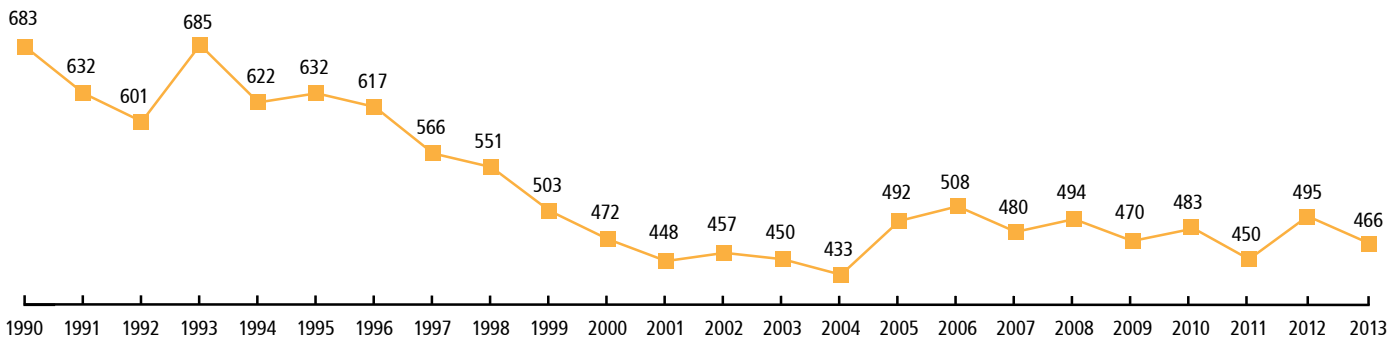


DROWNING REPORT

Prepared for the Lifesaving Society Canada by the Drowning Prevention Research Centre

Canadian Totals 1990 - 2013



The most recent data available from the Office of the Chief Coroner of Saskatchewan reveals that the drowning death rate has increased in recent years. After a drop in water-related fatalities in 2009 (12), at least 20 drowning deaths occurred in each subsequent year.

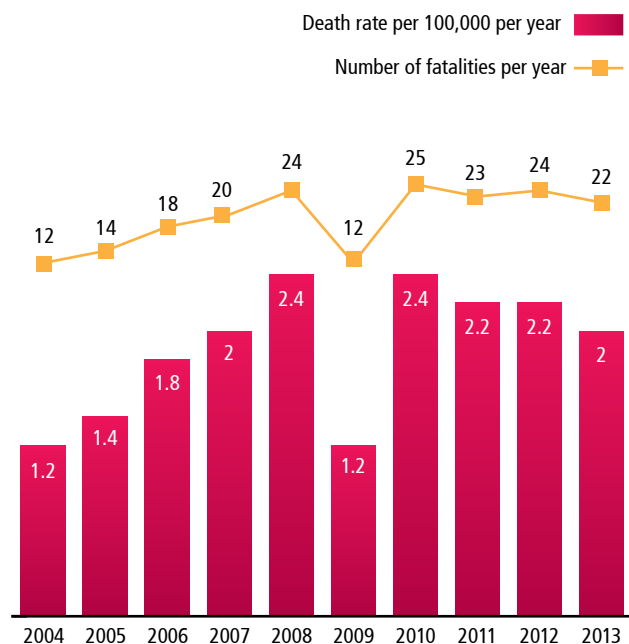
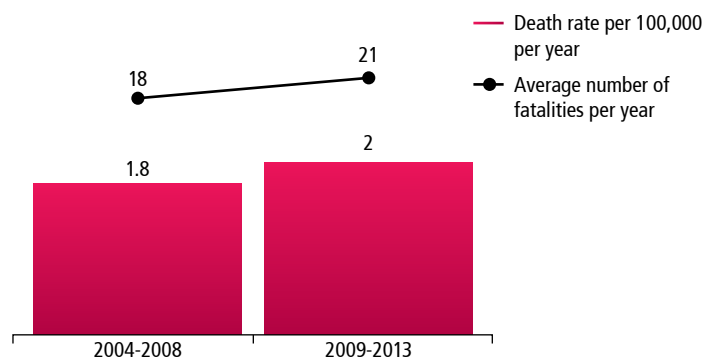
Looking at the most current five years (2009-2013) of data as a whole, the average water-related fatality rate has increased slightly (+11%) over the previous five year period. The average drowning rate for 2009-2013 was 2.0 per 100,000 population, up from 1.8 in 2004-2008. This rate is higher than the national average of 1.4 per 100,000. A total of 106 unintentional water-related fatalities occurred in Saskatchewan between 2009 and 2013.

Preliminary interim data

For drownings since 2013, only preliminary, interim data from media and internet reports are available. In Saskatchewan, these numbers indicate that at least 22 drownings occurred in 2014 and at least 14 in 2015.

Saskatchewan Water-Related Fatalities and Death Rates 2004-2013

Saskatchewan Water-Related Fatalities and Death Rates, Five Year Averages



WHO is drowning?

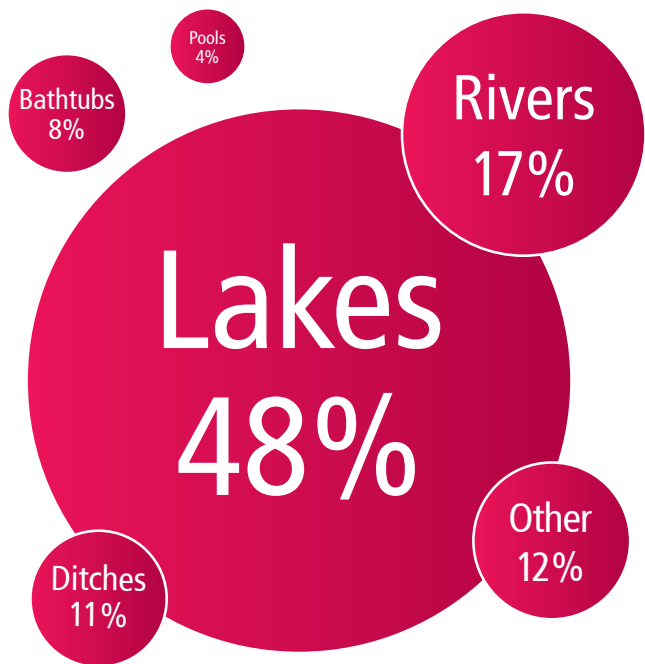
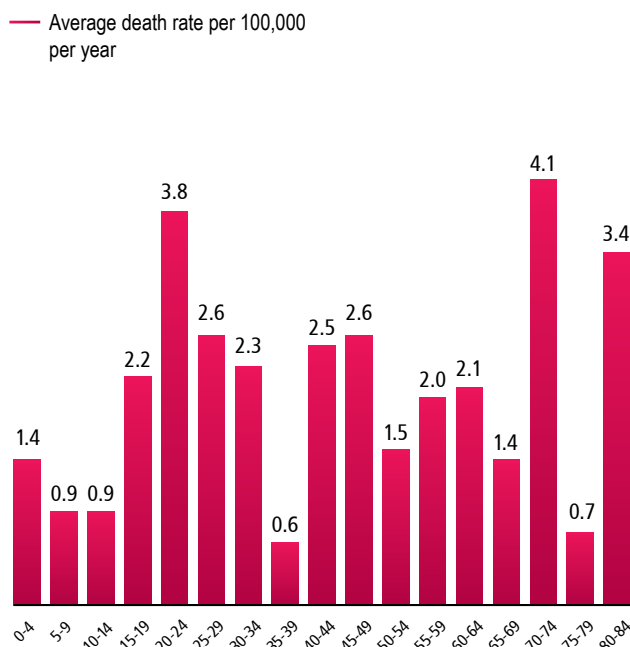


The vast majority of Saskatchewan drowning deaths continue to occur among men (84%). This is consistent with national trends; approximately 8 of 10 Canadian drowning victims are male. Between 2009 and 2013, the average water-related fatality rate for men in Saskatchewan was 3.3 per 100,000 population compared to 0.6 for women.

By age, the highest drowning rates in Saskatchewan continue to be found among young adults 20-24 years old (3.8 per 100,000) and older adults 70-74 years old (4.1 per 100,000). Young adults are a common high risk age group for drowning in many provinces, but the water-related fatality rate for 20-24-year-olds was particularly high in Saskatchewan, where it was double the national average for that age group (1.9 per 100,000).

The drowning rate among children under the age of 5 in Saskatchewan was also higher than that of most other provinces. Between 2009 and 2013, the average water-related fatality rate for children under 5 was 1.4 per 100,000, compared to a national drowning rate of 1.1 per 100,000 in this age group. Nationally, the most common site for drowning among children is private backyard pools. In Saskatchewan however, children in this age group were more likely to drown in a lake or river than a pool.

Water-Related Death Rate By Age, 2009-2013



WHERE are they drowning?

Natural bodies of water continue to account for the largest proportion of drowning deaths in Saskatchewan in 2009-2013 (65%). Lakes and ponds claimed the greatest number of lives - almost half of all water-related fatalities occurred in this type of setting (48%). Fewer drownings occurred in rivers and streams (17%).

Drowning fatalities in man-made settings such as ditches and culverts, bathtubs, and pools continue to be less common. Water-related fatalities were more likely to occur in a ditch (11%) than in a bathtub (8%) or pool (4%) in Saskatchewan between 2009 and 2013. The majority of water-related fatalities that occurred in a ditch were the result of motor vehicle incidents (83%), 56% of which occurred among young adults 20-34 years of age. A greater proportion of ditch related drowning deaths occurred in Saskatchewan than most other provinces. Comparatively, only about 3% of all Canadian water-related fatalities occurred in a ditch or culvert.

Drowning fatalities in lifeguard supervised settings continue to be rare: in 2009-2013 less than 2% of drowning deaths in Saskatchewan occurred under lifeguard supervision.

Despite the fact that the majority (67%) of the population lives in an urban setting, in 2009-2013, water-related fatalities more commonly occurred in rural (82%) than urban (18%) settings. This proportion is different from most other provinces where the majority of drownings occurred in urban environments.

WHEN are they drowning?

By time of year, the warmer months still account for the majority of drowning deaths in Saskatchewan. Over two thirds (72%) of water-related fatalities in the 2009-2013 period occurred in May through September. The highest number of drowning deaths occurred in July (20%), followed by June and August (both 16%).

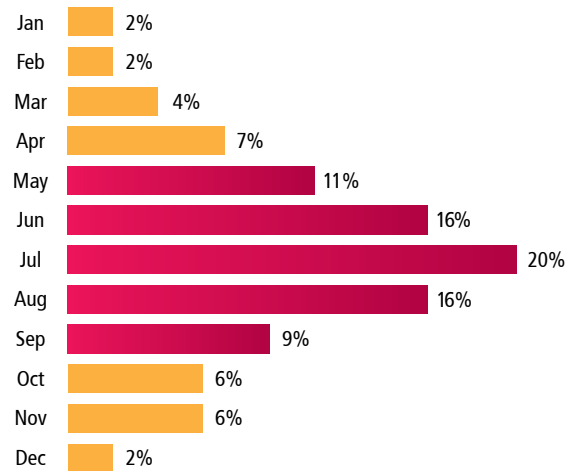
Over half (53%) of the 2009-2013 drownings happened on the weekend (Friday, Saturday or Sunday). Sunday was by far the most common day when drowning deaths occurred in Saskatchewan, 30 water-related fatalities (28%) occurred on a Sunday.

WHAT were they doing?

Consistent with previous years, daily living incidents (45%) accounted for a high proportion of drowning fatalities in Saskatchewan in 2009-2013, and once again over half (52%) of these deaths occurred during motor vehicle travel. The next most common daily living activity was bathing (15%).

The high proportion of daily living incidents in Saskatchewan differs from national trends; recreational drownings typically account for almost two thirds of Canadian drowning deaths. Recreational activities (43%) accounted for the second greatest proportion of drowning

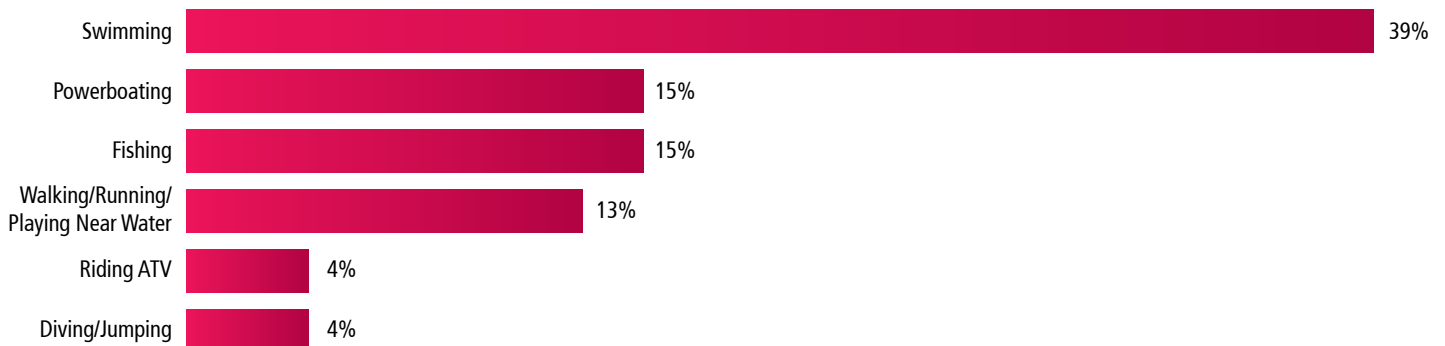
Water-Related Fatalities by Time of Year



fatalities in Saskatchewan. Among these, the most common primary activity was swimming (39%), followed by powerboating (15%) and fishing (15%).

Land, ice or air transportation (31%) continued to be the most common type of activity that victims were engaged in prior to drowning in 2009-2013. This was followed by aquatic activities, where the victim intended to be in the water and something went wrong (24%). Fewer boating related deaths (15%) occurred in Saskatchewan than in most other provinces. Nationally, boating is one of the most common activities engaged in prior to drowning (26%).

Water-Related Fatalities by Most Common Recreational Activity



Risk factors

The major risk factors contributing to drowning incidents in Saskatchewan continue to be consistent with those the Lifesaving Society has identified for the national population in the past, however alcohol consumption appears to be even more of a factor in Saskatchewan than in most other provinces.

Boating

Not wearing a PFD when relevant (81%)

Alcohol consumption (81%)

Swimming

Alcohol consumption (39%)

Victim was a weak or non-swimmer (39%)

Alone or with minors only (28%)

Age

<5

Alone or with other minors only (60%)

5-14

With other minors only (67%)

15-34

Not wearing a PFD when relevant (100%)

Alcohol consumption (80%)

After dark (27%)

35-64

Not wearing a PFD when relevant (78%)

Alone (48%)

Alcohol consumption (44%)

65+

Alcohol consumption (53%)

Alone (47%)

In summary

Water-related fatality rates in Saskatchewan were highest among men, and people 20-24 and 70-74 years old.

Drowning fatalities were most likely to occur during the summer, on weekends, and in natural bodies of water such as rivers and lakes.

The highest proportion of incidents occurred during a daily living activity, most commonly motor vehicle travel.

The increased drowning death rate in Saskatchewan in the most current five-year average reinforces the need for continued strong drowning prevention efforts.

Research methodology

Complete data from 2004-2013

The drowning research process involves data collection; research tabulation and analysis. Water-related death data is extracted from the Office of the Chief Coroner of Saskatchewan. The scope of this research:

- collects the data needed to profile victims of aquatic incidents, including the circumstances and contributing factors under which these incidents occurred.
- includes all deaths in each provincial/territorial jurisdiction resulting from incidents
 - in, on or near water; □ near-water incidents were included if the incident was closely related to water-based recreational, vocational or daily living activity, or if the presence of water appeared to be an attraction contributing to the incident.
- includes only unintentional deaths, not deaths due to natural causes, suicide, or homicide.

Interim data

Complete final data on more recent drownings and other water-related deaths are not yet available from the Office of the Chief Coroner. The interim, preliminary data are derived from media releases, media clippings, news reports and internet searches.

Acknowledgments

We gratefully acknowledge the support, co-operation and efforts of:

- The Office of the Chief Coroner of Saskatchewan which permitted and facilitated confidential access to reports on preventable water-related deaths.
- The volunteers who contributed their time and energy including data extraction on preventable water-related deaths from the coroner's files.
- Tessa Clemens who was primary author and data analyst for this report and Lucie Simoes who provided data input and verification.

Contact us

Lifesaving Society Saskatchewan
Tel: 306-780-9255
Email: lifesaving@sasktel.net
www.lifesavingsociety.sk.ca

Drowning Prevention Research Centre Canada

The Drowning Prevention Research Centre is the lead agency for drowning and water-incident research in Canada. The Centre conducts research into fatal and non-fatal drowning, significant aquatic injury and rescue interventions.

Contact Barbara Byers, Research Director
Email: experts@drowningresearch.ca
Telephone: 416-490-8844

The Lifesaving Society

The Lifesaving Society - Canada's lifeguarding experts works to prevent drowning and water-related injury through its training programs, Water Smart - public education, aquatic safety management, drowning research and lifesaving sport. Annually, over 1,000,000 Canadians participate in the Society's swimming, lifesaving, lifeguard and leadership training programs. The Society sets the standard for aquatic safety in Canada and certifies Canada's National Lifeguards.



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