



# NORTHWEST TERRITORIES DROWNING REPORT

## WATER-RELATED FATALITIES 2013-2017

The Northwest Territories contains many lakes and waterways; the utilization of watercraft is an integral part of the northern lifestyle. With so many activities taking place in, on, and around the water and ice, drownings and water-related injuries are prevalent in the Northwest Territories.

From 2013 to 2017 (the most recent year for which data is available) 15 people have drowned in the Northwest Territories.

- 93% of the drowning victims were male.
- 87% of the drowning victims were adults.
- Alcohol was a factor in 53% of the water-related deaths.
- 100% of the water-related deaths occurred in natural bodies of water (rivers, lakes and oceans).
- Almost half of the water-related deaths (47%, where information available) were as a result of daily living activities (the victim was in, on or around water or ice as part of their daily activities e.g. travel, subsistence hunting and fishing).

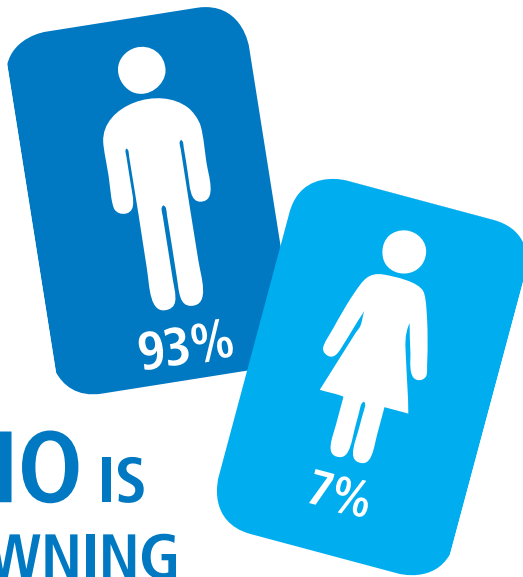
*The data outlined in this report is the most recent data collected from the Office of the Chief Coroner in the Northwest Territories.*

- The majority of drowning deaths in the Northwest Territories occurred in the warmer months. The highest number of drowning deaths (67%) occurred in the months of June and September.
- 100% of boating-related drowning victims were not wearing a lifejacket (present but not worn or not present).
- Almost half (47%) of the drowning victims were alone.
- Half of the children and youth who drowned had no adult supervision or were alone.

### Risk Factors

The main risk factors related to drowning incidents in the Northwest Territories include: not wearing a lifejacket, boating or swimming alone, and alcohol consumption.





## WHO IS DROWNING

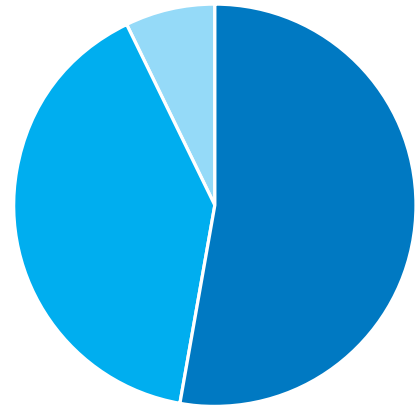
The vast majority of drowning victims in the Northwest Territories continue to be men (93%).

87% of drowning victims were adults (18-65+ years).

53%  
Lake / Pond

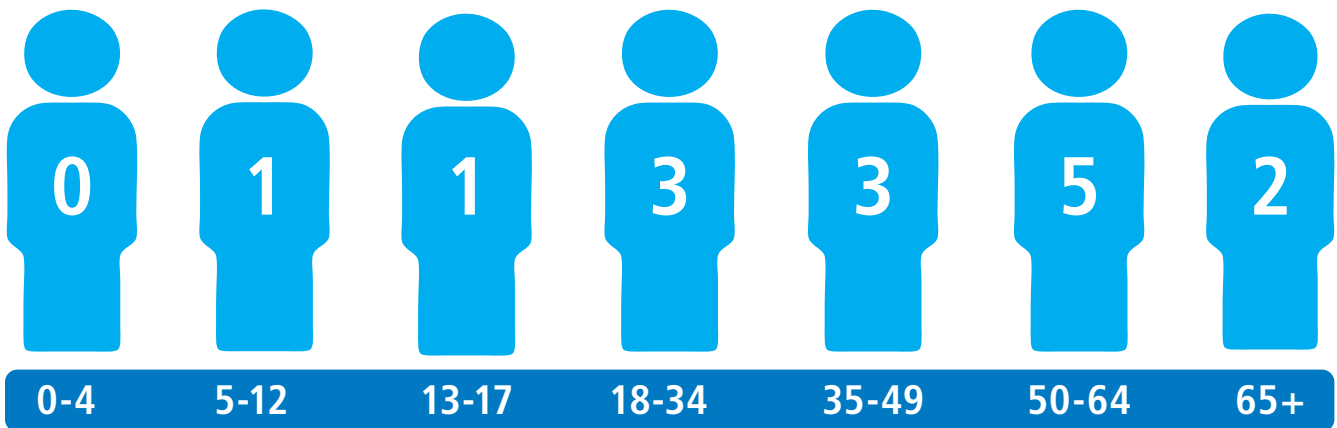
40%  
River / Creek

7%  
Ocean



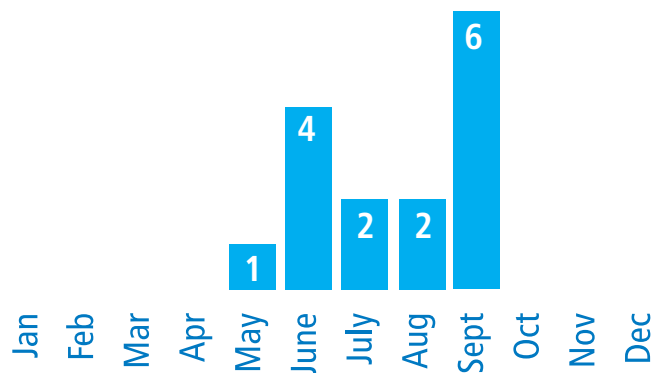
## WHERE ARE THEY DROWNING

All water-related deaths in the Northwest Territories occurred in natural bodies of water.



## WHEN ARE THEY DROWNING

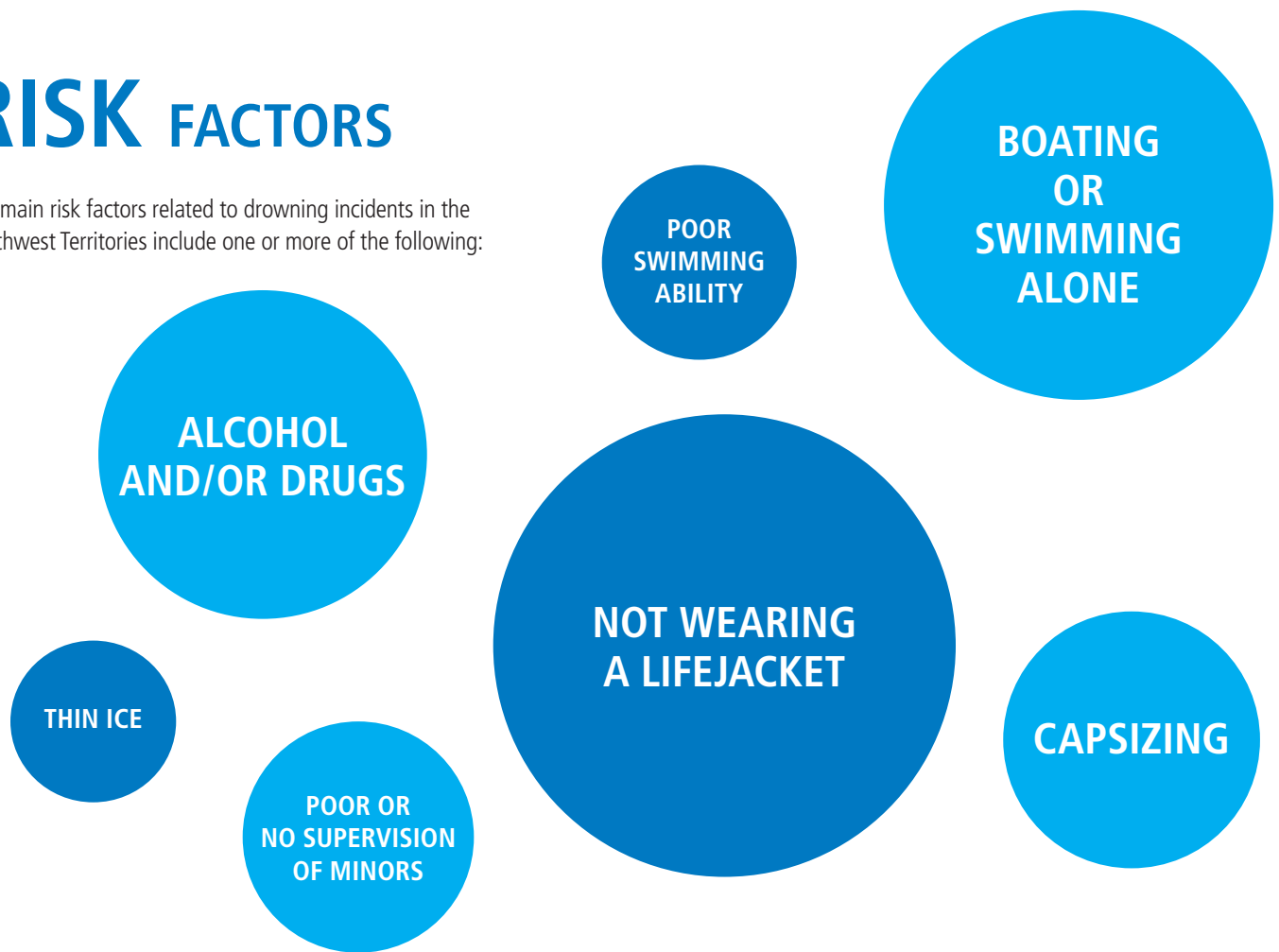
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# RISK FACTORS

The main risk factors related to drowning incidents in the Northwest Territories include one or more of the following:



# WHAT WERE THEY DOING

- Where information is available, daily living activities account for 47% of drownings in the Northwest Territories
- 40% of water-related deaths were as a result of recreational activities.
- 7% of water-related deaths were as a result of occupational activities.
- Based on the type of activity the victim was engaged in when the incident occurred the majority included boating (53%), followed by aquatic activities (27%), land, ice, or air transportation (13%) and non-aquatic activities (7%).



Boating 53%



Aquatic Activities 27%

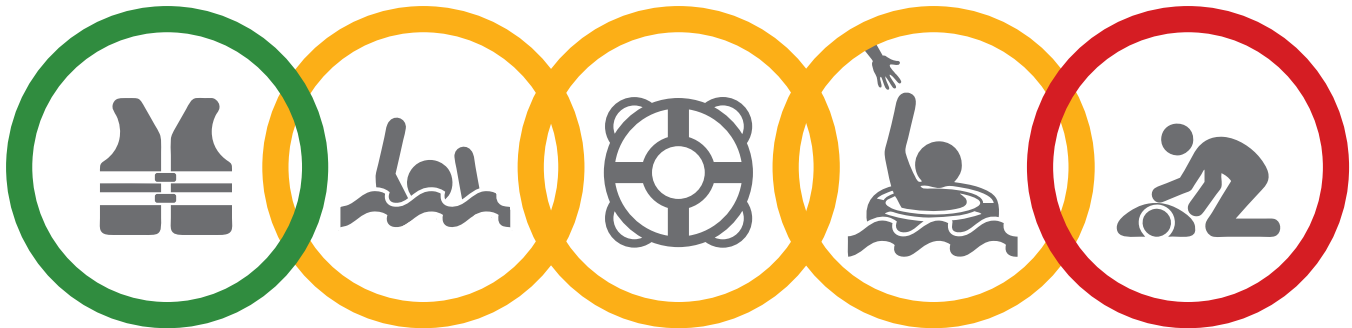


Land, Ice, or Air  
Transportation 13%



Non-aquatic Activities  
7%

# DROWNING CHAIN OF SURVIVAL



**PREVENT DROWNING**  
Be safe in and around water

**RECOGNIZE DISTRESS**  
Ask someone to call for help

**PROVIDE FLOTATION**  
To prevent submersion

**REMOVE FROM WATER**  
Only if safe to do so

**PROVIDE CARE AS NEEDED**  
Seek medical attention

**PREVENTION**

**RECOGNITION, RESPONSE, AND RESCUE**

**TREATMENT**



In Canada, Swim to Survive® is a proven method to prevent drowning. Swim to Survive® teaches people the necessary skills to survive an unexpected fall into the water. Swim and survival skills are as easy as 1-2-3; Roll into Deep Water; Tread 1 Minute; Swim 50 Meters.

The Lifesaving Society advocates for all ages to learn basic swim to survive skills in a global effort to eliminate drowning.

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 1,200,000 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.

## Acknowledgments

We greatly acknowledge the support, cooperation and efforts of the Office of the Chief Coroner in the Northwest Territories and the Drowning Prevention Research Centre Canada.