



LIFESAVING SOCIETY

The Lifeguarding Experts

Swim to Survive+ 2012 Drowning & Water Safety Fact Sheet

Below is a summary of facts about drowning deaths in Canada. The statistics are from the Lifesaving Society's recently released *Canadian Drowning Report 2012 Edition*. Data was compiled from the Chief Coroner's Offices in all provinces. The year 2009 is the most recent year for which complete data is available.

While final data on drownings for 2010-2011 is not yet available from the provincial/territorial Chief Coroners and Medical Examiners, the following interim statistics are available from the Lifesaving Society. Data is derived from media releases, media clippings, news reports and internet searches. These statistics do not represent all fatalities but give a preliminary idea of trends until Chief Coroner's statistics become available.

In Canada:

- In 2011, drowning incidents decreased 15 per cent to 347 people (from 409 in 2010).

Age	2011	2010
< 5	10	23
5-12	9	17
13-17	26	22
18-24	53	65
25-34	50	53
35-44	46	62
45-64	79	100
65+	41	39
Unknown	33	28
TOTAL	347	409

.../more

- By age group, decreases were evident among children under five years old and children between five and 12 years old.
- Decreases were also evident among adults 18 and 64 years old.
- However, increases were evident among children between 13 and 17 years old.
- The majority of drownings occur between May and September.
- Year after year, eight out of 10 drowning victims are male. The skew to male victims is evident across all age groups, but most pronounced among 18 to 34 year olds where nine of every 10 victims are male. This reflects higher risk behaviour around water among men than women.
- Nearly half of all fatal incidents occur on the weekend, (Friday, Saturday, Sunday) when participation in aquatic recreation is highest.
- Almost half of all drowning fatalities occur in the evening or at night (47 per cent) despite most participation in aquatic activities taking place during the day. Being in, on or around water after dark is a significant risk factor especially for incidents involving adults.
- Drowning is the second leading cause of preventable death for children under 10 years of age.

In Ontario:

- There have been 34 reported drownings from January 1st to June 17th, 2012 – that's an increase of 13 per cent during the same period last year (30 in 2011).
- There were 97 reported drownings in 2011 – a decrease of 27 per cent from 2010 when 132 drownings were reported.
- In 2011, the greatest number of drownings occurred during recreational swimming (33 deaths in 2011 vs. 23 deaths in 2010) and followed by boating.
- Boating related drownings in Ontario continue to represent about 30 per cent of total drownings, (30 incidents versus 41 in 2010).
- In 2011, drowning fatalities among children under the age of five decreased significantly from 13 children in 2010 to one child in 2011.
- Teens 13 to 17 years of age accounted for 10 per cent (10 of 97) of all drowning fatalities in 2011. Young adults aged 18 to 24 years accounted for 16 per cent of all drowning fatalities in 2011 (16 of 97).

.../more

Complete data from provincial coroner's offices is available in the Canadian Drowning Report – 2012 Edition (www.lifesavingsociety.com). This data includes all deaths collection from coroner's offices in each province from 1990-2009.

Drowning can occur very quickly, in as little as 10 seconds, and is often silent. The Lifesaving Society offers these drowning prevention tips:

- Restrict and control access to the water. Enclose backyard pools on all four sides with a fence and a self-latching, self-closing gate; drain bathtubs when not in use; empty unattended wading pools, ponds and buckets.
- Wear a lifejacket when boating. Toddlers should wear a lifejacket anytime they are near water.
- Don't drink and drive your boat.
- Stay within arms' reach of young children when they are near water – in the backyard, the beach and in the bathroom.
- Go to lifeguard-supervised beaches and pools.
- Learn to swim. Enroll children in swimming lessons and in a swimming survival programs such as the Lifesaving Society's *Swim to Survive* or *Swim to Survive+*.

About the Lifesaving Society:

The Lifesaving Society is a full-service provider of programs, products and services designed to prevent drowning. We save lives and prevent water-related injury through our training programs, Water Smart® public education, drowning prevention research, aquatic safety management and lifesaving sport. Each year in Canada, more than 800,000 Canadians participate in the Society's swimming, lifesaving, lifeguard, first aid and leadership programs. For more information, please visit www.lifesavingsociety.com.

-30-

For more information or to book an interview with Barbara Byers, please contact:

Andrea Burmaster	Danielle D'Agostino	Barbara Byers
Praxis	Praxis	The Lifesaving Society
905-949-8255 ext. 231	905-949-8255 ext. 233	416-490-8844
416-460-3159 (cell)	416-525-6725 (cell)	416-727-5636 (cell)
andrea@praxispr.ca	danielle@praxispr.ca	barbarab@lifeguarding.com