Houseboat Accident Log

PropellerSafety.com

Note: Many propeller accidents go unreported.

This is only a partial list of houseboat propeller accidents.

last updated 7 December 2015

It was quickly compiled and may include errors. Please contact us with any additional accidents or corrections.

Prints on 39 X 51 inch paper in portrait mode

Year	USCG BARD Accident Number	Accident Date	Name	Location	Injury / Fatality	Rental	Legal Case	Boat Builder	News Coverage	Situation	Notes
1966		14-Aug-1966	Paul Shaw	Susquehanna River near Oneonta NY	fractured skull, possible brain damage				Oneonta Star (NY) 15 Aug 1966	fell from deck of the bow, struck by prop in forehead	
1974		15-Jun-1974	Thomas Debrick, 58	Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta	Fatality				Modesto Bee 17 June 1974 & Press-Telegram 17 Jun 1974	trying to help two teens swim in rough water, struck by prop	
1982		4-Jul-1982	Joseph R. Cuppy III	South River in Maryland	injury				The Capital- Annapolis MD 8 Feb 1983	collision in marina, passenger OB in rear, struck	
1983	05241	22-Jun-83	struck by boat or propeller	California county 43	injury	marked no		unknown		at anchor, man overboard on slippery surface	Don Kerlin 1983-1987 data summary pg1
	14087	13-Jul-83	struck by boat or propeller	Georgia	injury	marked no		Lazy Day Cruisers		operator inattention or carelessness	Don Kerlin 1983-1987 data summary pg2
	50085	10-Sep-83	struck by boat or propeller	Tennessee	drowned	marked no		unknown		cruising, fell overboard	Don Kerlin 1983-1987 data summary pg5
1984	31081	10-Jul-84	struck by boat or propeller	Missouri	injury	Yes		Rick's Marine		operator inattention or carelessness	Don Kerlin 1983-1987 data summary pg8
	05387	2-Jul-84	struck by boat or propeller	California county 77	injury	Yes		unknown		operator inattention or carelessness	Don Kerlin 1983-1987 data summary pg6
	21060	29-Aug-84	struck by boat or propeller	Kentucky county 157	injury	Yes		Ultraglass		operator inattention or carelessness, collision w/fixed object	Don Kerlin 1983-1987 data summary pg7
misclassified	12446	14-Jul-84	struck by boat or propeller	Florida	injury	marked no		Glastron		operator inattention or carelessness	Don Kerlin 1983-1987 data summary pg6
misclassified **1985**	14088	31-Jul-85	struck by boat or propeller	Georgia	injury	Yes		Hilburn Custom Houseboats		fell overboard	Don Kerlin 1983-1987 data summary pg11
1986	53099	14-Aug-86	struck by boat or propeller	Utah	injury	Yes		Harris-Kayot		speeding, fell overboard	Don Kerlin 1983-1987 data summary pg21
misclassified	21076	17-Aug-86	struck by boat or propeller	Kentucky county 157	not marked, but listed	Yes		unknown		collision with another strong winds,	Don Kerlin 1983-1987 data summary pg18
1987	01049	7-Jun-87	struck by boat or propeller	Alabama county 125	fatality	Yes		Hilburn Custom Houseboats		operator inattention or carelessness, someone fell overboar	Don Kerlin 1983-1987 data summary bottom pg21
	05266	23-Jun-87	struck by boat or propeller	California county 89	injury	Yes		unknown		fell overboard	Don Kerlin 1983-1987 data summary pg22
	05594	19-Sep-87	struck by boat or propeller	California county 43	injury	Yes		SMF		speeding, navigational error	Don Kerlin 1983-1987 data summary pg22
	05750	19-Sep-87	struck by boat or propeller	California county 55	injury	Yes		SMF		fell overboard	Don Kerlin 1983-1987 data summary pg23
		?aprox 1987	Stanley Hightower	Allatoona Lake GA	injury	Yes	Hightower v.Cox			swimming to or on ladder when put in reverse	
1988	17032	19-Jun-1988		IL- county 161	struck by propeller			RQA=River Queen Boats 40ft	source-USCG Docket 10299 supplement	fell overboard, struck by propeller	
misclassified	21053	7-Jul-1988		KY county 231	Type1= "Stuck by boat or propeller"	Unknown		TKZ=Stardust Yachts	USCG Docket 10299 supplement pg14	swimmer or driver struck by propeller (Acc Desc=60 struck by propeller)	
1989	5268	8-Jul-1989		CA - county 77	struck by propeller	Yes		HLR=SMF Inc. 25 ft	source-USCG Docket 10299 supplement	sounds like fell from slick deck and swam toward shore leaving no operator onboard	
	5371	29-Jul-1989		CA- county 77	struck by propeller	Yes		MBC=MasterCraft Boat Co 30ft	source-USCG Docket 10299 supplement	improper lookout	
1990	3127	7-Sep-1990		AZ county15	struck by propeller	Yes		Unknown of unknown length	source-USCG Docket 10299 supplement	swimmer or diver -Other vessel/operator at fault	
1991	199145069	24-Aug-1991		Oregon county31		Yes		HLR= SMF Inc 50ft	source-NMMA docket list # 1 AND USCG Docket 10299 supplement	swimmer or diver struck by propeller	
1992	19925628	22-Jun-1992	Gilbert Silveria	Shasta Lake -CA county89	Lost left leg, left arm injured	No		unknown 56ft	RRS 23 June 1992 / NMMA docket list # 7/USCG Docket 10299 sup.	backed into swimmer	
	19925074	7-May-1992	Stacey Epping	Shasta Lake -CA county89	Leg amputated	Yes	Yes	unknown 47ft	RRS 3 July 1992 / NMMA docket list # 3/ USCG Docket 10299 sup.	backed into swimmer	
	19925192	31-May-1992		CA county55		Yes		MBC= MasterCraft Boat Co 50ft	NMMA docket list # 4 AND USCG Docket 10299 supplement	manuevering - improper lookout	
	19925513	6-Sep-1992	Matthew Wells	CA county89 - (Shasta Lake?)		Yes		unknown 50ft	source-NMMA docket list # 6 AND USCG Docket 10299 supplement	fell from PWC and houseboat backed over him	RRS 1 Jul 1996 reports Matthew Wells nearly lost a foot in a Lake Shasta accident
	19032	1-Aug-1992		CA county 37	Accident Desc2= 60	No		BUJ= Tracker 20ft	USCG Docket 10299 supplement pg9	fell overboard, struck by propeller	
1993	19933272	21-Mar-1993	Emilio Cruz	Lake Havasu	Fatality	Yes	Yes	ZZB= Three Buoys HB 52ft	LA Daily News 23 Mar 1993 / NMMA docket list # 10/ USCG Docket 10299	Jumped from one of four houseboats linked together, struck by prop	
	199314047	13-Jun-1993		Georgia county117				DCL= Delta Clipper 37ft	NMMA docket list # 8 AND USCG Docket 10299 supplement	inner tube or kite involved	
	199331169	16-Aug-1993		Missouri county29				CPV= Carrera 54ft	NMMA docket list # 9 AND USCG Docket 10299 supplement	fell over in sharp turn or acceleration	
	19935386	6-Aug-1993		CA county63		Yes		unknown 24 ft	NMMA docket list # 12 AND USCG Docket 10299 supplement	falls overboard	
	19935430	4-Sep-1993		CA county59		Yes		RHR= R&R Leisure Craft 56ft	NMMA docket list # 13 AND USCG Docket 10299 supplement		
	19935589	4-Jul-1993		CA county89 (Shasta Lake?)		Unknown		unknown of unknown length	NMMA docket list # 14 AND USCG 10299 supplement	drifting- swimmer or diver /Other vessel/operator at fault	
	Not Listed	11-May-1993	C. Falvey	Lake Mead -AZ		Yes		unknown of unknown length	Letters in USCG Docket USCG 2001-10299-52,53 dated 3 July 1995	National Park Service flotilla for Federal Land Managers conference, lady fell from PWC and was swimming to ladder when the HB started	
	CANADA	1-Jul-1993	Christie Hingley	**CANADA** Shuswap Lake	Fatality	probably			CanWest 10 jun 2005	Getting on a PWC when it was backed over	
1994	19945483	18-Sep-1994	David Tagg	CA county83 (Shasta Lake)	severe cuts both feet	Yes		HLR= SMF Inc 46ft	NMMA docket# 20 & USCG Docket 10299 supplement & RRS 19 Sept 1994	swimming under boat when engines started	
party barge	**party barge**	2-Jun-1994	14yr old boy	Tchefuncte River LA	cut legs, back, and left arm	**party barge**			Times-Picayune 2 Jun 1994	fell, barge went over him	
1995	9505806	21-Jul-1995	Shirley Jones / Koop	Shasta Lake- CA	died 8 days later	Yes		Sunseeker 52ft	RRS 26 Jul 1995 NMMA docket list #17 + BARD	swimming toward boat when accidentally went into reverse	
	9534221	21-Aug-1995		Overton, Lake Mead -NV	Accident Type 1 =14	Yes		Fun Country Marine 55ft	NMMA docket list # 22 + BARD	drifting, no one at the controls	
	9535083	8-Oct-1995		Lake Winnipesaukee -NH	Accident Type 2 =14			Aquasport Marine IND 20ft	NMMA docket list # 23 + BARD	collision	
	9553007	17-Apr-1995		Bullfrog Marina Lake Powell -UT				Kayot 50ft	NMMA docket list # 24+25 + BARD	collision with another houseboat, a Holiday Mansion 50ft as vessel "C" were also towing something	
not listed	**Not Listed**	28-May-1995	Larry Elmore	Shasta Lake- CA	left foot, left thigh, lower left leg				RRS 29 May 1995	backed into PWC he was on, bumped him off, sucked him in	
MAYBE	9501137	14-Aug-1995		Mobile River AL				Santa Clarita Marine cabin motor boat 58ft		cruising towing another boat	
1995 or 1996	**Not listed**	1995 or 1996	young girl	State of Washington	struck by propeller	Yes		Unknown	Propeller-guard issue just won't stay away. Florida Times Union. 7 April 1996.	houseboat reversed over her while she was swimming.	I have been unable to find this accident in BARD or other news reports.
1996	9653110	9-Jun-1996		Lake Powell-Halls Creek Bay - UT	Accident Type 1 =14	Yes		Kayot 50ft	NMMA docket list # 29	maneuvering and prop hit a swimmer	
	9639024	18-May-1996	Mark L. Beattie -May 19th per news	St. Lawrence River- Heart Island -NY	Accident Type 1 =14	CG=No /Yes per news		Gananoque 35ft	Watertown Daily News 21 May 1996 / NMMA docket list # 28	dove in to retrieve a lawn chair, passengers yelled to operator to put in reverse, he did and boat passed over him	
	9605838	13-Jul-1996		Don Pedro Reservoir - CA	Accident Type 2 =14			Master Fabricators 50ft	NMMA docket list # 26	maneuvering w/swimmer climbing ladder	
1997											
misclassified	199712182	21-Jun-1997		Destin FL	Accident Type 1 =14	No		Stardust 53ft **cabin motor boat**			"Houseboat" in boat model column
MAYBE	199713173	17-Dec-1997		Atlantic Ocean- Islmaorada FL				Blue Water **cabin motor boat** 49ft			They built some houseboat looking boats, plus yachts
1998											
misclassified	9819045	18-Jun-1998		Polk City, IA	Accident Type 3=14	No		Unknown 40ft **cabin motor boat**		Tied to marina buoy during a storm	boat name "Harbor Master" boat model = Houseboat
1999	9951258	28-Aug-1999		Devils Cove, Lake Travis - TX	Accident Type 1 =14	No		Sumerset 66ft	NMMA docket list # 42	Approaching dock	
	9914058	23-May-1999		Lake Lanier GA	Accident Type 2 =14	No		Unknown 60ft	NMMA docket list # 40	Leaving raft up, fell overboard	
	9953154	5-Oct-1999		Lake Powell UT	Accident Type 1 =14, type 2 =6	Yes		Unknown	NMMA docket list # 45	Docking/Undocking per USCG, fell over	HB was vessel B. Vessel A was a PWC tied to dock or mooring, show zero people injured>First Aid
2000											
	200005616	a Saturday	probably Shrayber????	CA - unknown location	Accident Type 1 =14, Type2&3 =6	yes		HHV= Holiday Harbor Inc 56ft			Is in our all prop accidents excel file as "4" boat type
	2000-MO-0252	5-Aug-2000		Lake of Ozarks - MO	Accident Type 1 =14			Natuiline 43ft	NMMA docket list # 48	docking/undocking	
	Probably above?	12-Sep-2000	Felix Shrayber	Shasta Lake -CA	leg cut four places	probably	Shrayber v. Holiday Harbor		RRS 17 Sep 2000	On PWC headed toward back of houseboat, fell in, houseboat idling in reverse	
misclassified	2000-NC-0089	1-Jul-2000		Lake Norman, Cornelius NC				Drifter 47ft **motor cabin boat**		changing direction	
2001											
	New Zealand	28-Apr-2001	Philip Eugene Hurley of Hawera	Lake Rotorangi in New Zealand	drowned entangled in prop				The Daily News (INL) N.Z. 9 Feb 2002	went over back of boat, entangled in prop	
party barge	200151116	29-Jun-2001	12-13 year old boy	Lewisville Lake TX	struck in back 14 times	Yes - party barge			http://rbbi.com/pgic/padata/lewisville/lewisville.htm	church outing, he jumped in as boat was being started	
FOR REFERENCE ONLY	2001-KY-0076	29-Sep-2001	51 year old probably female	Lake Cumberland	USCG said prop acc but was crushed	Yes		Stardust - Class Act III		fatally crushed between boat and shore	
2002	BARD California?	unknown	unknown	California?				unknown		USCG 2002 summary lists 1 HB prop accident, but none in public database. May be a CA accident not individually reported.	
	Not listed	1-Sep-2002	R. Tyler	Lake Mead	both feet injured	Yes	Yes	Fun Country Marine 59Ft		waiting for turn to get on ladder, engine started	
2003	2003-MO-0187	24-Jul-2003	Alan Pomerenke age 8	Table Rock Lake MO	left foot struck	Yes		Sunseeker 52ft		docking/undocking - went down water slide while beaching the houseboat	
	2003-NV-0081	8-Aug-2003		Lake Mead NV		maybe?		Fun Country 65ft		maneuvering	
	2003-KY-0039	6-Jul-2003		Lake Cumberland KY		Yes		TKZ= Stardust		maneuvering	
	2003-UT-2012	6-Jul-2003		Lake Powell in UT near Page AZ		unknown		No boat info reported		departed vessel swimming	
2004											
2005	2005-UT-0085	3-Oct-2005	Sylvia Rozon	Lake Powell - UT	Fatality	Yes	Yes	myacht 52ft	KUTV (Channel 2, SLC UT) 5 Oct 2005	Fell from rear of houseboat while boarding a small boat in windy weather, hit the prop	
	2005-KY-0032	20-Jun-2005		Lake Cumberland KY		Yes		Stardust 19X78			
	2005-VA-0066	15-Jul-2005		Smith Lake VA		Yes		Keycraft 53ft			
	05-50046	28-May-2005		J Percy Priest Lake TN				Nautilin 43 ft			
	NOT LISTED CA	17-Jul-2005	Kyle Wayne Lederer	Lake Oroville -CA	Died two days later	Yes			ChicoER.com 20 July 2005	Dove from front while before boat stopped as approached marina, hit by prop as boat passed over him	
party barge/hb?	2005-TX-0179	21-Aug-2005		Devils Cove, Lake Travis TX				Summerset 77ft **pontoon** MfgHull# S2J02382I697		no proper lookout	Just for Fun rents a 76X16 Sumerset there
2006	2006-UT-0033	8-Jun-2006		Lake Powell - UT at Cookie Jar	laceration, hospitalized			Boatel Kayot 55ft	Boat name = Mindsweeper	at anchor, not moving, caused by weather -s trong wind	
party barge	**party barge**	1-Jul-2006	Mary Maiella	Lake Travis - Austin TX	Fatality	Yes -**party barge**			KVUE 6 Jul 2006	Down a slide, then engines started, drawn in	
2007	2007-IL-0048	23-Jun-2007	age 36	Illinois River near Utica IL	laceration, hospitalized	Yes		Myacht 43 ft, 1995 model		Grounding	
misclassified **2008**	2008-OK-0003	19-Apr-2008	Debra Cosby	Lake Tenkiller - OK	leg injuries, hospitalized	No		Lakeview 54ft houseboat, 1997 model	Muskogee Phoenix 20 Apr 2007, Talequah Daily Press 22 Apr 2007	Going down water slide as boat started, pulled into prop	USCG classified as a cabin motorboat
2009	2009-UT-0084	20-Sep-2009	45 year old male	Lake Powell, near Page AZ	foot injury	Yes		Sumerset 59ft		Man jumped in to tie up boat when beaching, housboat was still in gear, man was pulled into propeller	
2010	**NOT LISTED KY**	7-Jun-2010	Brian Hinderlight age 30	Lake Cumberland	lower leg and foot	Yes			Laker Country. 7 June 2010.	He and his 2 brothers were in the water trying to keep HB off the rocks, another family member started HB	
2011	2011-UT-0092	18-Jul-2011	30 year old male	Lake Powell	left foot struck 3 times	Yes		Sumerset 60ft		Sternline came off while beaching, jumped in to retrieve line, victim's left foot was sucked into propeller	
	not listed	12-Aug-2011	Jordan McKelvey	Lake Cumberland	major injuries	Yes	Yes	Sunstar 62ft		Houseboat was started with swimmers at the stern, may have been trying to straighten boat to shore	
2012											
2013	**Australia**	2-Feb-13	John (no last name provided)	Jerusalem Bay, New South Wales, AU	deep lacerations to right ankle & foot	Yes (or chartered)		unknown	Sail World. 4 February 2013.	Bachelors party, reversed to avoid drifiting aground, prop struck John swimming at stern	
2014	**Australia**	24 Oct 2014	44 year old male	Murrary River at Gol Gol, AU	thigh,ankle, foot cut leg later amputated	Yes		unknown	SunraysiaDaily. 28 October 2014.	swimming at back of boat, leg contacted running propeller	
2015		30 May 2015	Olga Cioban, 26	Lake Shasta in Pit Arm	struck in right foot and left leg	Yes		unknown	Record Searchlight (Redding CA) 30 May 2015.	hat blew off upper deck, operator reversed, she jumped in	
		6 June 2015	Jenny Smotherman, 40	Lake Shasta in Squaw Arm	cut on both legs	Yes		unknown	Action News Now. 7 June 2015.	rented bass boat and rented ski boat in tow drifting toward HB while it was being beached, she jumped in behind the HB while it was in gear	
	Canada	10 Jul 2015	Andrea Jacura. 22	Shuswap Lake	fatality, left leg amputated, torso struck	Yes		unknown	PropellerSafety.com 14 July 2015	was swimming behind a hb when it was backed over her while beaching, operator did not know she was there	

NOTES

RRS = Redding Record Searchlight

NMMA docket list + Appendix A they supplied with their 11 March 2001 comments to U.S. Coast Guard docket (see our HB accident stats page) # XX = number of that accident on their "All Houseboats" list. USCG 2001-10163-88

USCG Docket Supplement 10299 = USCG -01-10299-4,5,6,7,8

Don Kerlin 1983-1987 data summary - 1 June 1987 document by Don Kerlin of USCG marked "Struck by Boat or Propeller" (manual analysis). Printout includes 1304 cases per handwritten note dated 22 Sept. 1988.

1996 Beattie accident on Heart Island WAS a rental per news coverage but is listed s a non-rental by BARD.

BARD listed Gananoque as boat manufacturer, but Gananoque is also a local houseboat rental operation.

Legal Cases

Late 1980's Hightower accident - Hightower v. Cox 418 S.E. 2d 613 204 Ga. App. 105 / No. A92A0074 Court of Appeals of Georgia decided 20 March 1992

1992 Epping accident - Seven Resorts dba Bridge Bay Resort v. James Arthur Cantlen, Delta Upsilon, Stacey Lynn Epping US Court of Appeals 9th Circuit No. 93-17196. 57 F. 3d. 771 1995 A.M.C. 2087

1992 Wells accident - Wells v. Slverthorne Resort. Shasta County Superior Court. California.

1993 Cruz accident - Cruz v. Three Buoys

2000 Shrayber accident - Shrayber v. Holiday Harbor 2003 WL 21197691 (Cal.App. 1 Dist., May 22, 2003) (NO. A099975)

2002 Tyler accident - Robin Tyler v. Forever Resorts and Fun Country Marine Industries. District Court. Clark County Nevada

2005 Rozon accident - Richard Rozon v. Aramark, Mercury Marine, and Tracker Marine. Central District Court Utah

2010 Hinderlight accident - Brian Hinderlight accident case in Russell Country Kentucky court

2011 McKelvey accident - Jordan McKelvey v. State Dock Marina et al. Commonwealth of Kentucky, Wayne Circuit Court

Additional Possible Houseboat Propeller Accidents

MAYBE Misclassified?	?1061	26-Aug-89	(cant see first digit in BARD number)	KY county 143	Type 3= "Struck by boat or propeller"	Yes	Unknown 46ft **cabin motor boat**	USCG Docket 10299 supplement pg16	grounding, fell overboard, struck by boat or propeller Acc Desc=60 "struck by propeller"	
MAYBE	19935092	10-Jul-93		CA country 89	"Stuck by boat or propeller"	Yes	unknown of unknown length	NMMA docket list # 11. Not on 10299 supplement due to no drive type listed in the	drifting, collision with another vessel going at excessive speed	
MAYBE Misclassified?	9501137	14-Aug-95		Mobile River AL	Accident Type 2 = 14	No	Santa Clarita Marine **cabin motor boat** 58ft		cruising towing another boat	
MAYBE Misclassified?	199713173	17-Dec-97		Atlantic Ocean- Islmaorada FL	Accident Type 1 = 14	No	Blue Water **cabin motor boat** 49ft			They built some houseboat looking boats, plus yachts
MAYBE	9953154	5-Oct-99		Lake Powell UT	Accident Type 1 =14, type 2 =6	Yes	Unknown	NMMA docket list # 45	Docking/Undocking per USCG, fell over	HB was vessel B. Vessel A was a PWC tied to dock or mooring, show zero people injured > than First Aid
	Australia	26-Jan-02	Michael Campaign	Noosa Australia	deep cuts to his arm				Sunday Mail (Brisbane Australia)	dove off to retrieve a hat, was ran over by HB (does NOT specifically mention PROP)

Interesting

2006	2006-TN-0136	2-Jul-06		Indian Creek /Jones Fork /Center Hill Lake	laceration, hospitalized		Solid Craft 30 foot pontoon w/11 passengers. Some Sold Craft boats are double deckers with water slides		They are somewhat houseboats without sides, like party barges.	

Federal Register Vol.60 No. 91 / May 11, 1995 Page 25191.

"Propeller Accidents Involving Houseboats and Other Displacement Type Recreational Vessels " reports 17 houseboat "struck by boat or propeller" accidents from 1989-1993 including one fatality

5 July 1995 Richard Snyder (Mercury Marine) letter in 10299 Docket

He says earlier USCG data reports 30 houseboat "struck by boat or propeller" accidents from 1969 through 1988 including a 1974 fatality.

He suggests 1/3 of those may be struck by the boat, gearcase skeg or strut, or gearcase anti-ventilation plate.

The 2001 Lake Cumberland houseboat accident below has a "Yes" in BARD's propeller column, but is really the result of a lady being crushed as a houseboat approached shore. BARD does not list struck by boat motor or propeller as an accident type. We confirmed this with the State of KY accident report and LakeCumberland.com forum.

2001	2001-KY-0076	29-Sep-01		Lake Cumberland KY	Fatality	Yes	Stardust 69ft		departed vessel approaching shore

Note - UK narrowboat (canal boat, longboat) propeller strikes often exhibit strong similarities to U.S. houseboat strikes

Note - about half the states did not report accidents to public BARD in 2010 due to privacy issues, including CA and KY

Note - beginning in 2011 some states that did not report in 2010 began to report again