

INCIDENT EVENTS (alphabetical*) –

**Approved by NASBLA membership (as Accident Types/Events), Sept. 11, 2012;
approved with recommended revisions, July 31, 2020**

Origins of the List. This updated terms and definitions product had its origins in a 2011-2013 collaborative effort led by a team of State and Associate members of NASBLA’s Engineering, Reporting & Analysis Committee (ERAC) and subject matter experts from the U.S. Coast Guard’s Boating Safety Division. The list of entries was reviewed and commented on over a period of months, and then approved by vote of NASBLA’s membership—i.e., the States via their Boating Law Administrators—at the association’s annual Business Meeting, Sept. 11, 2012.

Five years later, the list of accident types/events and those of four other incident report categories[†] produced as part of the same effort were taken up again, this time in the context of a more comprehensive reporting project also involving the Coast Guard and the States with coordination by NASBLA’s ERAC. The [Recreational Boating Incident Reporting Policy Project](#), set in motion in November 2017, resulted in over 100 [consensus recommendations](#) to inform the Coast Guard’s development of national reporting policies and procedures. Included in the array of recommendations were updates to the five terms and definitions lists as well as updates to other incident report data elements for national collection. In summer 2020, the States voted again—this time by an interim, online procedure authorized by NASBLA’s bylaws—and on July 31, 2020, accepted the entire [recommendations package](#) and approved its delivery to the Coast Guard Office of Auxiliary & Boating Safety.[‡]

Using the List. Bracketed information at the end of each definition indicates whether the entry is a new one or revises a term or definition currently used at the national level in the Boating Accident Report Database (BARD). The updates to the 2012 list, including the modification to the report category label and global replacement of the term “accident” with “incident,” as well as additional recommendations for future action (e.g., the collection and capture of events both for the overall incident and by vessel perspectives) are shown in **red**.[§]

* Term labels that begin with “Person,” are alphabetized according to the verb in the label.

† The other lists cover the following report categories: Contributing Factors/Causes, Activity (Use of the Vessel and Immediate Activity at Time of Incident), Operation of the Vessel, and Vessel Sub-Types (for use with the Vessel Types).

‡ Voting was conducted under the terms of NASBLA Bylaw III, Section 8 (*Conducting Interim Business*). A Request for Vote was initiated in a July 1, 2020 email to all Boating Law Administrators (BLAs) by NASBLA staff on behalf of the Executive Board. The required 30-day voting period had a July 31, 2020 deadline for receipt of ballots by email or postal mail. By the deadline, 54 of the 56 NASBLA member States, as represented by their BLAs or the BLAs’ designees, had cast ballots, all electronically. Two of the U.S. Territories (American Samoa and Virgin Islands) had not voted by the deadline. All 54 members who did vote, voted to accept the package of consensus recommendations and approve its transmission to the U.S. Coast Guard Office of Auxiliary and Boating Safety for Office use in developing related national policy and regulatory provisions. The vote was certified by then-NASBLA Vice Chair/Secretary Timothy Dunleavy on August 5, 2020.

§ For the markup presented for the vote, see pages 30-33 of [the PDF copy of the 2020 consensus recommendations package](#).

Capsizing: *Overturning of a vessel.* [Revises existing definition]

Carbon Monoxide Exposure: *Death or injury resulting from an odorless, colorless gas generated from auxiliary vessel equipment (including, but not limited to stoves, heaters, refrigerators, generators, hot water heaters), another vessel's exhaust, or the exhaust of the vessel on which persons were either aboard or in close proximity.* [Revises existing definition]

Collision with Fixed Object / Allision: *The striking of any fixed object, above or below the surface of the water, except the bottom of the body of water. A **Collision with Fixed Object/Allision** includes a vessel striking a vessel moored to a dock, pier, or similar structure; and a vessel striking timber or stumps.* [Revises existing term label ("Collision with Fixed Object") and definition]

Collision with Floating Object: *The striking of a floating object other than a vessel, above or below the surface of the water, that is not fixed or held in place by any means (e.g., barrels, logs, or other debris).* [Revises existing definition]

Collision with Vessel: *A striking together of two or more vessels. A **Collision with Vessel** includes colliding with the tow of another vessel, with the exception of a towed watersport participant. A **Collision with Vessel** also includes colliding with an anchored vessel or colliding with a vessel secured to a mooring buoy. A **Collision with Vessel** does not include a vessel striking a vessel moored to a dock, pier, or similar structure (see **Collision with Fixed Object / Allision**).* [Revises existing definition]

Person Departs Vessel Voluntarily: *A person, acting of their own free will, **enters the water from a vessel**, resulting in the person's injury or death.* [Revises existing term label ("Person left boat voluntarily") and creates definition]

Person Ejected from Vessel: *A person is thrown out of a vessel involuntarily by a non-human force such as a wake, wave, collision, or unexpected change in direction of the vessel.* [Revises related, existing term labels ("Ejected from Vessel" and "Person ejected from boat") and creates definition]

Electrical Shock: *Death, injury, or property damage resulting from contact with electrical current. This includes system failure and stray current. It does not include lightning (see **Natural Phenomena**).* [Replaces current term ("Electrocution") and revises existing definition]

Person Falls Overboard: *A person involuntarily falls off of the vessel.* [Revises existing term labels ("Falls Overboard" and "Person fell overboard") and definition]

Fuel-Related Fire/Explosion [creates new, combined term from 2012 Accident Types/Events list entries "Fire/Explosion (fuel and propulsion/generator related)" and "Fire/Explosion (fuel-related, but not propulsion/generator related)," with selection options below and additional prompts on next page.]

Engine (propulsion/generator-related) *Accidental burning or explosion of vessel due to combustion of vessel fuels or their vapors that are used for electrical generation or propulsion.*

Not engine (not propulsion/generator-related): *Accidental burning or explosion of vessel due to combustion of fuels or their vapors that are not used for electrical generation or propulsion.*

Upon selection of the above, there should be **additional prompting for the source of the suspected leak (if known):**

- 1) a propulsion or generator engine;**
- 2) the installed fuel system for such engines; or**
- 3) fuel introduced to the vessel during a refueling event.**

Non-Fuel-Related Fire/Explosion: *Accidental burning or explosion of any material onboard a vessel except vessel fuels or their vapors. Examples include electrical, cooking, cooking fuel, pyrotechnic, smoking material, shore-tie, etc. Provide brief description.* [Revises term label (“Fire/Explosion (Other)”)]

Fire/Explosion-unknown origin: *Accidental burning or explosion of any material onboard a vessel where the cause of the fire/explosion is unknown.* [Formalizes use of term label and creates definition]

Flooding: *Filling with water, by means of entry through a fitting, a drain plug, a hole or crack in the hull, or other means that allows ingress of water through the hull, not over the top of the gunwale, transom, or decking of the vessel. Vessel retains sufficient buoyancy to remain on the surface of the water.* [Separates existing term (“Flooding/Swamping”) and creates new definition]

Grounding: *Running aground of a vessel; striking or pounding on rocks, reefs, shoals, or the bottom of the body of water; includes stranded vessels.* [Revises existing definition]

Person Impacts Vessel: *A person slips, trips, falls, or strikes a surface on or in their vessel.* [Revises existing related term label (“Falls in boat”) and definition]

Natural Phenomena: *Death, injury or property damage resulting from an interaction with natural phenomenon including, but not limited to: lightning, being struck by a jumping fish, being stung or bitten by a fish, or being struck by falling debris from a cliff.* [Creates term label and definition]

Sinking: *After swamping, flooding, or capsizing, the vessel loses enough buoyancy to settle below the surface of the water.* [Revises existing definition]

Person Struck by Propeller/Propulsion Unit/Water Jet: *A person who is located on, inside or outside of a vessel is struck by the propeller or propulsion unit of a vessel or high velocity water leaving the propulsion unit.* [Revises existing term label (“Struck by Propeller/Propulsion Unit”) and definition]

Person Struck by Vessel: *A person who is located inside or outside of a vessel is struck by a vessel.* [Revises existing term labels (“Struck by Vessel” and “Person struck by boat”) and definition]

Swamping: *Ingress of water over the top of the gunwale, transom, or decking of the vessel. Vessel retains sufficient buoyancy to remain on the surface of the water.* [Separates existing term (“Flooding/Swamping”) and creates new definition]

Towed Watersport Mishap: *A watersport **incident** associated with vessel passenger(s) or person(s) being towed or surfing the wake created by the vessel. A **Towed Watersport Mishap** includes, but is not limited to, the following scenarios: persons falling or ejected during their activity; being struck by or entangled in the activity equipment; or running into a person, object or vessel.* [Replaces existing term (“Skier Mishap”) and revises definition]

Standardized terms and definitions for five major incident report categories
*Original release, September 2012; updated release July 2020 (**changes from 2012 list shown in red**)*

Other / describe: ***Incidents** that do not fit any of the described types. Provide brief description.* [Creates definition]

Unknown: *Insufficient information to determine the type of **incident**.* [Creates definition]