

2019 Recreational Boating Incident Summary



Boating In Virginia

- River Miles – 52,225 miles (source VDEQ)
- Coastline – 132 miles (source VIMS)
- Tidal Shore – 7,213 (source VIMS)
- Inland Lakes – 116,364 acres (source VDEQ)



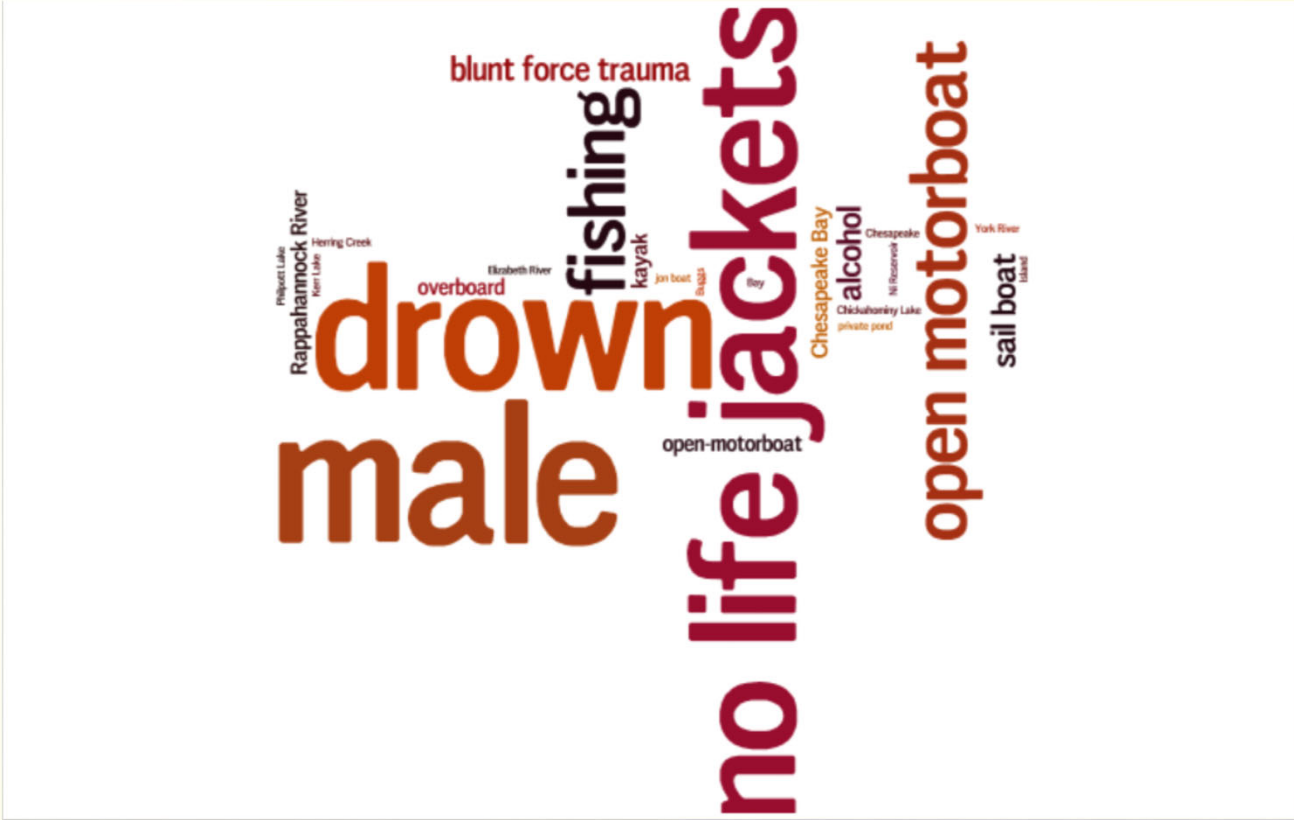
Reportable Incidents

Incidents that are required to be reported to the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries

- Damage over \$2,000 by or to the vessel or its equipment
- Injury requiring medical assistance beyond first aid
- Loss of life
- Disappearance of any person from a vessel



Factors Associated with Boating Fatalities



2019 Virginia Boating Incident Summary *

- **Number of Incidents = 89**
- **Number of Vessels Involved = 94**
- **Number of Injuries = 35**
- **Number of Fatalities = 20**
 - **Alcohol was a known factor in 20% of fatal incidents.**
 - **Paddlecraft (canoes and kayaks) were involved in 10% of fatal incidents.**
 - **In 95% of fatal incidents no life jacket was worn**
- **Property Damage = \$572,456**

* reported to DGIF

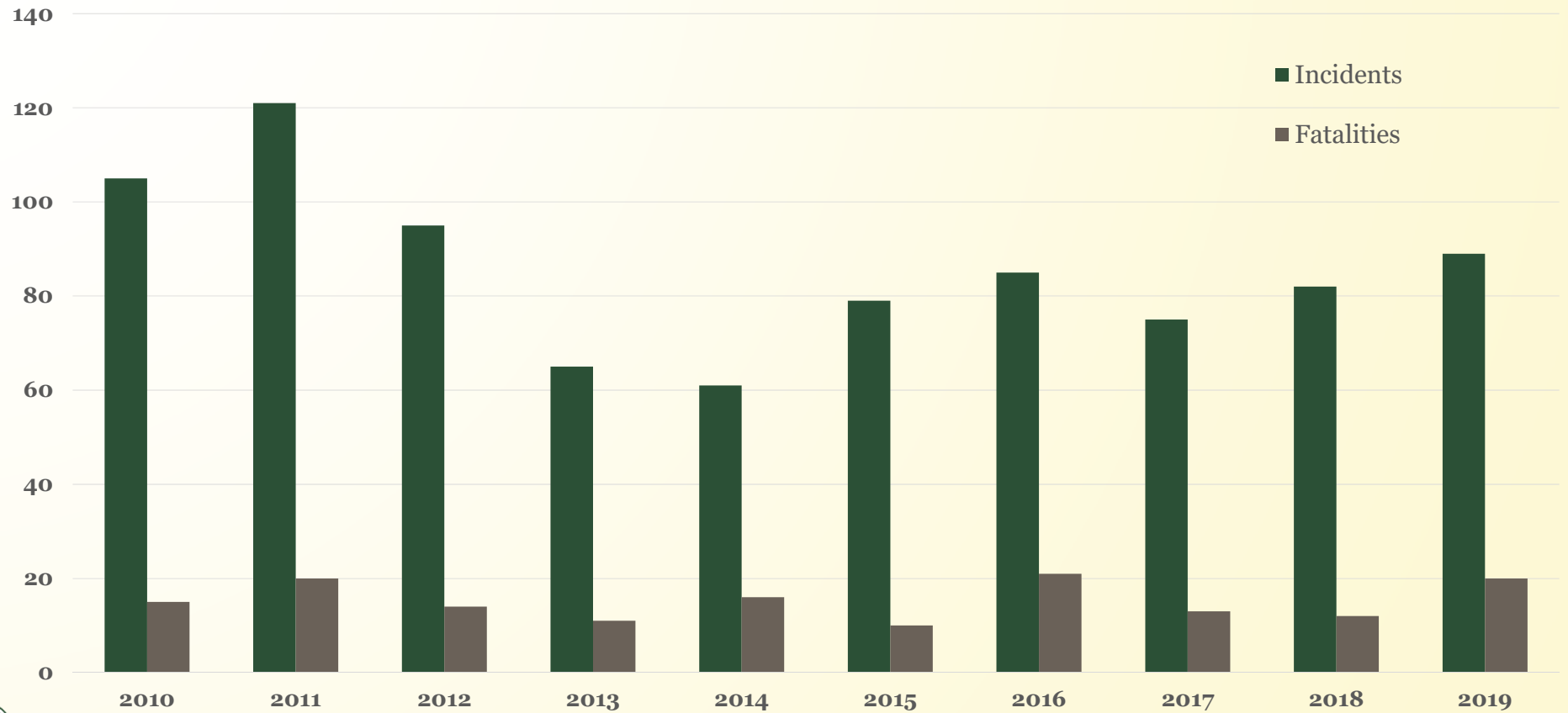


10 Year Boat Incident Summary

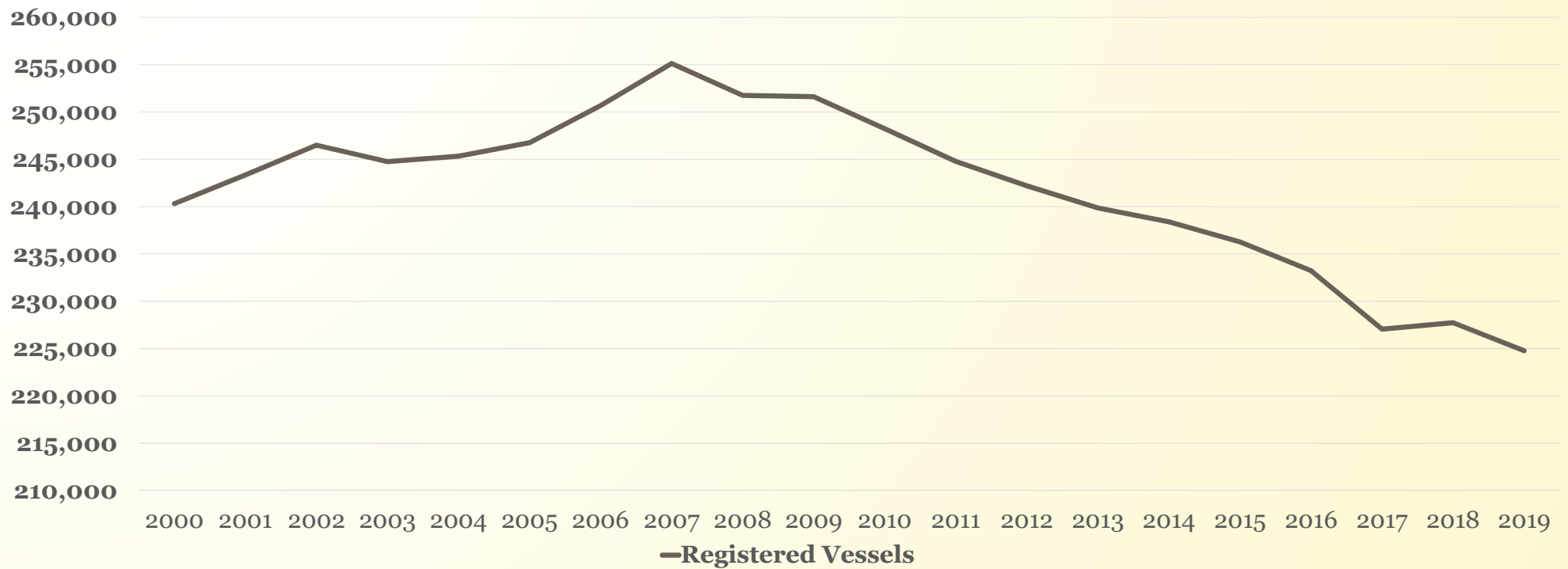
Year	Incidents	Injuries	Fatalities	Property Damage
2010	105	79	15	\$1,898,499
2011	121	95	20	\$1,226,360
2012	95	64	14	\$476,584
2013	65	44	11	\$981,945
2014	61	38	16	\$617,916
2015	79	39	10	\$441,301
2016	85	42	21	\$576,546
2017	75	44	13	\$308,160
2018	82	41	12	\$411,961
2019	89	35	20	\$572,456



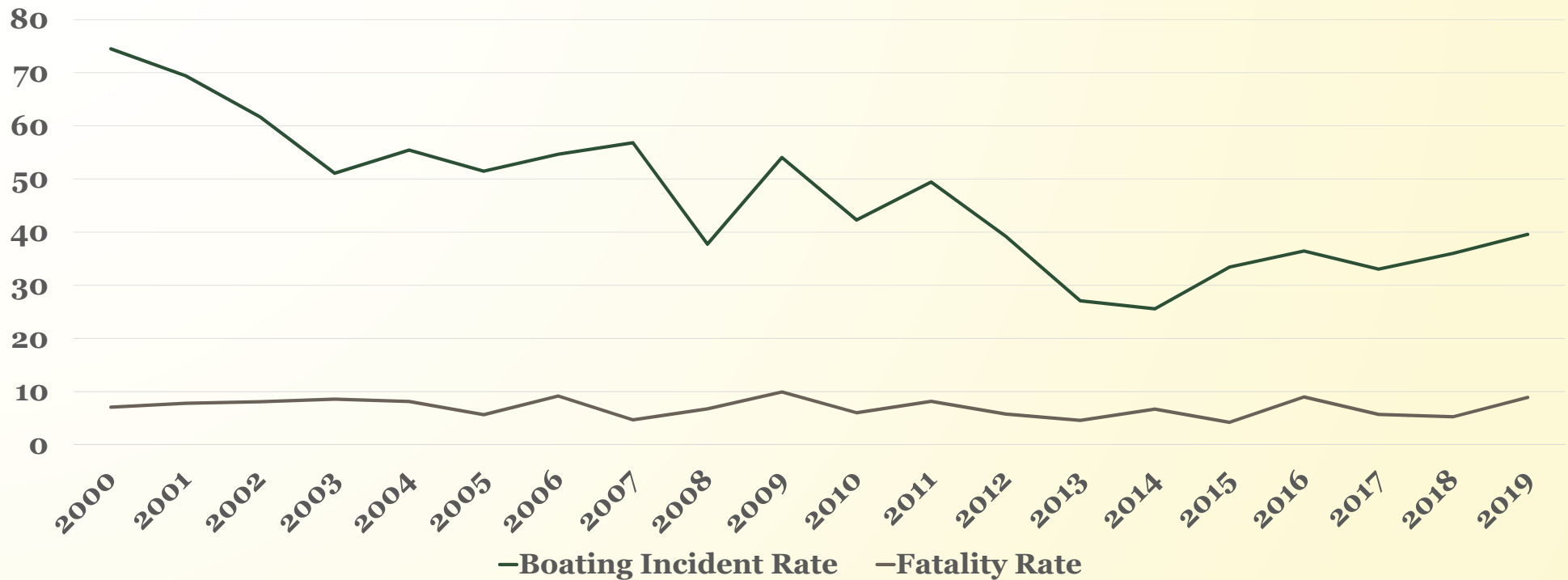
10 Year Boat Incident Statistics



Recreational Vessels Registered in Virginia by Year 2000 - 2019



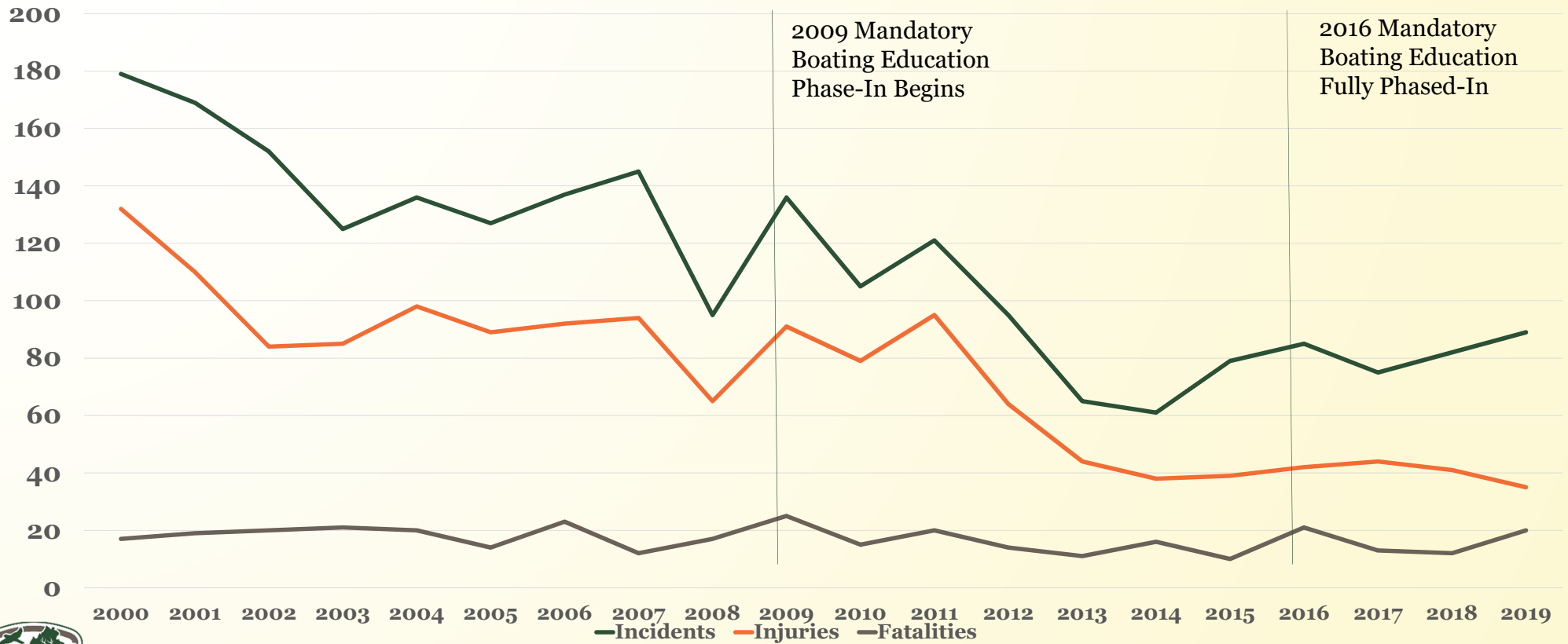
Annual Recreational Boating Incident Rate* 2000 - 2019 (per 100,000 Registered Boats)



- These rates include paddlecraft incidents/fatalities although paddlecraft are not registered in Virginia.
- These rates includes incidents/fatalities involving boats registered in another state that were involved in incidents on Virginia's waters.

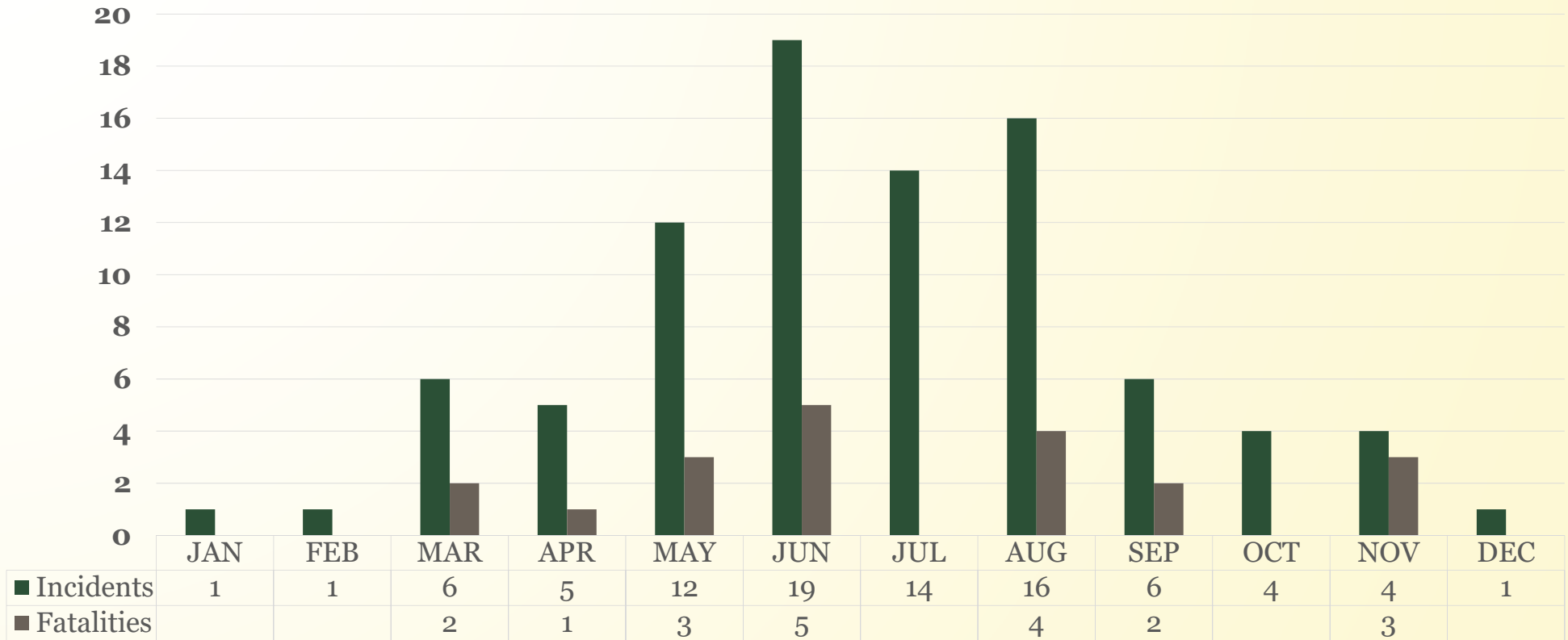


Fatalities, Injuries, and Incidents By Year 2000 - 2019

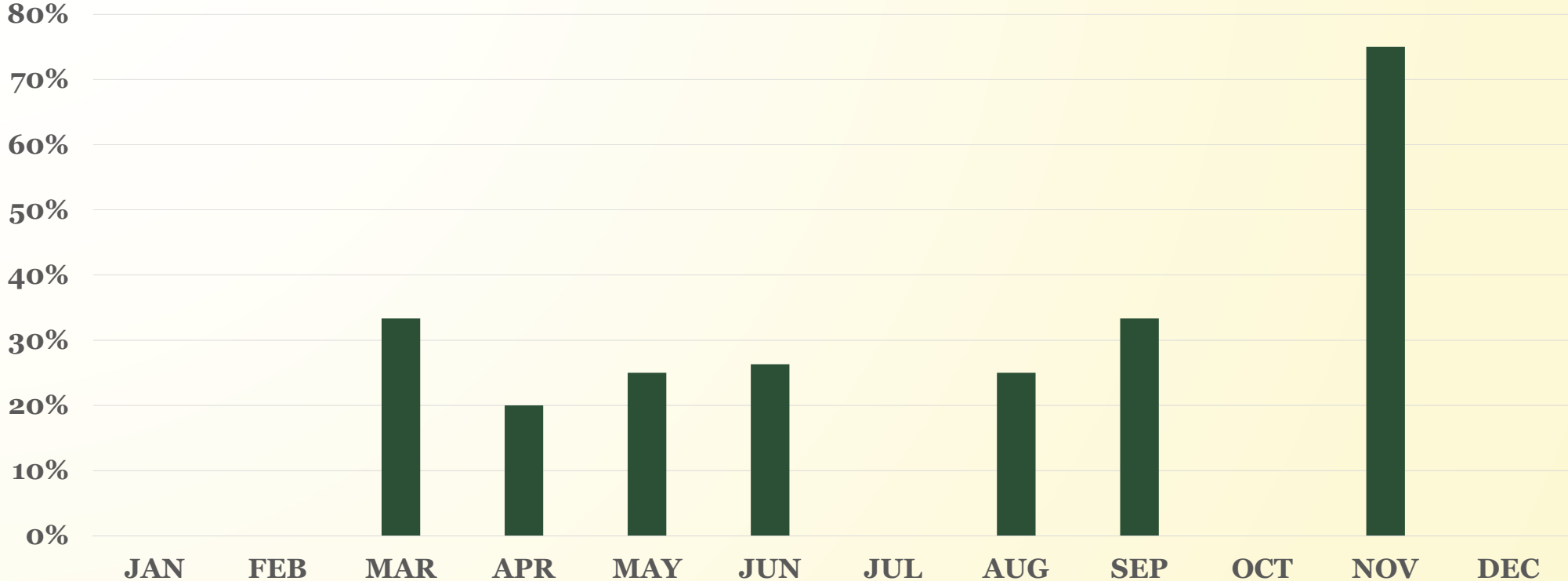


Tougher PWC Laws in 1998

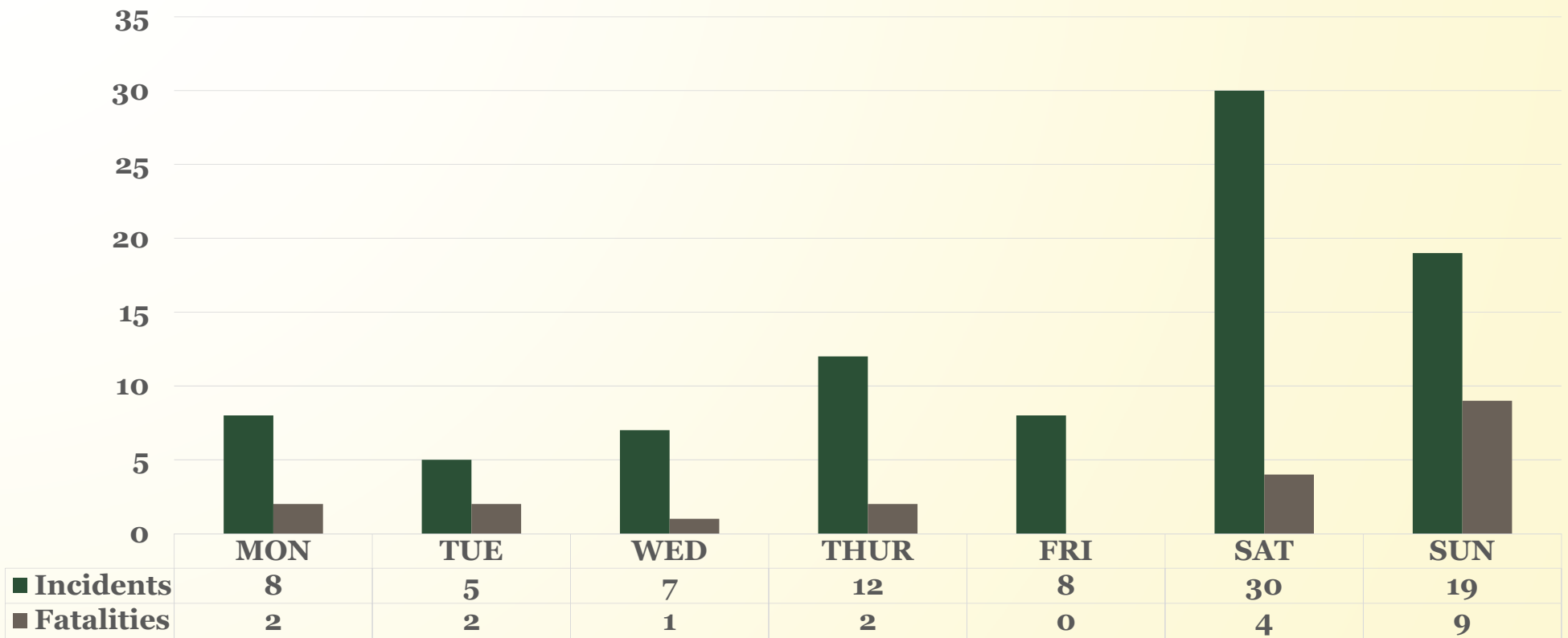
2019 Boating Incidents and Fatalities By Month



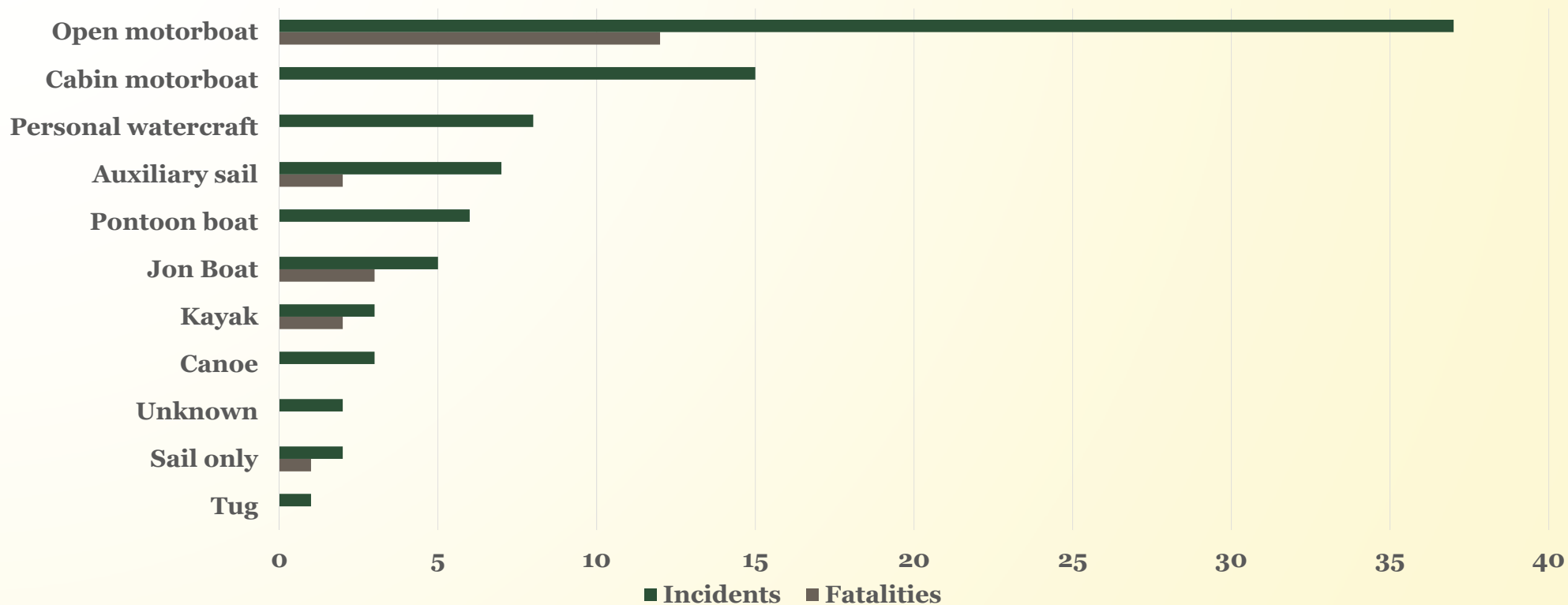
2019 Percentage of Incidents Each Month that were Fatal



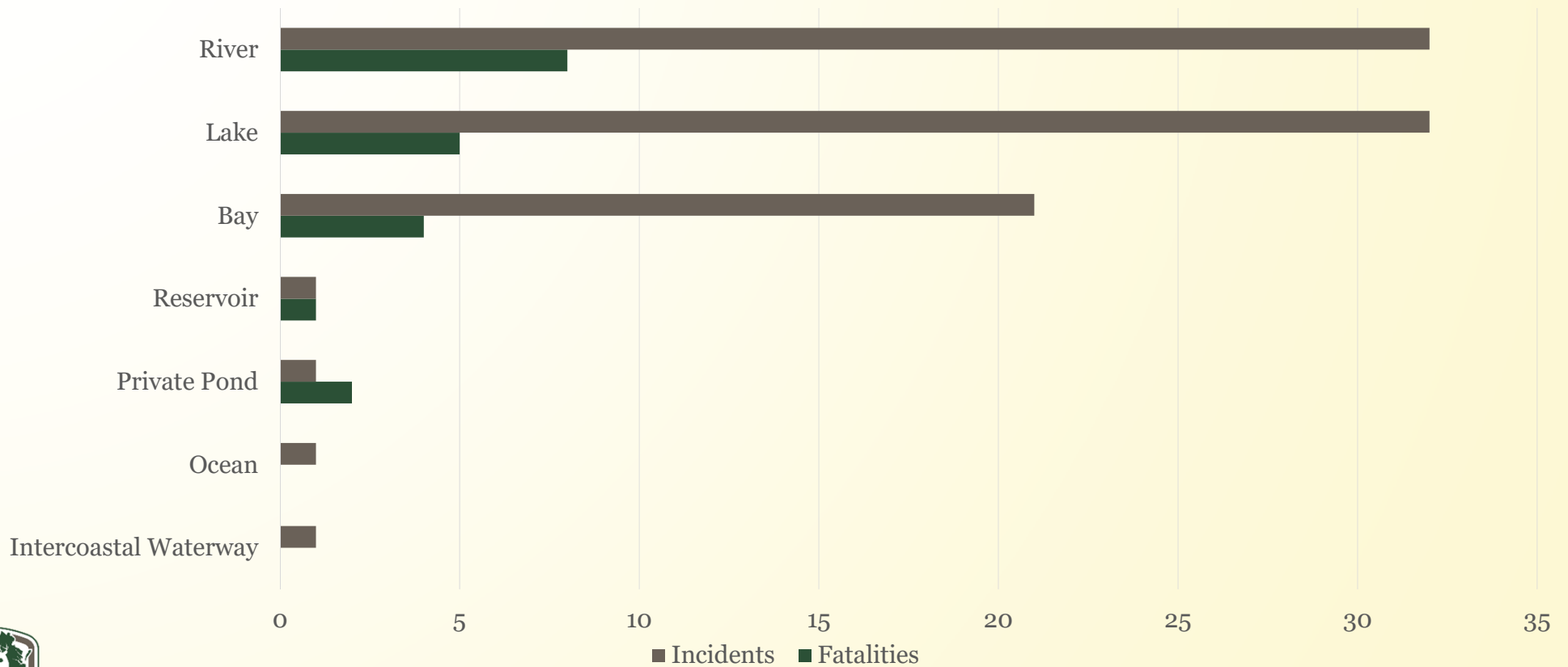
2019 Boating Incidents and Fatalities by Day of Week



2019 Boating Incidents and Fatalities By Vessel Type

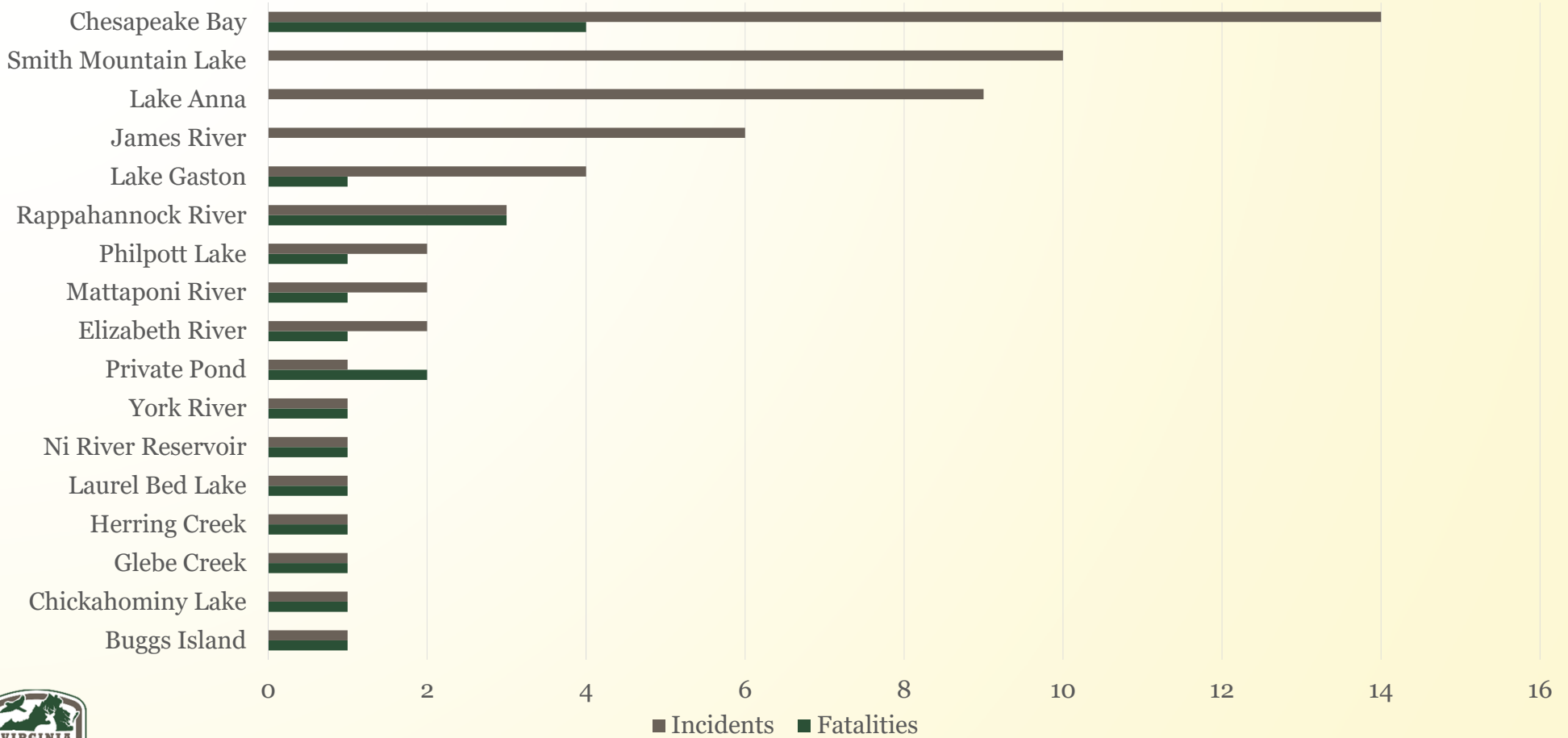


2019 Boating Incidents and Fatalities By Water Body Type



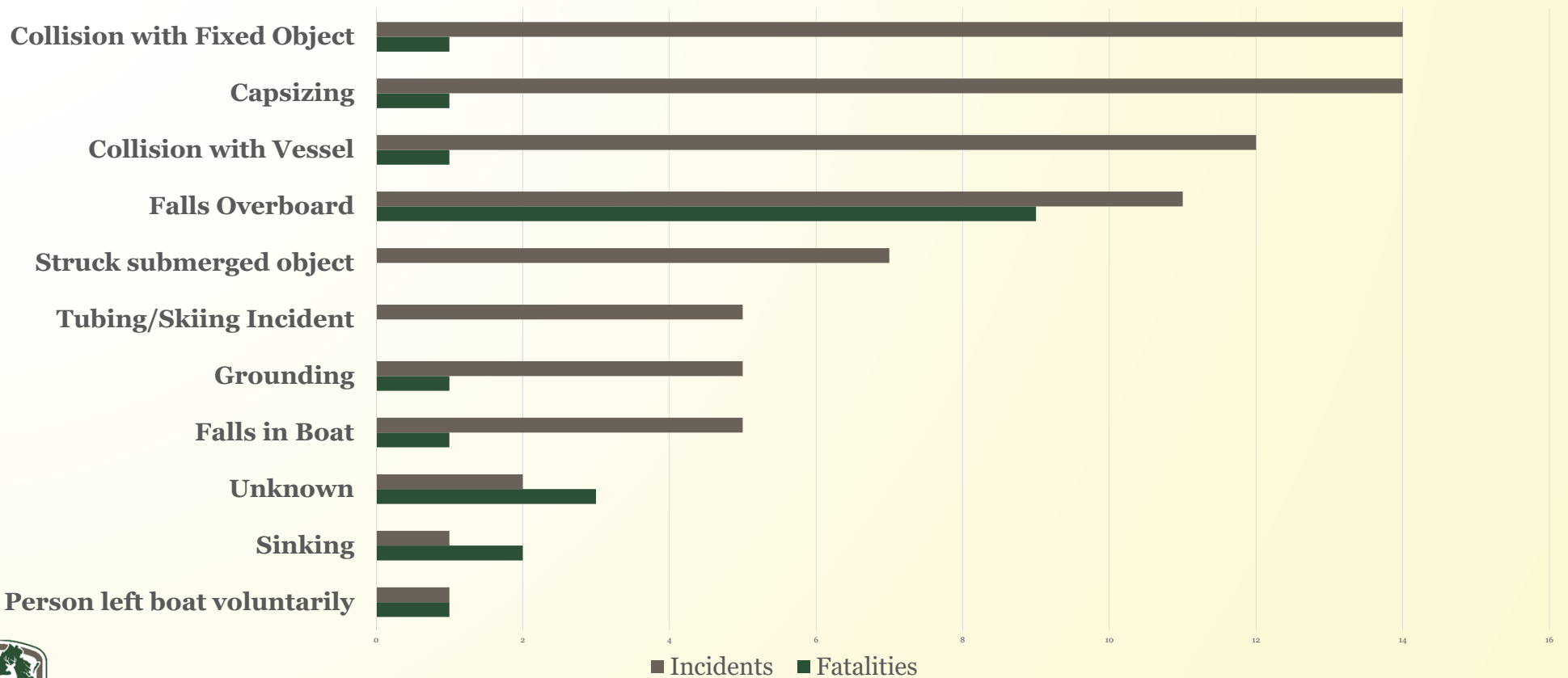
2019 Boating Incidents and Fatalities

Top Locations of Incidents

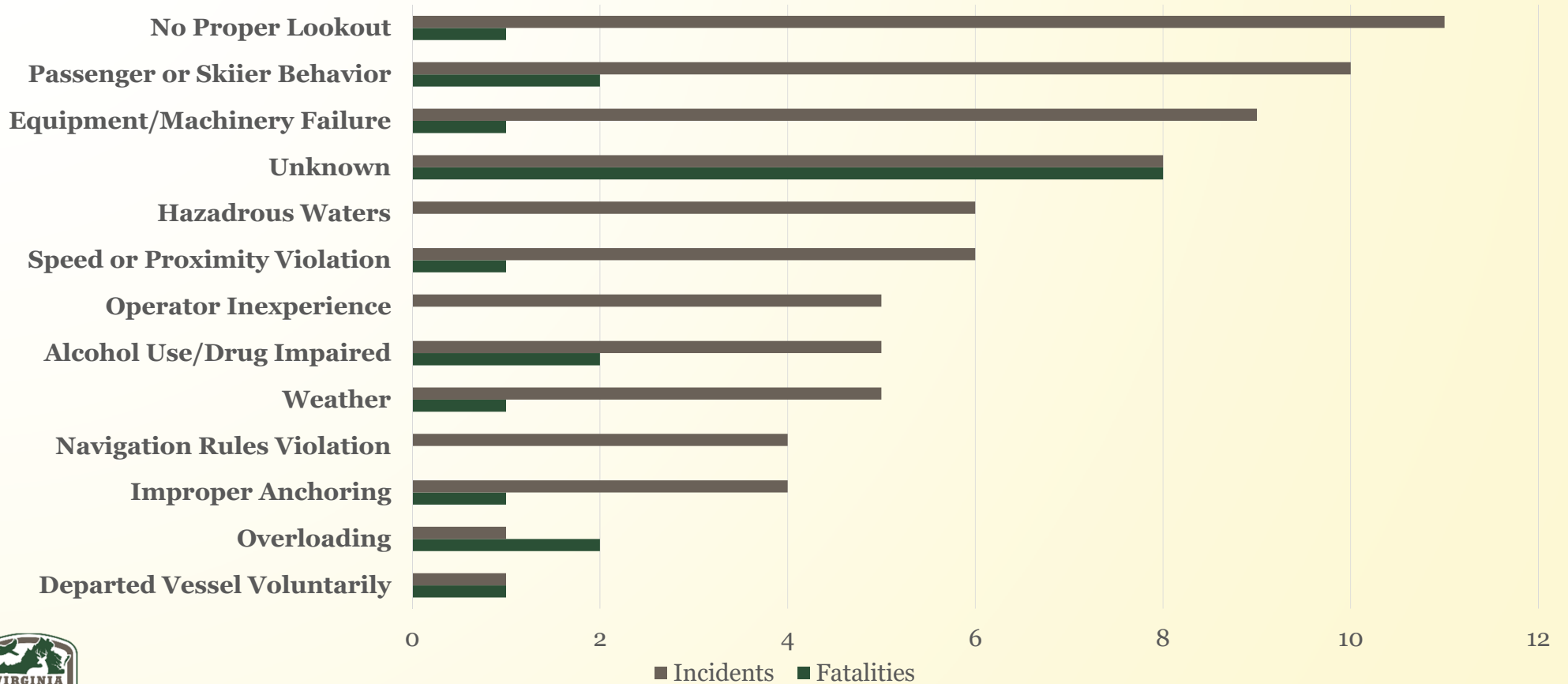


2019 Boating Incidents and Fatalities

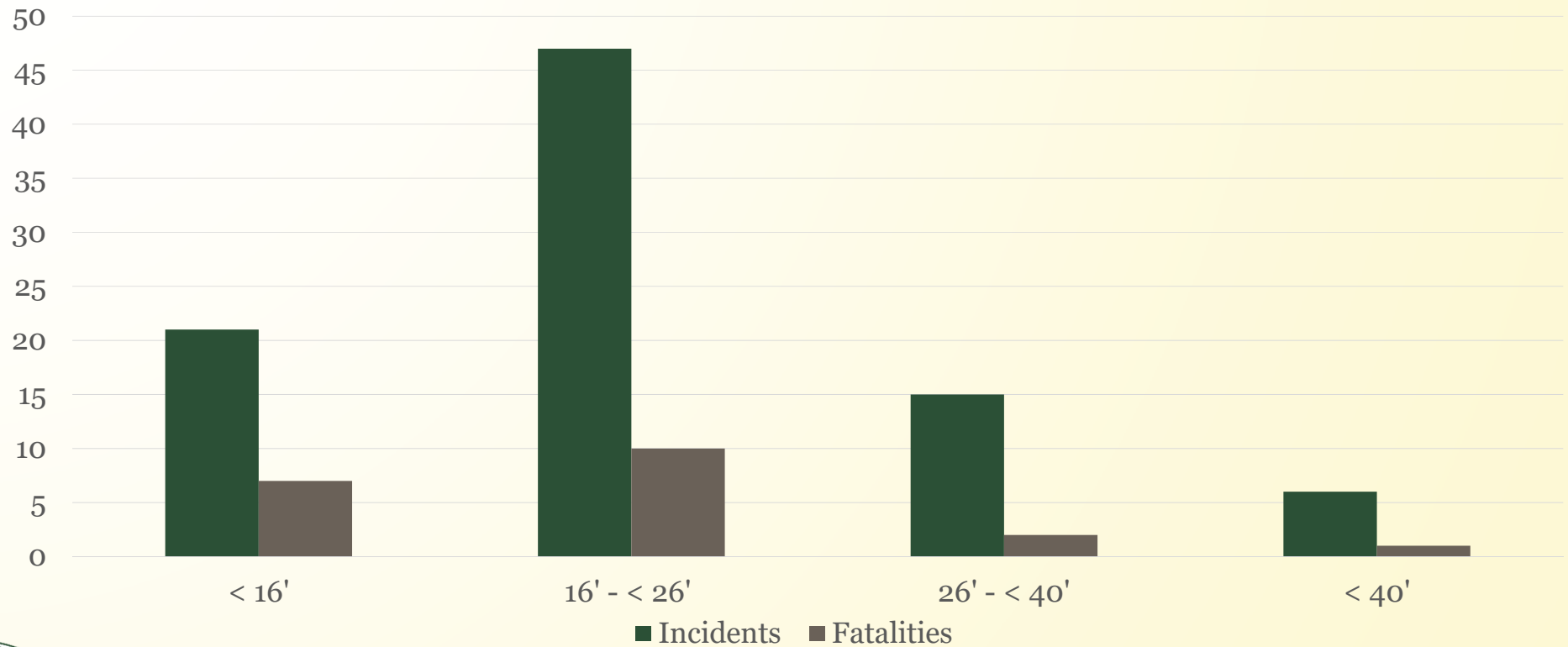
Top Primary Incident Types



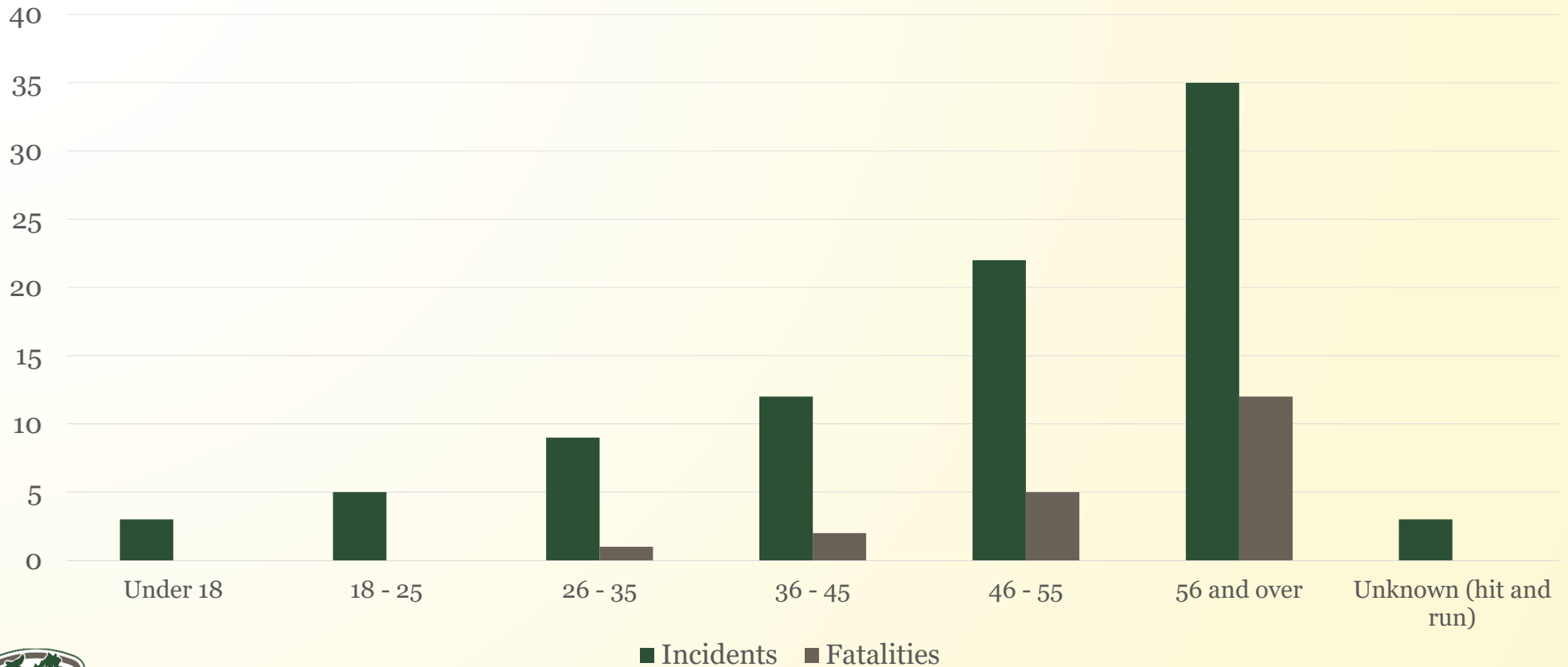
2019 Boating Incidents and Fatalities – Top Primary Contributing Factor



2019 Boating Incidents and Fatalities By Vessel Size

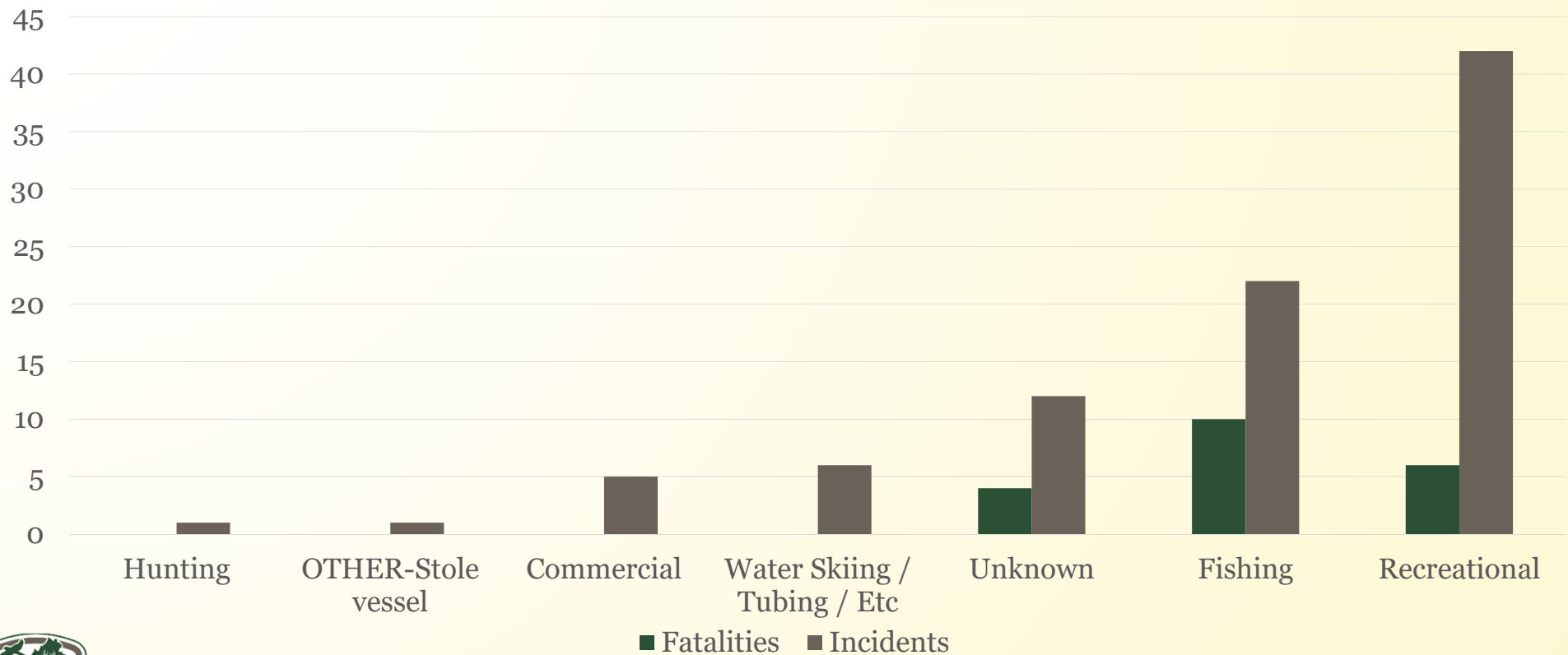


2019 Boat Incidents Age of Operators



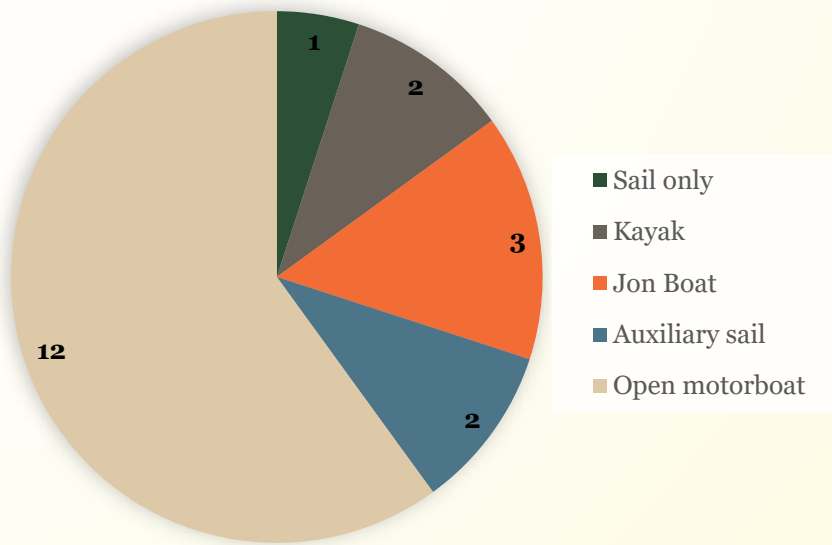
2019 Boating Incidents

Top Vessel Activity at Time of Incident

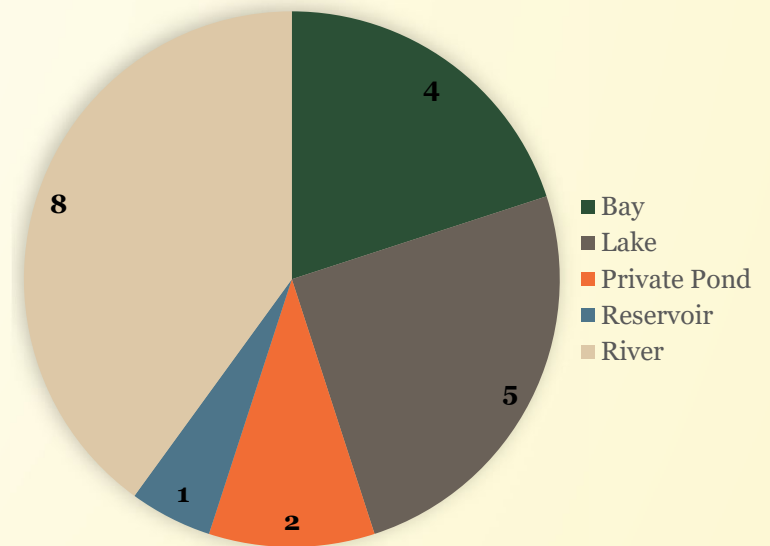


2019 Boating Fatalities

By Vessel Type

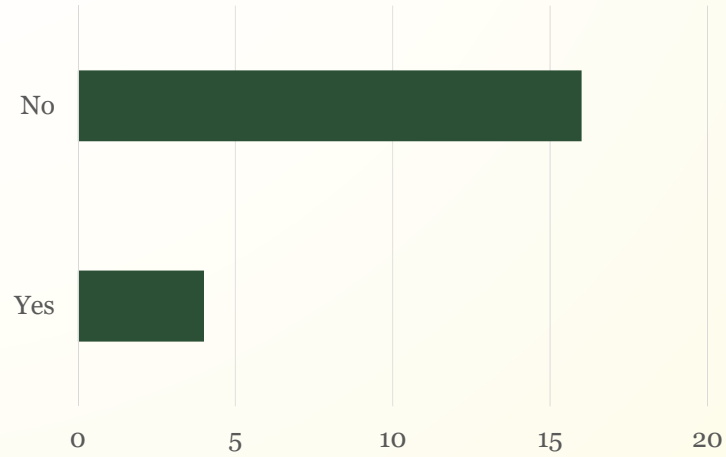


By Waterbody Type

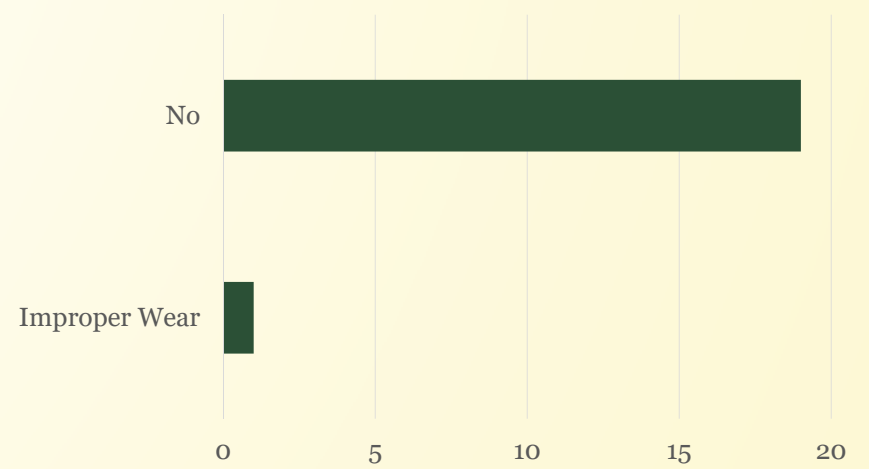


2019 Boating Fatalities

Alcohol Use

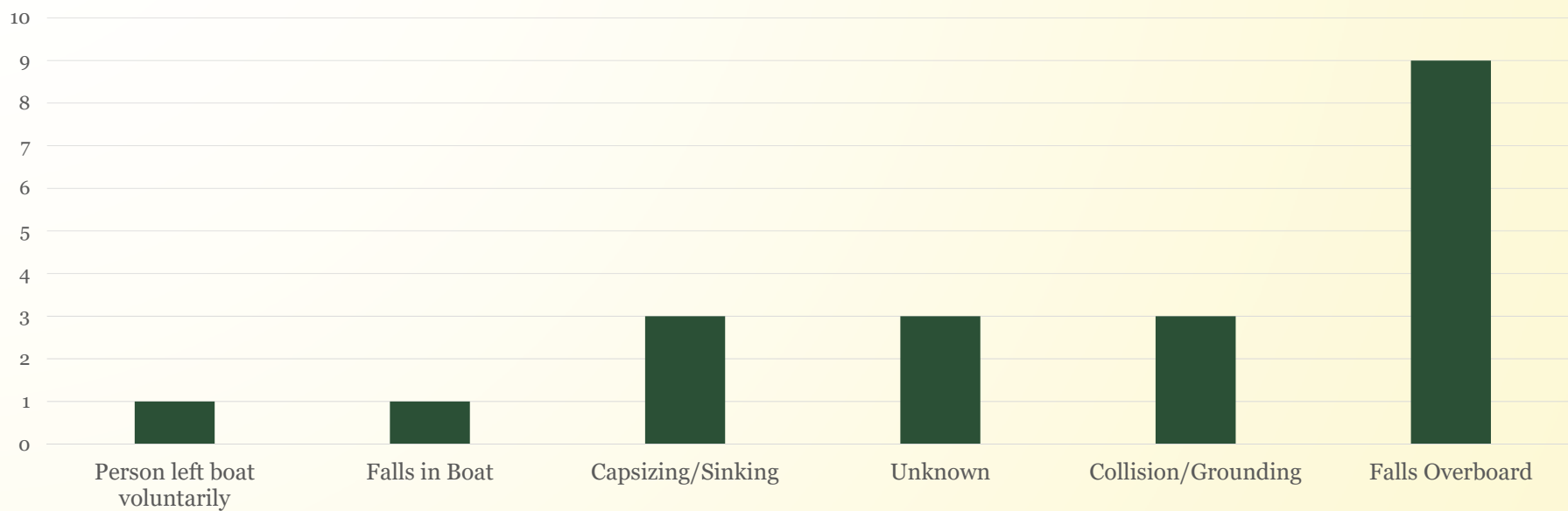


Life Jacket Use



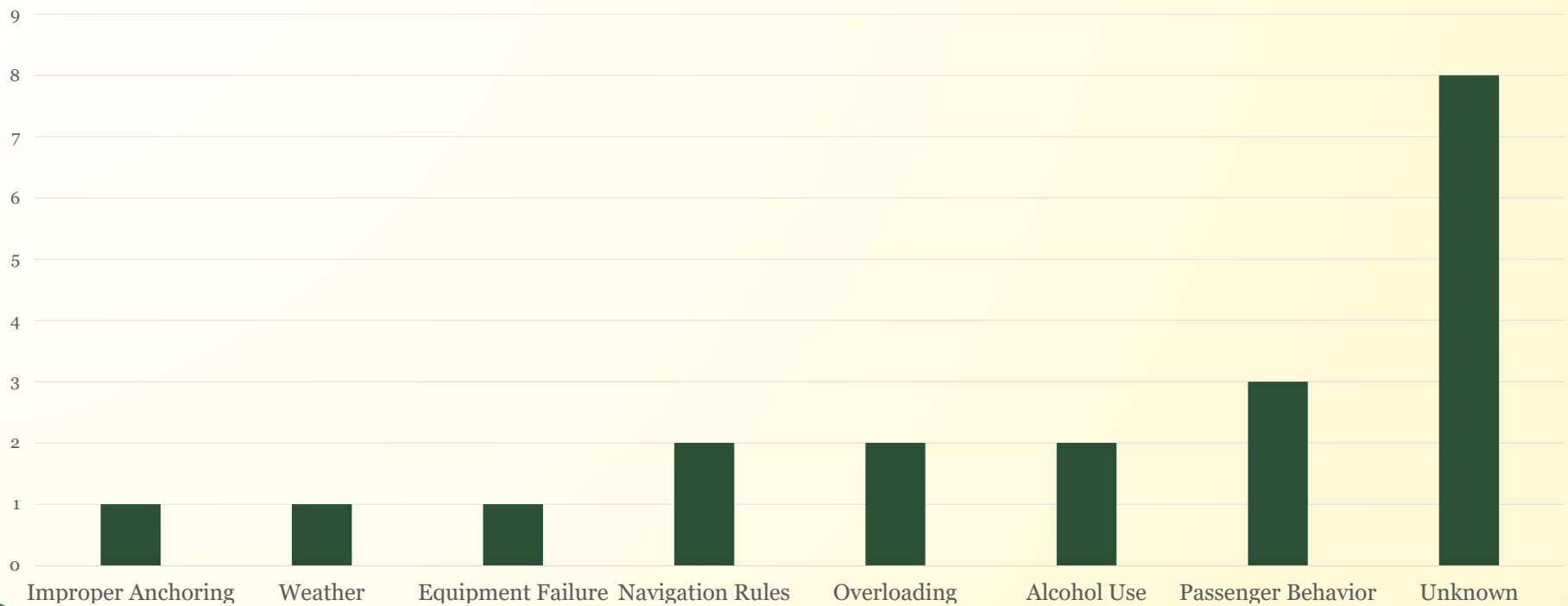
2019 Boating Fatalities

Type of Incident



2019 Boating Fatalities

Cause of Incident



2019 Boating Fatalities

3/11/2019 – Chesapeake Bay, time unknown

On 3/11/2019 USCG received a call regarding a potential fatality in the Chesapeake Bay near Buoy #2 at the entrance of Little Creek Inlet. The investigation discovered a 54 year old male wearing shorts and a t-shirt with a blue life jacket wrapped around his arms but not properly attached in the front. It was later determined that the victim entered the Bay near his residence on 3/10/2019 in a 10' kayak at 1600 hrs and never returned. While the life jacket was used, it was not properly worn.

03/16/2019 – Buggs Island, 3:48 pm

On 03/16/2019 the operator of the vessel reported that the passenger on the boat she was operating had fallen overboard the 19' open motorboat on Buggs Island Reservoir. The spouse, who was operating the vessel at the time of the incident, said that the decedent had started consuming alcohol the night prior to the incident and continued until 0400 am. She stated that he resumed consuming alcohol at 0900 that morning up until the incident. Just prior to the incident, the decedent asked his spouse to operate the vessel while he inspected an issue with the boat taking on water in the stern. The operator stated the decedent, a 50 year old male, fell off the back of the boat during his inspection with the boat was underway. The autopsy related that the victim would have had significant impairment due to the amount of ethanol in his system. The victim drown and no life jacket was worn.

04/21/2019 – Elizabeth River, 5:00 am

The 45' sailing Vessel "Grafin" ran aground in the area of Front and 3rd street in the Elizabeth River after breaking anchor from near Hospital Point. The owner boarded the grounded vessel overnight and as the tide came in on 4/21/2019. At approximately 05:00 am the vessel rolled over and sank. The owner, a 65 year old male, was later recovered from the cabin. The victim drown and no life jacket was worn.



2019 Boating Fatalities

05/19/2019 – Rappahannock River, between 2:20 pm and 4:45 pm

On 05/19/2019, an 18' open motorboat was found aground on the beach at Mosquito Point with no persons on board at approximately 4:45 pm. Two boaters had been confirmed to be on the vessel around 2:20 pm hours when they left a local river-side restaurant. A cooler and empty alcoholic beverage containers were found in the boat. The investigation did not provide any insights as to how the operator and passenger ended up in the water. Investigation indicated that the operator and passenger had been drinking at a nearby restaurant prior to the incident. The two male victims, age 59, drown. No life jackets were worn.

05/19/2019 – Herring Creek, 6:00 pm

Two males were fishing in Herring Creek on the evening of Sunday May 19 in a 16' jon boat. The vessel was anchored near a duck blind on Herring Creek. At approximately 6:00 pm, the victim, a 68 year old male, was fishing off the stern when he fell overboard. The operator of the vessel heard the victim say he was in the water and observed the victim go under the water and not resurface. The operator was unable to get to the victim in time. The victim was not wearing a life jacket and drown.

06/1/2019 – Chesapeake Bay, time unknown

At 8:34 am on 6/1/2019, officers responded to an 27' sailboat that was adrift. The sailboat was found with no persons on board. The sailboat had a broken mast and its sails were in the water. At 2:00 pm on 6/1/2019, a body was recovered and identified as the owner and operator of the vessel. It is unclear how the victim went overboard. The victim was a 57 year old male who was not wearing a life jacket and drown.

06/06/2019 – Glebe Creek, 11:30 am

The owner/operator and one passenger took a 16' open motorboat for a test drive. A few minutes into the trip the motor cut off and the boat began to take on water. The operator swam to shore for help while the passenger stayed with the boat. By the time help arrived the boat had capsized and sunk. There was no safety equipment aboard the vessel. The victim, a 65 year old male, was a non-swimmer. He was not wearing a life jacket and drown.



2019 Boating Fatalities

06/18/2019 – Mattaponi, 9:30 am

DGIF was notified of an abandoned 14' jon boat on the Mattaponi River. The responding officer spoke to the wife of the victim who stated that the 76 year old male left the house at 7:00 am to go fishing. When the officer got to the vessel, he noticed that it had two loose fishing rods inside, and one of the two was broken. He also noticed that the kill switch was attached to the motor and that the motor was in gear but not running. The gear shifter was broken as well. The investigation indicated the victim had fallen overboard. The medical examiner stated that the cause of death was accidental drowning. The victim was not wearing a life jacket.

06/29/2019 – Private Pond, time unknown

On 06/29/2019, a 55 year old male and 71 year old male went fishing in a aluminum jon boat on a private pond. At some time, the boat capsized, likely as a result of being overloaded, and the vessel sank. Neither of the decedents had swimming abilities. No PFD's were evident on location and do not appear to have been present on the boat nor worn by the decedents. The two victims drown.

08/04/2019 – Chesapeake Bay, 6:11 pm

On 8/4/2019 at approximately 6:11 pm, Norfolk Fire/Rescue responded to a water rescue. A witness stated he observed the victim anchor his boat, an open motorboat, a few feet off shore due to severe thunderstorms. He proceeded to get off the boat and walked to the sand dunes where the witness saw him and offered to let him take shelter on his porch. When the storm let up the victim proceeded to get back on the boat and began motoring towards Oceanview Pier. Approximately 150 - 200 yards from shore, the engine died and the boat began to drift. Witnesses stated that the victim was unable to restart the boat and suddenly jumped in the water and began swimming to shore. He was fully clothed with shoes on and no life jacket. Another witness grabbed his neighbor's kayak and life jackets and began paddling towards the victim to provide assistance. When he got within a few feet from the victim, he tossed a life jacket towards him, but the victim did not attempt to reach for it. He circled the kayak around and threw another life jacket to the victim at which point the victim appeared to be completely exhausted and sank under the water and never resurfaced. The victim, a 52 year old male, drown.



2019 Boating Fatalities

08/12/2019 – Philpott Lake, time unknown

On 08/13/2019 at approximately 10:15 A.M. DGIF was notified of an overdue boater on Philpott Lake. A 74 year old male went fishing on Philpott Lake on 08/12/2019 at approximately 06:30 A.M. The victim's vehicle and boat trailer were found at Ryan's Branch Boat Ramp on Philpott Lake. During the search on the lake, the victim's vessel was located and had washed up near the shore line. The motor and trolling motor were raised out of the water. Two oars were lying on the back of the vessel and assorted tools around the engine and the trolling motor as if the operator was having engine troubles. The victim's body was located a short ways away from the vessel. The medical examiner ruled drowning to be the cause of death. No life jackets were worn.

08/13/2019 – Ni Reservoir, time unknown

According to the Spotsylvania County Sheriff's reports the deceased fell out of his small plastic fishing boat in the Ni River Reservoir in Spotsylvania County. His shirt got tangled in his trolling motor and he was found by deputies lifeless in the water. The victim, a 63 year old male, drown. No life jackets were worn.

08/25/2019 – Rappahannock River, 12:09 pm

On 8/25/2019, a 15' open motorboat was traveling at full speed on the Rappahannock River while the operator was attempting to re-insert a drain plug he had removed. Due to the significant waves that day the operator lost control of the vessel and both occupants were ejected. The passenger clung to the vessel until rescued, but the operator, a 30 year old male, drowned. No life jackets were worn.

09/16/2019, York River, 9:53 pm

On 9/16/2019, a 23' open motorboat struck several vessels and a pier causing damage to two vessels and the pier. The operator of the vessel, a 57 year old male, sustained head trauma and was airlifted for treatment. He subsequently died from the injuries sustained in the collision. Alcohol was a primary contributing factor to the incident.



2019 Boating Fatalities

09/16/2019 – Lake Gaston, 11:00 am

The victim, a 68 year old male, exited his 21' open motorboat. He was fishing alone and the reason for exiting the vessel was not determined. All safety equipment was onboard and a life jacket was found in the operator's seat. The victim drown. No life jackets were worn.

11/14/2019 – Chesapeake Bay, 4:00 am

35' sailing vessel left Baltimore Maryland on November 13, 2019 en-route to Florida. At approximately 4:00 AM on Thursday December 14, 2019 as the vessel passed Wolftrap Light on its port side the mast rigging became entangled with the light house. This caused the mast to break and fall onto the vessel. The victim, a 70 year old male, was hit and entrapped by the falling mast and rigging. The impact of the mast and rigging caused the fatality.

11/17/2019 – Chickahominy Lake, 12:22 pm

On 11/17/2019, two men were fishing in a 20' open motorboat on Chickahominy Lake. The trolling motor was set on the auto anchor mode and the outboard motor was running in neutral. The trolling motor tried to correct the boat's position and the boat move abruptly towards the dam. The person fishing from the bow of the vessel, asked the other occupant to put the outboard motor in reverse so they wouldn't hit the dam. When this was done, the fisherman occupying the bow of the vessel fell head first from his standing position over the pedestal seat on the bow and onto the interior lowermost portion of the deck of the boat. This knocked him unconscious. When paramedics arrived on scene, the victim was not breathing and had no heart beat. The victim, a 58 year old male, died from blunt force trauma.

11/27/2019 – Laurel Bed Lake, 1:00 pm

On 11/27/19 two subjects had been fishing from kayaks on Laurel Bed Lake. The wind was high and water was rough at the time of the incident. The victim, a 38 year old male, fell from his kayak in the cold water. The other subject paddled over to victim in the water and attempted to pull him to shore. The victim lost his grip on the kayak, went under water and did not resurface. The victim's body was recovered the next day. No life jackets were worn.

