



BOATING IN CONNECTICUT

A Briefing on Boating Safety

May 2026

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
2025	88,101

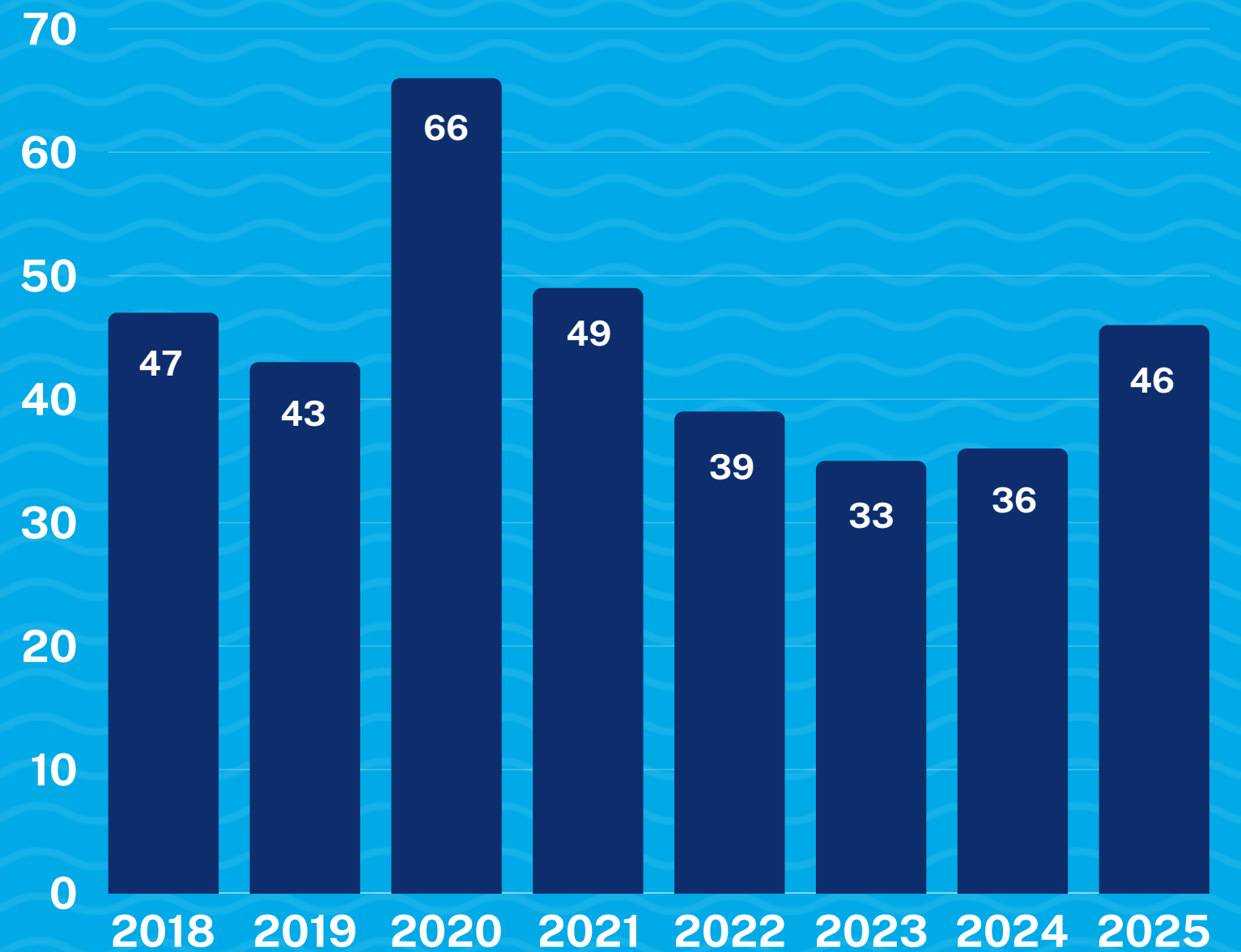
* Decrease in number of CT Registered Vessels – The Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) extended the vessel registration renewal expiration date to the end of November of 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore many boat owners did not renew their vessel’s registration in 2020.

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.

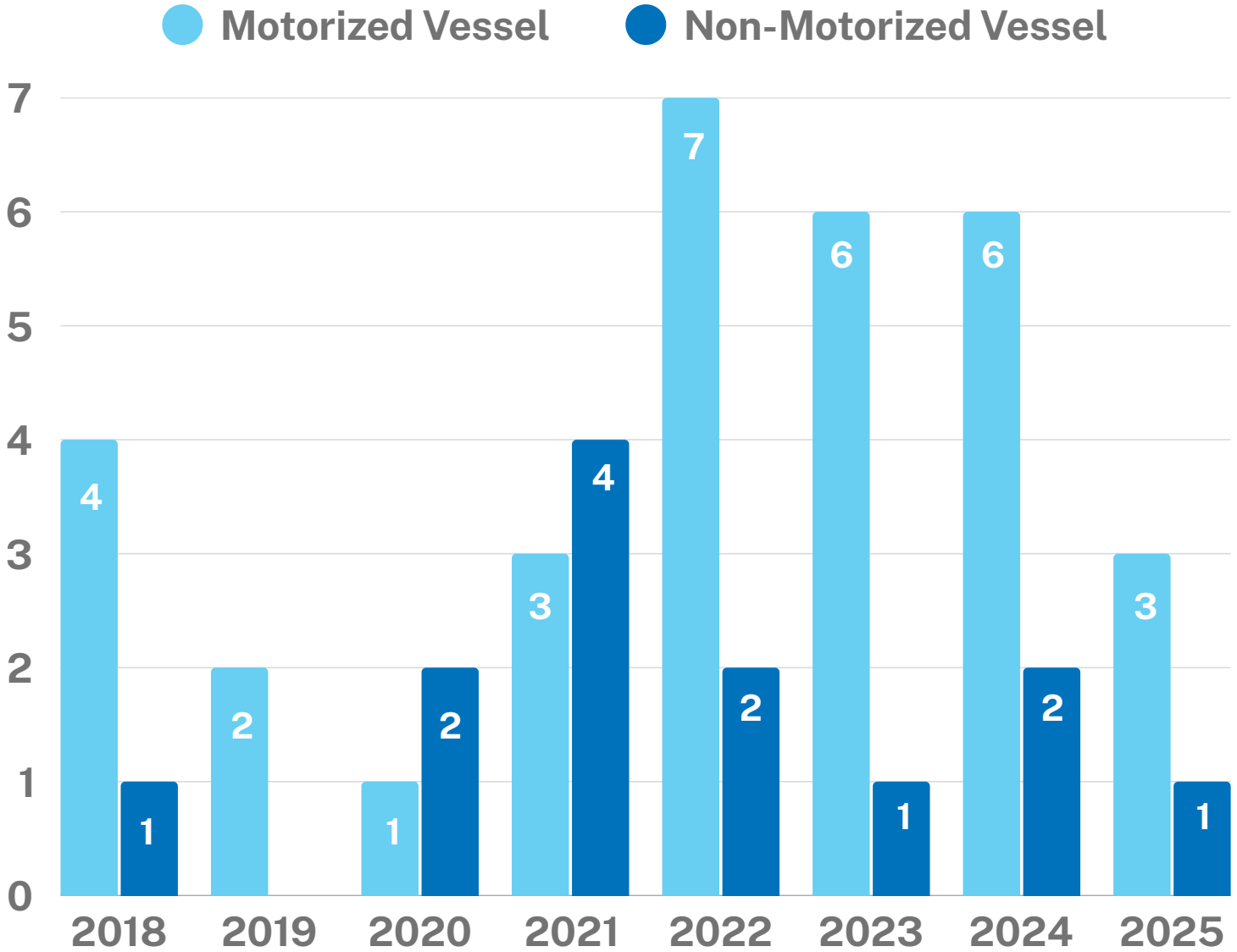
STATEWIDE REPORTABLE RECREATIONAL BOATING INCIDENTS 2018-2025



This graph represents the total number of reportable recreational boating incidents between 2018 and 2025 in the State of Connecticut.

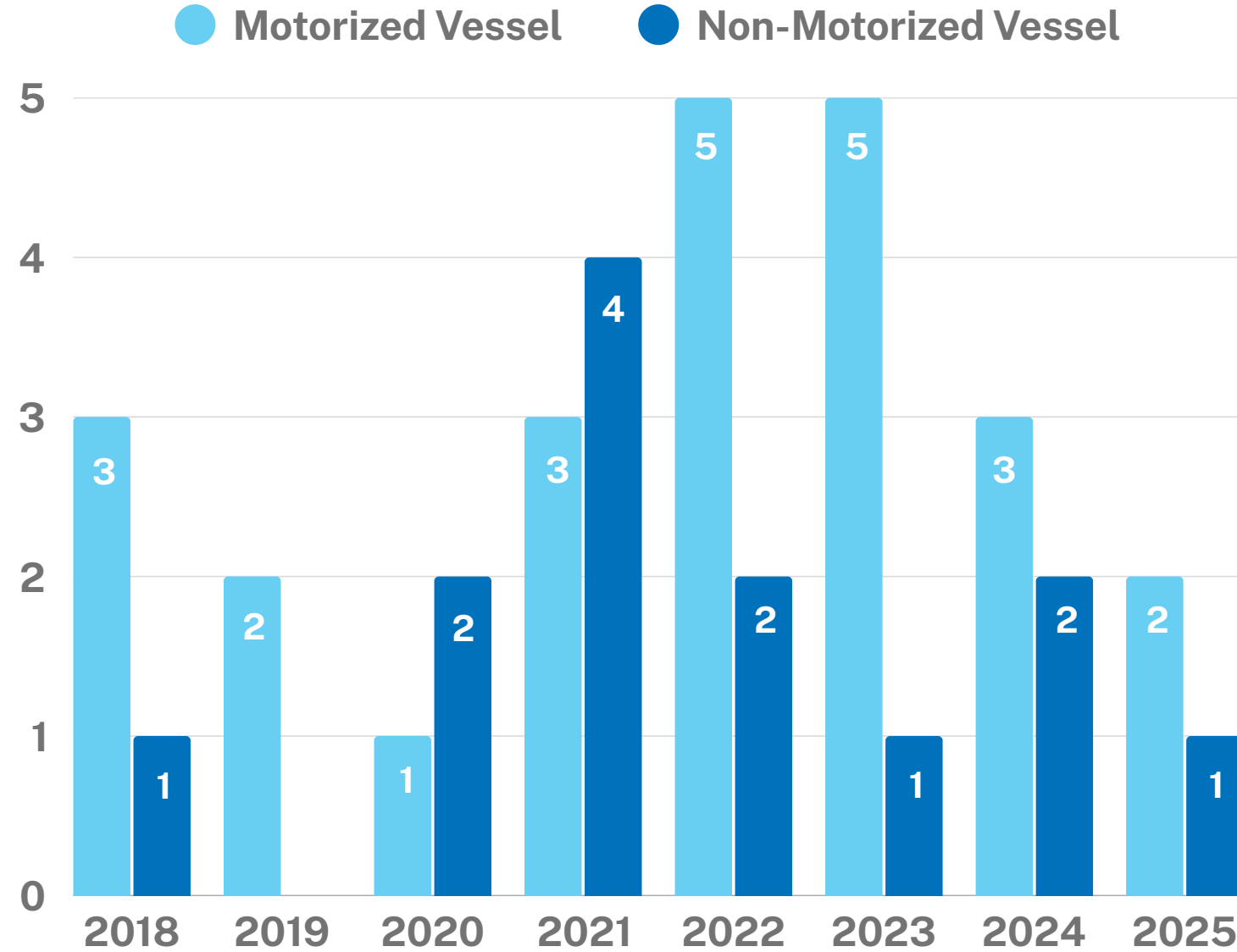
BOATING FATALITIES IN THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT

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 2025.

STATE OF CONNECTICUT FATAL BOATING INCIDENTS BY VESSEL TYPE

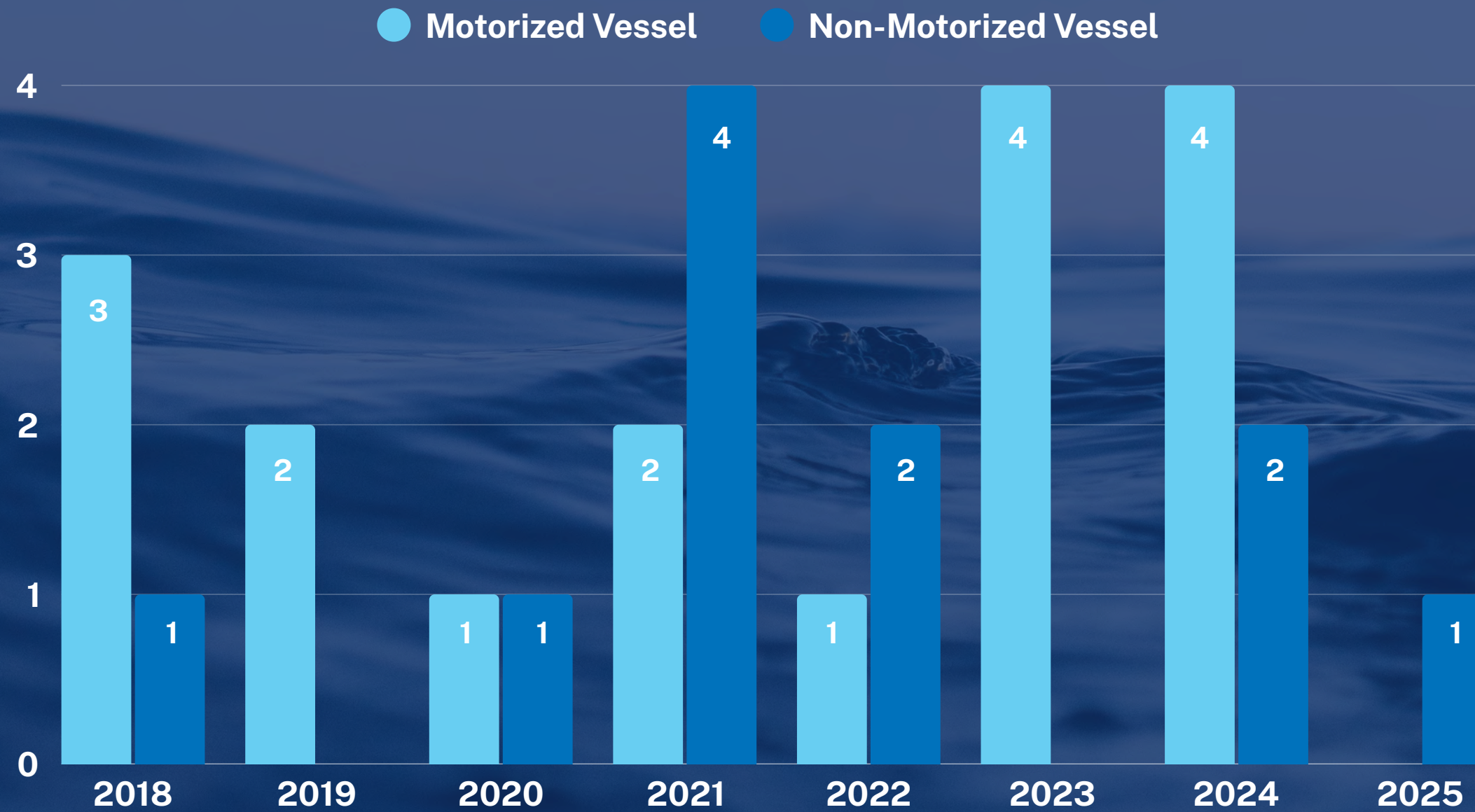


*A boating incident may involve more than 1 fatality

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 2025.

DROWNING FATALITIES

DROWNINGS BY VESSEL TYPE 2018-2025

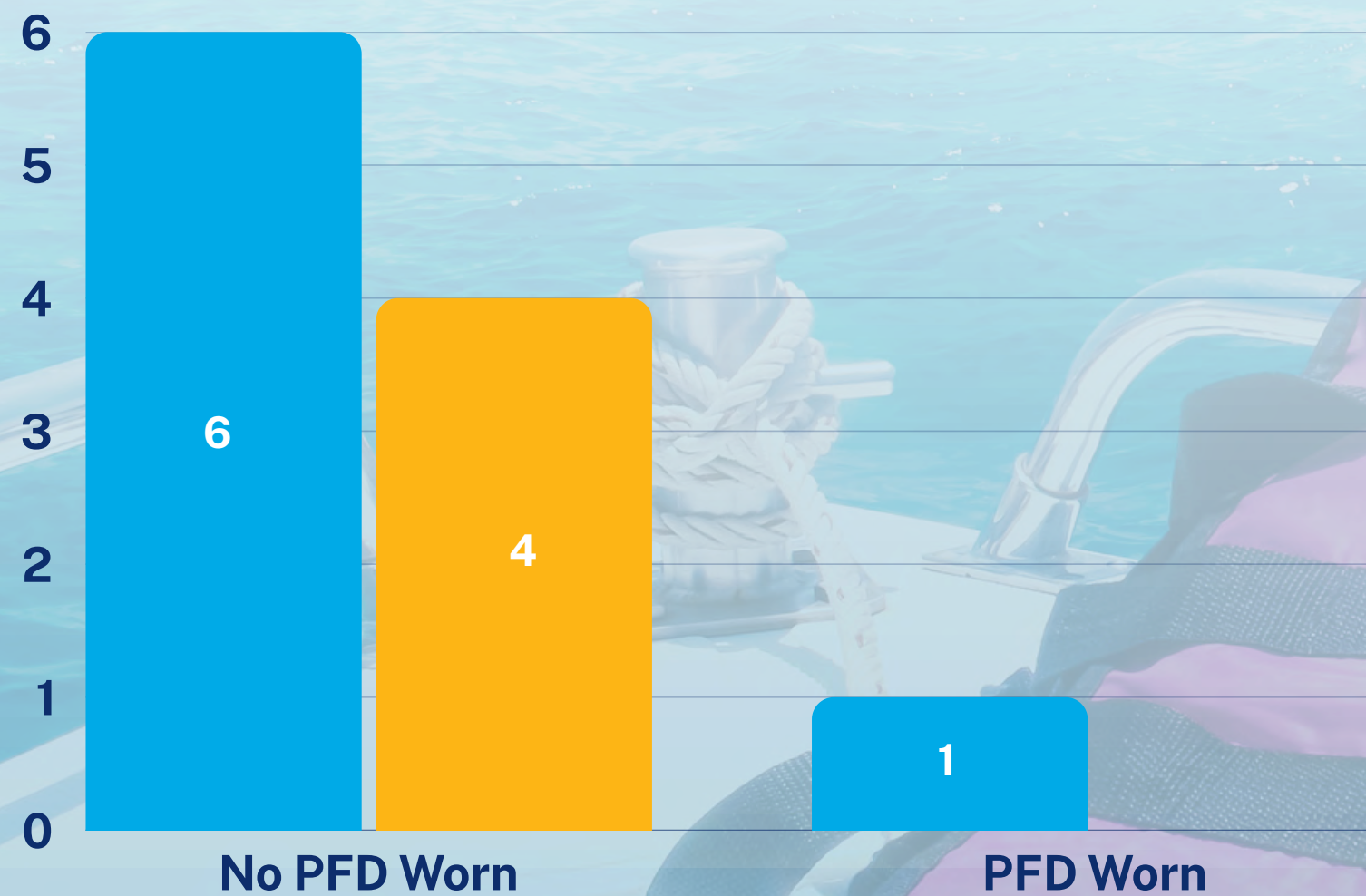


This graph represents the total number of drowning fatalities determined by the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner each year and the type of vessel involved in the boating incident between 2018-2025.

PFD USE AND WARM/COLD WATER DROWNINGS

DROWNINGS IN NON-MOTORIZED VESSELS 2018-2025

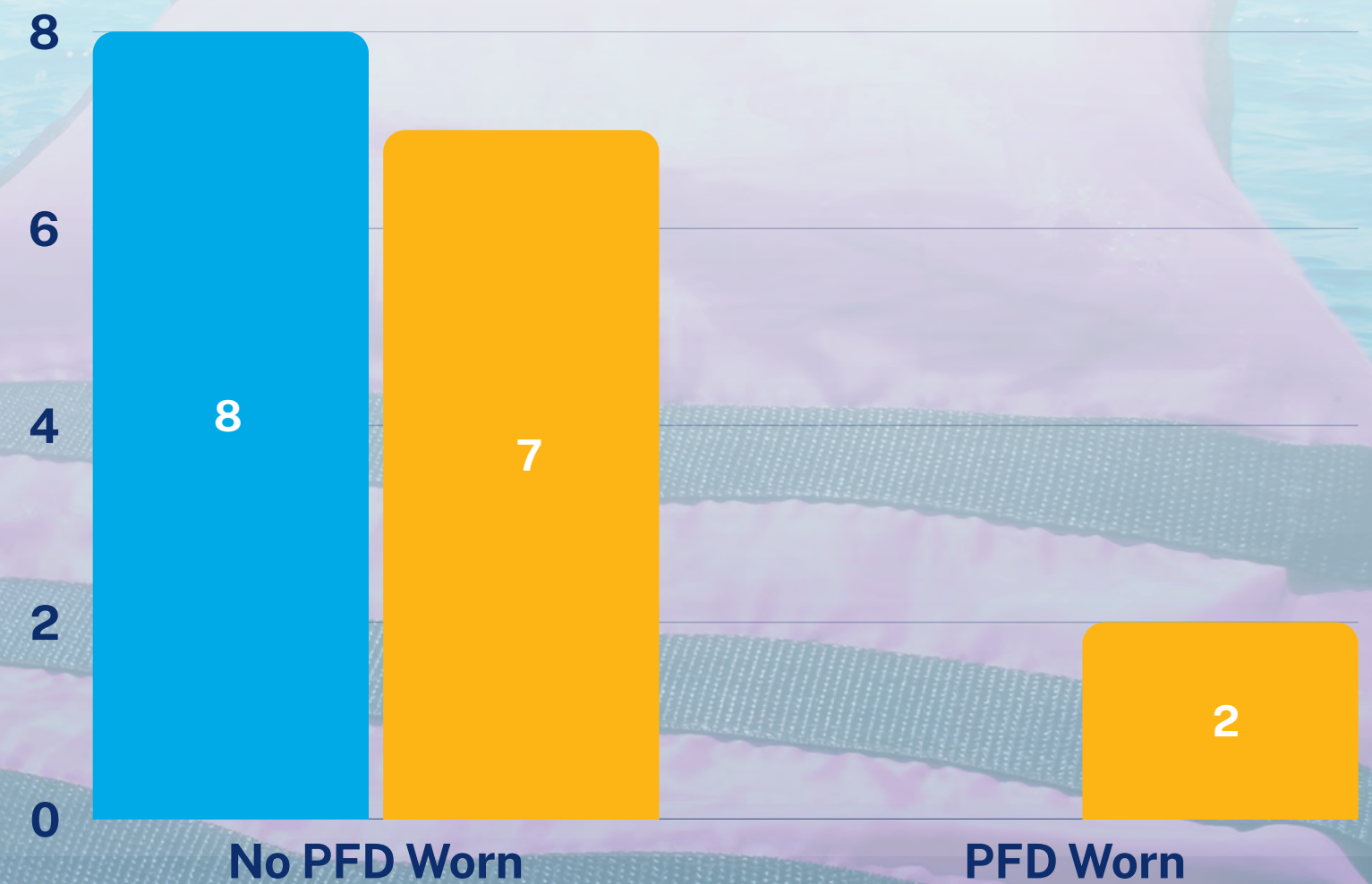
- Cold Water (Oct.-May)
- Warm Water (June-Sept.)



This graph represents PFD usage for drowning fatalities that occurred in cold water & warm water months that involved non-motorized vessels between 2018 and 2025.

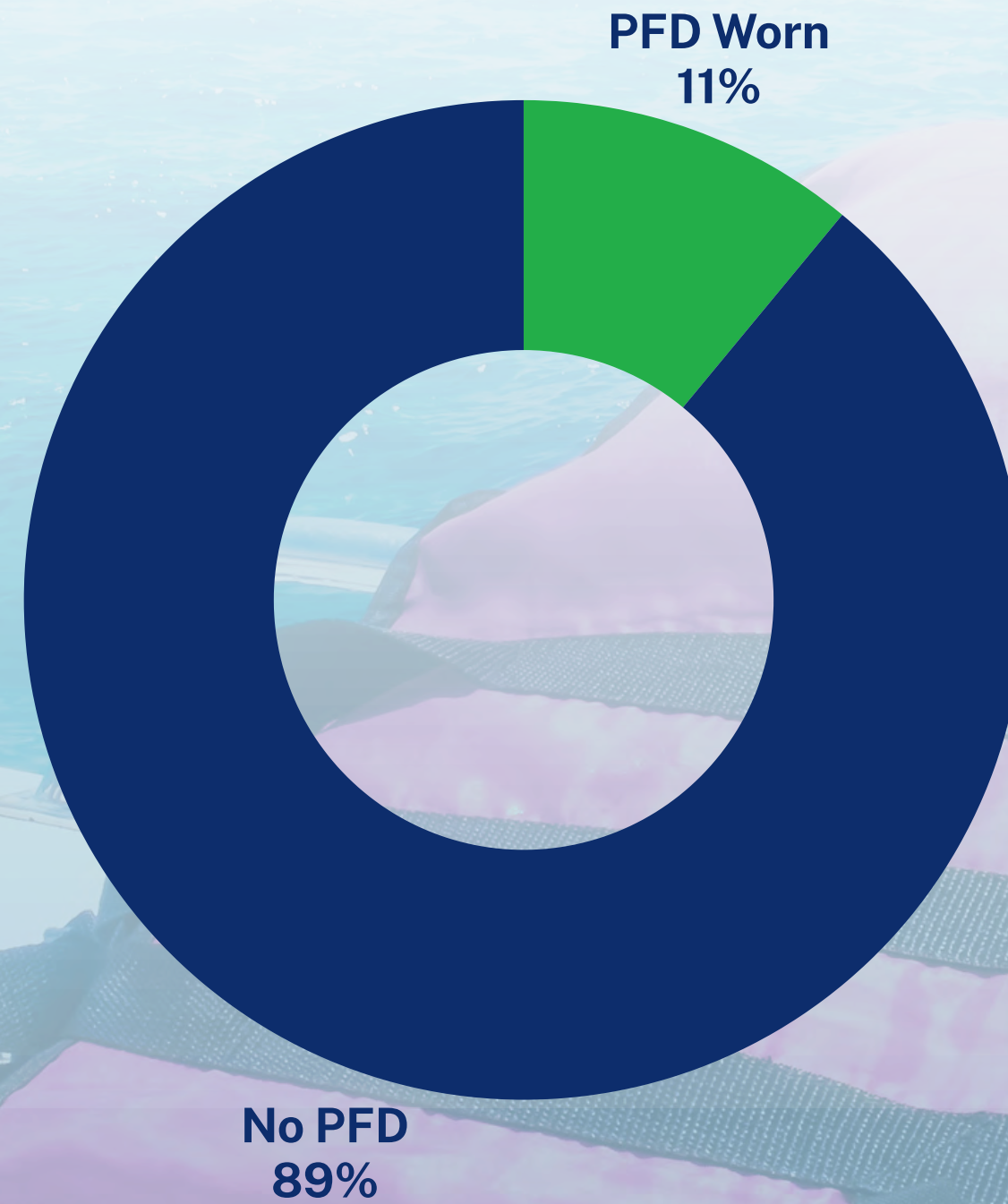
DROWNINGS IN MOTORIZED VESSELS 2018-2025

- Cold Water (Oct.-May)
- Warm Water (June-Sept.)



This graph represents PFD usage for drowning fatalities that occurred in cold water & warm water months that involved motorized vessels between 2018 and 2025.

PFD USAGE IN DROWNING FATALITIES 2018-2025



This graph represents the percentage of drowning victims wearing and not wearing a PFD that occurred between 2018 and 2025. In the 11% of drowning fatalities, the PFD failed or was not worn properly.



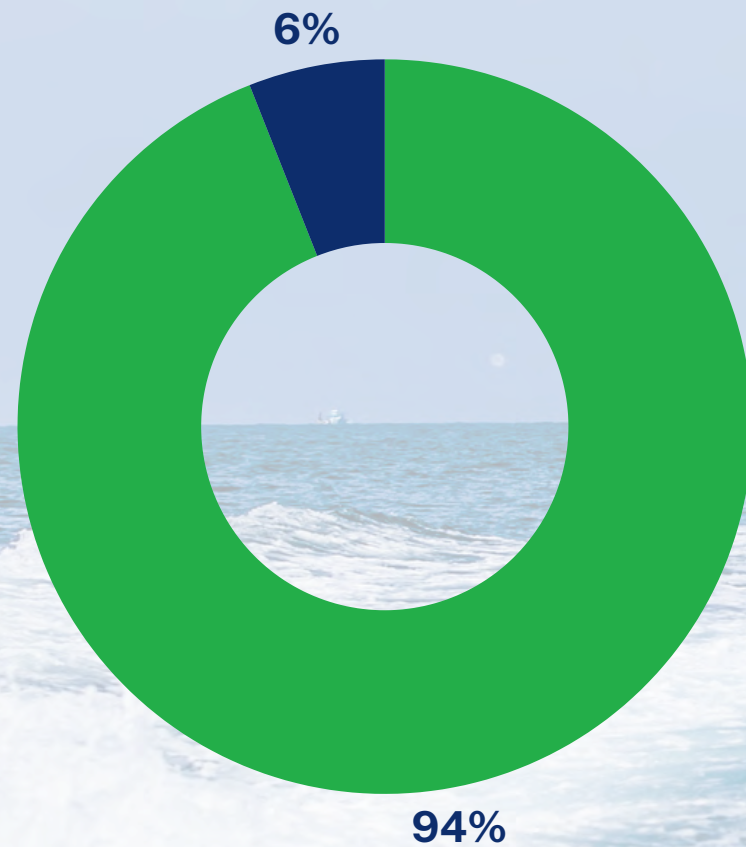
BOAT SOBER AND RESPONSIBLY

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 2018-2025

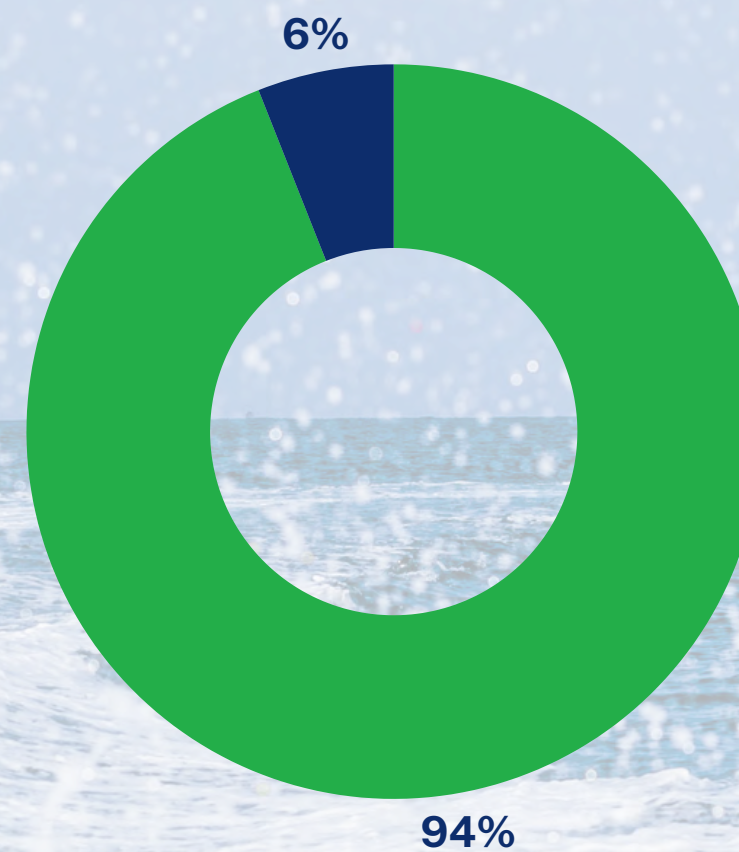
**359 REPORTABLE RECREATIONAL
BOATING INCIDENTS IN CT**



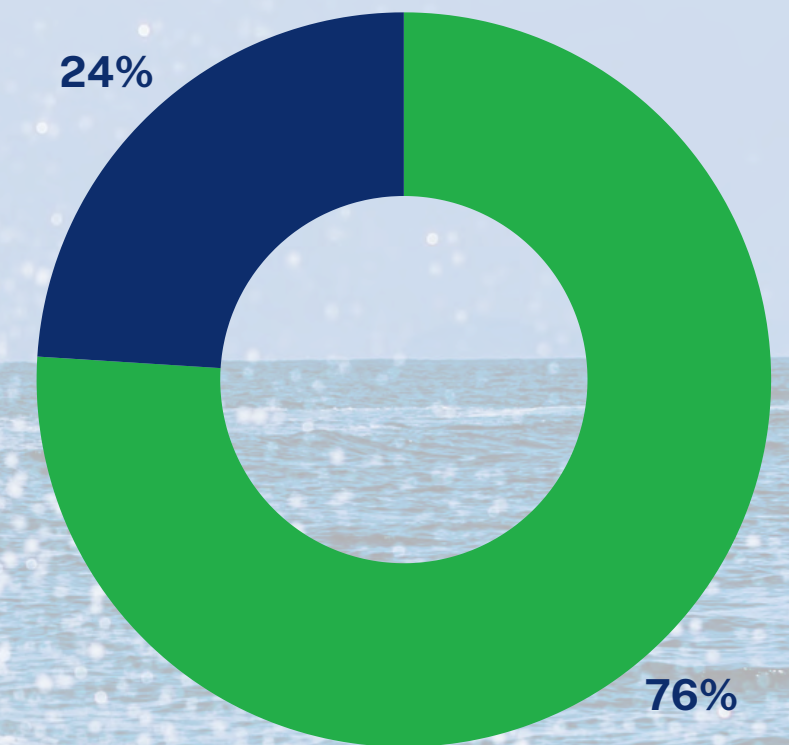
204 PROPERTY DAMAGE ONLY



125 INJURY RELATED



37 FATAL



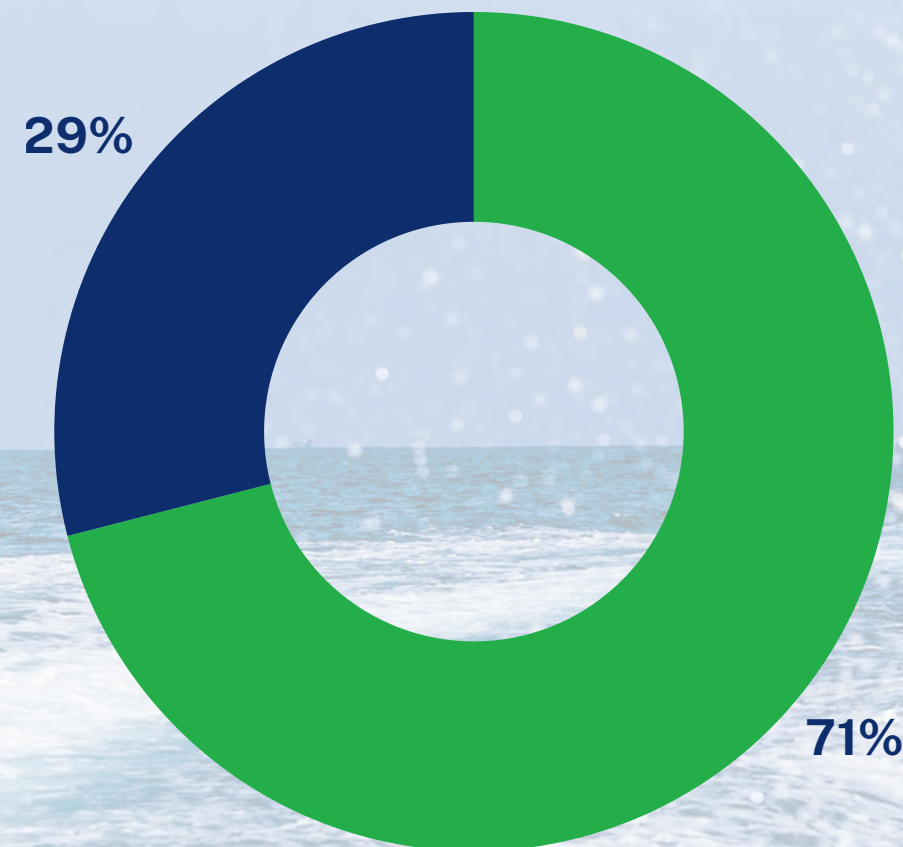
■ Alcohol as a Contributing Factor

■ Other Causes

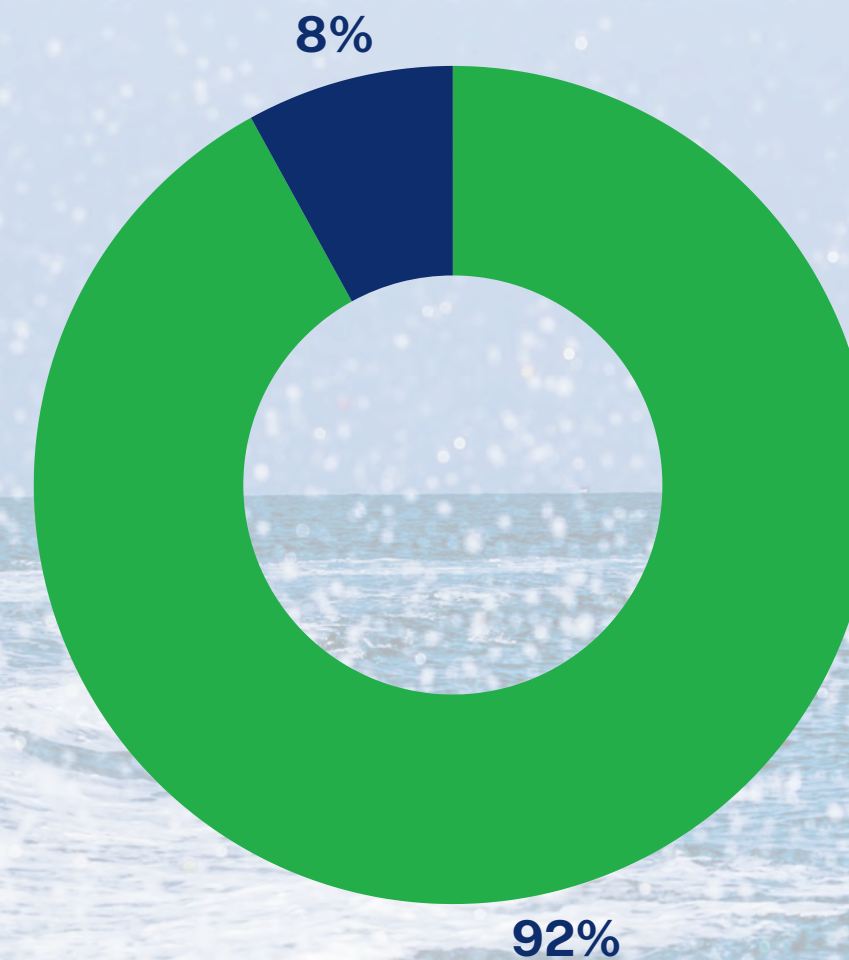
These graphs represent the percentage of incidents that occurred where alcohol was determined to be a contributing factor between 2018 and 2025 in reportable recreational boating incidents, fatal incidents, injury related incidents, and property damage only incidents.

ALCOHOL AS A CONTRIBUTING FACTOR IN BOATING FATALITIES & INJURIES 2018-2025

45 BOATING FATALITIES



180 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 2025.

LOOKING BACK AT 2025



CT REGISTERED VESSELS IN 2025

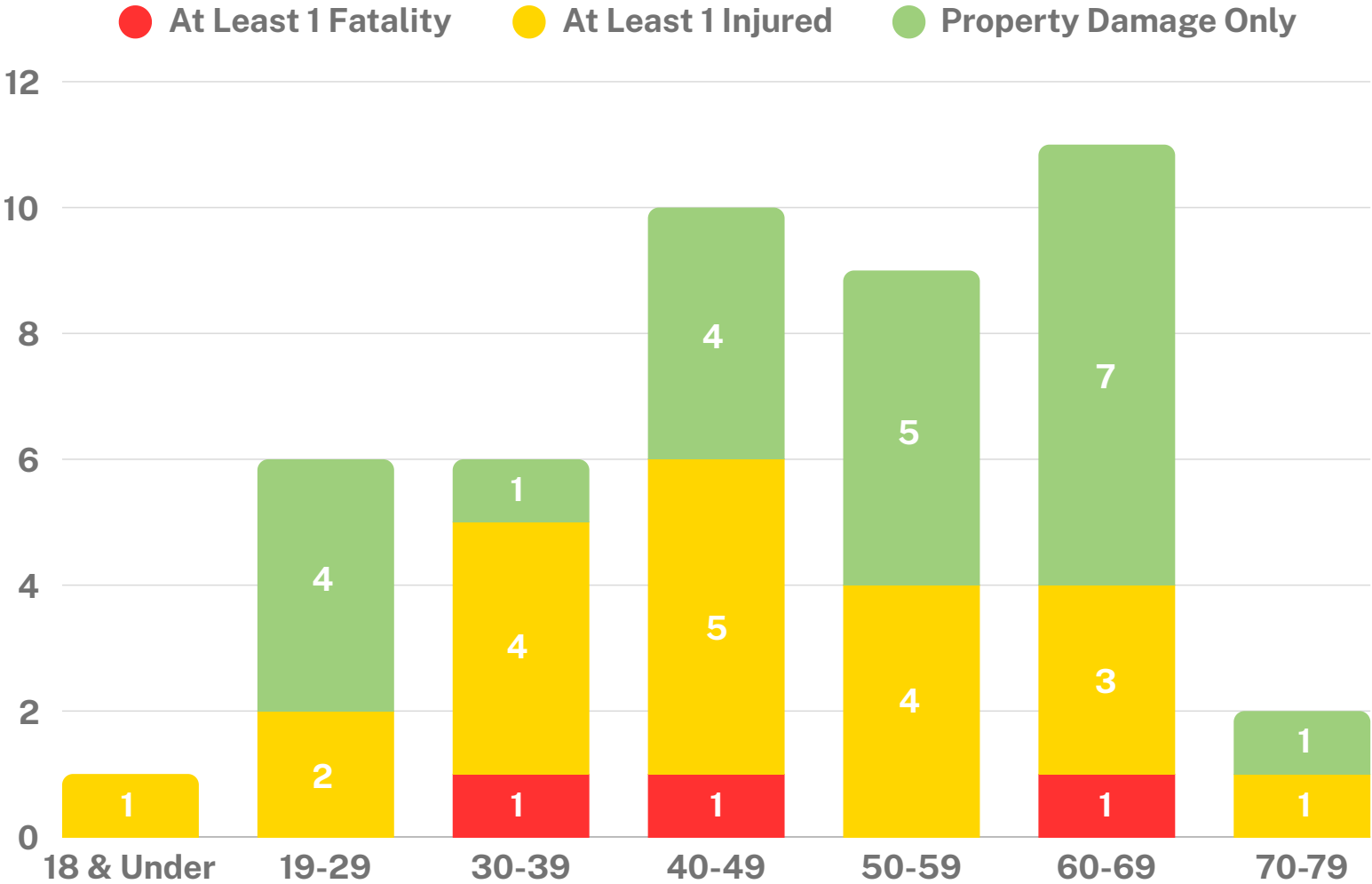
TOTAL NUMBER OF REGISTERED VESSELS	88101
Recreational Vessels	87574
Motorized Vessels	86168
Non-motorized Vessels	1406
Commercial Vessels	527

LENGTH CATEGORY (ft)

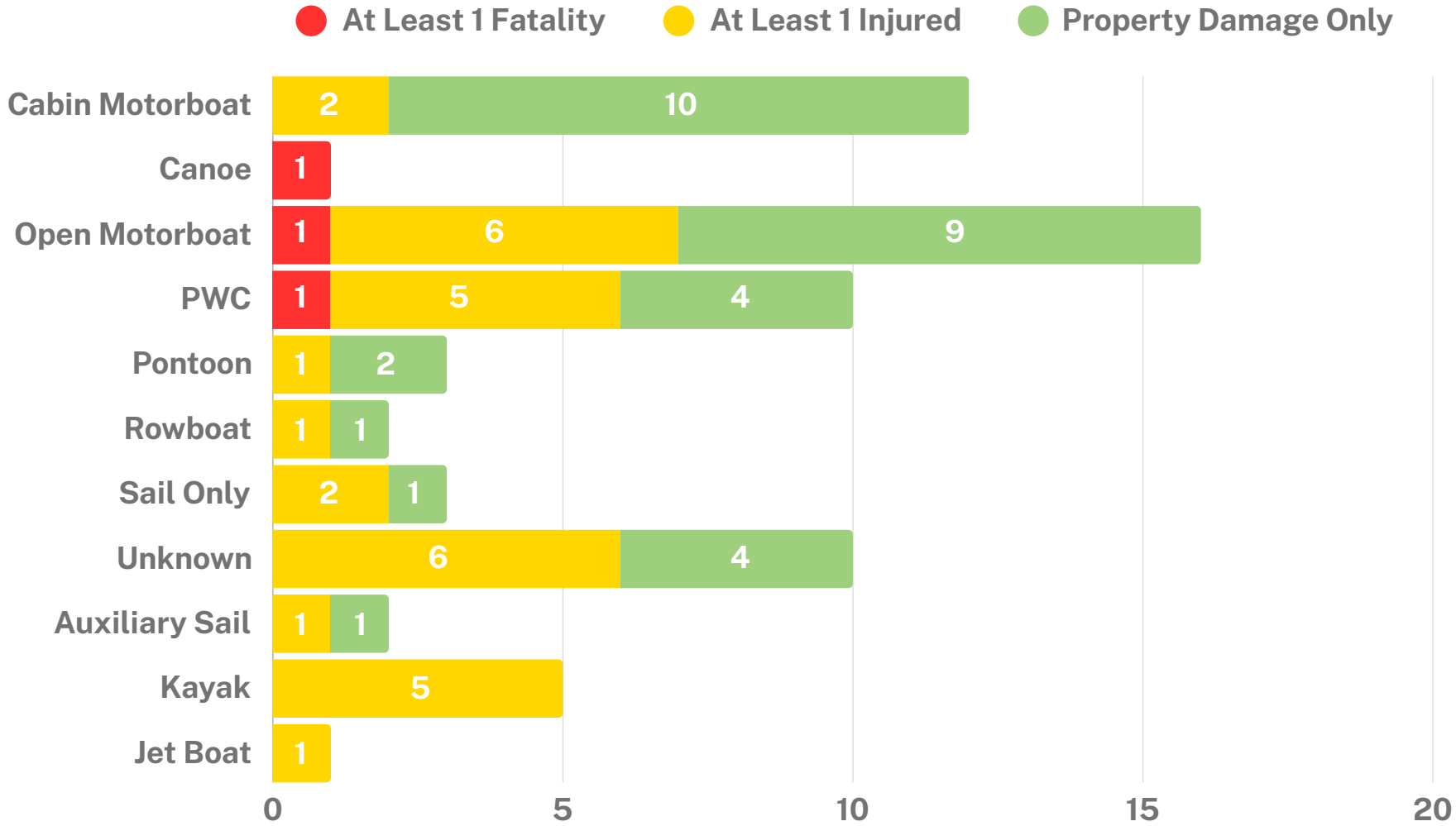
MOTORIZED VESSEL TYPES	<16	16 to <26	26<40	40 to 65	>65	All Lengths
Airboat	7	2	1	0	0	10
Auxiliary sail	201	793	1720	387	3	3104
Cabin motorboat	26	4262	4997	1171	12	10468
Houseboat	7	15	19	8	0	49
Inflatable boat	3492	132	25	1	0	3650
Open motorboat	19951	30539	2291	53	1	52835
Personal watercraft	9722	151	0	0	0	9873
Pontoon	217	4600	136	3	3	4959
Other	836	257	103	20	4	1220
NON-MOTORIZED VESSEL TYPES	<16	16 to <26	26<40	40 to 65	>65	All Lengths
Inflatable boat	424	7	0	0	0	431
Paddlecraft	247	22	1	0	1	271
Rowboat	142	6	1	0	0	149
Sail only	22	205	120	19	0	366
Other	133	42	10	4	0	189

BOATING INCIDENTS IN 2025

AGE OF OPERATORS INVOLVED



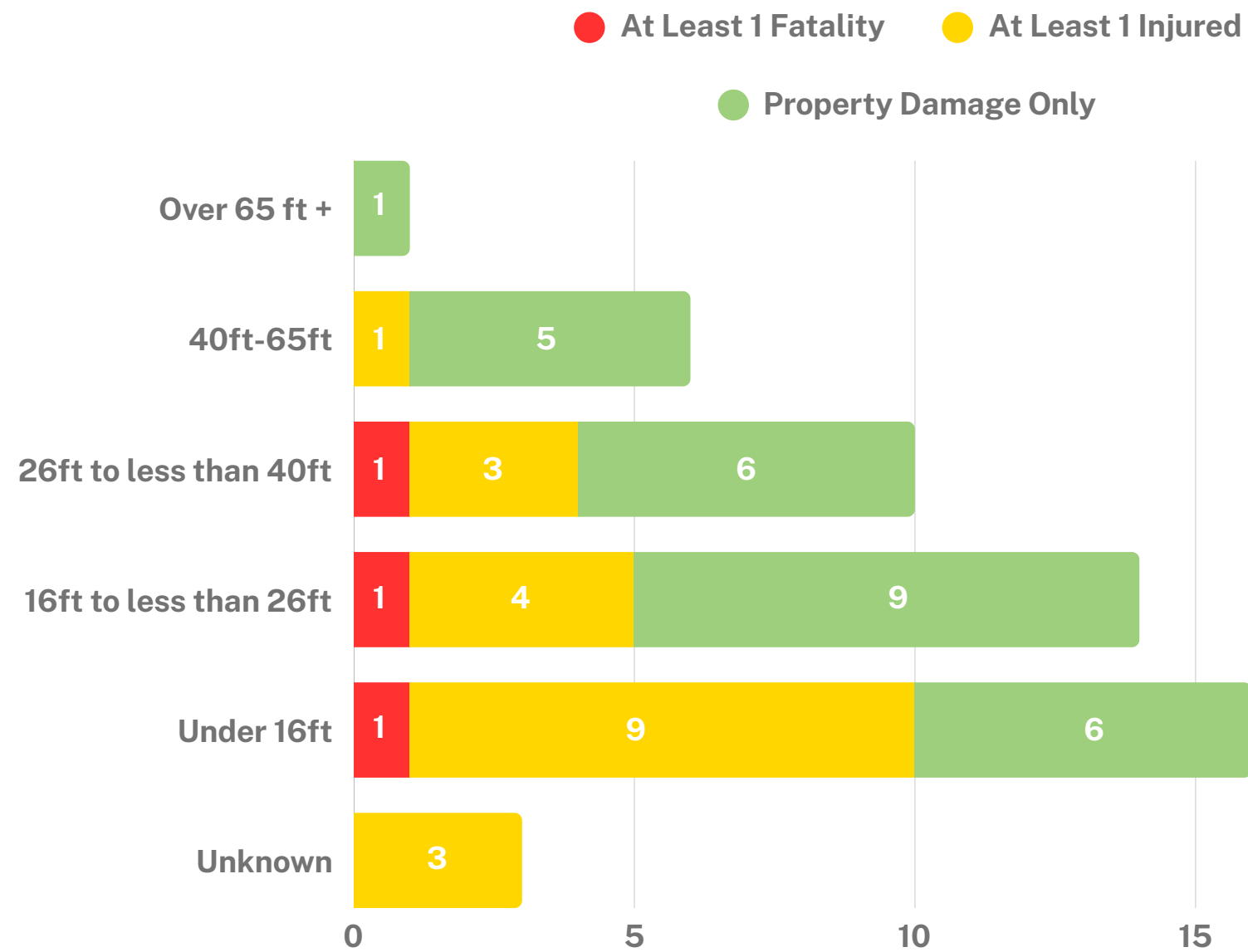
VESSEL TYPES INVOLVED



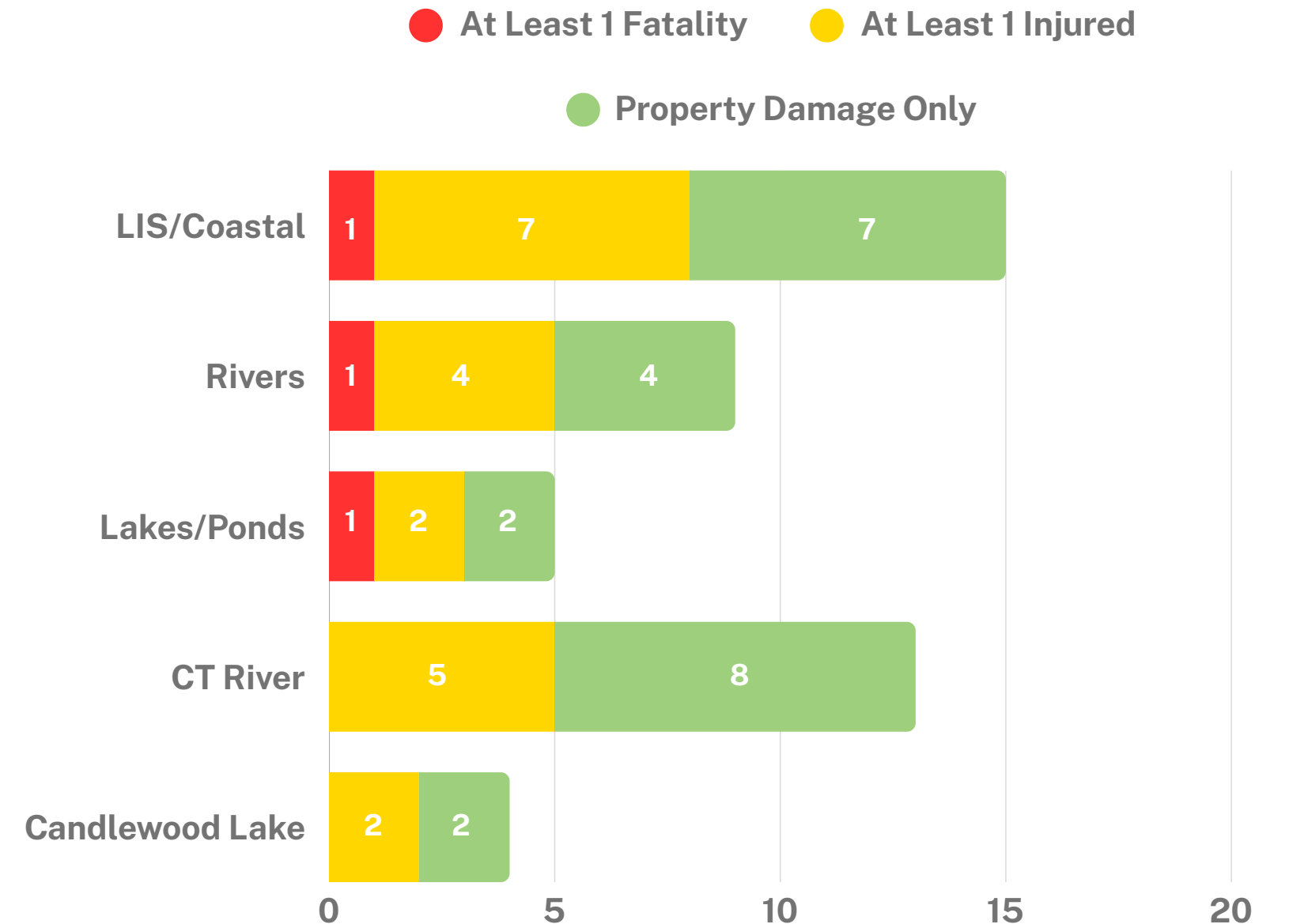
These two graphs show the age of operators and the types of vessels involved in fatal, injury related, and property damage only boating incidents in 2025.

BOATING INCIDENTS IN 2025 CONTINUED

SIZE OF VESSELS INVOLVED



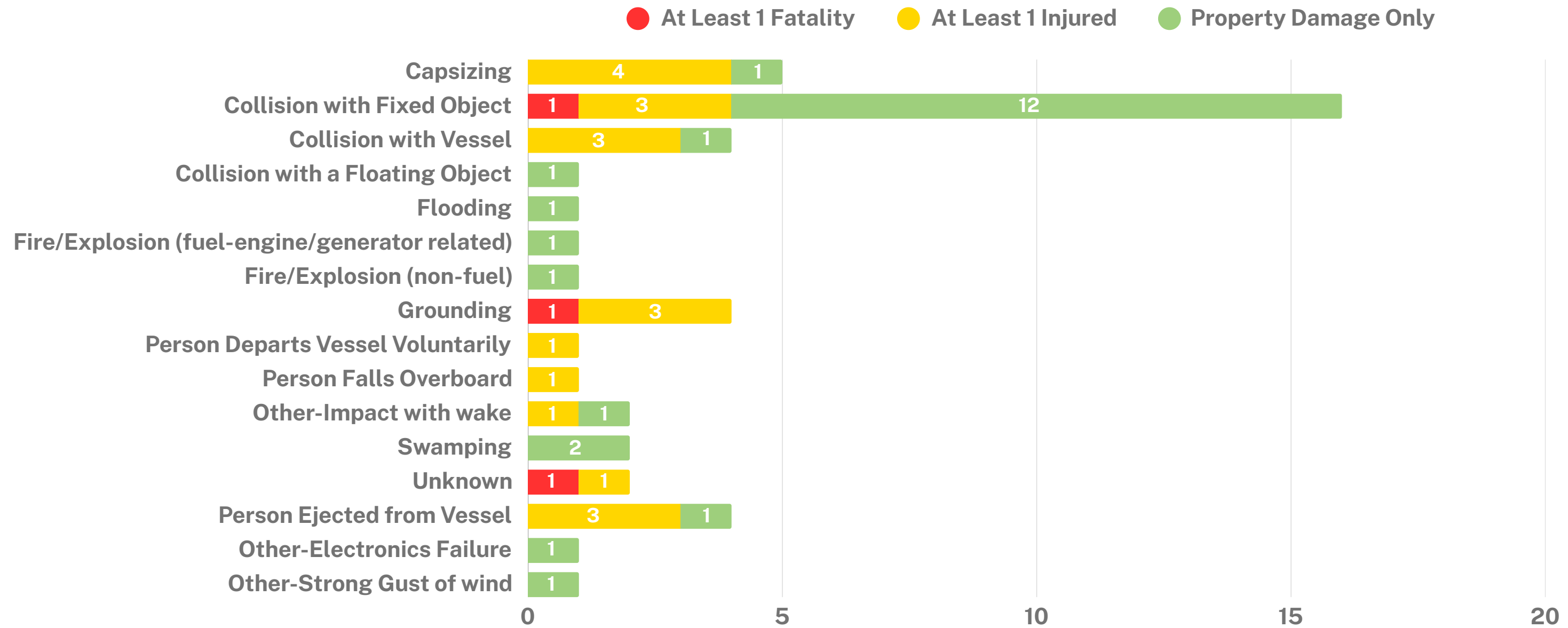
BOATING INCIDENTS BY WATERBODY



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 2025.

BOATING INCIDENTS IN 2025 CONTINUED

BOATING INCIDENT TYPES



This graph shows the primary boating incident types that involved fatalities, injuries, and property damage only in 2025.

PRIMARY CAUSES OF FATAL BOATING INCIDENTS 2025

- OPERATOR INEXPERIENCE
- CARELESS/RECKLESS OPERATION
- UNKNOWN

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

