



2014 Minnesota Boating Accident and Drowning Summary

Prepared by Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
Boat & Water Safety

Summary of Accidents for the Entire Year – Jan.-Dec.										
Accident Category and Year	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005
Boating Fatalities	14	13 ⁺	15	16	12	15	12	15	14	23
Non-Fatal Boating Accidents <i>See NOTES below</i>	36	65	72	61	71	70	77	113	102	93
Non-Boating Drownings	29	30	40	50	34	28	33	26	49	45
* One fatality was on a commercial craft and will not be counted by the U.S. Coast Guard as a recreational boating fatality.										

2014 Statewide Summary – as of 12/31/14

Boating Fatalities

- 4/19 – Blue Earth Co. – Madison Lake – A 39-year-old Madison Lake man died when the canoe he and another passenger were in capsized about 11:05 p.m., approximately 100 yards from shore. The passenger was able to swim to shore and get help. The victim's body was found at 1:55 a.m. on 4/20. The cause of death was drowning. (*Life Jackets worn – no*)
- 6/6 – Winona Co. – Mississippi River – An 88-year-old Stockton man was missing after his canoe capsized about 11:00 a.m. on the backwaters of the river. He was fishing and got too close to the spillway, causing his canoe to capsize. The search continued the following day, and his body was found at 2:51 p.m. about 50 yards from where the canoe capsized. (*Life Jacket worn – no*)
- 6/11 – St. Louis Co. – Lake Vermilion – A 64-year-old Lincoln, NE man died after falling out of a boat in which he was a passenger. He was pulled from the water and CPR was attempted, but he was later pronounced dead at the hospital. (*Life Jacket worn – no*)
- 6/25 – Otter Tail Co. – Little Long Lake – A 72-year-old Longville man drowned when the boat he and his friend were fishing from capsized at about 1:20 p.m. The friend was able to get to shore, but the victim went under water and did not resurface. He was recovered by the dive team at about 3:30 p.m. (*Life Jacket worn – no*)
- 6/26 – Crow Wing Co. – Clearwater Lake – A 44-year-old man from Sartell drowned about 1:35 p.m. He was with a group of friends on a drifting pontoon boat when they decided to go swimming. He went in the water and failed to resurface. Authorities responded and began searching for the man. His body was recovered in 20 feet of water, at about 5:00 p.m. (*Life Jacket worn – no*)
- 7/18 – St. Louis Co. – Nichols Lake – A 60-year-old man drowned about 12:50 p.m. when he jumped from his paddle boat to help two young children who had fallen off the tube he was pulling. The children, who were wearing life jackets, were panicked but uninjured. The victim was not wearing a life jacket and did not resurface. He was recovered about 30 minutes later, in 12 feet of water. CPR was started, but to no avail. (*Life Jacket worn – no*)
- 8/3 – Douglas Co. – Lobster Lake – A 15-year-old Montevideo teenager drowned when the kayak he was in capsized and he was not able to get himself out of it. He had left the campground in the kayak about 12:30 p.m. His mother called authorities about 4:45 p.m., when he hadn't yet returned. A search was started, and the submerged kayak and victim were found about 5:50 p.m. He was pronounced dead at the scene. (*Life Jacket worn – yes*)
- 8/8 – Mille Lacs Co. – Lake Mille Lacs – A 56-year-old Cottage Grove man was fishing from an anchored boat, with no lights on, when he was hit by another boat at about 10:00 p.m. A search was started for the man, who

was no longer in the boat. His body was found the next afternoon in about 11 feet of water. *(Life Jacket worn – no)*

9. 8/22 – St. Louis Co. – Shagawa Lake – A 23-year-old Ely man died when the boat he was a passenger in struck some rocks on the edge of an island about 10:30 p.m. The watercraft was traveling at a high rate of speed from one fishing spot to another when it hit the rocks. All three occupants in the boat were ejected. The operator and another passenger sustained non-life threatening injuries. *(Life Jackets worn – no)*
10. 8/23 – Sherburne Co. – Lake Freemont – A 23-year-old Foley man drowned when he jumped off a boat to swim to an island, about 6:00 p.m. His friends watched him swimming toward the island, turned the boat around to pick him up, and could no longer see him. The authorities were called by a witness on shore who saw the victim go under and not come up. The victim's body was recovered by divers about 8:15 p.m. *(Life Jacket worn – no)*
11. 10/11 – Hennepin Co. – Medicine Lake – A 31-year-old St. Louis Park man was missing after the kayak he was in overturned about 2:30 a.m. He and a friend went out on the lake in the kayak about 2:00 a.m. The kayak overturned, putting both men in the water. One man made it to shore. Authorities were called about 7:45 a.m. and a search was started for the missing man. Boats and divers searched for several days, and the man's body was found about 3:00 p.m. on 10/13 in about 10 feet of water. *(Life Jacket worn – no)*
12. 10/17 – Carver Co. – Parley Lake – A 6-year-old boy was found unresponsive in the water near the shoreline by sheriff's deputies, after receiving a call from the boy's father about 6:25 a.m. The boy had been in the family's boat at the dock, waiting to ride along with his dad who was going duck hunting. The boat drifted away from the dock, and the dad swam after the boat to retrieve it, but was unsuccessful. The boat was found empty. They found the boy a short time later. They were unable to revive him, and he was pronounced dead at the hospital. *(Life Jacket worn – no)*
13. 10/18 – Carver Co. – Parley Lake – A 60-year-old Burnsville man was heading out on the lake to duck hunt when authorities received a call, about 6:22 a.m., that he had fallen out of his boat and could not be located. Authorities found him unconscious in the water and he was taken to a medical center, where he was later pronounced dead. *(Life Jacket worn – no)*
14. 11/8 – Winona Co. – Mississippi River – A 27-year-old Onalaska, WI man was missing after the boat he was in apparently hit a roller gate on Lock and Dam 7. He had gone fishing about 11:00 p.m. on 11/8 and was reported missing in the morning on 11/9. A gas tank and life jacket were found near the dam and the damaged boat was found about 2 miles downstream. The victim's body was recovered on 3/13/15, near La Crosse. *(Life Jacket worn – unknown)*

Summary: There were 14 fatal accidents, involving 15 boats, resulting in 14 deaths, two additional injuries and \$23,137 in property damage. Of the 14 accidents, 13 were single boat accidents, classified as five capsizings, three falls overboard, three intentionally left boat (two to swim and one to help kids who fell off a tube), and two collisions with a fixed object. There was one collision between two boats which caused one operator to fall overboard and drown. Five of the deaths involved nonmotorized craft (two kayaks, one canoe, one paddle boat and one rowboat) and nine involved motorized craft (including one canoe with a trolling motor). A life jacket was known to be worn by only one victim out of the total of 14 (7%). The most common operator age range was 51 years and older (7). Alcohol was listed as a factor in six of the accidents – involving four motorized and two nonmotorized craft.

Non-Fatal Boating Accidents

Capsizing	7
Collision w / fixed/floating object	1
Collision w / another watercraft	7
Collision w / underwater object	2
Collision w/ swimmer, person in water	0
Fall in boat	2
Fall overboard	3
Fire/Explosion	0
Grounding / Hitting Bottom	1
Struck by Propeller	0
Sinking / Flooding / Swamping	3
Water skiing, wake boarding or tubing	7
Other	3
Total reportable non-fatal boating accidents, as of 12/31/14	36

NOTES:

Reportable non-fatal boating accidents are those where there was: a) at least \$2,000 in property damage, or b) an injury beyond first aid.

Summary: There were 36 reportable non-fatal accidents, involving 44 boats, resulting in 36 injuries and \$94,257 in damages to boats. The most common operator age ranges were 18-25 years old and 31-40 years old (10 operators each). The most common age range for victims with injuries was 31-40 years old (10 injuries).

Non-Boating Drownings

1. 1/5 – Hennepin Co. – hotel bathtub – A 73-year-old Camp Verde, AZ man was found unresponsive in a hotel bathtub by a security officer and family members about 4:13 a.m. Police responded and found the victim in the tub. He was declared deceased at the scene.
2. 1/22 – Scott Co. – Minnesota River – A 37-year-old Shakopee man went fishing on the river. His father called authorities when he did not return home. The shoreline was checked by snowmobile, but nothing was found. The following day, authorities discovered footprints leading to a hole in the ice. The dive team was called but they didn't find anything near the opening in the ice. The search was suspended because of darkness and cold weather conditions. On 1/24 about 10:01 a.m., the man was located by a remotely piloted camera.
3. 2/15 – Polk Co. – Maple Lake – A 37-year-old Crookston man drowned while spearfishing. A friend went to the man's icehouse to check on him about 6:40 p.m. and found him underwater. The friend broke through the ice and pulled him out. CPR was attempted, but to no avail.
4. 2/27 – Hennepin Co. – school pool – A 12-year-old St. Louis Park boy drowned in his school pool. He was found floating in the pool about 9:00 a.m., at the end of gym class. He was pulled from the pool unconscious and not breathing. CPR was started and paramedics transported him to the hospital. He died 2 days later, early on Saturday morning (3/1).
5. 3/31 – Dakota Co. – Sunset Park Pond – A 43-year-old Savage man fell through the ice and was submerged up to his head and unconscious. Authorities pulled him from the water about 2:45 p.m. CPR was started and he was taken to a local hospital. A pulse was established, but he passed away the following day.
6. 4/25 – Hennepin Co. – apartment pool – A 16-year-old Plymouth boy drowned while swimming in the pool of the apartment building that he lived in. He was pulled from the pool about 7:00 p.m. and resuscitation was started, but to no avail. He was pronounced dead at the hospital about 8:00 p.m.
7. 5/25 – Chisago Co. – St. Croix River – A 21-year old Coon Rapids man was swept away and drowned when he jumped in the river to rescue his nephew, who had fallen in about 4:45 p.m. The current was strong and he couldn't get to the boy, who was saved by a second person. Authorities searched for the man for several days. His body was found about one mile south of Osceola Landing on 5/30 at 8:16 am.
8. 5/25 – Washington Co. – Mississippi River – A 14-year-old St. Paul Park boy drowned about 5:00 p.m. He was wading in the water, and then swam out to retrieve a stick. He then went under. Authorities were called and many dives were made to locate the victim. His body was recovered about 11:55 p.m. The river was high, and the current was swift from recent rains.
9. 5/26 – Hennepin Co. – residential pool – A 48-year-old St. Paul man was swimming in a pool at a private residence when he was noticed at the bottom of the pool. He was pulled from the pool and CPR was started. He was taken to the hospital, where he was in a coma. He died several days later, on 6/3/14.
10. 6/15 – Scott Co. – hotel hot tub – A 32-year-old man drowned in a hotel hot tub. He left his hotel room at approximately 8:30 p.m. to go to the hot tub. At approximately 9:20 p.m. a guest alerted the front desk that someone was slumped over in the hot tub. The employee went to the hot tub, saw the victim and called 911. CPR was started, but to no avail. The victim was pronounced dead about 10:00 p.m.
11. 6/21 – Ramsey Co. – Lake Phalen – A 22-year-old St. Paul man drowned about 7:54 p.m. when he was diving off the floating dock in the swim area. A witness saw him go under water and not resurface. Authorities arrived, and divers found the victim at about 8:50 p.m. in 19 feet of water. CPR was started, but to no avail. He was pronounced dead at the scene.
12. 6/26 – Hubbard Co. – LaSalle Lake – A 78-year-old man drowned while swimming. He dove off the day use area dock at the LaSalle State Recreation Area, and didn't resurface. Friends and witnesses attempted to locate him in the water without success. Authorities were called, and the victim was located, about 9:30 p.m., using underwater cameras.
13. 7/6 – Washington Co. – St. Croix River – A 40-year-old man drowned while swimming in a designated swimming area. He was with family when he swam out to a swim marker, about 5:05 p.m., went under and didn't resurface. The family tried to locate him, but couldn't. The victim's body was recovered by authorities at about 6:25 p.m.
14. 7/12 – Otter Tail Co. – Ten Mile Lake – A 62-year-old Dalton man drowned while working on his dock. He was found in the water by a family member about 7:50 p.m. Authorities were called and CPR was started. He was pronounced dead at the hospital just after 9:00 p.m.
15. 7/16 – Douglas Co. – Maple Lake – A 23-year-old Alexandria man was found on the bottom of the lake at the end of the dock just after 5:00 p.m. He was pulled from the water by a family member, CPR was started and authorities were called. Rescue efforts were unsuccessful.

16. 8/6 - Hennepin Co. – Lake Nokomis – A 15-year-old Minneapolis boy drowned about 10:05 a.m. while swimming to a raft in the swim area. He called for help and went underwater. He did not resurface. His body was recovered by divers about an hour later.
17. 8/9 – Chisago Co. – St. Croix River – A 28-year-old Harris man drowned just before 6:00 p.m. He swam across the river and when he was on his way back, he began to struggle and went under. Efforts to find the victim were unsuccessful. Authorities were called and his body was recovered by the sheriff's department officers just after 8:00 p.m.
18. 8/10 – Stearns Co. – Sauk River – A 55-year-old St. Cloud man drowned about 12:40 p.m. while swimming in the river. His neighbors watched him swimming and went back into their apartment. They looked out about 6 minutes later, and saw the man in the river, not moving. They called 911 and went out into the river to check on the man. They pulled him out of the river and started CPR, until authorities arrived. The victim was pronounced dead at the scene.
19. 9/6 – Wright Co. – Dog Lake – A 53-year-old Winsted man was fishing from a dock, about 5:50 p.m. He possibly knocked a bucket into the water and fell in trying to retrieve it. He struggled and did not resurface. Authorities recovered his body about 2 hours later in about 6 ½ feet of water.
20. 9/9 – Hennepin Co. – Lake Independence – An 80-year-old Minnetonka man drowned when the wheelchair he was in apparently rolled off the end of the dock. The victim was found floating in the water about 6:30 a.m. His wheelchair was in the water at the end of the dock. The victim was pronounced dead at the scene.
21. 9/9 – Olmsted Co. – Zumbro River – A 60-year-old man drowned when he apparently fell in the river. His body was found in the river beneath a bridge about 5:05 p.m. It is unknown where he entered the river.
22. 9/21 – Goodhue Co. – Mississippi River – A 44-year-old New Market man drowned when he slipped from the swim platform of a docked boat about 2:14 p.m. He possibly hit his head on the dock before he fell in the river. The owner of the boat saw the victim sinking under the water and attempted to retrieve him, but was unsuccessful. Authorities were contacted at about 2:15 p.m. The victim's body was located by sonar and recovered by a county sheriff's office diver at 4:22 p.m.
23. Unk. – Clay Co. – Red River – A boater found the body of a 48-year-old man in the river on 10/1/14. It is unknown how he came to be in the river, or how long he had been there.
24. 10/3 – Ramsey Co. – residential bathtub – A 52-year old woman drowned in her apartment bathtub. She was found by a friend about 6:20 p.m. The friend had talked to her on the telephone 2 days previously. It is unknown how long she had been in the tub. She was pronounced dead at the scene.
25. 10/25 – Scott Co. – residential pool – A 52-year-old Savage man apparently drowned in a residential pool. He was found floating in the shallow end of the pool about 3:57 a.m. He was pulled to the edge of the steps. CPR was started by medics, to no avail.
26. 11/20 – St. Louis Co. – residential bathtub – A 59-year old man was taking a bath at his residence. He was found under the water in his bathtub about 11:41 a.m. It is unknown how long he was in the water.
27. 11/26 – Aitkin Co. – Gun Lake – A 62-year-old Aitkin man drowned about 3:40 p.m., when the ATV he was operating on the lake broke through the ice. Authorities arrived and removed him from about 6 ½ feet of water just after 4:00 p.m. He was taken to a local health care center, where he died later that night. The ice where he broke through was about 1 inch thick.
- 28-29. 12/23 – Cook Co. – Lake Superior – A 40-year-old Menomonie, WI man left the hot tub to go down to the rocks on shore about 3:00 p.m. He was knocked into the lake by a large wave. A 66-year-old Spring Green, WI man was out walking and saw him in distress and attempted to rescue him. The 66-year-old was swept away by a wave. The 40-year-old was pulled from the water at about 3:30 p.m. and was transported to the hospital, where he was pronounced dead. A search was started for the other man. Many agencies participated, including the U.S. Coast Guard, the State Patrol, a Canadian Coast Guard plane, many area fire departments and county sheriff and search and rescue personnel. He was finally located and recovered about 10:30 p.m. by a U.S. Coast Guard boat crew. He was pronounced dead by EMS personnel on shore.

Summary: There were 29 non-boating drownings. Eleven were in lakes, nine in rivers, four in swimming pools, three in bathtubs, one in a pond and one in a hot tub. The most common age range for victims was 51 years and over (12 victims), followed by 31-40 years old (5 victims). Victim's ages ranged from 12 to 80 years old.