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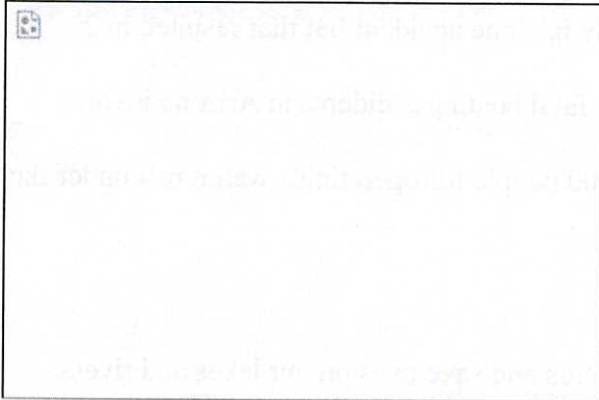
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July 11, 2012

Be Alert! Boating Safety Saves Lives

Posted by dawnnyelsmink under [Recreational Vehicle Insurance](#) | Tags: [accidents](#), [boat](#), [boating](#), [boating safety](#), [lake](#), [rivers](#), [water](#) |

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Be safe on the lakes this summer (image via macbiff on Flickr)

Summer is here which means the temps are high, the skies are clear, and people across the state can't wait to take their boats out every chance they get. We may not have as many options for boating and water sports as some other states, but our lakes and waterways have some of the highest activity levels in the country. Unfortunately, with so many boats and watercrafts in the water, accidents happen. Even seasoned boaters need to refresh themselves on safe operation and common sense safety precautions. Despite having few lakes and waterways, in 2010 [Arizona ranked thirteenth](#) in the nation for both the number of boating accidents and the number of boating injuries.

Here is a picture of Arizona's Boating accidents in 2010 based on the information provided in the [2010 Boating Safety Report](#).

- In 2010, there were 142 watercraft accidents on Arizona's waterways.
- Those 142 accidents involved 197 vessels, causing 89 injuries and 6 fatalities.
- The 142 accidents resulted in almost \$500,000 in damages.
- The most common causes of boating accidents were operator inattention, operator inexperience, and passenger/behavior.
- 34% of all accidents in 2010 involved colliding with other vessels.
- Open motor boats and personal watercraft like jet skis were the type of vessel most commonly

- involved in an accident, accounting for 43% and 40% of all vessels respectively.
- Watercraft spanning 9' to 11' in length accounted for the highest number of vessels (37%) involved in accidents.
- The majority of accidents (42%) happen between noon and 4PM on clear, calm days.
- The most dangerous days are Saturday which saw 35% of all accidents and Sunday, which saw 27%.
- The most dangerous month for boating was May which saw 22% of the accidents for the entire year. July was a close second with 19% and third by June with 18%.
- Most accidents, nearly 76%, involved operators from either Arizona or California.
- The Middle Colorado River span, which goes from David Dam to 1-40 was the most accident prone waterway in the state. There were 29 accidents on this span which accounted for 20% of the annual total.
- The most dangerous waterways, those resulting in the highest ratio of casualties per accident were the Verde River with an average 3 casualties per accident, Parker Canyon Lake and Lake Mary which both averaged two casualties per accident, and Bartlett Lake and the Upper span of the Colorado River which both average 1 casualty per accident.
- The most deadly waterways were Verde River which only had one accident but that resulted in three deaths and Parker Canton Lake which also only had one accident but that resulted in 2 fatalities.
- Since 1998, the numbers show that almost half of all fatal boating accidents in Arizona involve alcohol.
- In 2010, law enforcement officials arrested almost 300 people for operating a watercraft under the influence.

Making Our Waterways Safer

Education is the best way to decrease the number of accidents and save lives on our lakes and rivers. Although boater safety training is not mandatory in Arizona, it is provided by the state. There is an 8 hour core boating safety class offered at several locations. Additionally, in an effort to reverse the growing trend of paddle craft related fatalities, Arizona is one of the first states to create and provide a boating safety course specifically designed around safe operation of paddle craft. You can find a schedule of the classes being offered [here](#).

With the July 4th holiday and summer vacations upon us, the lakes and rivers will be full of those celebrating the holiday. If you or someone you love will be boating, please take all precautions to follow the rules of the waterways, don't operate a boat if you've consumed alcohol, and ensure everyone onboard has a lifejacket accessible to them.

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