupational Activities

The majority of drownings occurred while victims were engaged in occupational activities (50%). This is contributed to by multiple drownings in the commercial fishing industry, followed by recreational activities, (37.5%), and daily living 8%. During 2005, water related fatalities due to occupational activities continued to be on an upward spiral with 12 water related deaths compared to 3 deaths in 2004, an increase of 75%. (See Chart #3)

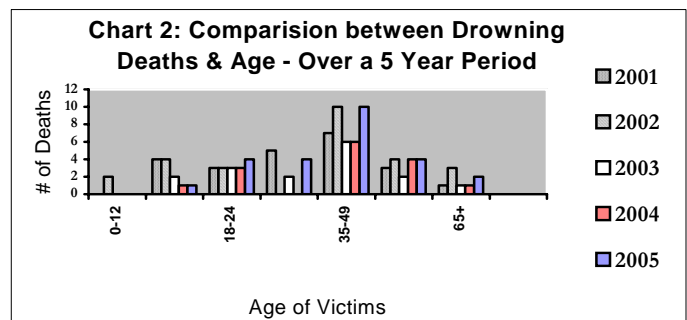
	1997-2002 (Avg.)	2003	2004	2005
Recreation	11	14	7	9
Occupation	5	1	3	12
Daily Living	4	0	2	2

Drowning Statistics

In 2005, 50% (12) of water-related deaths occurred between January and August. September through December .saw the majority of drownings 50% (12) for a four month period.

Seven-five percent (75%) of water-related deaths occurred during the weekend (i.e. Friday-Sunday), 7.7% occurred in the morning, 38.5% in the afternoon, and the remaining 53.8% occurred at night.

Also, 62.5% (15) of all drownings occurred while the victim was alone and 37.5% (9) of all drownings were multiple victim incidents.

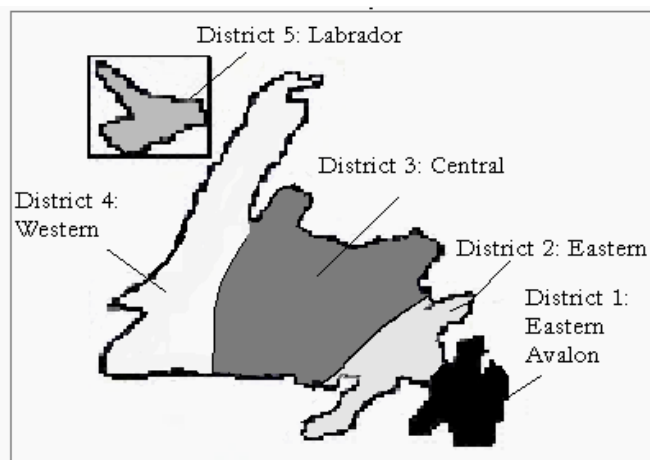


Where Drowning Took Place?

Across Newfoundland and Labrador the largest increase in the annual number of drownings occurred in the Eastern (8) and Central (7) regions of the province accounting for 63% of the total number of drownings. This is up 60% in those regions from last year. The Avalon and Labrador regions also reported an increase of 43% with 5 and 2 deaths respectively,

Seventy-nine percent (19) of the water related deaths happened on the ocean while individuals were engaged in activities such as commercial fishing

Statistics reported that drowning fatalities on lakes and ponds accounted for 12.5% of the total number of drowning fatalities, and eight percent (8%) on river and streams (See Chart #4)



What were they doing?

More drownings occurred while sport fishing and powerboating than in any other recreational activity. The 75% increase in occupational drownings (12) can be attributed to an increase in boating activities such as multiple victim involvement in commercial fishing on the ocean which represented 79% (19) of the total drownings (see chart # 3)

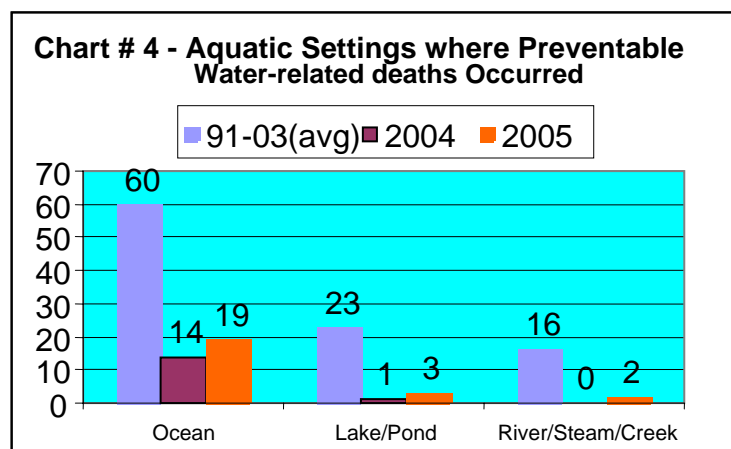
The daily living factor has experienced no change with two deaths reported again this year, which is the same as last year. Walking near water (or on ice) is the recreational activity showing 2 deaths this year.

Statistics indicated that half of the province's preventable water-related deaths were boating incidents. Current statistics show that the deaths involving boating represented 50% of all water-related fatalities. Seven-five percent (75%) of boating victims drowned while operating a small powerboat over 5.5m (18 feet). Rowboat and kayak activity reported one drowning each.

To ensure safety when boating it is important to be prepared. Make sure the weather forecast is appropriate for a boating excursion. In addition, always wear a lifejacket/PFD and be sure it is worn correctly. Never drink and drive and make certain you are not an occupant of a boat with an intoxicated driver

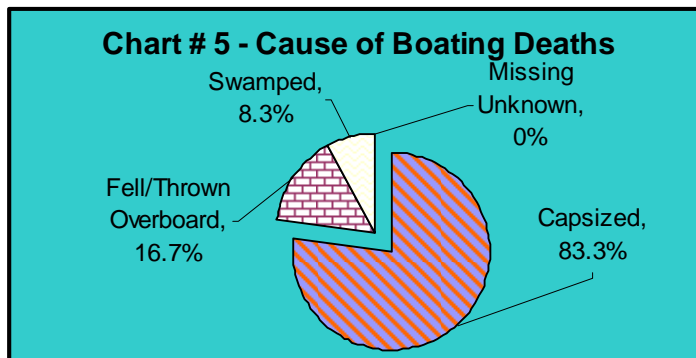
Initiatives such as the new federal recreational boating safety regulations, which began to take effect in September 1999, and the Lifesaving Society B.O.A.T. (Boat Operator Accredited Training) Safety course will continue to help reduce the drowning toll.

Of the 19 deaths that occurred on the ocean 31.6% involved recreational activity, 63.2% were occupational and 5.3% involved daily living activity.



Of the total number of boating fatalities 83.3% (10) were a result of the boat capsizing in rough wave conditions, while swamping contributed to 8.3%, and falling or getting thrown overboard represented 16.7% of all fatalities involving boats

Snowmobiling fatalities accounted for 17% (4) of water-related deaths. This number is an increase from last year's reported incident of 3 snowmobiling. There were no reported drownings due to hunting this year.



The Risk Factors



1. **Not wearing a Lifejacket or PFD is the number one problem contributing to drownings.**
 - Most victims were not wearing a PFD (81.3% victims for whom PFD information was available). The victim was not wearing a PFD in activities such as commercial fishing (45.8%) which usually involved capsizing, swamping or falling overboard.

2. **Drinking alcoholic beverages and drug usage continues to be a major problem with boaters and snowmobilers**

- Alcoholic beverage consumption was involved in 75% (18) of preventable water-related deaths involving victims ages 18-49 years of age. The blood alcohol level ranged from 100ml and over
- Known or suspected drug involvement accounted for 42.9% of the total number of victims



3. **Victims were alone**

- Sixty-two percent (15) of the victims were alone at time of the incident compared to 37.5% (9) who were with other individuals when drownings occurred.

4. **Rough Water**

- Rough water/ waves – white caps were cited in 66.7% of boating fatalities; the victims were in water more than 2.5 metres (more than 8.1 feet) and 50 metres from shore/dock (64.3% - 9 victims) when drowning occurred

5. **Cold Water**

- Ninety-three percent (93.8%) of all drownings known to involve water 10 degrees Celsius or colder
- Hypothermia was reported as a cause of death by the Medical Examiner in 25% of deaths

6. **Snowmobiling on ice after dark**

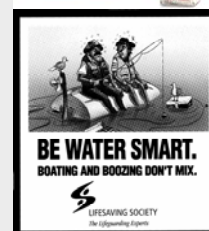
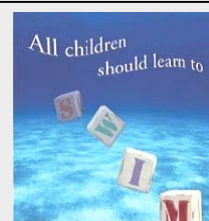
- Fifty percent (50%) of snowmobiling drownings occurred after dark

The "Unattended Toddler" (If you are not in arms reach ... You've gone too far)

- 1 to 4 years old – can walk, but can't swim
- Playing near water and falls in
- Alone, or momentary lapse in parent or caregiver's attention
- Not wearing a lifejacket
- Drowns, or suffers near drowning brain damage
- Backyard pools particularly dangerous; also unsupervised beaches, waterfronts, cabins, and bathtubs.

The "Risk Taker" (Be Water Smart - Boozing and boating don't mix)

- Young men 18 to 34 year, active in outdoor recreational activities, especially fishing, powerboating, swimming, diving or jumping into water, canoeing, and snowmobiling; and put themselves into high risk situations.
- Often partying with friends, including drinking alcoholic beverages.
- Almost never wearing a lifejacket or PFD, and may be guilty of careless driving of a boat or snowmobile.
- Usually on lakes, river, and ocean



The table represents the number of drownings and causes for five (5) districts in Newfoundland and Labrador. The table shows figures for the total number of deaths for the year 2004, 2005, and the total drownings in five years.

District		1	2	3	4	5
2004 Drownings		2	3	4	5	1
2005 Drownings		5	8	7	2	2
Total Drownings In 5 Years		20	31	24	17	16
Drownings In Ocean	2004	2	3	3	5	1
	2005	2	8	7	0	2
Drownings In Lakes & Ponds	2004	0	0	1	0	0
	2005	2	0	0	1	0
Boating Related Deaths	2004	1	3	0	3	0
	2005	0	5	6	1	0
Fishing Related Deaths	2004	0	0	0	0	0
	2005	0	0	0	0	0
Deaths Involving Alcohol	2004	1	2	2	3	0
	2005	3	2	5	0	1



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), 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.

Swim to survive

The Canadian Swim to survive standard is a simple straightforward and focused natural standard that defines the minimum swimming skills needed to survive an unexpected fall into deep water

Roll into deep water – Tread water (1min) = Swim (50 mtrs)

Learn more, take the Swim to Survive Challenge at your local pool.