

# Boating-related Injuries and Fatalities in North Carolina, 2019-2023

There were

**76**

boating-related deaths in NC from 2019-2023

In 2023, there were **339,851 registered recreational vessels** in North Carolina and reportable boating incidents resulted in over **\$1.7 million in damages**

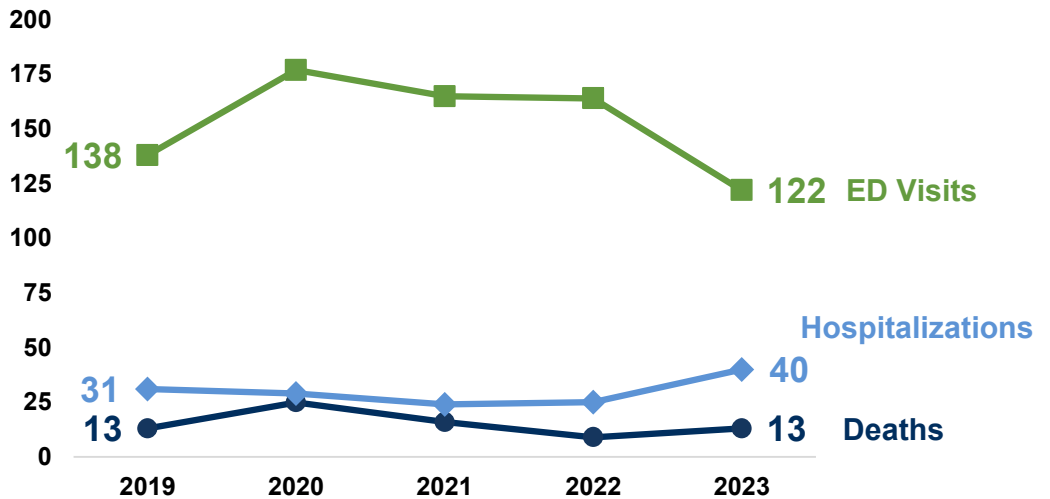
Boating-related deaths increased by 92% from 2019 to 2020, but have since decreased.

Hospitalizations increased by 29% from 2019 to 2023.

ED visits decreased by 12% from 2019 to 2023.

While boating-related deaths remained fairly constant, hospitalizations increased and emergency department (ED) visits decreased from 2019 to 2023 in North Carolina

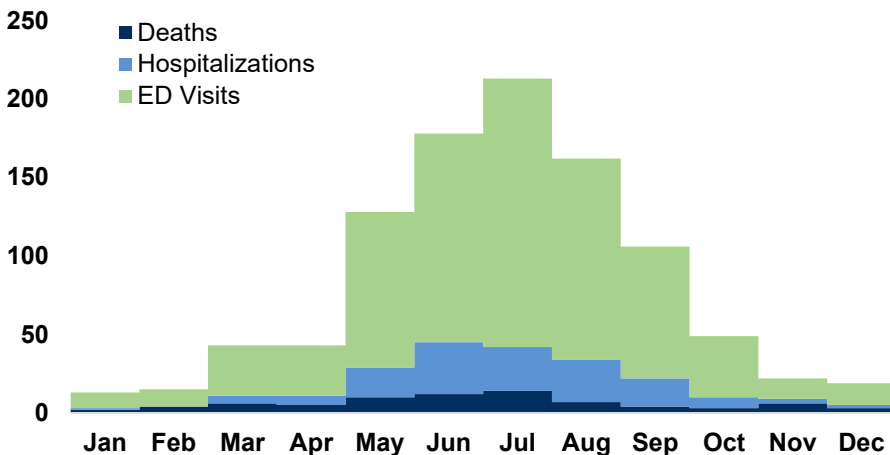
Number of Boating-related Injuries and Fatalities in NC, 2019-2023



Limited to NC residents; Source: NC State Center for Health Statistics, Vital Statistics (2019-2023) and Hospital Discharge Data (2019-2023), NCDETECT (2019-2023)

## Monthly counts highlight increases in boating-related injury during warm months

Number of Boating-related Injuries and Fatalities in NC by month, 2019-2023



## Boating-related injuries are preventable.

### Top Safety Tips:



Use life jackets when boating, using a personal watercraft, not swim trained, or under the age of 13



Watch children when they are in or around water

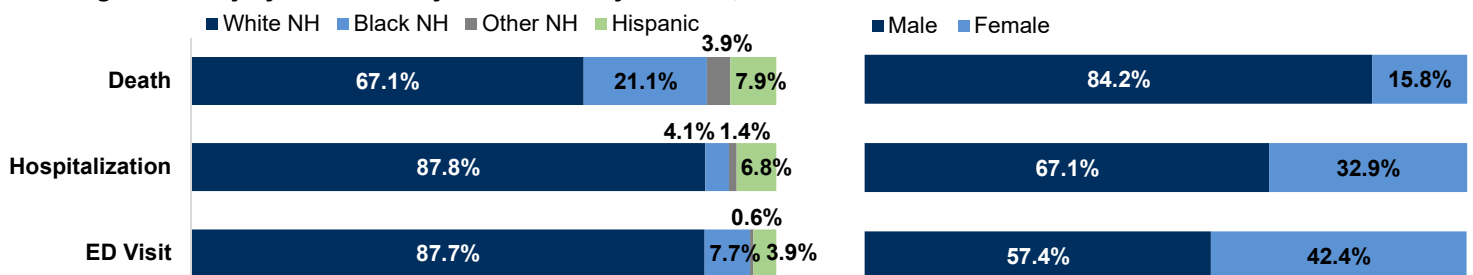


Teach yourself and children to swim

Do not operate a boating vessel under the influence

## Non-Hispanic (NH) White residents and males had the highest proportion of boating-related deaths, hospitalizations, and ED visits

Boating-related Injury Outcomes by Race/Ethnicity and Sex, 2019-2023

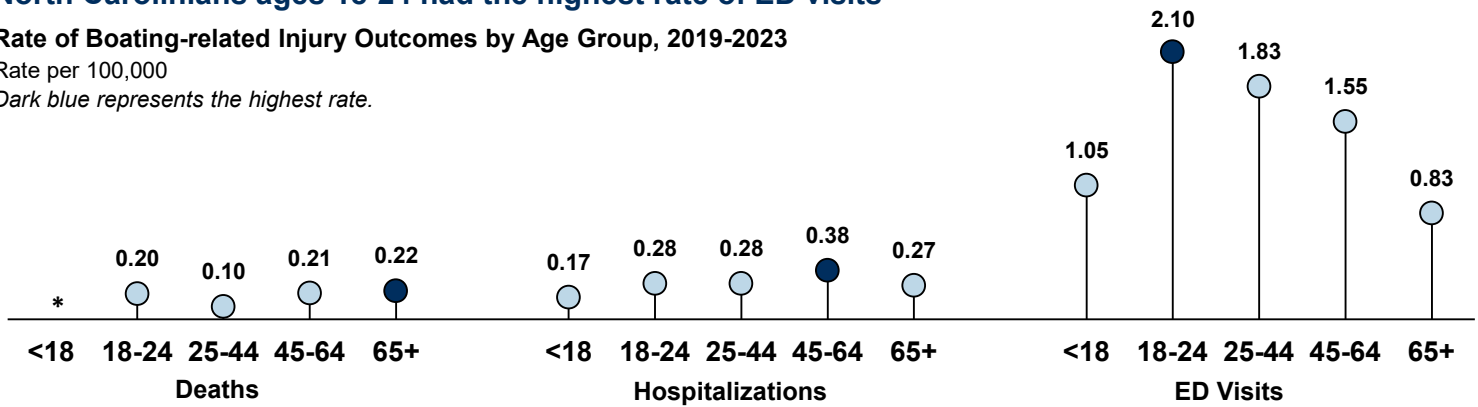


## The highest rate of boating-related deaths occurred among older adults (65+), whereas younger North Carolinians ages 18-24 had the highest rate of ED visits

### Rate of Boating-related Injury Outcomes by Age Group, 2019-2023

Rate per 100,000

Dark blue represents the highest rate.



\*Rates are not calculated for <5 deaths; Limited to NC residents

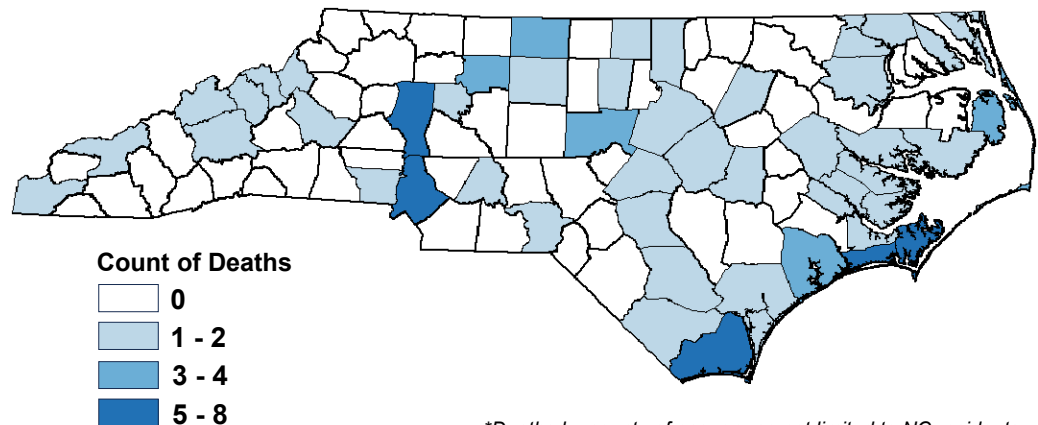


## The highest number of boating-related deaths occurred in Mecklenburg, Brunswick, Carteret, and Iredell counties

### Number of Boating-related Injury Deaths by County of Occurrence\*, 2019-2023

County of Occurrence*	Deaths
Mecklenburg	8
Brunswick	7
Carteret	5
Iredell	5
Chatham	4
Dare	4
Rockingham	4
Forsyth	3
Onslow	3

- Counties of occurrence for boating-related deaths were popular coastal and large lake destinations

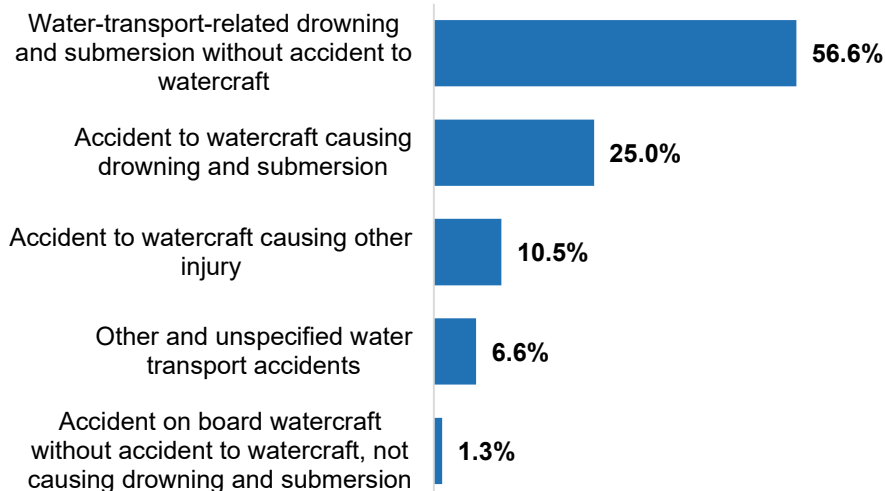


\*Deaths by county of occurrence not limited to NC residents  
Source: NC State Center for Health Statistics, Vital Statistics - Deaths (2019-2023)

## Circumstances of boating-related injuries varied by injury outcome

### Circumstances of Boating-related Injury Deaths, 2019-2023

Limited to NC residents



- Over half (56.6%) of boating-related deaths were drownings that involved water transport or submersion without an accident to a watercraft. 25% of these deaths were drownings involving an accident to a watercraft.

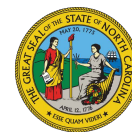
- In contrast, the majority of boating-related injury hospitalizations (89.9%) and ED visits (82.0%) were due to water transport accidents or accidents on board the watercraft, followed by near-drowning (10.1% of hospitalizations and 18.0% of ED boating-related injury visits).

#### National Resources

U.S. Coast Guard, Boating Safety Division  
<https://www.uscgboating.org/>

#### State Resources

NC Wildlife Resources Commission  
<https://www.ncwildlife.gov/enforcement/boating-safety-campaigns>



NC DEPARTMENT OF  
**HEALTH AND  
HUMAN SERVICES**  
Division of Public Health  
Injury and Violence Prevention Branch