



July 2025

BOATING IN CONNECTICUT

A Briefing on Boating Safety





REGISTERED VESSELS IN CONNECTICUT

Connecticut law requires that all vessels with motors, regardless of size, and sailboats powered by sail alone, 19 1/2 feet or longer in length, be registered and numbered before launching.

YEAR	CT REGISTERED VESSELS
2018	93,271
2019	92,175
2020*	87,168
2021	93,074
2022	91,161
2023	89,699
2024	88,861

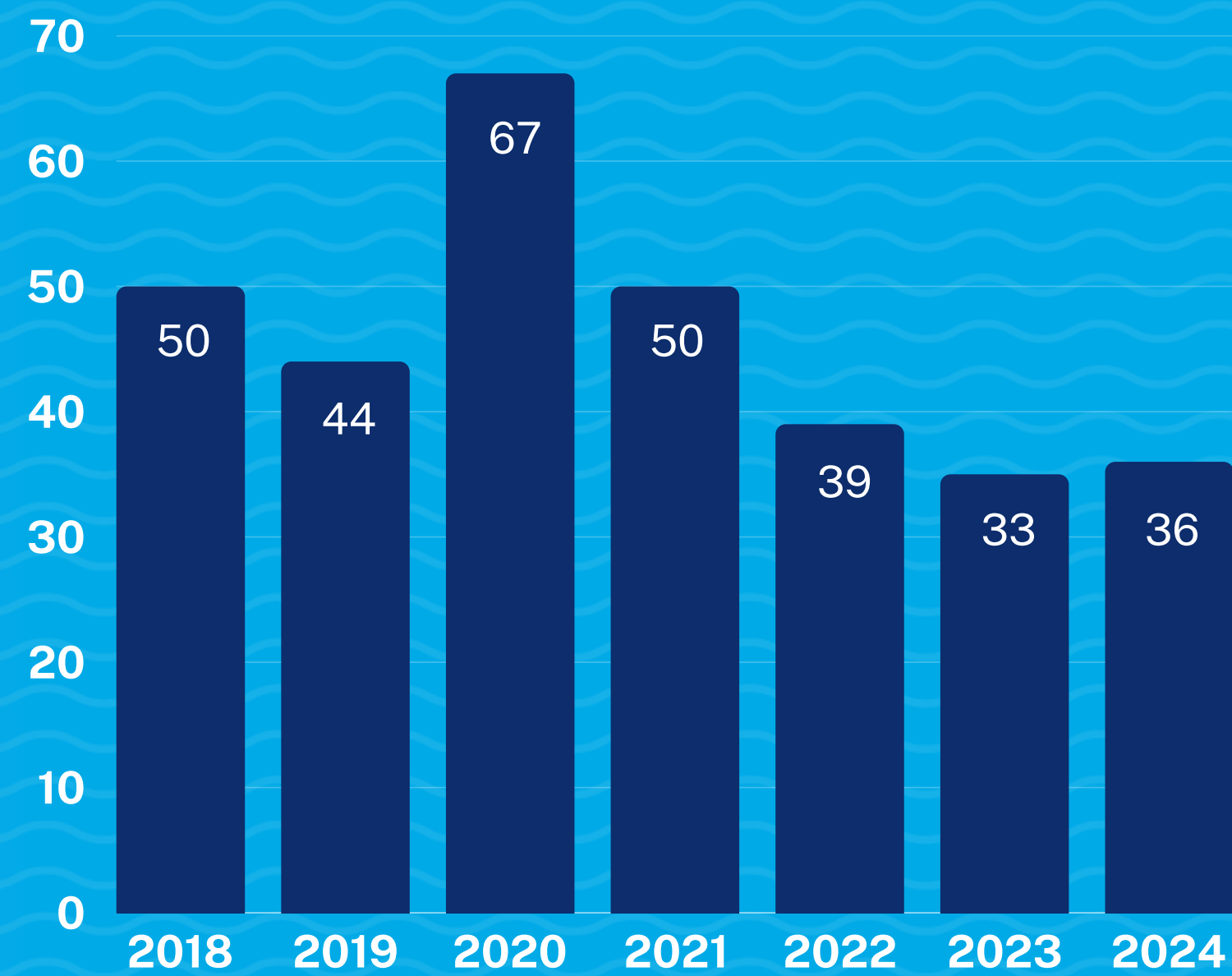
* Decrease in number of CT Registered Vessels – The Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) extended the vessel registration renewal expiration date to the end of November of 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore many boat owners did not renew their vessel’s registration in 2020.

WHAT MAKES A BOATING INCIDENT REPORTABLE IN THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT?



The operator of a vessel involved in a boating incident is required to submit an incident reporting form to the Department of Energy & Environmental Protection (DEEP) if the incident resulted in the death of any person, injury of a person who requires medical attention beyond first aid, if the incident totals damages to all property affected is in excess of \$500, or if the vessel is a total loss.

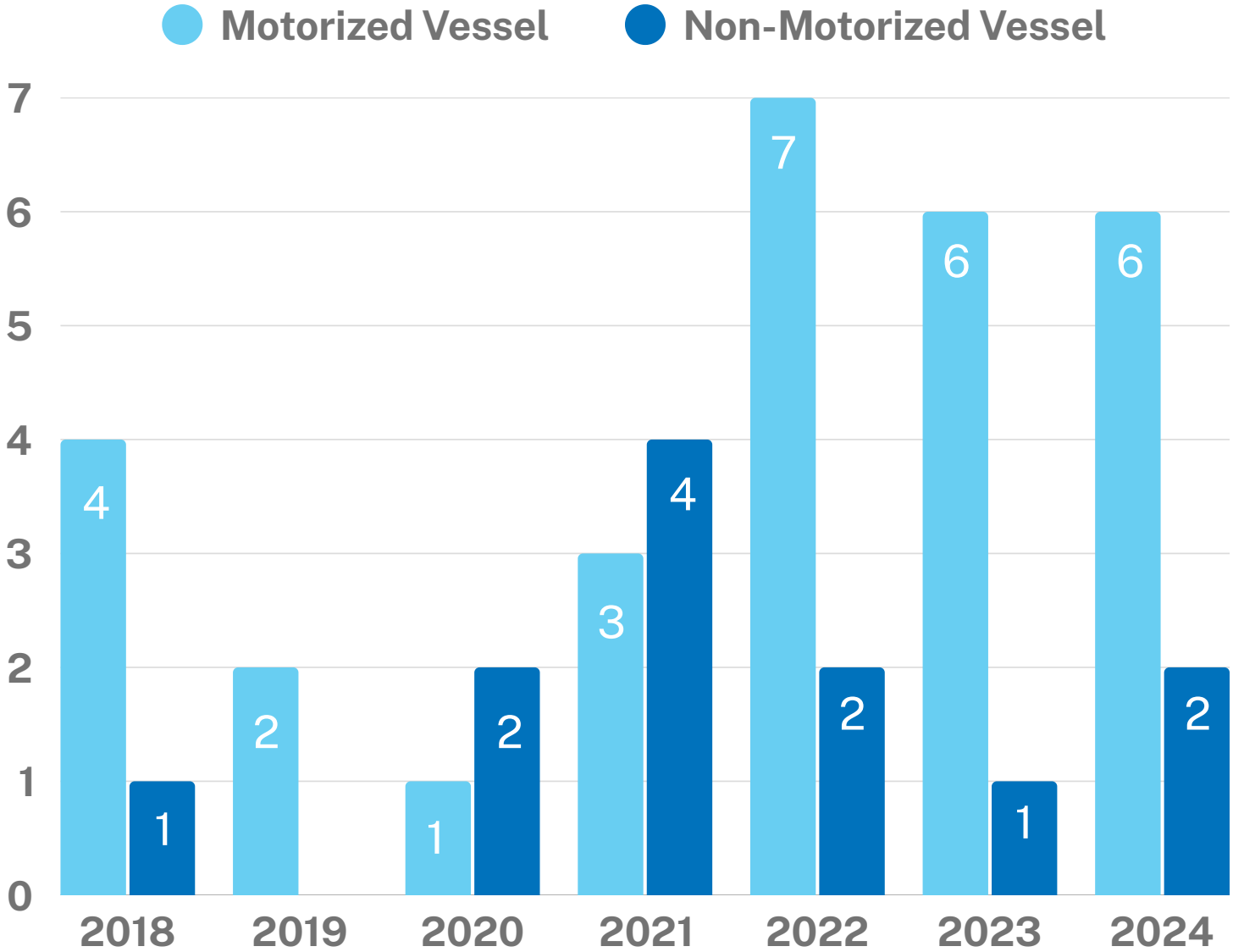
STATEWIDE REPORTABLE RECREATIONAL BOATING INCIDENTS 2018-2024



This graph represents the total number of reportable boating recreational incidents between 2018 and 2024 in the State of Connecticut.

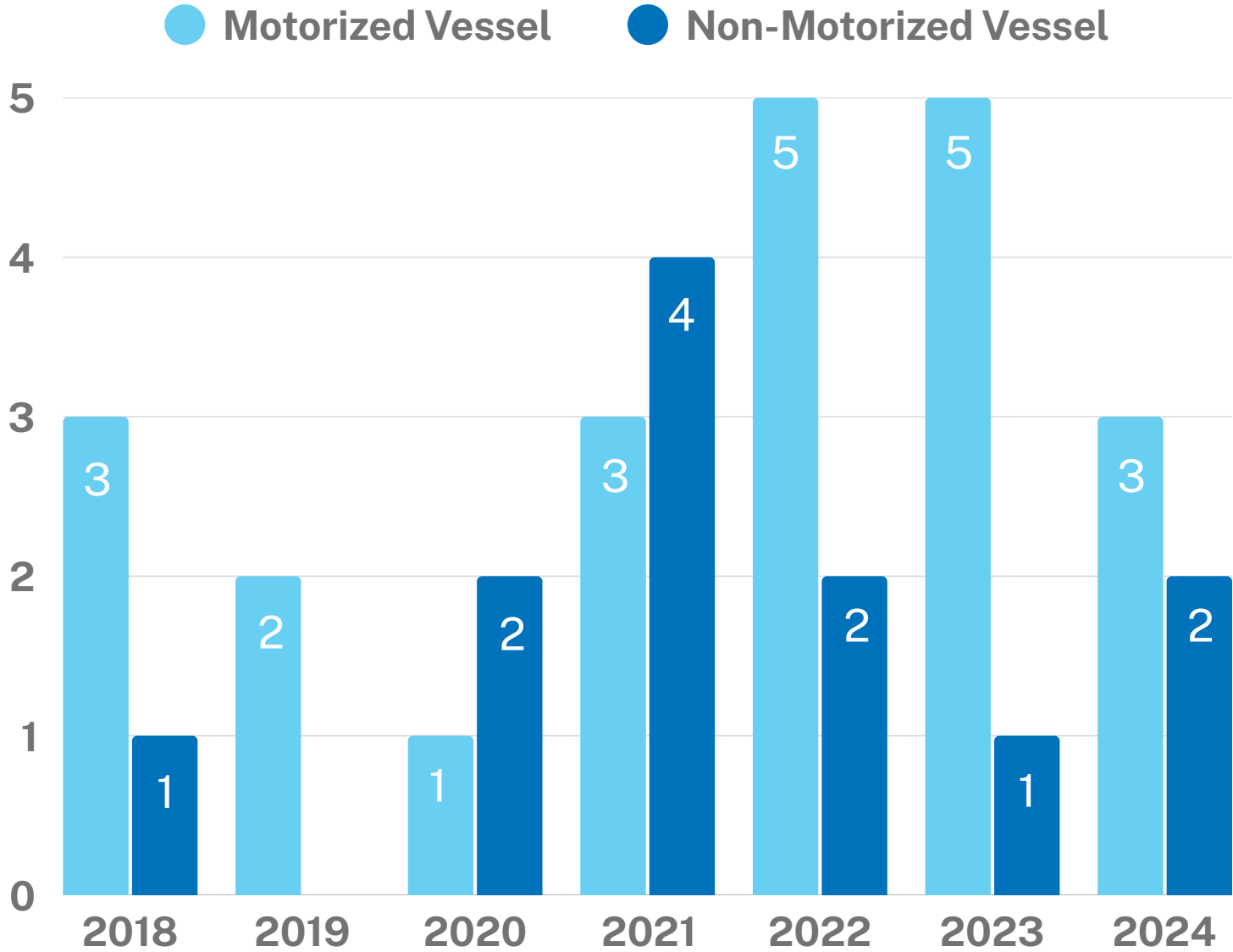
BOATING FATALITIES IN THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT

STATE OF CONNECTICUT BOATING FATALITIES
BY VESSEL TYPE



This graph represents the total number of fatalities each year and the type of vessel involved in the fatality between 2018 and 2024.

STATE OF CONNECTICUT FATAL BOATING INCIDENTS
BY VESSEL TYPE

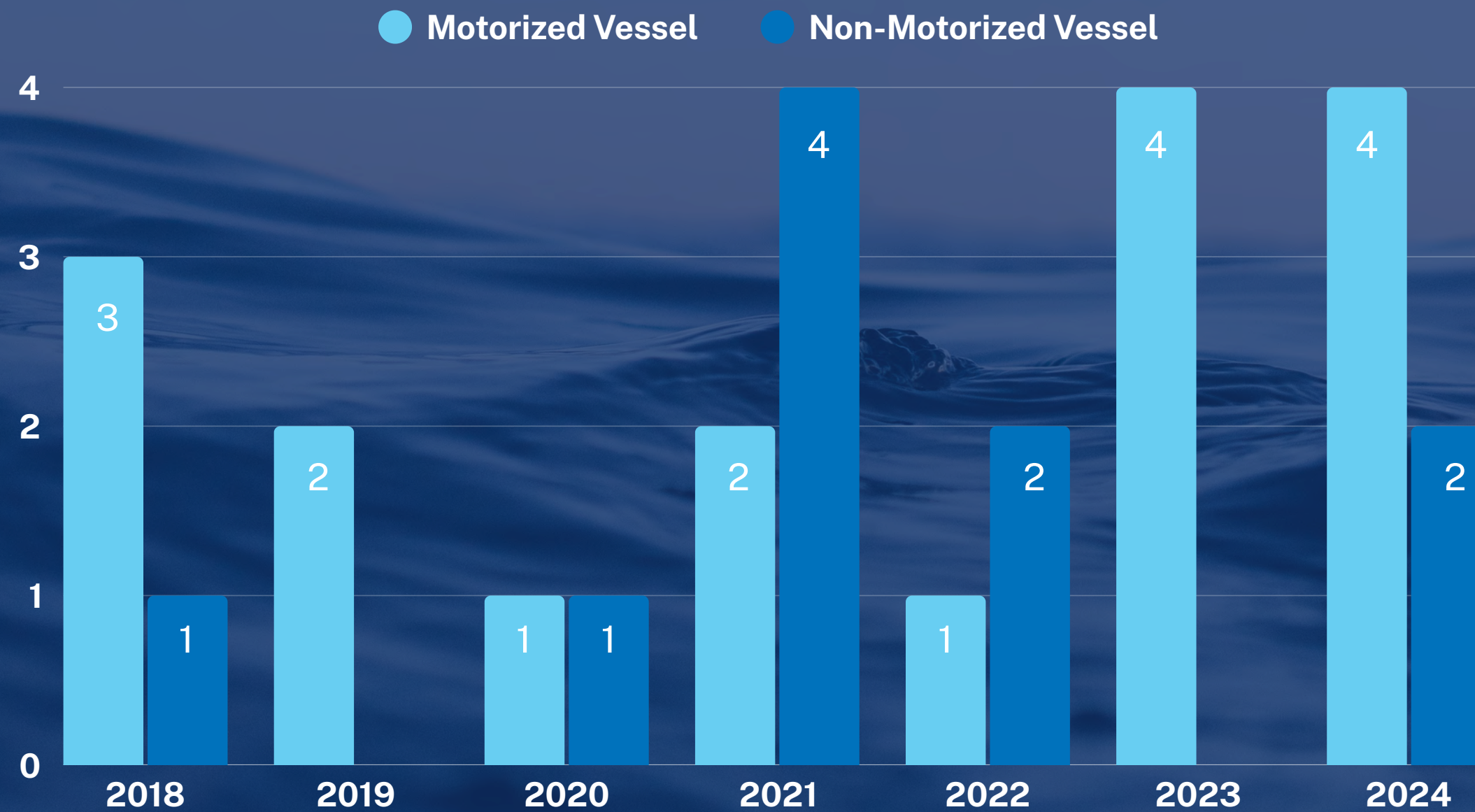


*A boating incident may involve more than 1 fatality

This graph represents the total number of fatal boating incidents each year and the type of vessel involved in the fatal incident between 2018 and 2024.

DROWNING FATALITIES

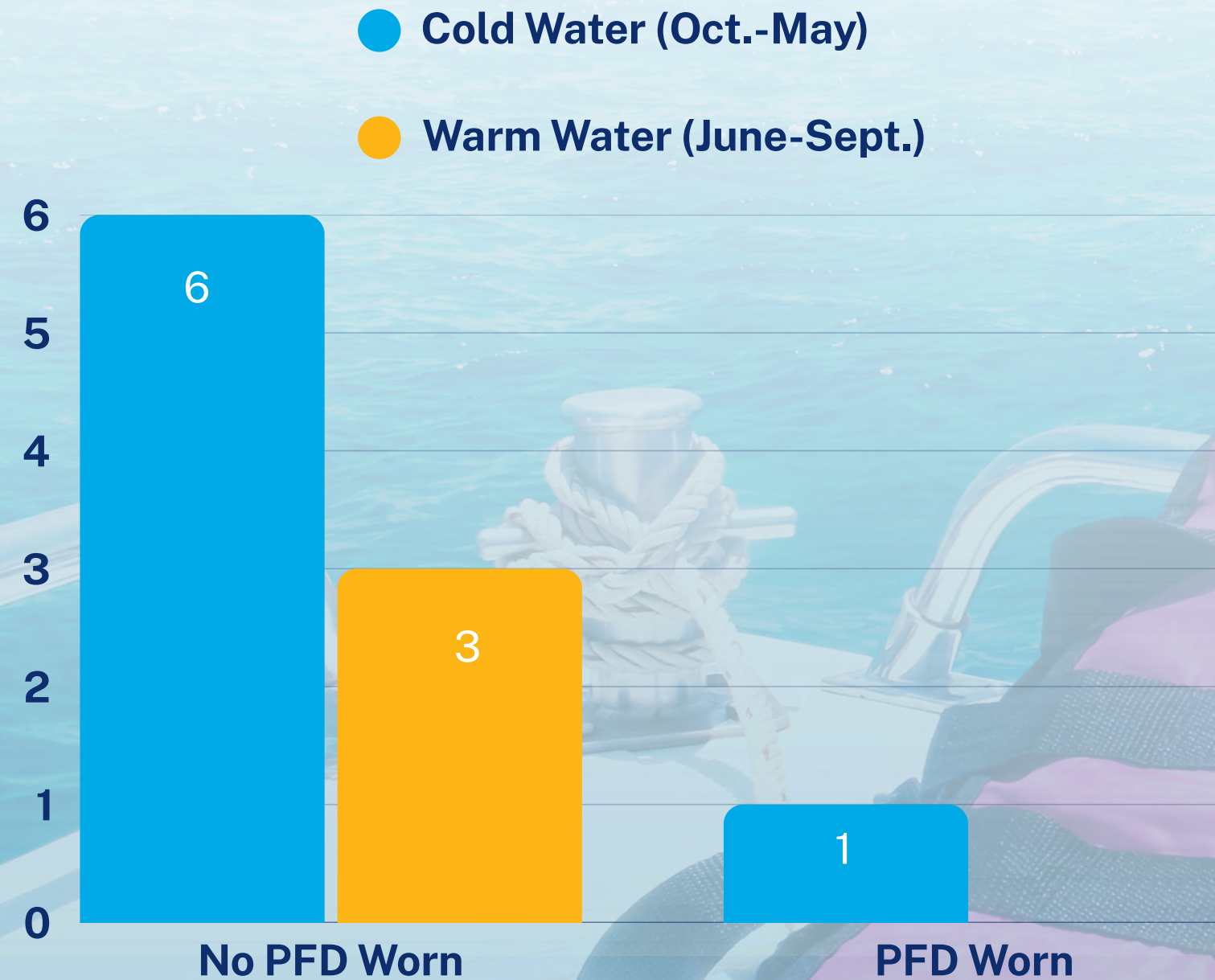
DROWNINGS BY VESSEL TYPE 2018-2024



This graph represents the total number of drowning fatalities determined by the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner each year and the type of vessel involved in the boating incident between 2018-2024.

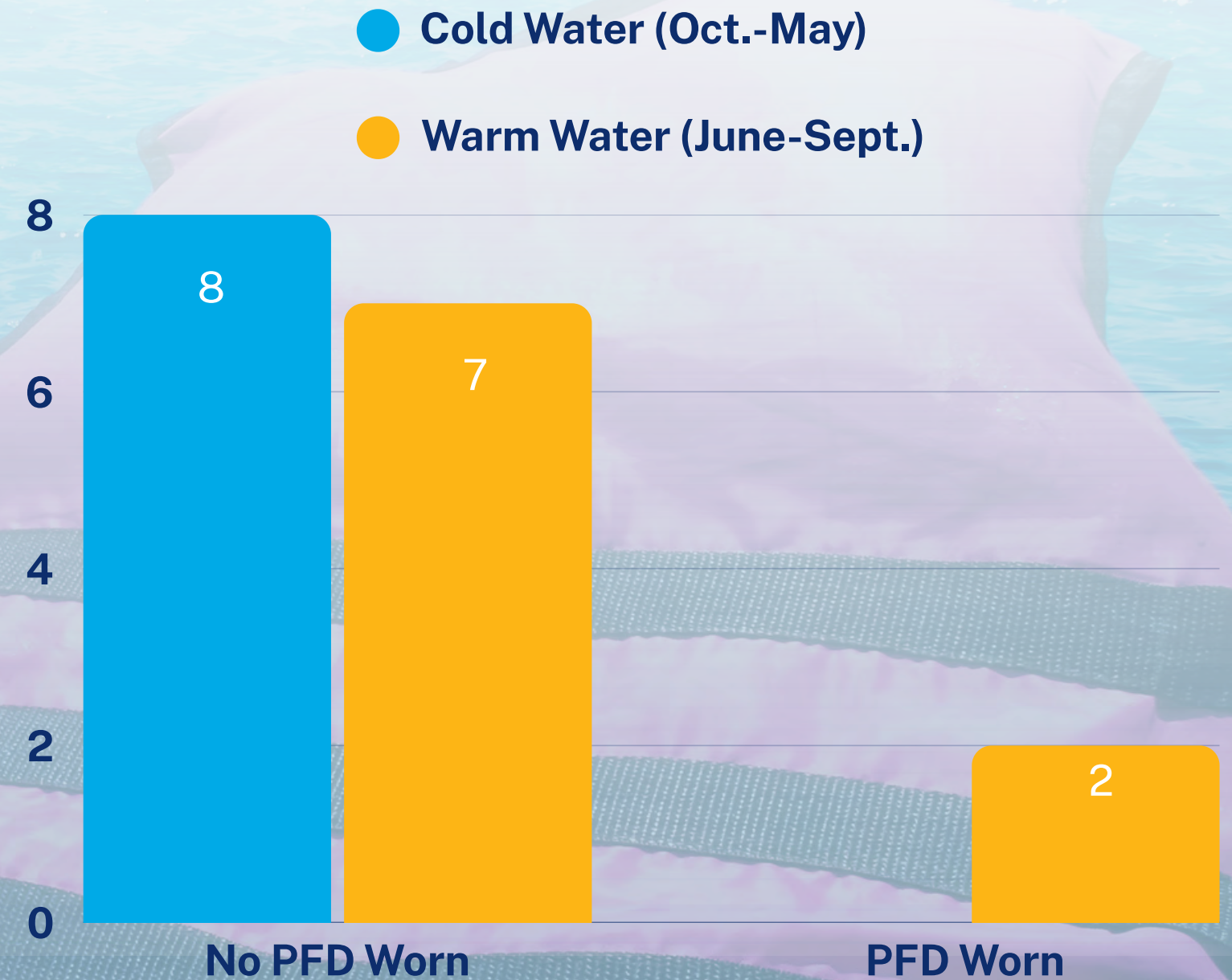
PFD USE AND WARM/COLD WATER DROWNINGS

DROWNINGS IN NON-MOTORIZED VESSELS 2018-2024



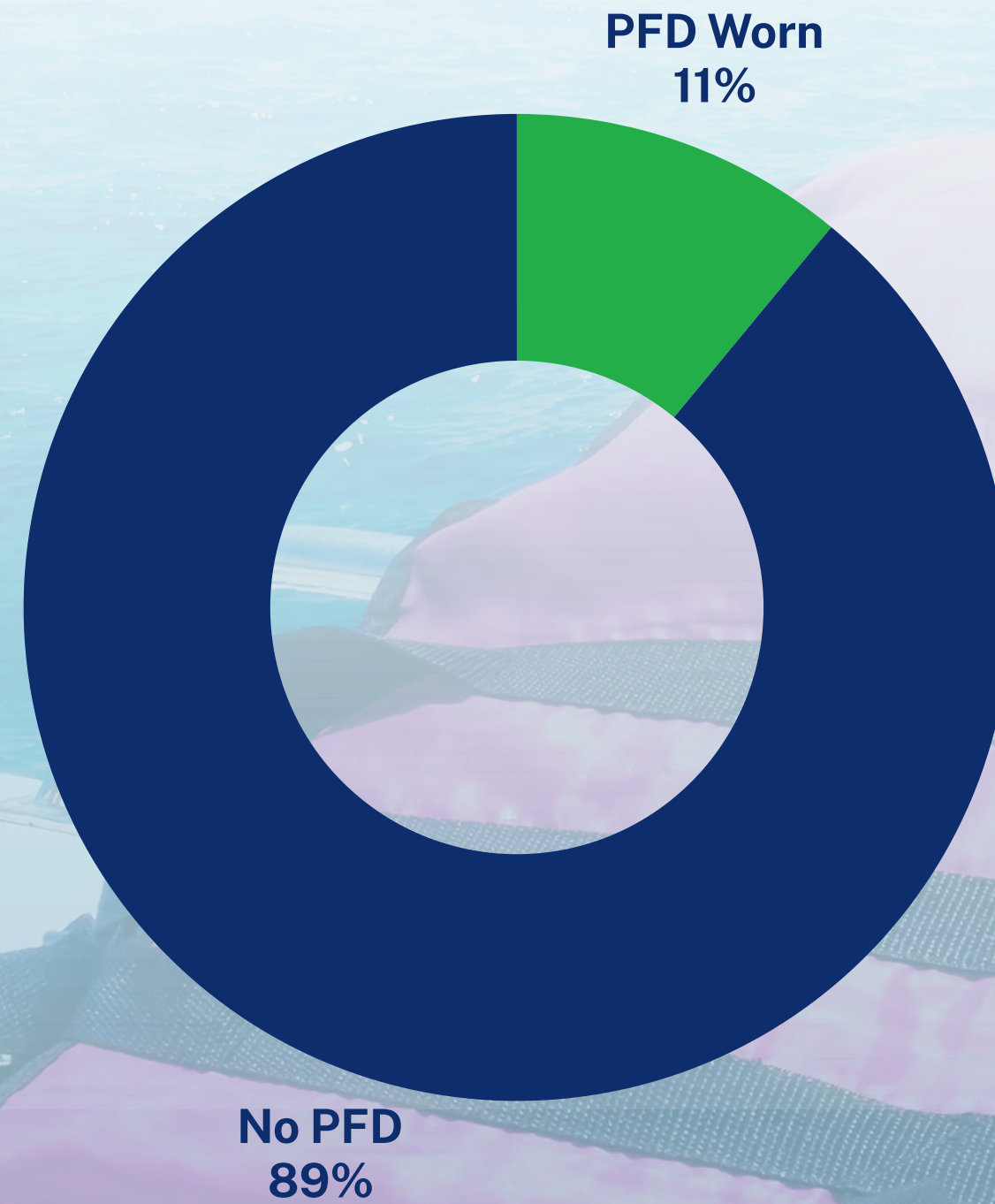
This graph represents PFD usage for drowning fatalities that occurred in cold water & warm water months that involved non-motorized vessels between 2018 and 2024.

DROWNINGS IN MOTORIZED VESSELS 2018-2024



This graph represents PFD usage for drowning fatalities that occurred in cold water & warm water months that involved motorized vessels between 2018 and 2024.

PFD USAGE IN DROWNING FATALITIES 2018-2024



This graph represents the percentage of drowning victims wearing and not wearing a PFD that occurred between 2018 and 2024. In the 11% of drowning fatalities, the PFD failed or was not worn properly.

A person wearing a tactical vest with a handgun holstered on their hip, standing on a boat. The image is overlaid with a blue tint.

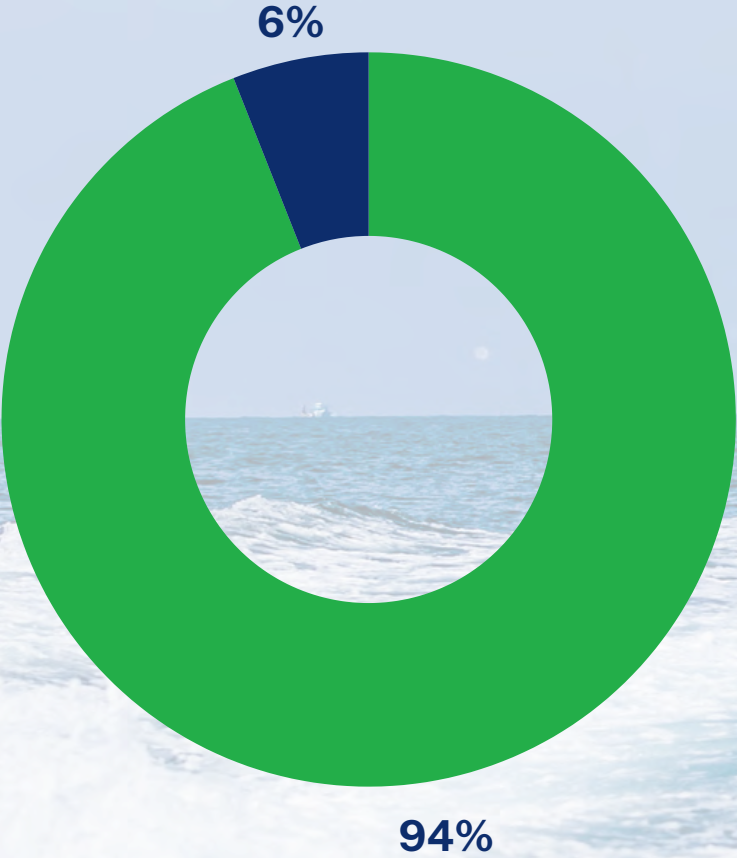
BOAT SOBER AND RESPONSIBLY

IN CONNECICUT, IT IS ILLEGAL TO OPERATE A VESSEL WITH A BLOOD ALCOHOL CONTENT LEVEL OF 0.08 OR HIGHER.

Boating Under the Influence (BUI) No person should operate a vessel while under the influence of alcohol or drugs. A person shall be considered to be under the influence of intoxicating liquor if the ratio of alcohol in the blood is eight-hundredths (.08) of one percent. If the person is under 21 years of age, the level is .02.

ALCOHOL AS A CONTRIBUTING FACTOR IN BOATING INCIDENTS 2018-2024

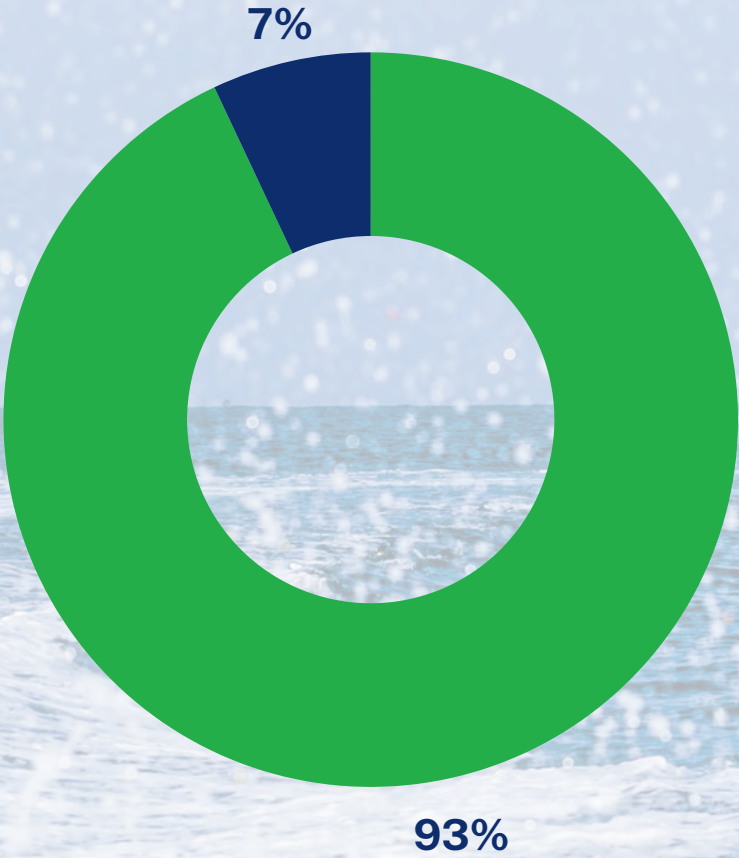
**319 REPORTABLE BOATING
INCIDENTS IN CT**



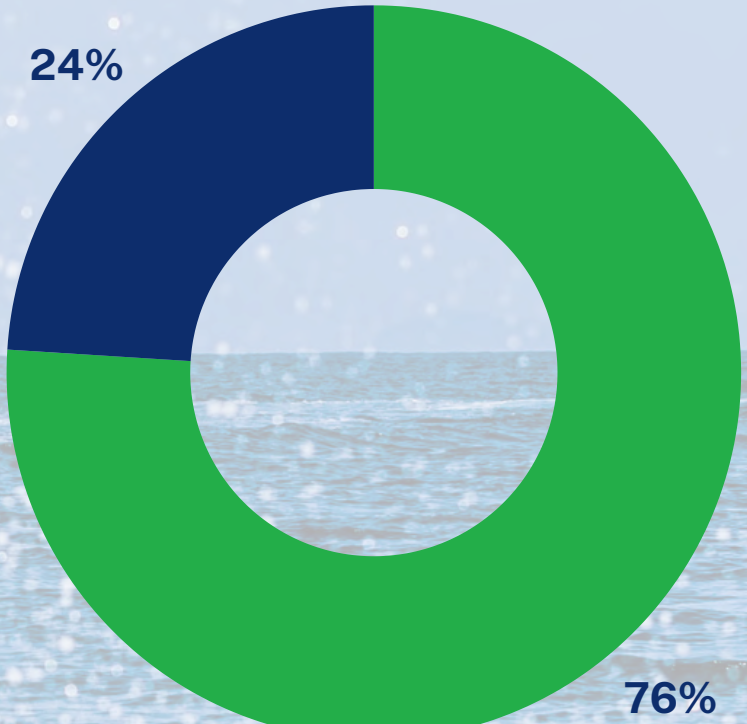
185 PROPERTY DAMAGE ONLY



107 INJURY RELATED



34 FATAL

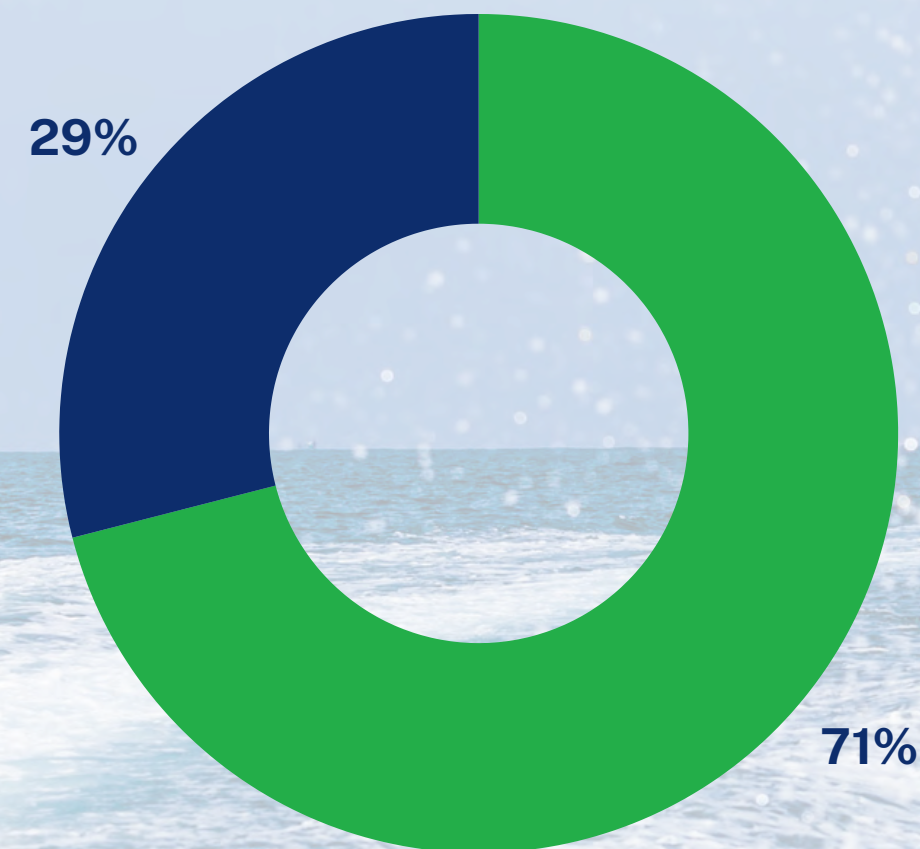


■ Alcohol as a Contributing Factor ■ Other Causes

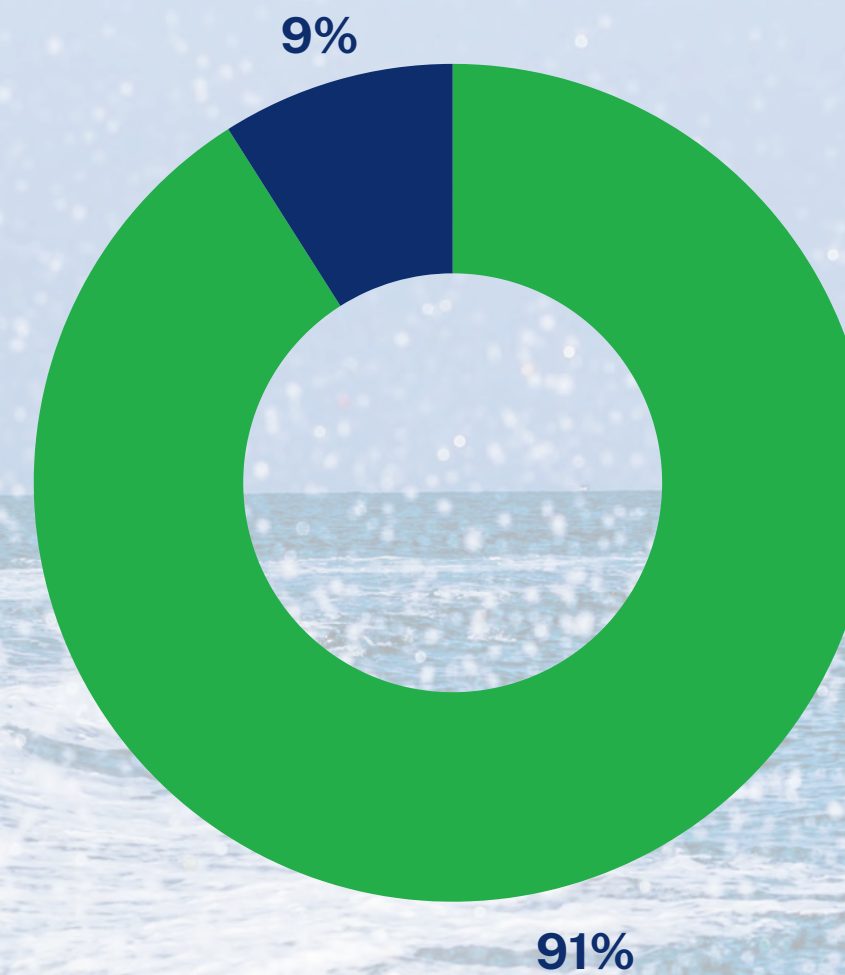
These graphs represent the percentage of incidents that occurred where alcohol was determined to be a contributing factor between 2018 and 2024 in reportable boating incidents, fatal incidents, injury related incidents, and property damage only incidents

ALCOHOL AS A CONTRIBUTING FACTOR IN BOATING FATALITIES & INJURIES 2018-2024

41 BOATING FATALITIES



154 BOATING INJURIES



■ Alcohol as a Contributing Factor

■ Other Causes

These two graphs represent the percentage of boating fatalities and injuries where alcohol was determined to be a contributing factor between 2018 and 2024.

A serene harbor scene at dusk or dawn, with numerous sailboats anchored in the water. In the foreground, a wooden dock extends into the water, and a dog is swimming in the calm water. The text "LOOKING BACK AT 2024" is overlaid in the center.

LOOKING BACK AT 2024

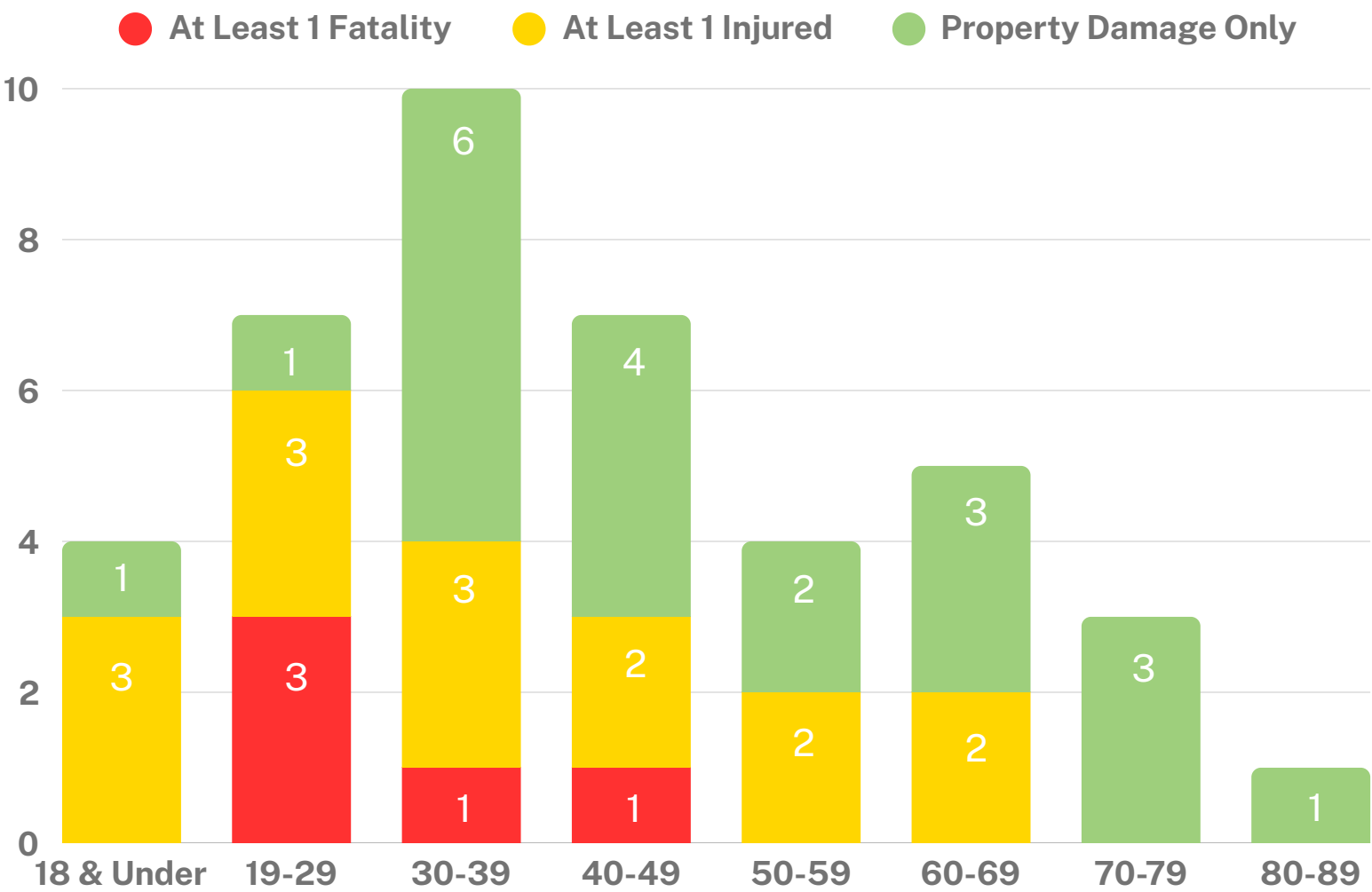
CT REGISTERED VESSELS IN 2024

TOTAL NUMBER OF REGISTERED VESSELS	88861
Recreational Vessels	88378
Motorized Vessels	87029
Non-motorized Vessels	1349
Commercial Vessels	483

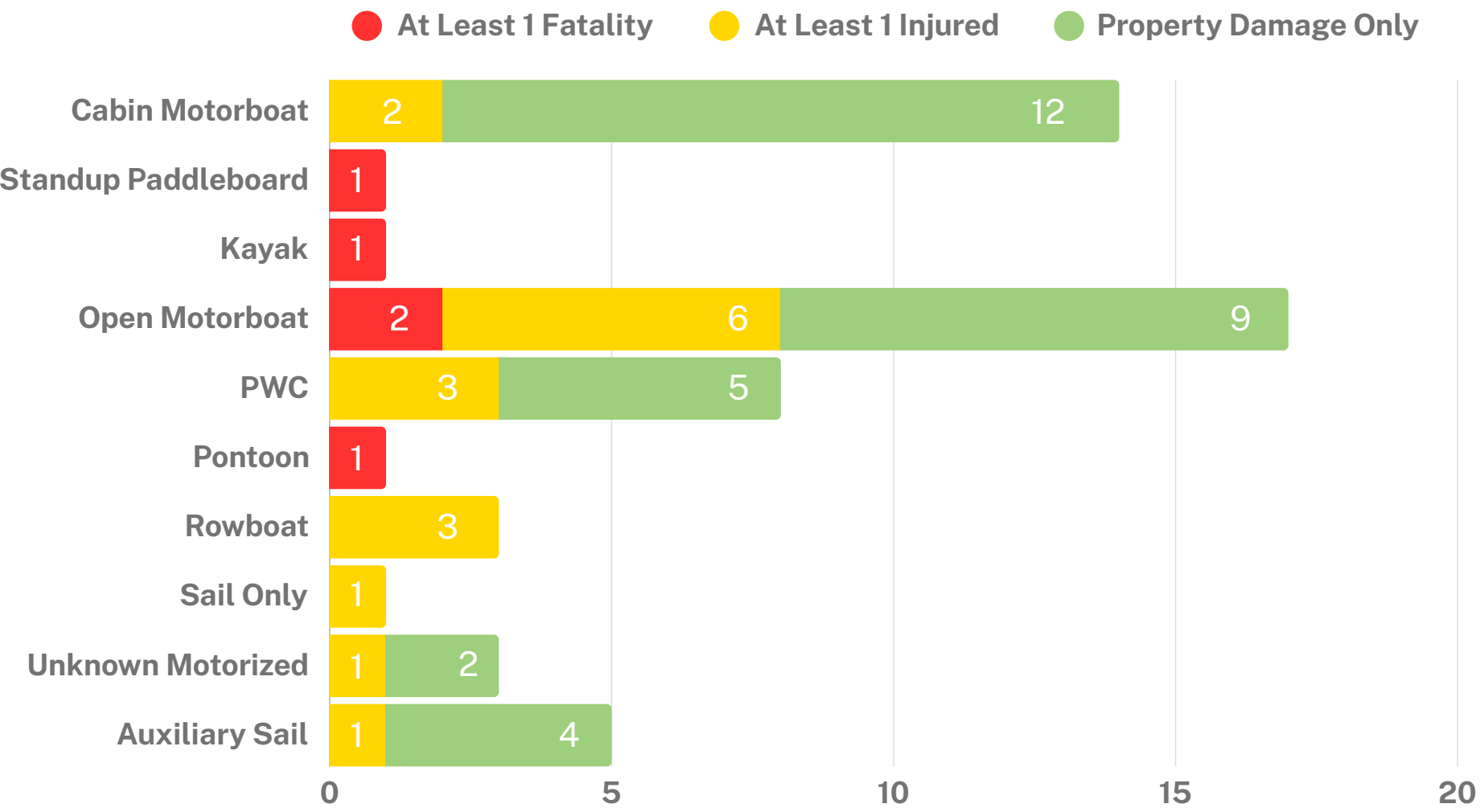
LENGTH CATEGORY (ft)						
MOTORIZED VESSEL TYPES	<16	16 to <26	26<40	40 to 65	>65	All Lengths
Airboat	6	1	1	0	0	8
Auxiliary sail	206	845	1766	388	2	3207
Cabin motorboat	21	4466	5070	1164	14	10735
Houseboat	5	17	18	8	0	48
Inflatable boat	3397	123	24	1	0	3545
Open motorboat	20659	30785	2166	55	1	53666
Personal watercraft	9656	143	0	0	0	9799
Pontoon	223	4412	136	2	3	4776
Other	852	266	102	23	2	1245
NON-MOTORIZED VESSEL TYPES	<16	16 to <26	26<40	40 to 65	>65	All Lengths
Inflatable boat	406	8	0	0	0	414
Paddlecraft	209	22	1	0	0	232
Rowboat	140	5	1	0	0	146
Sail only	28	199	126	16	1	370
Other	134	42	7	4	0	187

BOATING INCIDENTS IN 2024

AGE OF OPERATORS INVOLVED



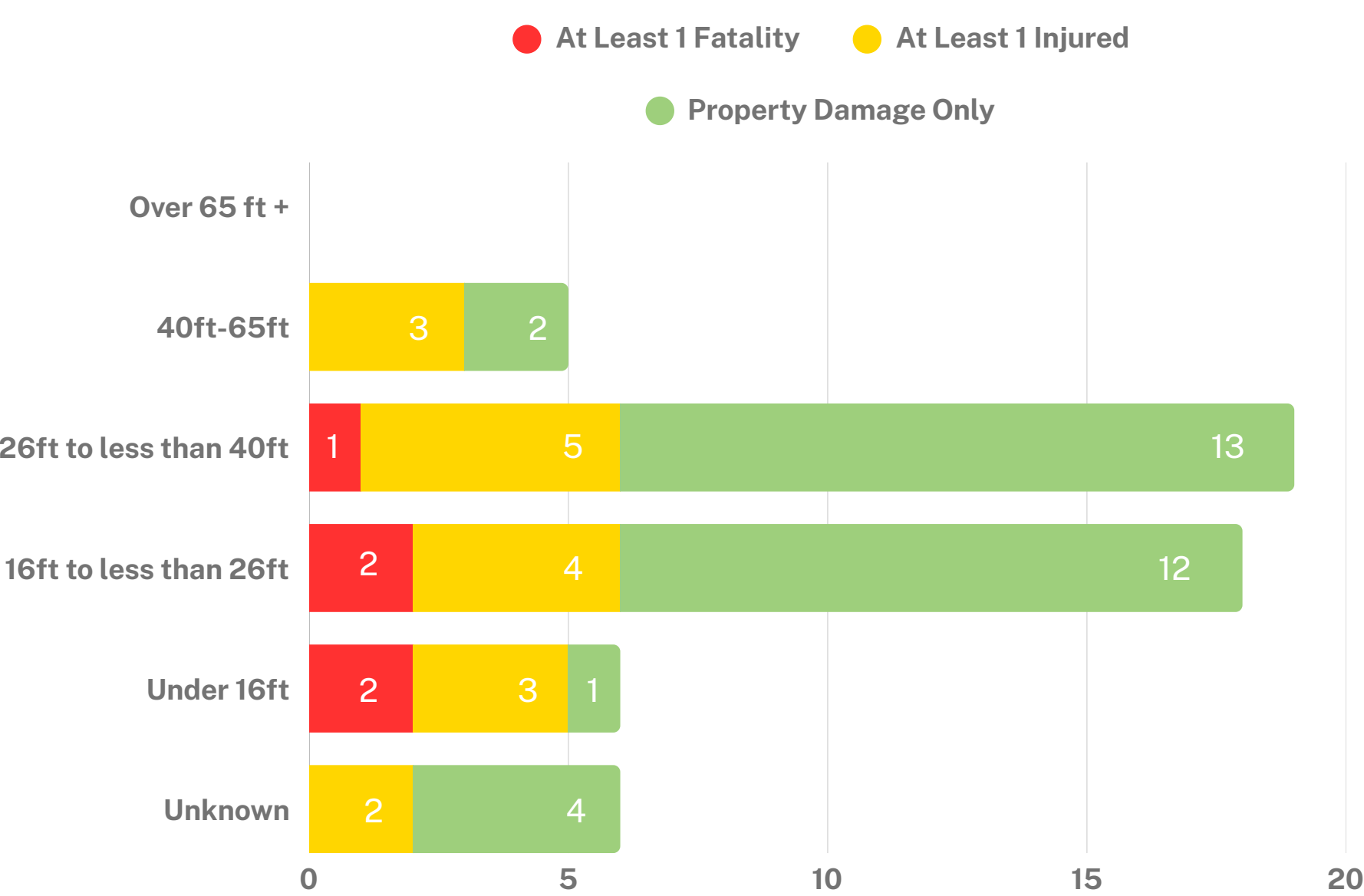
VESSEL TYPES INVOLVED



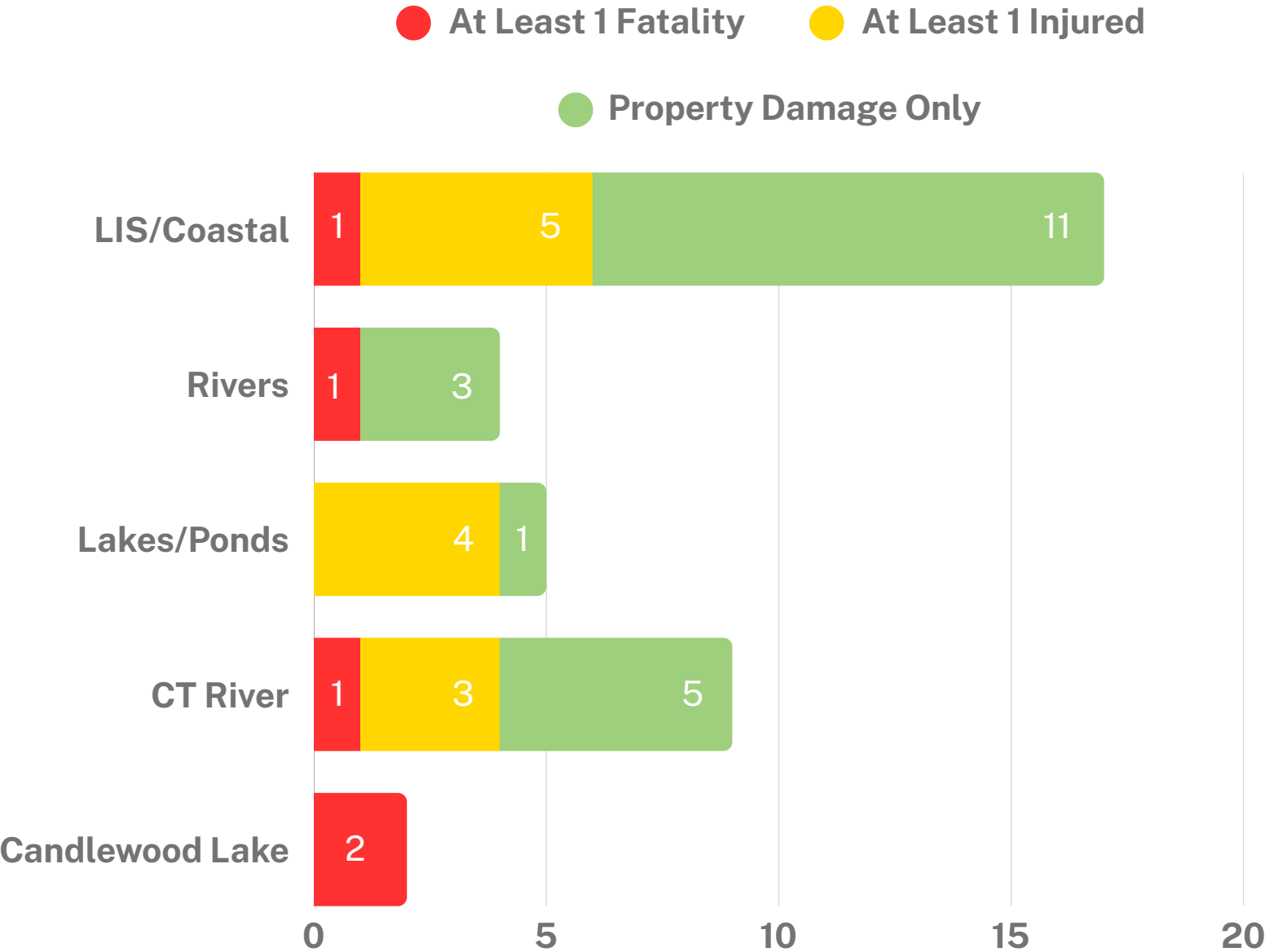
These two graphs show the age of operators and the types of vessels involved in fatal, injury related, and property damage only boating incidents in 2024.

BOATING INCIDENTS IN 2024 CONTINUED

SIZE OF VESSELS INVOLVED

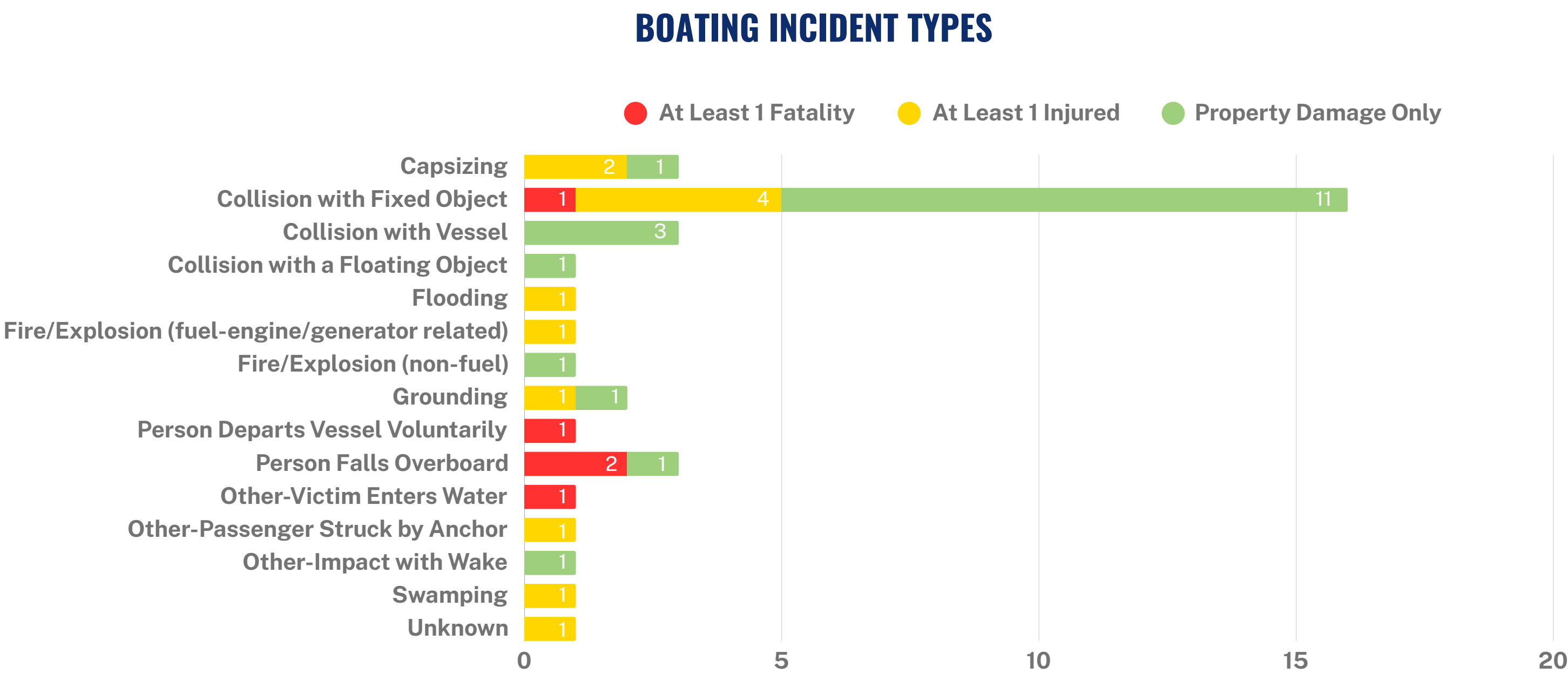


BOATING INCIDENTS BY WATERBODY



These two graphs show the size of vessels involved in the boating incident and waterbody location of fatal, injury related, and property damage only boating incidents in 2024.

BOATING INCIDENTS IN 2024 CONTINUED



This graph shows the primary boating incident types that involved fatalities, injuries, and property damage only in 2024.



PRIMARY CAUSES OF FATAL BOATING INCIDENTS 2024

- **ALCOHOL USE**
- **OPERATOR INEXPERIENCE**
- **OPERATOR INATTENTION**

WHAT IS CT DOING TO MAKE OUR WATERS SAFER??

Statistics have shown that boating education helps create safer boaters. DEEP's Boating Division strives to provide boating education through various programs, events, and more. Most vessels in CT require a boating certificate to be operated. These certificates are obtained after an individual completes a boating safety exam. Most exams are accompanied by an eight-hour boating safety course.

The Boating Division hosts and participates in outreach events that promote safe boating and, in some cases, provide on-the-water activities for new and experienced boaters. Boating Education Staff post educational and safe boating content on social media platforms. In addition, seasonal employees are stationed at state boat launches and provide voluntary Vessel Safety Checks.

LEARN MORE AT: portal.ct.gov/DEEP-Boating

