



Guidelines for Investigator's Boating Accident Report

Prepared by Eleanor Mariani, State Boating Law Administrator, DEEP Boating Division Director

"Reportable" Boating Accidents

A vessel is considered to be involved in a "boating accident" whenever a death, missing person, injury beyond first aid, property damage greater than \$500, or total vessel loss results from the vessel's operation, construction, seaworthiness, equipment, or machinery.

The following are examples of accident types that would need to be reported to the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection:

- Grounding, capsizing, sinking, or flooding/swamping
- Falls in or overboard a vessel
- Persons ejected from a vessel
- Fire or explosions that occur while underway and while anchored, moored or docked if the fire resulted from the vessel or vessel equipment.
- Water-skiing or other mishap involving a towable device
- Collision with another vessel or object
- Striking a submerged object
- A person struck by a vessel, propeller, propulsion unit, or steering machinery
- Carbon monoxide exposure
- Electrocutation due to stray current related to a vessel
- Casualties while swimming from a vessel that is not anchored, moored or docked.
- Casualties where natural causes served as a contributing factor in the death of an individual but the determined cause of death was drowning.
- Casualties from natural phenomena such as interaction with marine life (i.e. leaping sturgeon causes casualty to person) and interaction with nature (i.e. mountain side falls onto vessel causing casualties).
- Casualties where a person falls off an anchored vessel.

The DEEP is required to submit all reportable boating accidents to the USCG within 30 days of the date of occurrence of the accident. Therefore, all law enforcement agencies must submit their accident reports prior to 30 days. If an investigation precludes the accident report from being complete, submit as much as possible and note that further investigation is required. Please send all reports to:

Miraflor Powe

DEEP Boating Division

333 Ferry Road, P.O. Box 280, Old Lyme, CT 06371-0280

Phone: 860-434-8638

“Non-Reportable” Boating Accidents

Not every occurrence involving a vessel must be reported. The following occurrences involving an accident with a vessel are not required to be reported:

- A person dies, is injured, or is missing as a result of self-inflicted wounds, alcohol poisoning, gunshot wounds, or the ingestion of drugs, controlled substances or poison.
- A person dies, is injured, or is missing as a result of assault by another person or persons while aboard a vessel.
- A person dies or is injured from natural causes while aboard a vessel.
- A person dies, is injured, or is missing as a result of jumping, diving, or swimming for pleasure from an anchored, moored or docked vessel.
- A person dies, is injured, or is missing as a result of swimming to retrieve an object or a vessel that is adrift from its mooring or dock, having departed from a place of inherent safety, such as the shore or pier.
- Property damage occurs or a person dies, is injured, or is missing while preparing a vessel for launching or retrieving and the vessel is not on the water and capable / ready for its intended use.
- Property damage occurs or a person dies, is injured, or is missing as a result of a fire on shore or a pier that spreads to a vessel or vessels.
- Property damage occurs to a docked or moored vessel or a person dies, is injured, or is missing from such a vessel as a result of storms, or unusual tidal or sea conditions; or when a vessel gets underway in those conditions in an attempt to rescue persons or vessels.
- Property damage occurs to a docked or moored vessel due to lack of maintenance on the vessel or the structure to which it was moored.
- Property damage occurs to a docked or moored vessel due to theft or vandalism.
- Property damage occurs to, a person dies or is injured on, or a person is missing from a non-propelled houseboat or other vessel used primarily as a residence when such a vessel is not underway.
- Property damage to the all vessels involved in an accident is \$500 or less.
- Casualties that result from falls from or on docked vessels or vessels that are moored to a permanent structure.
- Casualties that result from a person climbing aboard an anchored vessel from the water or swimming near an anchored vessel.
- Fire or explosions on anchored, docked or moored boats where the cause of the fire was not attributed to the vessel or vessel equipment.
- Casualty or damage that results when the vehicle used for trailering the vessel fails.
- Casualties or damage that occur during accidents that only involve unmodified inner tubes.
- Casualties or damage that occur when the only vessel(s) involved are being used solely for governmental, commercial or criminal activity.
- Casualties or damage that occur when the only vessel(s) involved are not numbered and are being used exclusively for racing.

- Casualties or damage that occur when the only vessel(s) involved are foreign vessels and thus not subject to U.S. federal reporting requirements.

The following definitions are for reference when filling out the Investigator's Boating Accident Report.

- ♦ **Open Motorboat:** Boat of open construction specifically built for operating with a motor, including boats canopied or fitted with temporary partial shelters.
- ♦ **Cabin Motorboat:** Motorboats with a cabin that can be completely closed by means of doors or hatches. Large motorboats with cabins, even though referred to as yachts, are considered to be cabin motorboats.
- ♦ **Auxiliary Sail:** Any boat whose sole source of propulsion is the natural element (i.e., wind) or a boat intended to be propelled primarily by sail, regardless of size or type. This type of boat can be propelled either by the auxiliary engine alone for close-quarter maneuvering or by both engine and sails simultaneously when cruising.
- ♦ **Sail (only):** Any boat whose sole source of propulsion is the natural element (i.e., wind) or a boat designed or intended to be propelled primarily by sail, regardless of size or type.
- ♦ **Rowboat:** A light boat propelled by one or more persons using oars.
- ♦ **Canoe:** A long light narrow boat with both ends sharp and sides curved that is usually propelled by hand-driven oars.
- ♦ **Kayak:** A very lightly built open boat of narrow beam (width) and shallow draft (depth of water drawn when loaded) designed to be manually propelled by paddles that are normally double-ended.
- ♦ **Personal Watercraft:** A boat less than 16 feet in length that is designed to be operated by a person sitting, standing, or kneeling on the boat rather than by the conventional manner of sitting or standing inside the boat.
- ♦ **Pontoon:** A boat consisting of a rigid structure connecting at least two parallel fore (front) and aft (back) rigid sealed buoyancy chambers.
- ♦ **Houseboat:** A motorized vessel designed primarily with accommodation spaces with little or no foredeck or cockpit, with low freeboard and with a low length to beam ratio.
- ♦ **Mini Jet Boat:** A boat with an inboard engine powering a water jet pump as its primary propulsion, and designed to be operated with one or more persons within the confines of the hull.
- ♦ **Airboat:** A boat with a solid hull that is propelled using an engine that produces air thrust. This type of boat does not include "ground effect" as a means of propulsion (i.e., hovercraft).
- ♦ **Boat Type Other:** If this boat does not fit any of the descriptions above, enter another term for the boat that best describes it.
- ♦ **Paddleboard:** A type of paddlecraft; similar to a surfboard, but may vary significantly in length; intended to be propelled with a single or double-bladed paddle.

Hull Material

Enter the type of hull material for this boat

- ♦ **Wood:** Hulls of plywood, molded plywood, wood planking, or any other wood fiber in its natural consistency, including those of wooden construction that have been “sheathed” with fiberglass or sheet metal.
- ♦ **Aluminum/Steel:** Includes hulls of sheet steel or steel alloy, not those with steel ribs and wood, canvas, or plastic hull coverings.
- ♦ **Fiberglass:** Hulls of fiber reinforced plastic. The laminate consists of two basic components, the reinforcing material (glass filaments) and the plastic or resin in which it is embedded.
- ♦ **Plastic:** Any one of a large number of synthetic usually organic materials that have a polymeric structure and can be moulded when soft and then set, esp such a material in a finished state containing plasticizer, stabilizer, filler, pigments, etc.
- ♦ **Rubber/Vinyl/Canvas:** Hull made with the material(s) of rubber, vinyl, and/or canvas.
- ♦ **Hull Material Other:** If this boat’s hull material does not fit any of the descriptions above, enter another term for the hull material that best describes it.

Engine Type

Enter the type of engine used as the primary means of propulsion for this boat.

- ♦ **Outboard:** An engine not permanently affixed to the structure of the boat, regardless of the method or location used to mount the engine (e.g., motor wells, motor pockets).
- ♦ **Inboard:** An engine where the power unit of the motor is fitted inside the boat.
- ♦ **Inboard/Stern drive:** An inboard/outboard engine system, with the motor fitted inside the hull. Gears distribute the power to the outside propeller and steering is done by turning the outboard (propeller) unit.
- ♦ **Pod drive:** means an engine mounted in front of the transom of a vessel and attached through the bottom of the hull to a steerable propulsion unit.

Engine Make**Engine Serial Number****Number of Engines**

Enter the number of engines used to mechanically propel this boat.

Horsepower

Enter the total combined amount of horsepower for all engines used in the propulsion (movement) of this boat.

Fuel Type

Enter the primary type of fuel used in the propulsion of this boat. -Gasoline -Diesel -Electric

Propulsion

Enter the primary method of propulsion (movement) used for this boat.

- ♦ **Propeller:** A rotating device, with two or more blades, used as the means of propulsion.
- ♦ **Water Jet:** A pump that expels a high-pressure stream of water through a directional nozzle that provides both propulsion and steering.
- ♦ **Air Thrust:** A means of propulsion where the force of air propels the boat into a course of direction.
- ♦ **Manual:** A means of propulsion where one or more persons use oars, paddles or poles.
- ♦ **Sail:** A means of propulsion solely dependent on the natural element (i.e., wind).

Boat Length

Length (in feet) of this boat. Length means the straight-line horizontal measurement of the overall length from the foremost part of the boat to the aftermost part of the boat; measured from end to end over the deck and parallel to the centerline. Outboard motor brackets, rudders, and other similar fittings, attachments, and extensions are not included in the measurement.

Model Year

Enter the manufacturer's model year for this particular boat.

Operation 1 Operation 2 Operation 3 Operation Other

Enter this boat's operation at the time of the accident. Three types of operation can be entered for each boat. Boat operations should be entered first for those operations closest to the time of the accident.

For example, if the boat is

(1) cruising and then

(2) changes direction -- and -- as a result of changing direction ends up in an accident, the correct entry is as follows: Operation #1: Changing Direction and Operation #2: Cruising.

- ♦ **Cruising:** Proceeding in a normal manner, unrestricted, with an absence of drastic rudder or engine changes.
- ♦ **Changing Speed:** Changing the propulsion (movement) of the boat either faster or slower.
- ♦ **Changing Direction:** Changing the course of the boat's direction.
- ♦ **Drifting:** Underway, but proceeding over the bottom without use of engines, oars or sails; being carried along only by the tide, current, or wind.
- ♦ **Towing another Boat:** Boat was engaged in towing another vessel at the time of the accident.
- ♦ **Being Towed:** Boat was being towed by another vessel at the time of the accident.
- ♦ **Rowing/Paddling:** The boat is propelled by using (1) oars (long, slender wooden shafts shaped into a round handle at one end and a flat blade at the other) --or (2) paddles (similar to oars except they are shorter, double-ended, and used vertically rather than horizontally).
- ♦ **Sailing:** The technical skill of navigation where the wind is the sole means of propulsion.
- ♦ **Launching:** In the act of physically putting the boat into the water. If a person dies or is injured away from the water while preparing a boat for launching, it is not a reportable accident.

- ◆ **Docking/Undocking:** Guiding a boat into an enclosed area for the purpose of loading or unloading passengers and/or gear. Undocking is the process where the boat departs from the enclosed area.
- ◆ **At anchor:** Held in place in the water by an anchor. Includes “moored” to a buoy or anchored vessel and “dragging anchor”.
- ◆ **Tied to Dock/Mooring:** A boat that is securely tied to a fixed structure or moored (fastened with cables and/or lines) to a buoy or anchored vessel.
- ◆ **Other:** Enter another type of operation not described above.

Speed

Enter the estimated speed the boat was moving just prior to the accident -Not Moving -Under 10 mph -10 to 20 mph -21 to 40 mph -Over 40 mph

Activity 1 Activity 2 Activity 3

Enter this boat’s activity at the time of the accident. Up to three types of activities can be entered for each boat in the accident.

- ◆ **Commercial Activity:** The vessel is being used for commercial activity. This type of activity includes carrying passengers for hire; fishing, crabbing, or shrimping in support of one’s business; or charging a fee to tow a vessel.
- ◆ **Dividing/Swimming:** Boat occupants engaged in scuba diving, snorkeling, or swimming activity just prior to the accident or the boat was involved in an accident with individuals who engaged in these activities who were not occupants on the boat.
- ◆ **Fishing:** Occupants on this boat are engaged in any recreational fishing activity for sport and not in support of a business venture.
- ◆ **Fueling:** The boat is in the process of fueling the engine just prior to the accident. A fire, explosion, sinking or other occurrence involving a boat, if the boat, its installed or associated equipment or appendages failed, malfunctioned, or otherwise caused or contributed to the accident or casualty. A boat could be docked, moored, or anchored.
- ◆ **Hunting:** Occupants on this boat are engaged in any recreational hunting activity for sport and not in support of a business venture.
- ◆ **Racing:** The boat is involved in a racing activity that is not sanctioned. An accident is not reportable when a fatality, injury or property damage occurs while the boat is participating in an organized and sanctioned race, warm-up, or in a boat uniquely designed for racing.
- ◆ **Repairs:** This boat was making repairs to the machinery or material, design or construction, or components involved in the mechanical or sail propulsion of the boat (e.g., engine, sails, transmission, fuel system, electric system, and steering system), and/or repairing any equipment on the boat (e.g., communications, visual distress, seats, and sound producing equipment).
- ◆ **Water Skiing:** An activity where boat passengers use one or two skis to plane over water while being towed behind the boat. The boat may also be involved in an accident with individuals who were water-skiing, but were not passengers on this boat.

- ♦ **tubing:** An activity involving inner tubes and other devices on which a person can be towed behind a boat. If the boat was involved specifically with water-skiing activity, it needs to be indicated in the water-skiing category.
- ♦ **Starting Engine:** The boat engine was in the process of being started at the time of the accident.
- ♦ **Tournament:** This boat was participating in a fishing tournament at the time of the accident.
- ♦ **White water Activity:** This boat was traveling in white water “rapids” where the water conditions were rough and the current very strong.

Accident Types/Events

Chain of events in the accident sequence:

Please enter the events in sequential number for each vessel involved in the accident in the order they occurred. Up to 3 events can be entered for each vessel.

For example, if Vessel A collides with Vessel B and a passenger on Vessel B falls overboard, and then that passenger is struck by the boat propeller, that accident would be entered as follows:

Vessel A:

#1 = Collision with Vessel,

Vessel B:

#1 = Collision with Vessel,

#2 = Falls Overboard,

#3 = Struck by Boat Propeller.

Definitions

Capsizing: Overturning of a vessel.

Carbon Monoxide Exposure: Death or injury resulting from an odorless, colorless gas generated from auxiliary vessel equipment (including, but not limited to stoves, heaters, refrigerators, generators, hot water heaters), another vessel's exhaust, or the exhaust of the vessel on which persons were either aboard or in close proximity.

Collision with Fixed Object: The striking of any fixed object above or below the surface of the water.

Collision with Floating Object: The striking of a floating object other than a vessel, above or at the surface of the water, which is not fixed or held in place by any means (e.g., barrels, logs, or other debris).

Collision with Vessel: A striking together of two or more vessels. A **Collision with Vessel** includes colliding with the tow of another vessel, with the exception of a towed watersport participant. A **Collision with Vessel** also includes colliding with an anchored vessel, colliding with a vessel secured to a mooring buoy, or a vessel moored to a dock, pier, or similar structure.

Electrocution: Death, injury, or property damage resulting from contact with electrical current. This includes lightning, system failure, and stray current.

Fall in Boat : A person slips, trips, falls, or strikes a surface on or in their vessel.

Falls Overboard: A person involuntarily falls off of the vessel.

Fire/Explosion (fuel): Accidental burning or explosion of vessel due to combustion of vessel fuels or their vapors that are used for electrical generation or propulsion. Note: includes **Fire/Explosion (fuel-related but not propulsion/generator-related):** Accidental burning or explosion of vessel due to combustion of fuels or their vapors that are not used for electrical generation or propulsion. I.e: propane stoves.

Fire/Explosion (other): Accidental burning or explosion of any material onboard a vessel except vessel fuels or their vapors.

Flooding/Swamping: Flooding: Filling with water, by means of entry through a fitting, a drain plug, a hole or crack in the hull, or other means that allows ingress of water through the hull, not over the top of the gunwale, transom, or decking of the vessel. Vessel retains sufficient buoyancy to remain on the surface of the water. **Swamping:** Ingress of water over the top of the gunwale, transom, or decking of the vessel. Vessel retains sufficient buoyancy to remain on the surface of the water.

Grounding: Running aground of a vessel; striking or pounding on rocks, reefs, shoals, or the bottom of the body of water; includes stranded vessels.

Hull Failure: Defect or failure of the structural body of a vessel. This includes the hull material, design, or construction. It does not include the superstructure, masts, or rigging.

Language Barrier: The unsuccessful communication between individuals due to a foreign language or dialect that contributed to the accident

Person Leaves a Vessel: A person, acting of their own free will, leaves the vessel that is not anchored or moored, resulting in the person's injury or death.

A casualty while swimming from a vessel that is not anchored or moored is currently considered a reportable boating accident under 33 CFR § 173 Subpart C (and articulated in CG 449). Per the recommendation, incidents involving CO poisoning, in-water electrical shock or other boat-related caused accidents would continue to be counted.

Person Ejected from Vessel: A person is thrown out of a vessel involuntarily by a non-human force such as a wake, wave, collision, or unexpected change in direction of the vessel.

Sinking: After swamping, flooding, or capsizing, the vessel loses enough buoyancy to settle below the surface of the water.

Starting Engine: The boat engine was in the process of being started at the time of the accident.

Struck by Boat: A person who is located inside or outside of a vessel is struck by a vessel.

Struck by Propeller: A person who is located inside or outside of a vessel is struck by the propeller or propulsion unit of a vessel.

Struck Submerged Object: The striking of any fixed object or a collision with any waterborne object that is below the surface of the water. Includes a vessel striking timber or stumps.

Skier Mishap: Is defined by persons (1) falling off their water-skis, (2) striking a fixed or submerged object, or by (3) becoming entangled or struck by the tow line. Also includes mishaps involving inner-tubes and other devices on which a person can be towed behind a boat.

Other / describe: Accidents that do not fit any of the described types. Provide brief description.

Example:

Person struck by high velocity water leaving the propulsion unit (jet drive) of a vessel.

Unknown: Insufficient information to determine the type of accident.

Examples:

Accidental burning or explosion of any material onboard a vessel where the cause of the fire/explosion is unknown.

Single occupant, vessel found capsized or without the occupant and no witnesses available.

Causes of Accident - CONTRIBUTING FACTORS

Chain of events for contributing factors sequence:

Accident Cause 1 (Primary Cause), Accident Cause 2 (Secondary Cause), Accident Cause 3 (Tertiary Cause) Accident Cause Other

Please enter the causes (contributing factors) by number for each vessel involved in the accident. Up to 3 contributing factors can be entered for each vessel.

For example, we find out the operator of Vessel A did not have a proper lookout prior to colliding with Vessel B in congested waters. Further, Vessel Operator A was operating the boat at an excessive speed given the environment in which he was boating and he had little overall boating experience. That accident would be entered as follows:

Vessel A:

Accident Cause 1 (Primary Cause) “No Proper Lookout”

Accident Cause 2 (Secondary Cause) “Excessive Speed”

Accident Cause 3 (Tertiary Cause) “Operator Inexperience”

Vessel B:

Accident Cause 1 (Primary Cause) Primary Cause: “Congested Waters”

Definitions

Alcohol Use: In the investigating officer's judgment, use of alcohol by the operator or vessel's passengers contributed to the accident. This does not necessarily indicate intoxication, only that alcohol consumption contributed to the accident.

Congested Waters: Where an area of a body of water was either too small or narrow to safely accommodate the number of vessels, or there were a large number of vessels operating in close proximity to one another.

Dam / Lock: A vessel(s) operated in, near, on or over a dam or lock and the structure contributed to the accident.

Drug Use: In the investigating officer's judgment, use of legal or illegal drug(s) by the operator or vessel's passengers contributed to the accident. This does not necessarily indicate intoxication, only that use of drug(s) contributed to the accident.

Equipment Failure:** Failure of equipment, either carried or installed. This includes unsafe or improper installation. This does not include the failure to carry required equipment.

** If you entered **Equipment Failure**, indicate which equipment failed:

- ◆ **Auxiliary or accessory equipment failure** -- Stoves, heaters, refrigerators, generators, battery chargers, hot water heaters.
- ◆ **Communication equipment failure** -- Radio, cell phones, CBs, Emergency Locator Beacons (ELBs), Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacons (EPIRBs), Digital Selective Calling (DSC) technology.
- ◆ **Fire Extinguisher Not Functional**—Fire extinguisher prevented from discharging
- ◆ **De-masting** -- Mast fell down, either onto the vessel or into the water.
- ◆ **Seat Failure** -- Includes the back of the seat or the seat itself, or the base structure that is fixed to the area of the vessel deck supporting the seat.

- ✦ **Sound Producing Equipment Failure**—Horn or bell not functional
- ✦ **Nav. Equip. Failure** – GPS, Radar
- ✦ **Visual Distress Signal Failure** - Visual distress signals failed Includes any of the following used during the day: Day Flags, Shapes, and Smoke Includes any of the following used at night: SOS Light, flares and other pyrotechnics

Excessive Speed: Speed above that which a reasonable and prudent person would have operated under the circumstances that existed. It is not necessarily a speed in excess of a posted limit.

Failure to Yield: Failure of stand-on vessel to avoid collision with another vessel in a Rules of Road Violation. May include a violation of the state-regulated distance or proximity requirements. Operator knowingly fails to take action.

Failure to Vent: Prior to starting the engine, failure to take action to ventilate a machinery space or enclosed compartment such that gasoline vapors are not expelled.

Hazardous Waters: Water conditions that were not weather-related, but were inherent to the location, such as currents, rapids, or rapid tidal flows, contributed to the accident.

Ignition of Fuel/Vapors: Accidental combustion of vessel fuel or fuel vapors, regardless of the cause of the spill.

Improper Anchoring: Where a vessel was either in the process of being anchored incorrectly or incorrectly held in place in the water by an anchor. Improper anchoring includes dropping the anchor off of the stern of the vessel instead of the bow or a vessel that is improperly moored to a buoy or anchored vessel.

Improper Lookout: Not keeping a proper watch and not scanning effectively for other vessels, persons, or objects. The operator failed to perceive danger and the risk of a collision or grounding, using all available resources, because no one was serving as lookout or the person so serving failed in that regard.

Improper Lookout includes the following Distractions:

- **Looked but did not see** – Observed, but did not detect the relevant vessel, person, or object.
- **Lost in thought** – Was thinking about items other than the task; daydreaming.
- **Background lighting** – Lights on docks, shorelines, or other vessels.
- **Onboard lighting** – Glare from lights onboard the vessel; includes improperly shielded navigation lights.
- **Occupant(s)** – Occupant(s) in vessel; includes conversing with or looking at other occupant(s).
- **Moving object(s) in vessel** – Moving object(s), other than occupant(s), in vessel.

- **Navigation device** – Viewing or operating a navigation device; includes GPS or other devices being used for navigation.
- **Using or reaching for mobile/wireless communication devices** -- Using, attempting to use, or reaching for a wireless phone or e-mail device; includes talking or listening, entering numbers, or text messaging on the wireless device.
- **Using or reaching for other devices** – Using, attempting to use, or reaching for a spotlight, a VHF radio, an audio device, or any other equipment or devices (excludes mobile/wireless communication devices).
- **Using autopilot** – Reduced attention to navigation as result of reliance on an engaged electronic helmsman or self-steering device to steer or make throttle adjustments.
- **Person(s) or object(s) outside of vessel** -- Fixated on a person, towed watersport participant, another vessel, or any other object(s) in or on the water and outside of the vessel.
- **Sightseeing** -- Fixated on viewing adjacent scenery.
- **Eating or drinking** – Eating, drinking, or activity related to these actions.
- **Other distraction** -- Details regarding the distraction are known, but none of the specified codes is applicable.
- **Distraction details unknown** - Distraction noted, but the specifics are unknown.

Improper/Lack of Navigation Lights: Insufficient and/or improper navigation lights shown by a vessel that indicate direction of travel, position, activity, or operation.

Improper/No Ski Observer: No one was serving as observer for a watersport participant or the person so serving failed in that regard.

Machinery Failure:** Defect or failure in the machinery, material, design, construction, or any installed components involved in the mechanical propulsion of the vessel (e.g., engine, transmission, fuel system, electric system, and steering system).

** If you entered **Machinery Failure**, indicate which machinery failed:

- **Electric system failure** -- Shock hazard; system shorted out; battery failure; failure of ignition protection.
- **Engine** -- Engine would not start; engine stalled.
- **Fuel system** -- Fuel tank or fuel lines leaked; clogged fuel lines.
- **Gear Shift** -- Shifting mechanism would not operate properly. Engine started in gear, would not go into gear, or went into gear by itself without warning.
- **Steering** -- Failure of the assembly, including all components necessary to transmit remote manual effort to the rudder, sterndrive, water jet drive or outboard engine (includes cable, pulleys, fittings, hydraulic components). Includes **Propulsion system failure** – Failure of the propulsion system to operate properly.
- **Throttle** -- Throttle mechanism would not operate properly.
- **Ventilation** -- Failure of the powered ventilation system that exchanges air and expels gasoline vapors from the engine compartment.

Navigation Aid Missing: The absence of, missing, or off-station navigation aid(s).

Navigation Aid Not Working: Navigation aid is on station but ineffective or defective.

Operator Inattention: The operator was distracted or failed to pay attention to activities occurring on the vessel, its occupants, or the immediate proximity in which the vessel is operating. **Operator Inattention** should not be selected when a collision or grounding occurred.

Operator Inattention includes the following Distractions:

- **Lost in thought** – Was thinking about items other than the task; daydreaming.
- **Occupant(s)** -- Distracted by occupant(s) in vessel; includes conversing with or looking at other occupant(s)
- **Moving object(s) in vessel** -- Distracted by moving object(s), other than occupants(s), in vessel.
- **Onboard lighting** – Glare from lights onboard the vessel; includes improperly shielded navigation lights.
- **Navigation device** -- Distracted while viewing or operating a navigation device; includes GPS or other devices being used for navigation.
- **Using or reaching for mobile/ wireless communication devices** -- Distracted while using, attempting to use, or reaching for a wireless phone or e-mail device; includes talking or listening, entering numbers, or text messaging on the wireless device.
- **Using or reaching for other devices** -- Distracted while using, attempting to use, or reaching for a spotlight, a VHF radio, an audio device, or any other equipment or devices (excludes mobile/wireless communication devices).
- **Using autopilot** – Reduced attention to navigation as result of reliance on an engaged electronic helmsman or self-steering device to steer or make throttle adjustments.
- **Person(s) or object(s) outside of vessel** -- Fixated on a person, towed watersport participant, another vessel, or any other object(s) in or on the water and outside of the vessel.
- **Sightseeing** -- Fixated on viewing adjacent scenery.
- **Eating or drinking** – Distracted by eating, drinking, or activity related to these actions.
- **Other distraction** -- Details regarding distraction are known, but none of the specified codes is applicable.
- **Distraction details unknown** -- Distraction noted, but the specifics are unknown.

Operator Inexperience: Lack of experience, familiarity or knowledge regarding the vessel, environmental conditions, or location.

More specifically:

- **This vessel** =its operation or controls
- **Environmental conditions** = prevailing conditions at the time of the accident (e.g., weather, waves, current, other types of environmental conditions)
- **Location** = the immediate area where the accident occurred (e.g., shallow water, shoals, wing dikes, other types of underwater obstructions or hazards)

Overloading: Loading of gear or passengers on the vessel – including inadvertent distribution or redistribution of weight – contributing to instability, limited maneuverability, or dangerously reduced freeboard.

Restricted Vision – Visibility limited due to external conditions such as sun glare, fog, rain, snow, spray, limited night visibility or other environmental conditions Also includes visibility limited due to the vessel’s bow elevation, passengers, a dirty windshield, canopy top, or other obstruction in or on the vessel.

Rules of the Road Violation: Failure to observe the navigation rules in crossing, meeting, overtaking situations, or in actions to avoid collisions.

Sharp Turn: An immediate or abrupt change in the vessel’s course.

Standing/Sitting on Bow, Transom or Gunwale: Standing or sitting in an area of a vessel not intended for occupancy during the vessel’s operation. Examples of areas not intended for occupancy during vessel operation include, but are not limited to, the gunwale, a cabin top or other elevated platform, the bow, or the stern.

Starting in Gear: The vessel’s engine was started with the transmission in forward or reverse.

Force of Wave/Wake: The wake created by a vessel(s) contributed to the accident.

Heavy Weather: One or more atmospheric conditions, such as thunderstorms, lightning, wind, rain, sleet, fog, or snow, created an adverse environmental situation that contributed to the accident.

Other / Describe: Contributing factors(s) that are not described. Provide brief description

Examples:

Did Not Contribute: The actions of the operator of a vessel did not contribute to the accident.

Carbon Monoxide: The accumulation of carbon monoxide from inadequate or improper ventilation contributed to the accident.

Medical Condition: A person on a vessel or a towed watersport participant experienced a medical condition(s) that contributed to, but was not the result of the accident.

Unknown: Insufficient information to determine the contributing factor(s) of the accident.

Questions:

Should you have any questions regarding filling out the accident form, please contact:

Yolanda Cooley
Boating Accident Report Coordinator or
DEEP Boating Division
860 447-4343
Yolanda.cooley@ct.gov

Sgt. Eric Lundin, EnCon Police/
Marine Unit/
Boating Accident Reconstruction Unit
860 434-9840
Eric.lundin@ct.gov