

Preliminary 2018 Minnesota Boating Accident and Drowning Summary

Prepared by Minnesota Department of Natural Resources – Boat and Water Safety
as of 11/30/18

Summary of Accidents – as of 11/30 each year

Accident Category and Year	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009
Boating Fatalities	14	12	18	18	14	12	15	16	12	15
Non-Fatal Boating Accidents	64	91	79	71	36	65	72	61	70	70
Non-Boating Drownings	32	27	39	35	27	29	40	50	30	26

There is usually a delay in the reporting of non-fatal accidents.

Summary of Accidents for the Entire Year – January - December

Accident Category and Year	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Boating Fatalities	12	18	18	14	12	15	16	12	15	12
Non-Fatal Boating Accidents	92	79	71	36	65	72	61	71	70	77
Non-Boating Drownings	31	40	35	29	30	40	50	34	28	33

2018 Statewide Summary – as of 11/30/18

Boating Fatalities

- 4/28 or 4/29 – Wabasha Co. – Lake Pepin – The search is ongoing for a 61-year-old Pepin, WI man whose 31-foot auxiliary sailboat was found, with the motor running, at a resort near Lake City about 9:30 a.m. on 4/29. He had apparently fallen overboard and has not been found. The last contact with the man was about 9:40 p.m. the previous day. It was not unusual for him to spend the night on his boat. *(Life jacket worn – no)*
- 5/19 – Hubbard Co. – Hart Lake – A 4-year-old Northwood, IA boy drowned when the kayak he was riding in with his father (see number 3) capsized about 1:25 p.m. It was windy and there were choppy waves. Both went into the water and neither resurfaced. A search was started and the boy was found soon after. CPR was started and he was flown to the hospital. He died the following day. *(Life jacket worn – no)*
- 5/19 – Hubbard Co. – Hart Lake – A 42-year-old Northwood, IA man drowned when the kayak he and his son (see number 2) were in capsized about 1:25 p.m. It was windy and there were choppy waves. Both went into the water and neither resurfaced. A search was started for the man, but was suspended overnight. His body was found about 11:00 a.m. the following day. *(Life jacket worn – no)*

4. 6/3 – Swift Co. – Lake Oliver – A 60-year-old Appleton man drowned after falling overboard from his 16-foot open motorboat. His boat was found abandoned on shore the night of 6/3 with the motor in gear and his fishing equipment still on board. His body was found about noon on 6/5, about ¼ mile east of there the boat was found. *(Life jacket worn – no)*
5. 6/4 – Wabasha Co. – Lake Pepin – An 86-year-old Chicago, IL man drowned after his 15-foot open motorboat capsized at about 2:05 p.m. The victim and two passengers had been fishing and when they were heading back to the landing, they started taking on water. The wind and rough water caused them to capsize. They were in the water about 30 minutes before another boat came by and got them out of the water. CPR was started on the unresponsive victim. He was pronounced deceased at the hospital. *(Life jacket worn – not by victim – passengers were wearing them)*
6. 6/9 – Lake Co. – Perent Lake – A 31-year-old Coon Rapids man drowned after his canoe capsized about 9:00 p.m. in the BWCA. The other person in the canoe was able to swim to a rock, but the victim didn't make it to shore. His body was found on 6/11. *(Life jackets worn – no)*
7. 6/12 – Cass Co. – Hay Lake – A 69-year-old Canton, GA man drowned after falling overboard, about 1:30 p.m., from the 16-foot motorboat he was a passenger in. The operator lost control of the tiller handle, causing a sharp turn throwing both occupants into the water. The operator was able to get back in the boat but the victim was unable to stay afloat and went under water. His body was recovered about three hours later. *(Life jackets worn – no)*
8. 7/7 – Pine Co. – Sturgeon Lake – A 28-year-old Moose Lake man drowned when he jumped out of the 17-foot motorboat he was a passenger in to try to retrieve something that had blown out of the boat. The operator threw a life jacket toward him, but the passenger couldn't get it. He then jumped in the water to get the passenger, but was unable to hold on to the passenger and stay afloat. He had to let go and the passenger went under. The man's body was recovered on 7/9/18. *(Life jackets worn – no)*
9. 7/10 – Cook Co. – Sawbill Lake – A 74-year-old Minneapolis man drowned after his 17-foot canoe capsized about 1:00 p.m. He was canoeing while the rest of the camping party was swimming. They heard a splash and saw the man trying to right his tipped canoe. He tried several times and then they couldn't see him. Two of the campers paddled their canoe out to help, but couldn't find him. Authorities found him in the water at 4:00 p.m. *(Life jacket worn - no)*
10. 8/15 – Washington Co. – Lost Lake – A 67-year-old Mahtomedi man drowned after somehow entering the water while fishing from his 6-foot inflatable boat. County authorities received a call regarding a partially submerged boat in the lake. The boat had oars and a small electric motor. A deputy found the man in the water and started lifesaving efforts, to no avail. He was pronounced deceased on scene. *(Life jacket worn – yes)*
11. 8/31 – Cass Co. – Hunter Lake – A 74-year-old Annandale man drowned after falling overboard from his 12-foot motorboat while fishing. A witness heard the man calling for help about 5:05 p.m. but when he arrived at the scene, the man was on the bottom of the lake in about 10-feet of water. He was pulled from the water and taken to the dock and CPR was started. Ambulance was on scene and called time of death. *(Life jacket worn – no)*
12. 9/2 – Itasca Co. – Big Jessie Lake – A 77-year-old Sturgeon Lake man died after falling overboard from his 12-foot motorboat at about 2:30 p.m. He was fishing and reached over to grab his lure which was caught in the weeds, causing him to fall overboard. The boat continued forward, and the passenger got to the motor and turned the boat around. She threw a life jacket to him but that was unsuccessful. She told him to grab the front of the boat, but he couldn't. He went under the water. The passenger got to shore and called 911. The man was located just after 5:00 p.m. by the county dive team. *(Life jacket worn - no)*

13. 9/15 – Hennepin Co. – Lake Minnetonka – A 40-year-old Shorewood man drowned after falling overboard from his 19-foot motorboat. The boat was found circling just before 6:00 p.m. with no one onboard. A search of the lake using sonar was started. His body was found the following day at about 10:00 a.m. It is unknown what caused the man to fall overboard. *(Life jacket worn – no)*
14. 9/22 – Anoka Co. – Peltier Lake – A 64-year-old St. Paul man drowned after falling overboard from his 16-foot motorboat about 6:40 p.m. Witnesses saw the boat lunge forward and the man fall out. The boat circled him and he went under the water. He was located using side-scan sonar and his body was recovered by sheriff’s office divers at about 10:30 p.m. *(Life jacket worn – no)*

Non-Fatal Boating Accidents

Type of Accident	Number
Capsizing	3
Collision with a fixed or floating object	10
Collision with another watercraft	19
Collision with an underwater object	2
Collision with swimmer or person in water	1
Fall in boat	2
Falls overboard	4
Fire/Explosion	2
Grounding, Hitting Bottom	0
Struck by Propeller	5
Sinking / Flooding / Swamping	4
Water-skiing, wake boarding or tubing mishap	7
Other	5
Total reportable non-fatal boating accidents as of 11/30/18	64

Notes:

1. Reportable non-fatal boating accidents are those where there was at least \$2000 in property damage, an injury beyond first aid or total loss of the boat.
2. There is usually a delay in the reporting of non-fatal boating accidents.

Non-Boating Drownings

1. 3/3 – Hennepin Co. – apartment hot tub – A 52-year-old Minneapolis woman drowned in the hot tub in her apartment building. She was found face down in the hot tub by another resident at about 11:00 p.m. He got her out of the hot tub, started CPR and called 911. She was pronounced deceased on scene. It is unknown what time the incident actually occurred.
2. 4/23 – St. Louis Co. – Prairie Lake – An 82-year-old Wright, MN man drowned when the UTV he was a passenger on fell through the ice at about 1:50 p.m. He and his son (operator) were fishing and when they were leaving, the UTV didn’t want to move in the slush on the ice when the operator pressed the gas. The UTV then went through the ice. The operator pulled himself out of the water and onto the ice, but was unable to pull his father out. Fire department personnel pulled him out about 45 minutes later. EMTs and Lifeflight nurses worked on getting him back, to no avail.

3. 4/28 – Stearns Co. – Watab River - South Fork – A 39-year-old Royalton man drowned after somehow entering the river. He had fled police after a traffic stop on 4/28, and was reported missing on 5/2. His body was located in the river on 5/3.
4. 4/28 – Mille Lacs Co. – Rum River – The body of a 46-year-old Princeton woman was found in the river on 5/20/18 by a person in a canoe. She had been reported missing on 4/28 at about 2045 hours. Daily searches had yielded no results. It is unknown what time or how she came to be in the river.
5. 5/25 – Dakota Co. – Mississippi River – The body of a 29-year-old St. Paul man was found in the river by a boater at 4:10 p.m. It is unknown how or when he came to be in the river.
6. 5/28 – Crow Wing Co. – Rush Lake – A 2-year-old Minneapolis boy was found unresponsive in the lake about 10:00 a.m., near the dock, at a family member’s cabin. It was noticed he was unaccounted for and his mother checked the lake. She pulled him from the water and started CPR. He was transported to a hospital in Minneapolis, where he passed away on 6/2/18.
7. 5/28 – Goodhue Co. – Cannon River – A 40-year-old St. Paul man drowned after slipping off a steep bank into the river while fishing at about 11:35 a.m. He did not know how to swim. He went under and did not resurface. The current was strong. Authorities were called and a search was started. The man’s body was found caught in a submerged tree just before 1:00 p.m., almost a mile from where the incident occurred.
8. 5/30 – Mille Lacs Co. – Lake Mille Lacs – A 75-year-old Little Canada man drowned after somehow entering the water. A neighbor found him about 1:30 p.m., floating face down in the water near the man’s cabin. Authorities were called. He was pronounced deceased at the scene. It is unknown how he came to be in the water, or what time the incident occurred.
9. 6/1 – Wright Co. – residential pool – A 3-year-old boy was found unconscious in the pool at about 2:50 p.m. He had been playing in the yard while older children were swimming. They left the pool and when they came back, the victim was on the bottom of the pool. They got him out and called for help. Resuscitation was started and he was airlifted to the hospital, where he died on 6/3.
10. 6/7 – Crow Wing Co. – Gilbert Lake – A 66-year-old Brainerd man drowned while swimming to retrieve his drifting boat at the launch area. A witness heard screams for help and saw the man struggling to swim. He then went under. 911 was called and the man was retrieved from the water. Resuscitation was started, to no avail.
11. 6/18 – Cass Co. – Upper Menton Lake – A 76-year-old Remer man drowned while swimming with his wife near their dock at about 6:30 p.m. He began to struggle and went under water. He did not resurface. He was recovered by first responders in about 5 feet of water.
12. 6/27 – Clay Co. – Buffalo River State Park Swim Area – A 9-year-old Moorhead girl drowned while swimming at the park with a group. When the safety whistle blew, her friend informed the lifeguard and a chaperone that she couldn’t find the girl. The lifeguards called for her and the trails were checked. When the girl didn’t come forward, the swimming area was checked. She was located in 6-8 feet of water. Lifesaving efforts were unsuccessful.
13. 6/29 – Waseca Co. – Lake Elysian – A 17-year-old Waseca boy drowned while he was swimming and jumping around an inner tube with friends about 3:45 p.m. He jumped into the water and did not resurface. Authorities were called and a search was started. He was located in about 7 feet of water at about 5:08 p.m. Resuscitation was attempted, without success.
14. 7/7 – Mower Co. – unused residential pool – A 6-year-old Hartland boy drowned after falling into an unused swimming pool at a family gathering. He and another child had been seen with a net, attempting

to catch frogs in the pool behind the house about an hour before the incident. He was later seen playing in front of the house where everyone was gathered. Later, someone mentioned they didn't know where he was and a search was started. The net was found in the pool and was used to find the boy in the dark green water at about 8:52 p.m. Lifesaving efforts were started, to no avail.

15. 7/8 – Crow Wing Co. – Adney Lake – A 60-year-old St. Paul man drowned while swimming from his anchored pontoon boat about 3:00 p.m. He began to tire and his wife threw a life jacket to him. He missed catching it and began to panic. She jumped in and started to swim him backwards to the boat, which was too far away. He went limp, she lost her grasp on him and he went under. The search for him was called off due to approaching storms. Divers located him the following day in heavy vegetation.
16. 7/17 – Dodge Co. – Naylor's Pond – A 7-year-old Owatonna boy drowned while swimming at the pond. He was there with his brother and his friend. The friend's mother was watching the boys play in the water at about 4:10 p.m. and looked away for a minute. When she looked back she only saw two boys. Search teams arrived and searched the land area as well as the pond. The Olmsted County Dive Team arrived and located his body in 10 feet of water just before 8:00 p.m.
17. 7/20 – Crow Wing Co. – Armour Mine Pit #2 – A 13-year-old Minneapolis boy was playing with a Frisbee on the lakeshore of the mine pit about 3:00 p.m. It had just rained and the inlet creek near him was running fast. The Frisbee went into the water and the boy went to get it. He was swept away by the current into the drop off. His father attempted to get him, but the boy panicked and took the father under. The boy went underwater and didn't resurface. A search was started by authorities and the boy was found in 92-feet of water about noon the following day.
18. 7/21 – Wright Co. – Limestone Lake – A 27-year-old Sartell man drowned about 3:00 p.m. while swimming to retrieve the tube he had been floating on. He either jumped or fell off the tube and the wind blew the tube away from him. He swam to catch it in a weedy area and went under water. He was under for 2-3 minutes before his father, who was floating on a separate tube, could reach him and attempt to keep the man's head above water. A bystander brought a boat and pulled the man in and CPR was started. He was pronounced deceased at the hospital.
19. 7/23 – Dakota Co. – Vermillion River – A 30-year-old St. Paul man drowned while attempting to swim across the river. He had been at the river fishing with a friend when he decided to go in the river and swim at about 8:45 p.m. He made it about half way, began to struggle and submerged. Authorities were called and a search was started. His body was located at about 2:00 a.m. on 7/24.
20. 7/25 – Beltrami Co. – Lake Bemidji – The body of a 32-year-old Cass Lake woman was found floating in the lake about 12:18 p.m. She had been seen sitting with a friend on the dock at the lake at about 2:00 a.m. It is unknown what time or how she entered the water.
21. 8/10 – Pine Co. – Grindstone River – A 75-year-old Hinckley man was found in the river by a passerby, near the reservoir dam, just after 10:00 a.m. A short time later, he was reported missing when he didn't return home from his walk. It is unknown where or what time he entered the water.
22. 8/10 – Wright Co. – Buffalo Lake – A 75-year-old Buffalo man drowned after apparently falling from the dock. His body was found floating near the dock about 6:30 p.m. He may have been in an electric scooter while fishing from the dock when it somehow tipped, putting him in the water. The incident was unwitnessed, so it is unknown when or how he came to be in the water.
23. 8/12 – Dakota Co. – residential pool – A 66-year-old Eagan man drowned while swimming alone in a friend's pool. The friend's wife had left home for about 30 minutes and when she came home, she did not see the man in the pool. She went out to check and found him on the bottom in the deep end. She

called 911 and went to a neighbor to get help. The man was removed from the pool and CPR was started. He was transported to the hospital by ambulance while CPR continued, to no avail.

24. 8/12 – Hennepin Co. – Lake Bde Maka Ska – A 52-year-old Minneapolis man drowned while swimming with a friend in a marked swim area. He was near the swim platform when he suddenly went under water. He was under for less than a minute when lifeguards pulled him from the water. CPR was started and he was taken to the hospital, where he later died.
25. 8/14 – Washington Co. – Square Lake – A 51-year-old Shoreview man drowned while scuba diving. A witness reported that the man's diving gear was leaking air. When the man attempted to fix it, the air came rushing out and he sank in the lake. Resuscitation efforts were unsuccessful.
26. 8/15 – Hennepin Co. – residential pool – An 11-year-old Brooklyn Center boy drowned in an above-ground residential pool. He was found on the bottom of the pool about 3:10 p.m. and was removed unconscious and not breathing. CPR was started and he was transported to the hospital, where he died several days later. It is not known what he was doing in the pool or what time he entered the water.
27. 8/16 – Hennepin Co. – creek in MN Valley National Wildlife Refuge – The body of a 46-year-old Deephaven man was found in the creek by a person walking on the path. It is unknown when, where or how he entered the creek. The cause of death was determined to be drowning.
28. 8/18 – Cass Co. – Ponto Lake – A 37-year-old Sheboygan, WI woman drowned while swimming. She was found motionless in shallow water by a witness and pulled to shore. Resuscitation was started and authorities were called. She was transported by Aircare to a St. Cloud hospital. She died the following day.
29. 9/10 – Dakota Co. – indoor pool – A 55-year-old Huron, SD man drowned while swimming alone in the pool at his sister's apartment complex. He was found floating in the deep end of the pool by another resident about 6:20 a.m. He had accessed the pool area just after 6:00 a.m. The incident was unwitnessed.
30. 9/15 – Dakota Co. – Crystal Lake – A 40-year-old Waterloo, IA man drowned while swimming in the lake. He was reported missing on 9/16. He had last been seen swimming in the lake. His body was recovered from the lake, near the swim area, at about 1:30 a.m. on 9/18.
31. 10/12 – Hennepin Co. – Shingle Creek – A 33-year-old Minneapolis man drowned after somehow entering the creek. A passerby saw the body lying in the creek about 9:45 a.m. and called authorities. It is unknown how, when or where the man entered the creek.
32. 11/28 – McLeod Co. – Winsted Lake – The sheriff's office received a report of a snowmobile possibly going through the ice at about 6:30 p.m. The body of a 52-year-old Winsted man was found in the lake about 2:35 p.m. the following afternoon. [\(Have not yet received report – information may change\)](#)