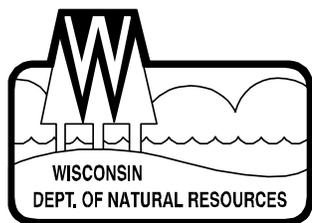


Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources 2009-2010 Snowmobile Enforcement & Safety Report



**Produced by the Bureau of Law
Enforcement, Recreation Enforcement
and Education Section
PUB-LE-203 2010**



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Randal Stark, Chief Warden
Bureau of Law Enforcement
Department of Natural Resources

Todd Schaller, Director
Recreation Enforcement & Education
Bureau of Law Enforcement
Department of Natural Resources

Gary Eddy
ATV/Snowmobile Administrator
Recreation Enforcement & Education Section
Bureau of Law Enforcement
Department of Natural Resources

Julie Fitzgerald
Operations Prog. Associate
Recreation Enf. & Ed. Section
Bureau of Law Enforcement
Department of Natural Resources

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2009-2010 Snowmobile Program Report Summary Recreation Enforcement and Education Section

The 2009-2010 Snowmobile Program Report was compiled from crash, registration and arrest data collected during the period of July 1 - June 30. 21 fatal incidents in 2009-2010 were two less than the 2008-2009 fatality total of 23. Fatalities decreased despite having good snowmobiling conditions. The only additional safety measure implemented during recent years was the nighttime, 55 m.p.h. speed limit which was supported by the Association of Wisconsin Snowmobile Clubs and the Governor's Snowmobile Recreation Council. Fatality rates have continued to decrease since the speed limit was enacted in 2006. Volunteer snowmobile safety instructors certified 9,912 students; the largest number of students certified since the 2001 – 2002 season when 14,588 students were certified when Snowmobile Safety Education became mandatory.

Conservation Wardens are required to investigate all snowmobile fatalities; Wisconsin law also requires that a conservation warden or law enforcement officer be notified immediately of any snowmobile incident that results in an injury requiring medical treatment by a physician. In addition, the operator(s) involved in these reportable incidents must file a written report with the Department of Natural Resources within 10 days.

Factors

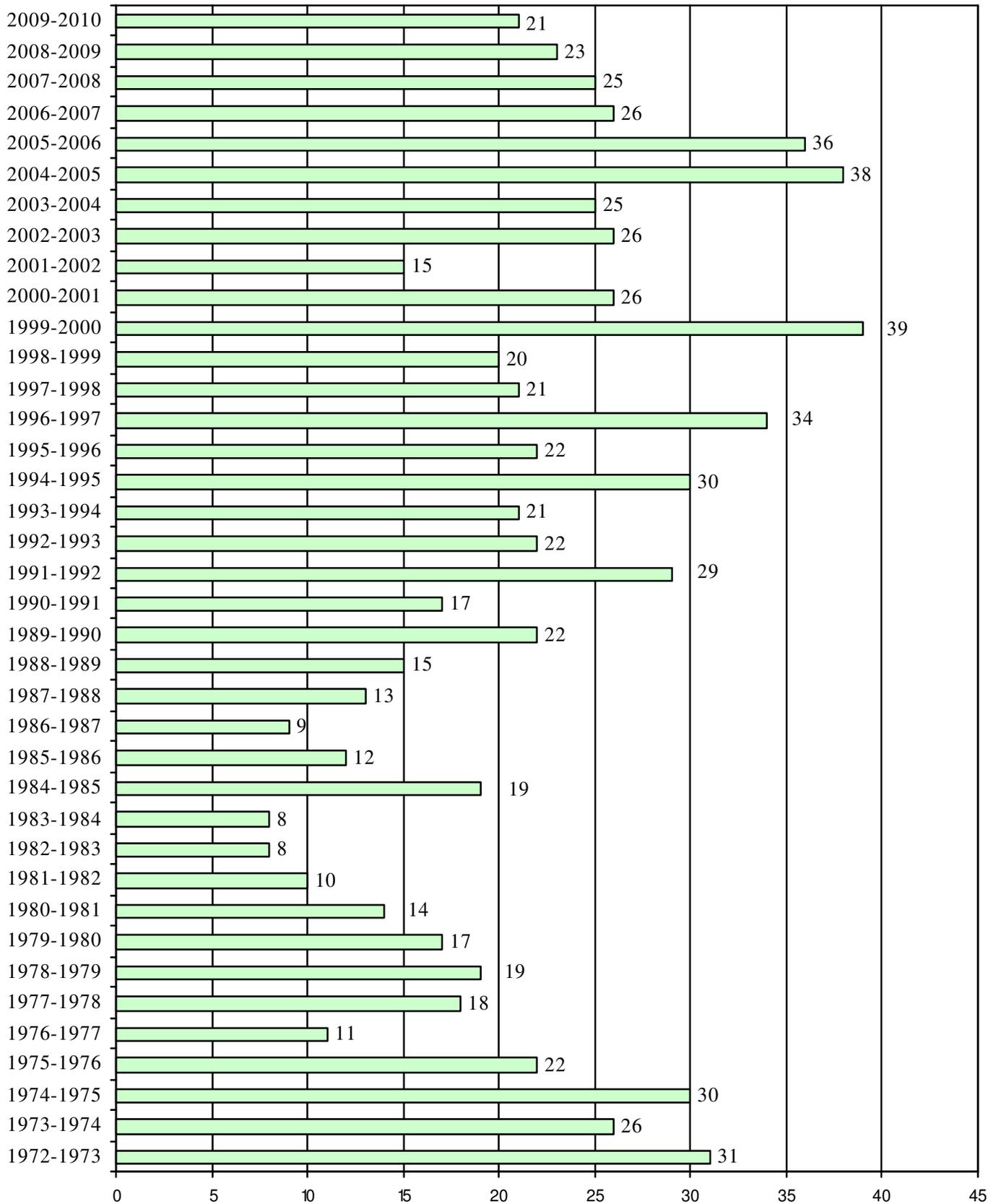
- Alcohol, speed and nighttime operation continue to be the main contributing factors involved in fatal snowmobile incidents with 57% during the 2009-2010 season. 67% of the incidents were alcohol involved.
- Speed was also involved in 81% of the incidents and 71% of the incidents occurred during the hours of darkness.
- The number of operators arrested for operating a snowmobile while intoxicated was 96, up from the 43 during the 2008-2009 season.
- Two top locations where fatal incidents occurred were frozen waterways with 8 (38%) and public trails with 7 (34%).
- Top cause for the fatal incidents was collision with a fixed object (14) 67%. Struck by snowmobile, driven into open water and collision with moving motor vehicle where tied for second with (2) 10% each.

Safety Tips

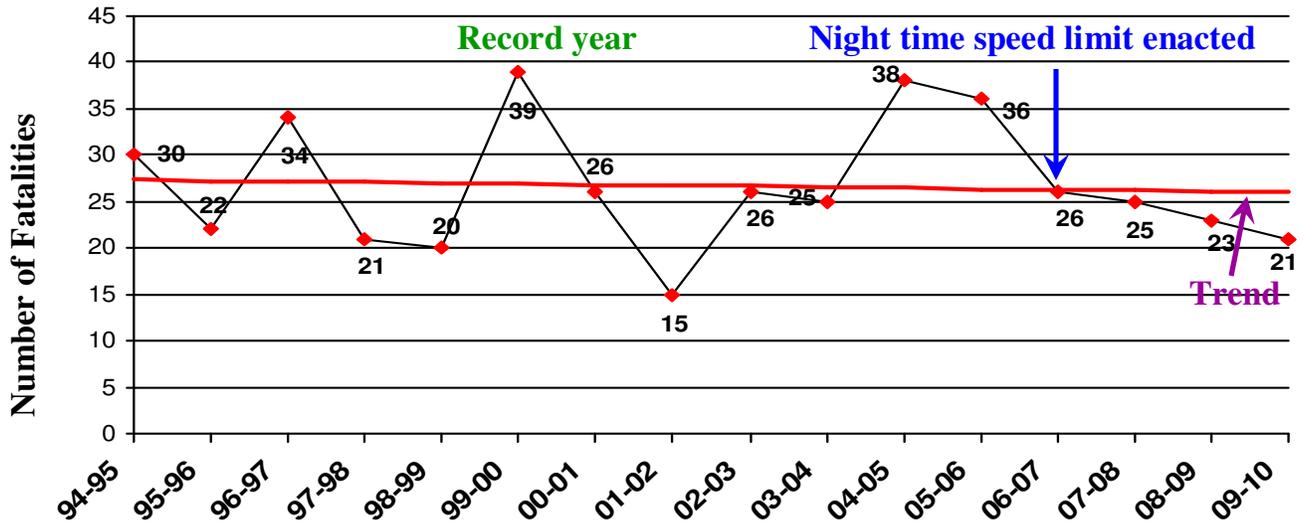
The Department recommends the following tips to help ensure safe, enjoyable and ethical snowmobile experience for everyone.

- Complete a Wisconsin Snowmobile Safety Course. This course helps establish a safety mindset and provides basic knowledge in safe, legal and ethical operation. Visit: www.dnr.wi.gov to find a course near you.
- When crossing roads, always take your safety into your own hands. Never allow someone to wave you across. Cross only when you have determined it is safe to do so.
- Use the highest degree of caution while traveling across frozen waterways. Check ice conditions with local law enforcement or bait shops, carry or wear a floatation device, limit travel at night and if you DON'T KNOW, DON'T GO.
- Use the buddy system, never ride alone.
- Don't drink and ride. Alcohol affects a person's reaction time and judgment. Wait until you're done riding for the day before consuming any alcoholic beverages. If not for yourself, do it for your family and friends.
- Slow down. High speed operation leaves little room for mistakes and greatly increases stopping distances. Many snowmobile fatalities could have been prevented if the operators were only going slower.
- Nighttime speeds above 40 m.p.h. cause operators to override their headlamps. At this speed, operators have little chance of avoiding a hazard once it is illuminated by their headlamps.
- When riding in groups, always maintain a safe following distance of 2-3 seconds. Increase your following distance when traveling at night or when experiencing snow dust.
- Respect private property. The majority of the snowmobile trails in Wisconsin are on private property. Snowmobile clubs invest much time and effort to set up agreements with landowners each year. Riding outside the marked trails on private property is trespass and has caused landowners to close their properties to trails, sometimes forever. Stay within the marked trails and don't cut corners.

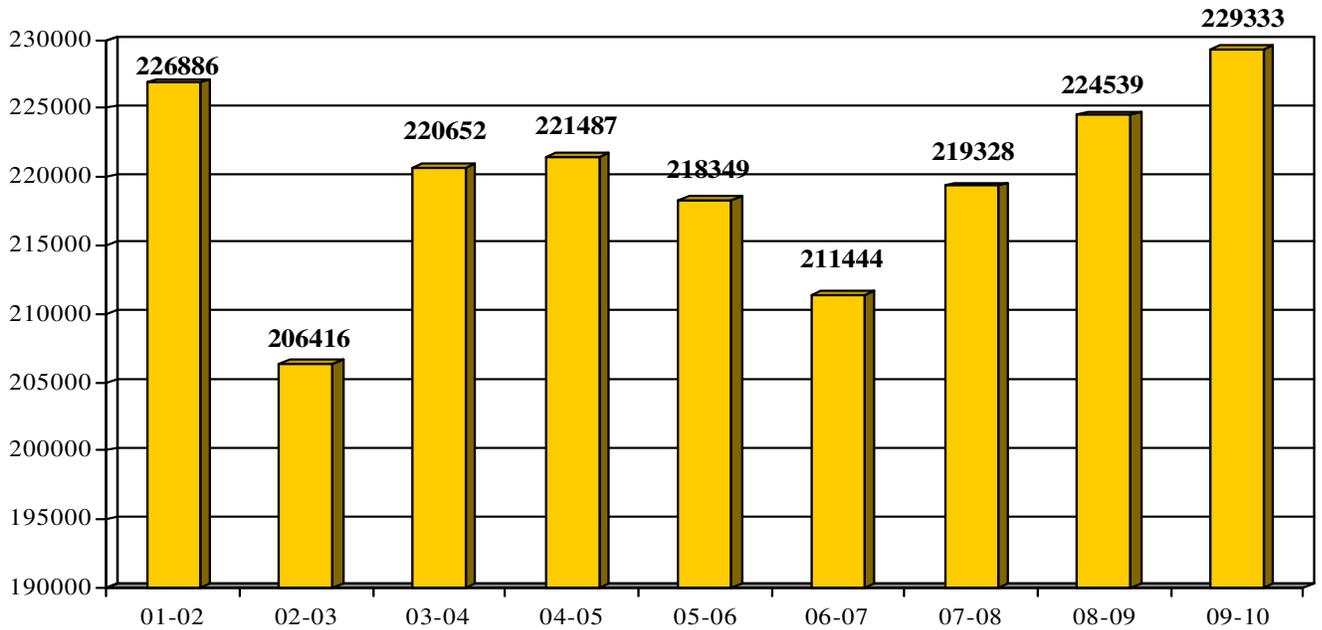
History of Snowmobile Fatalities 1972 - 2010



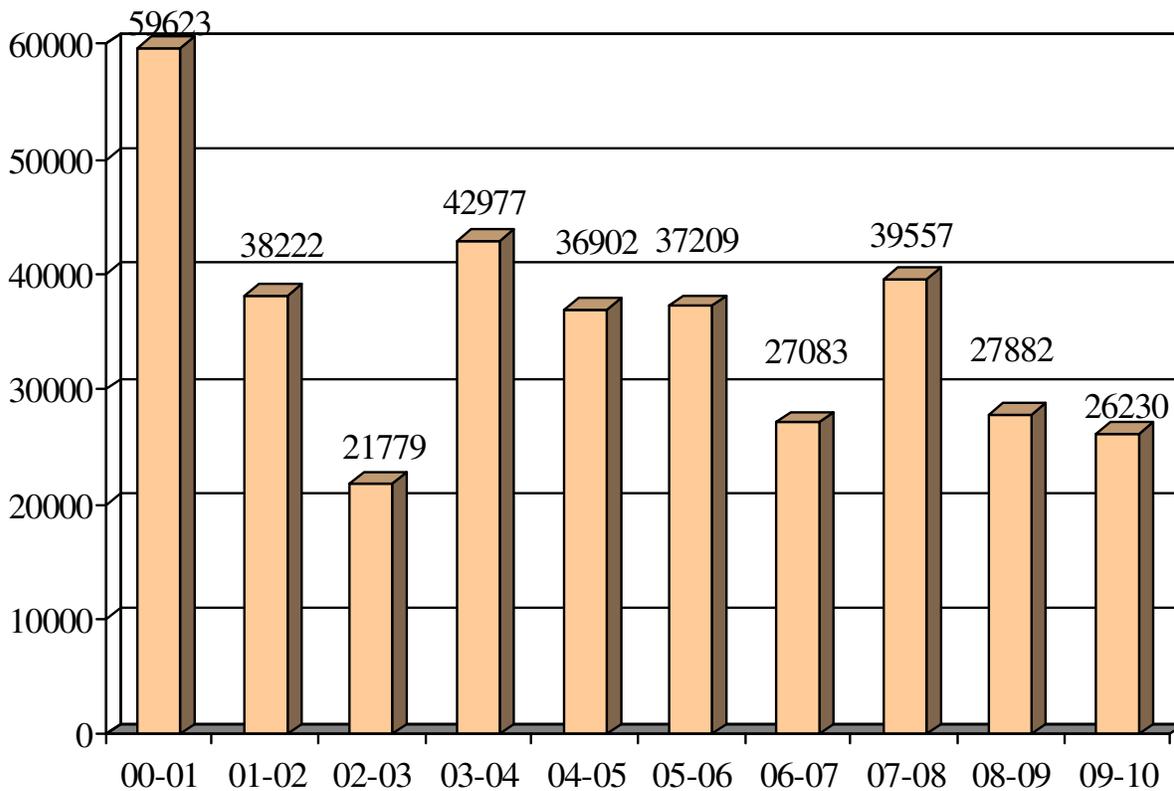
History of Snowmobile Fatalities



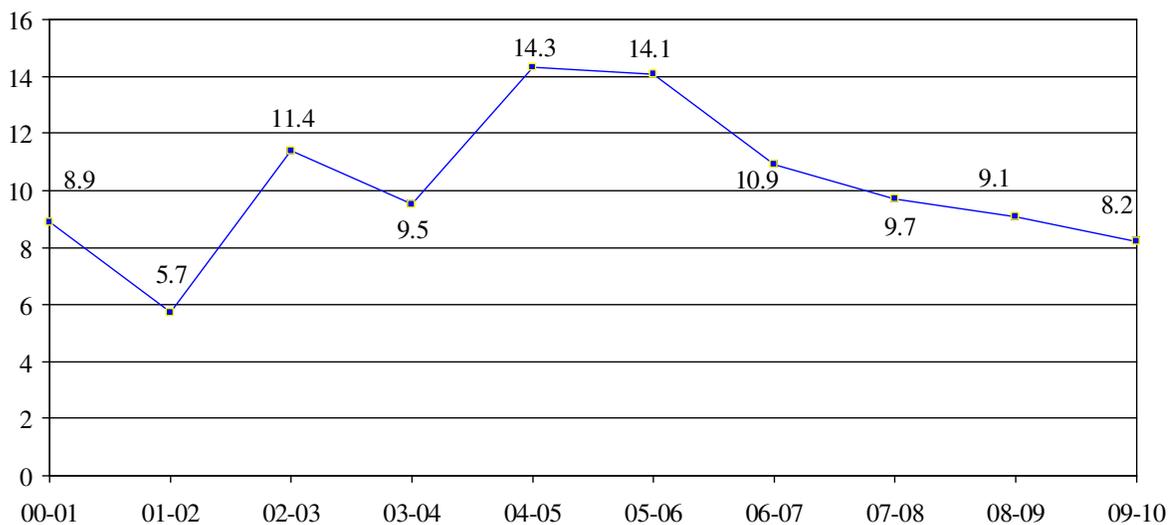
Wisconsin Resident Snowmobile Registrations



Nonresident Snowmobile Trail Passes

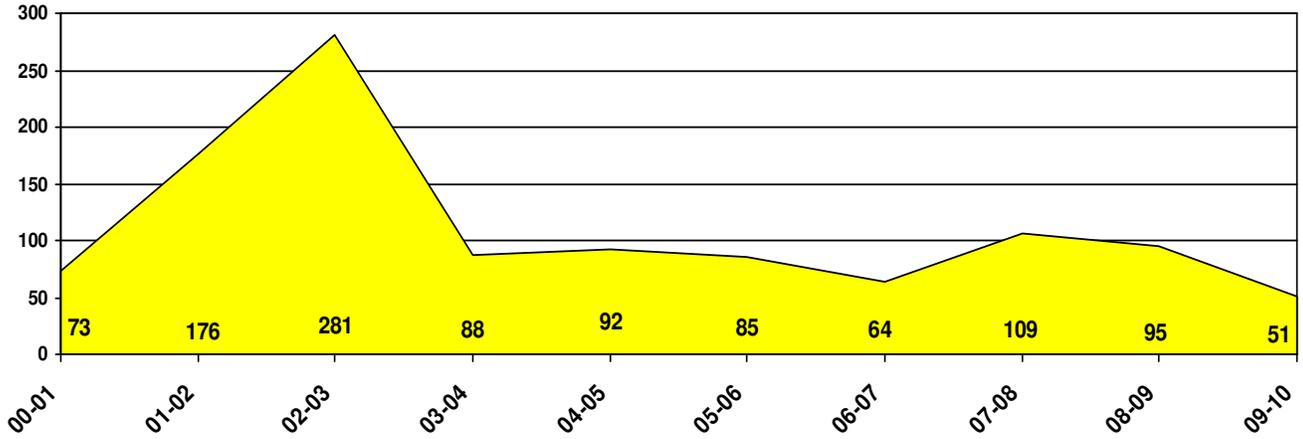


—■ Snowmobile Fatalities / 100,000



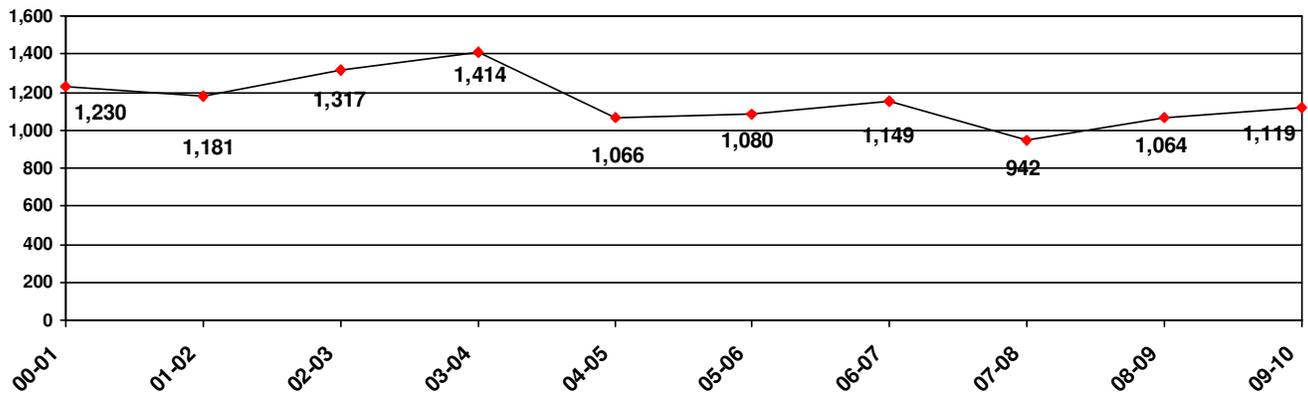
History of Newly Recruited Snowmobile Education Instructors

The total number of active instructors for 2009-2010 was 1,119.



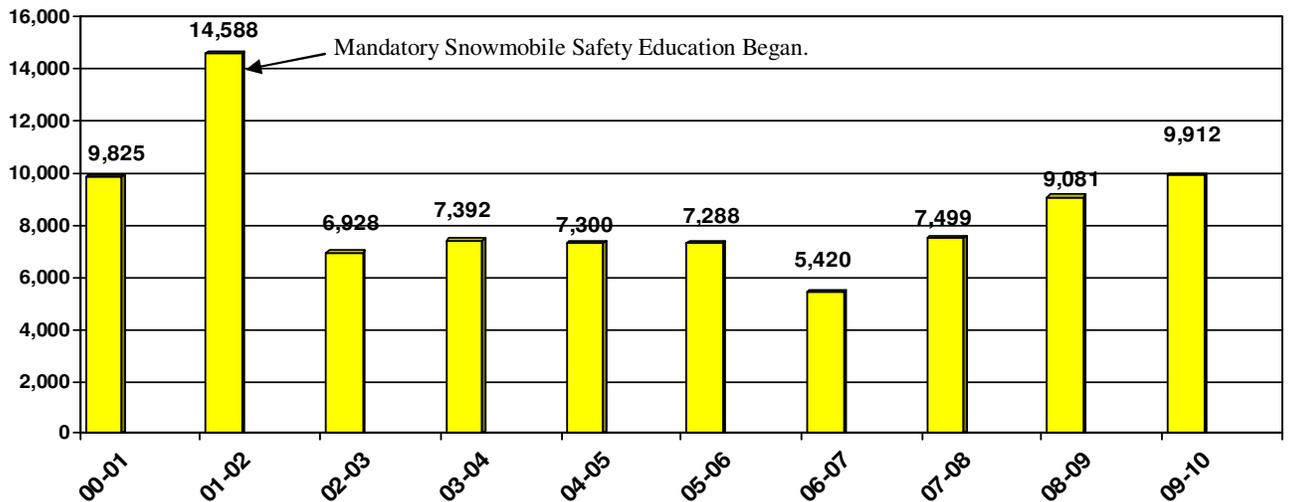
History of Active Snowmobile Instructors

Over 279,321 students have been certified by volunteer instructors.



History of Certified Snowmobile Students

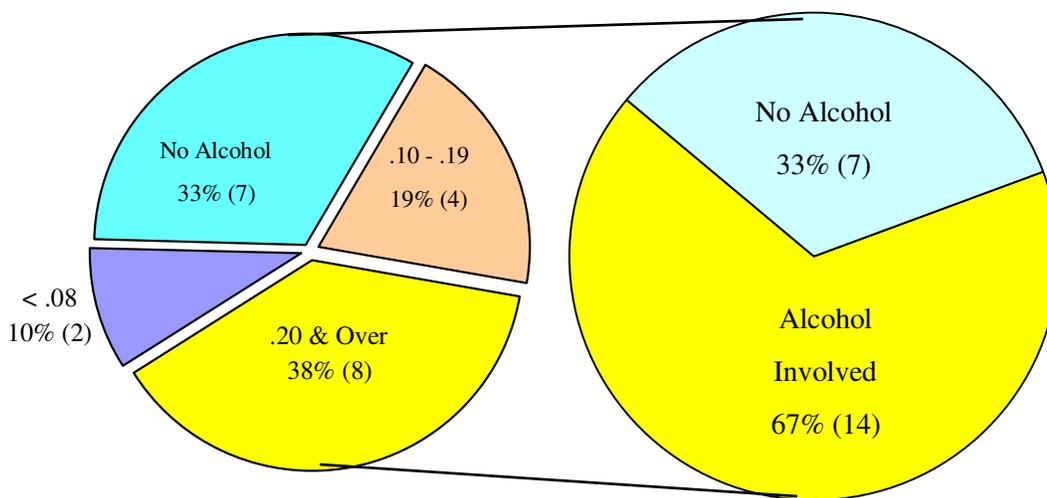
Certification requires a student to complete a basic Wisconsin snowmobile training course. Course content includes: knowing your snowmobile, maintenance and repair, riding, personal safety, winter survival, laws, courtesy and ethics.



2009-2010 Alcohol Involved Snowmobile Fatafs

2009-2010, the average blood alcohol level for all reported victim operators was 0.132.

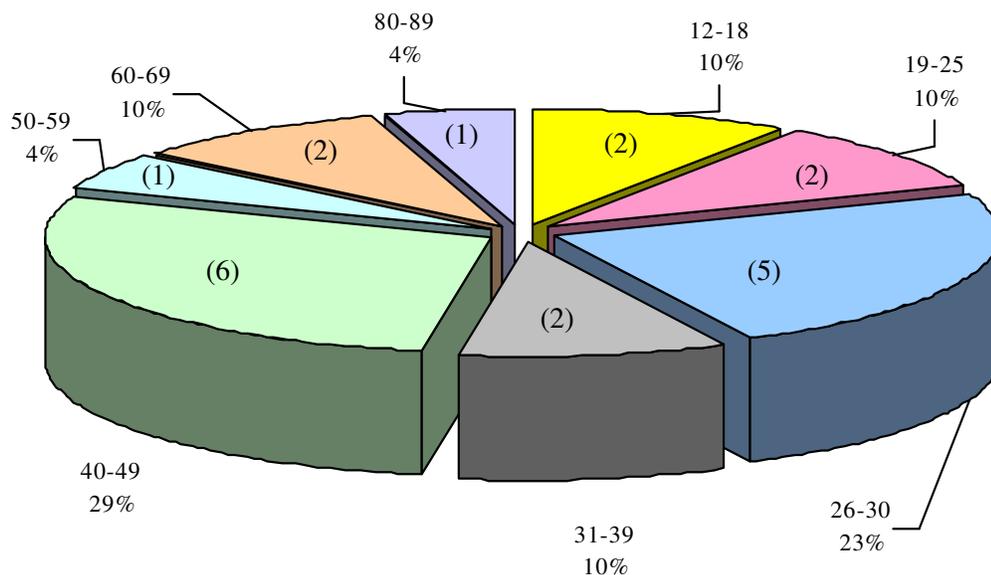
A snowmobile fatal is considered "alcohol involved" if any level of alcohol is found in the victims blood or witness accounts confirm the victim was consuming alcohol just prior to the crash.



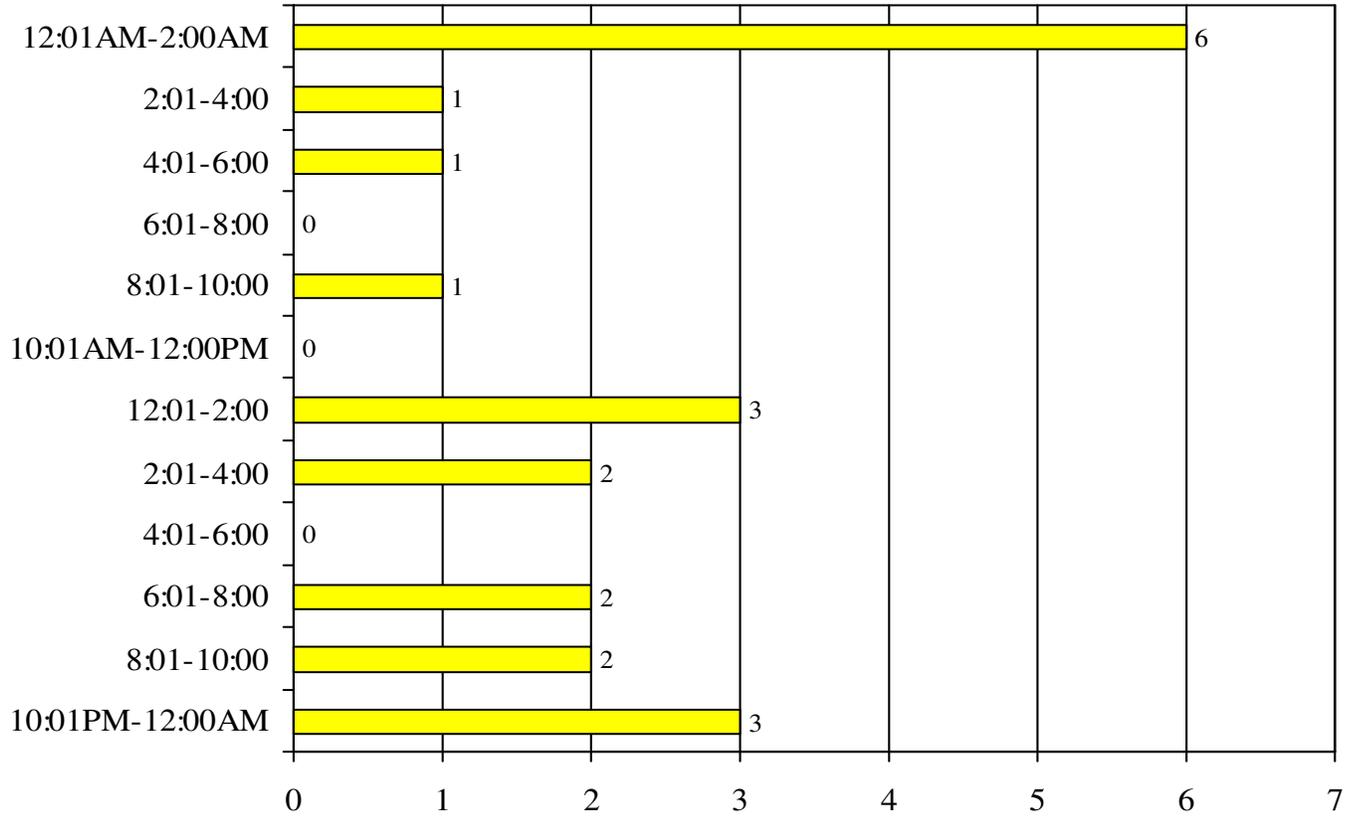
-Numbers in () represents number of victims.
-Blood alcohol content is grams/ml.

2009-2010 Age of Snowmobile Fatality Victims

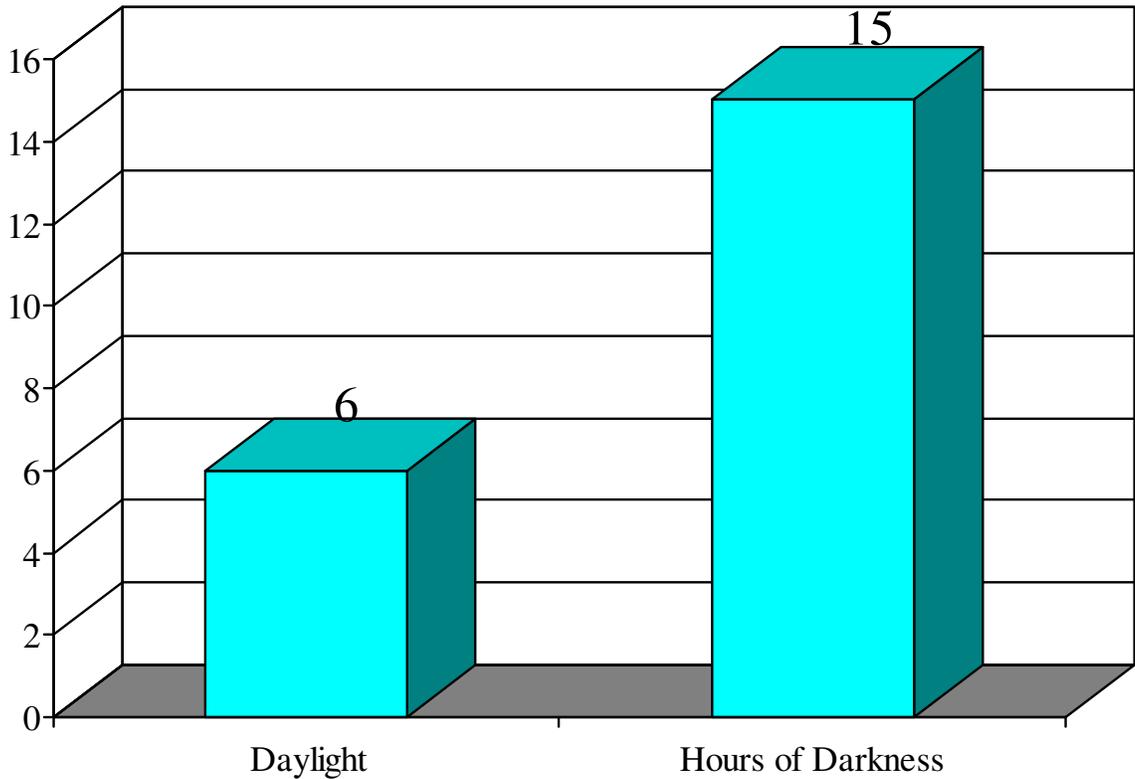
The average age for the victims killed was 38 years old compared to 42 years in 2008-2009.



2009-2010 Snowmobile Fatal Incident by Time of Day

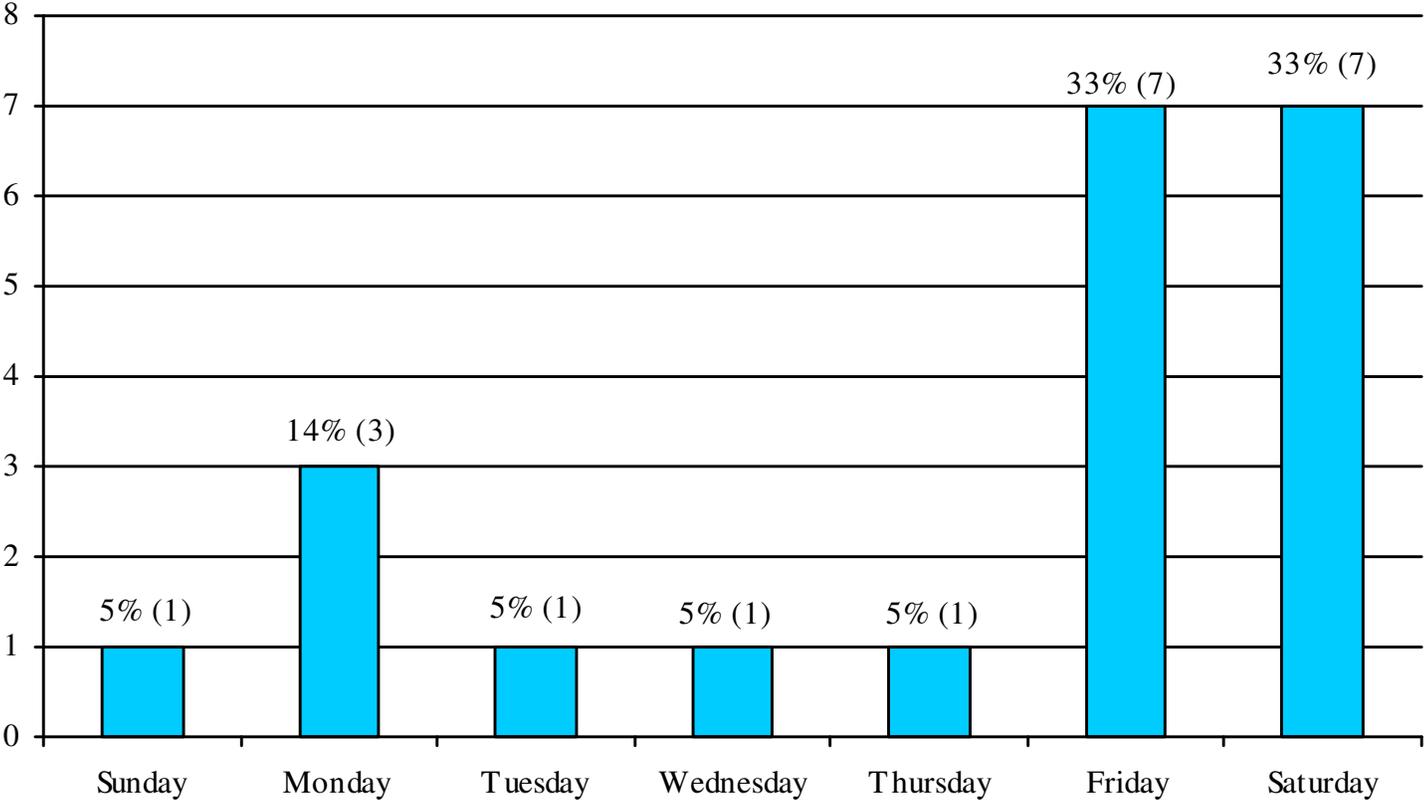


Occurring After the Hours of Darkness

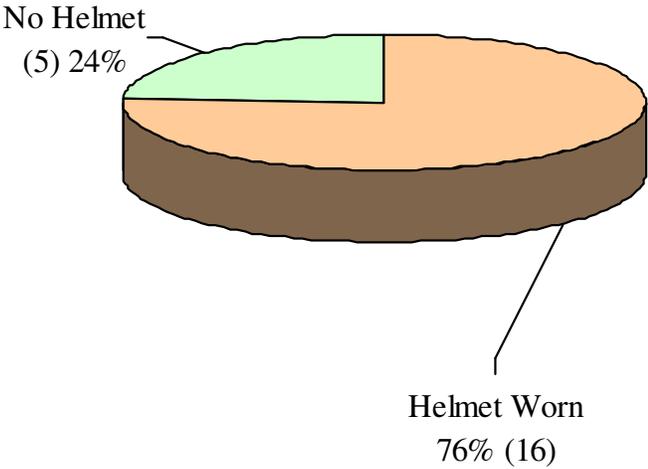


Hours of Darkness refers to the ½ hour after sunset until ½ hour before sunrise.

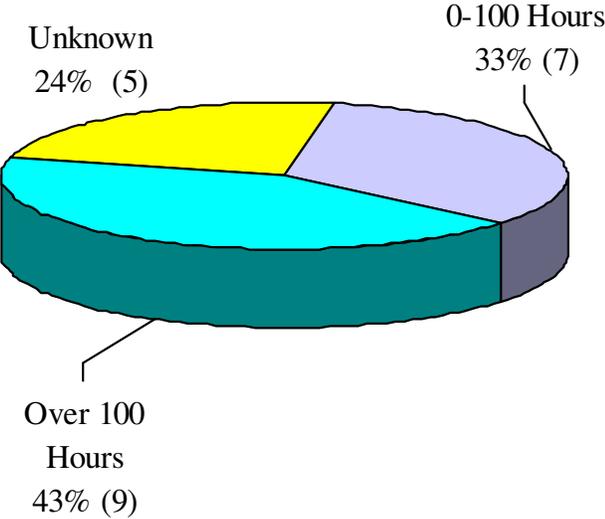
2009-2010 Snowmobile Fatal Incidents by Day of Week



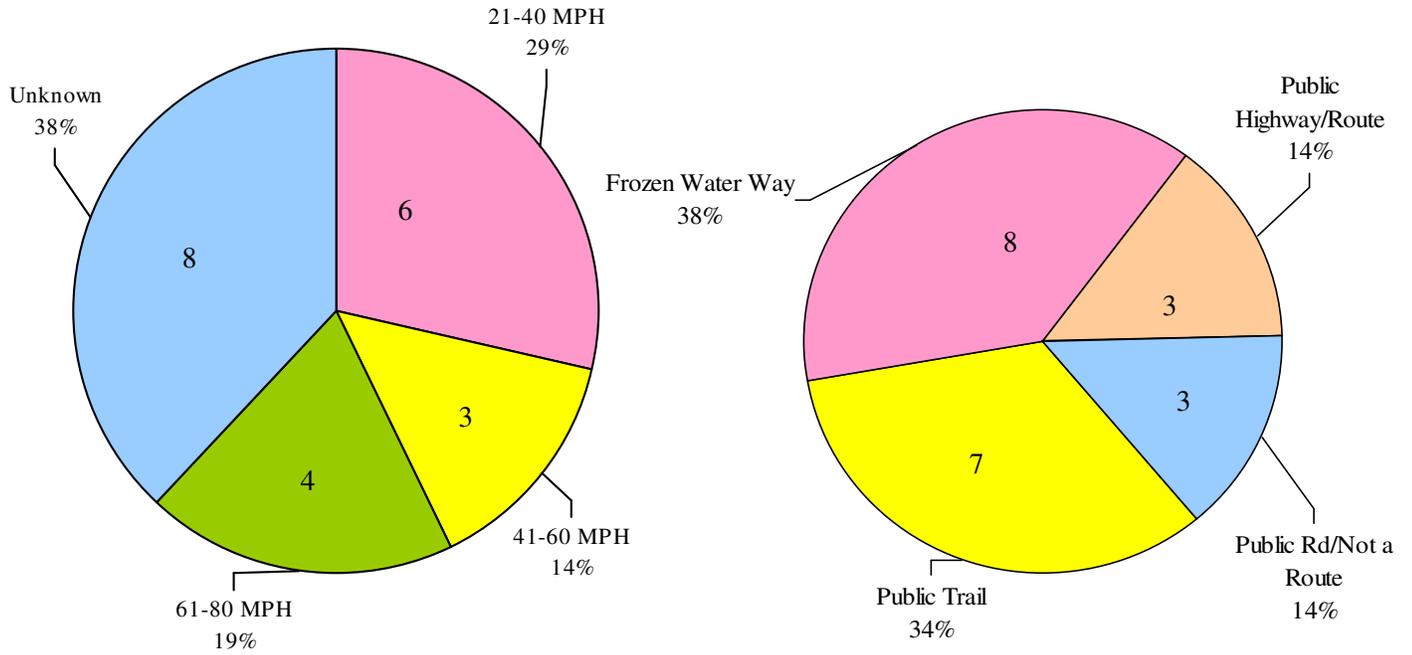
Victim Helmet Use



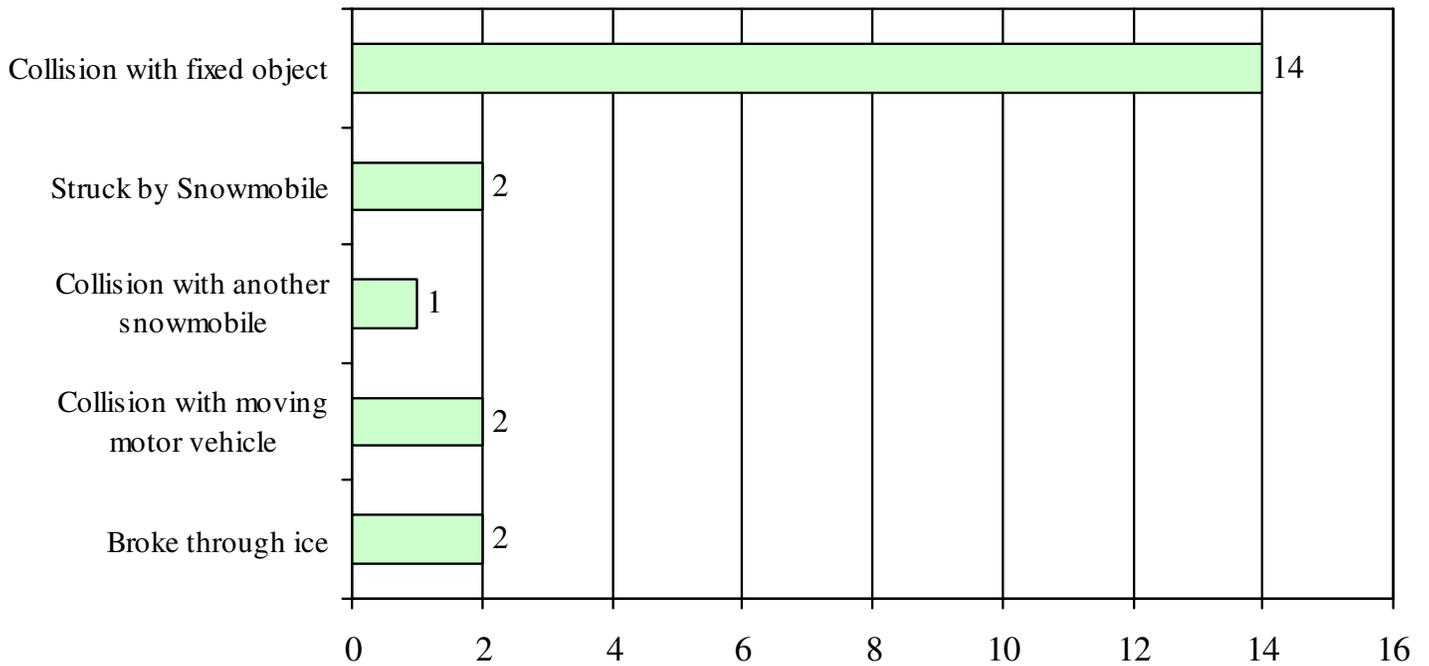
Operator Experience



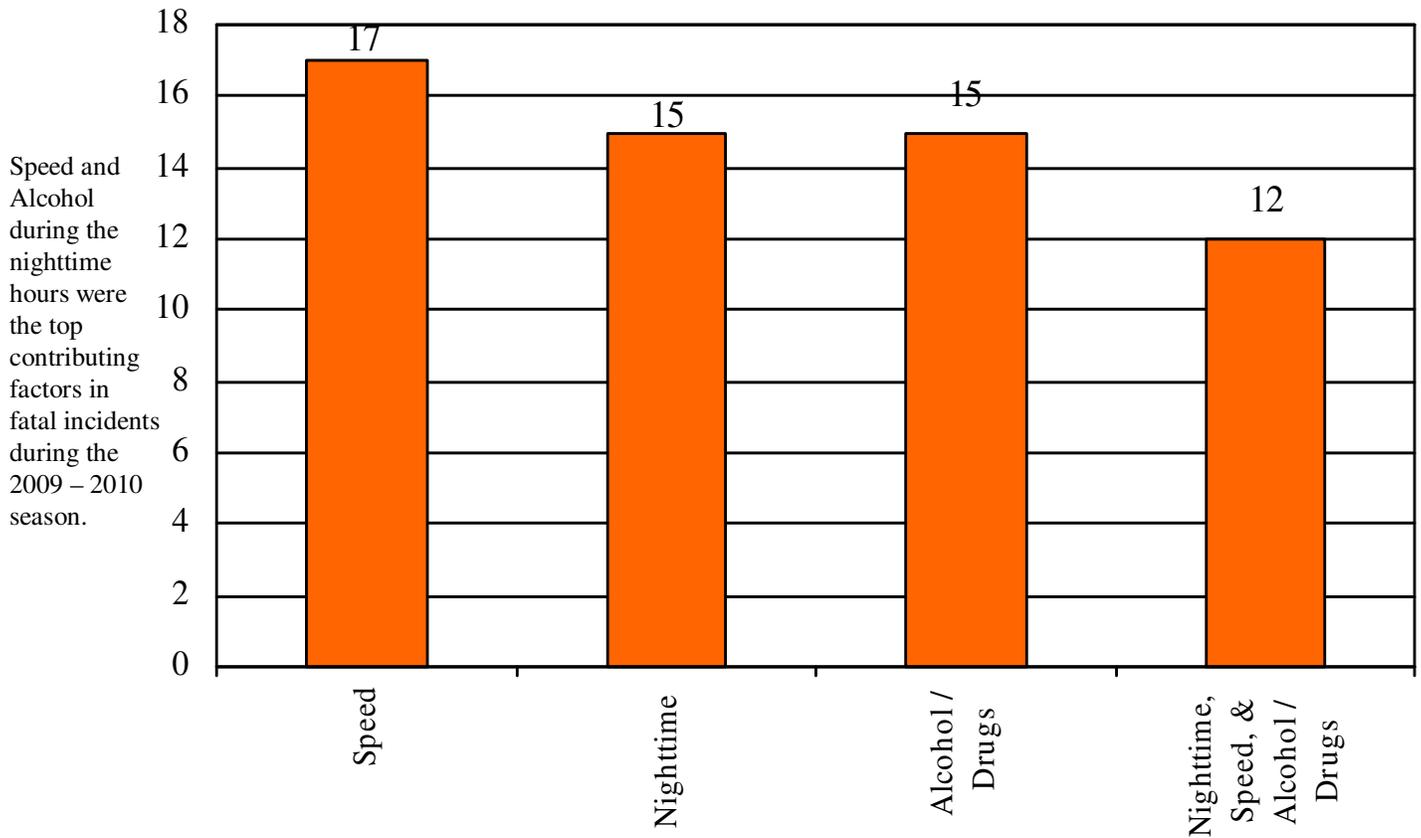
2009-2010 Fatal Snowmobile Incidents Speed and Location at Time of Incident



2009-2010 Fatal Snowmobile Incidents Type

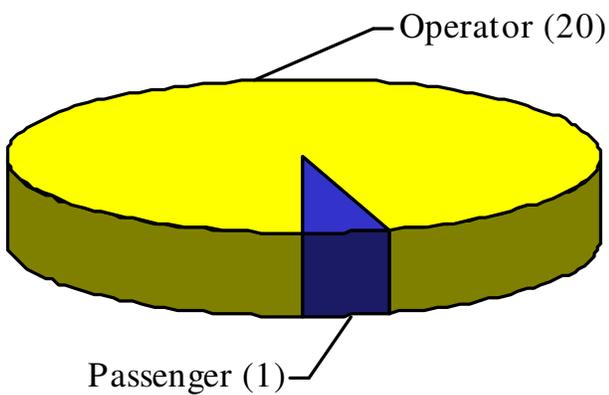


2009-2010 Main Factors Involved in Fatal Snowmobile Incidents



2009-2010 Fatal Snowmobile Victim Operators with Wisconsin DNR Safety Training Certification

2009-2010 Fatal Snowmobile Victim Operator vs. Passenger



2009-2010 Citations Issued for Snowmobile Violations

Total Citations	1,092
Operate Snowmobile w/o Valid Registration (S-1)	146
Highway and Roadway Violations (S-12)	81
Fail to or Improper Display of Registration Number or Decal (S-2)	35
Operate w/o Trail Use Sticker (S-33).....	70
Fail to Comply with Regulatory Signs (S-35).....	187
Operate Snowmobile w/o Possession of Valid Certificate (S-3)	35
Operate at/in Unreasonable, Improper or Careless Speed/manner (S-17)	52
Trespass 'Sec. 350.10(6) through (13) Wis. Stats.' (S-19)	34
Operate Snowmobile that Makes Excessive or Unusual Noise (S-28)	11
Operate Snowmobile while Intoxicated (S-24).....	96
Operate in Prohibited Area on Lands Controlled by DNR (S-11)	10
Give Permission to Operate a Snowmobile not Registered (S-5)	29
Permit Operation by Person Incapable Because of Age, Physical or Mental Disability (S-15).....	28
Operate Snowmobile with Alcohol Concentration Above .1% (S-25)	67
Fail to Transfer Registration of Snowmobile (S-4).....	22
Operate snowmobile w/o proof of training certificate (S-36)	83
Operate (Manufacture or Seller) Snowmobile w/o Functioning Muffler (S-34)	3
Transport Uncased Strung Bow on a Snowmobile (S-09)	8
Fail to Report Snowmobile Accident (S-16).....	4
Fail to Display Lights when Required (S-18)	4
Miscellaneous (S-20)	6
Fail to Stop for Law Enforcement Officer (S-22).....	2
Operate Snowmobile w/o Muffler on Engine (S-29)	4
Shoot From a Snowmobile (S-10).....	5
Equipment Violation (S-14).....	15
Dealer Failing to Collect Fee & Submit Registration Applications (S-21).....	1
Refuse to Take Intoxicated Snowmobile Test (S-26)	1
Absolute Sobriety for Persons Under 19 (S-27)	1
Fail to Render Aid (S-23).....	1
Cause Injury by Intoxicated Operation of Snowmobile (S-30).....	1
Operate snowmobile on or adjacent to a roadway in excess of the applicable Speed limit (S-27)	1
Fail to keep to the right and proceed with caution when passing another Snowmobile in the opposite direction (S-38).....	3
Operate snowmobile > 55 mph during hours of darkness (S-55)	43
Driving animals with a snowmobile (S-07)	1
Selling snowmobiles without dealers license (S-13).....	1
Failure to advise/notify of change of address (S-06)	3
Transport loaded or uncased firearm on a snowmobile (S-08)	3
Remove or damage snowmobile trail signs & standards (S-32)	3
Operate snowmobile on or adjacent to a roadway in excess of the applicable speed limit (S-37)	3
Operate snowmobile with detectable amount of controlled substance in blood (S-39).....	2

Citations received and entered into database as of 05/2010.

Wisconsin Snowmobile Fatality Summary 2009/2010 Season

#	Date/Time	Location	Type & Cause of Incident / Fatality	Age / Sex	BAC / Residency	WI Safety Certified / Helmet
1.	12/18/09	Town of Brazeau	Collision with a fixed object	31	.066	No
	10:25PM	Oconto Co. (Route)	Speed/Alcohol/Drugs	M	WI	Yes
<p>The victim had crested a hill with a slight curve and was unable to control the snowmobile. It appears he was moving fast enough that he was unable to stay on the roadway, crossed over the roadway and continued on the opposite side before climbing a snow bank and hitting a tree.</p>						
2.	12/19/09	Town of Three Lakes	Collision with a fixed object	20	.207	No
	1:35AM	Oneida Co. (Route)	Speed/Alcohol	F	IL	Yes
<p>The victim and a companion left a bar after consuming several alcoholic beverages and failed to follow the snowmobile route, lost control and attempted to brake for approximately 200 feet and went airborne prior to striking the residence.</p>						
3.	12/19/09	Town of Seneca	Struck by a Vehicle	41	.247	No
	6:24PM	Crawford Co. (Public Rd)	Speed/Alcohol	M	IA	No
<p>The victim was witnessed traveling at a high rate of speed and attempted to stop before crossing a state highway. The victim was thrown from the snowmobile onto the state highway and into the path of a pickup truck.</p>						
4.	12/23/09	Town of Mukwonago	Rollover/Ejection/Collision With a Fixed Object	17	0.00	No
	12:05AM	Waukesha Co. (Lake)	Speed/Drugs	F	WI	No
<p>The victim was a passenger on a snowmobile racing another snowmobile across a lake. The male operator swerved to avoid a motor vehicle on the ice and both driver and passenger were thrown from the snowmobile. The victim sustained major injuries after colliding with the motor vehicle and passed away on 12/26/2009. The victim and driver were not wearing helmets.</p>						

5.	12/27/09	Town of Bradley	Collision With a Fixed Object	22	.118	Yes
	4:30AM	Lincoln Co. (Route)	Speed/Alcohol	M	WI	Yes
<p>The victim was lead snowmobile in a group of two when they became lost. The victim was operating at a high rate of speed on a snowmobile road route when he failed to negotiate a 90 degree turn, left the road and collided with a tree.</p>						
6.	01/01/10	Town of Pelican	Collision With Motor Vehicle	42	.249	No
	12:55AM	Oneida Co. (Road)	Alcohol/Illegal Roadway Operation	M	WI	No
<p>The victim was the first in a group of six snowmobilers operating on the shoulder of a state highway, against traffic. A motor vehicle traveling towards them collided head-on with the first three snowmobiles, killing the first rider and injuring three others on the next two following snowmobiles.</p>						
7.	01/01/10	Town of Fifield	Struck by Another Snowmobile	27	0.320	No
	1:00AM	Price Co. (Lake)	Speed/Alcohol	M	WI	Yes
<p>The victim was traveling at a high rate of speed across a lake when he fell off his snowmobile and was struck by his companion, following behind.</p>						
8.	01/01/10	Town of Mt. Morris	Collision With a Fixed Object	42	.131	No
	> 1:00 AM	Waushara Co. (Public Trail)	Speed/Hypothermia/Alcohol	M	WI	Yes
<p>The victim failed to make a 90 degree turn, left the trail and traveled through a barbed wire fence and eventually struck a plow.</p>						

9.	01/01/10	Town of Salem	Collision With a Fixed Object	43	.263	No
	7:11PM	Kenosha Co (Lake)	Speed/Alcohol	M	WI	Yes
<p>The victim was traveling at a high rate of speed when he struck the side of one unoccupied permanent ice shanty and continued on to strike a second permanent ice shanty occupied by two fishermen. One of the fishermen was injured in the crash.</p>						
10.	01/09/10	City of Menasha	Broke through Ice	30	.167	No
	10:00 PM	Winnebago Co (River/Lake)	Open Water/Alcohol	M	WI	Yes
<p>The victim was traveling with companion, #11, and never returned home. A search was conducted by the Winnebago Co. Sheriff's Dive Team locating the victim on 01/11/2010</p>						
11.	01/09/10	City of Menasha	Broke through Ice	29	.015	Yes
	10:00 PM	Winnebago Co (River/Lake)	Open Water/Alcohol	M	WI	Yes
<p>The victim was traveling with companion #10, and never returned home. A search was conducted by the Winnebago Co. Sheriff's Dive Team locating the victim on 01/12/2010.</p>						
12.	01/23/10	Town of Doty	Collision with Fixed Object	63	0.00	No
	12:53PM	Oconto Co (Trail)	Speed/Inexperience/Rain	M	WI	Yes
<p>The victim was 3rd in line of 4 snowmobiles and failed to negotiate a down hill curve and collided with a tree. There was misting precipitation at the time which may have limited visibility and may have contributed to the incident.</p>						

13.	02/01/10	Town of Lafayette	Collision with Fixed Object	81	0.0	No
	4:00PM	Chippewa Co (Creek)	Speed	M	WI	No

The victim attempted to go down a bank at a high rate of speed onto a creek, lost control of his snowmobile, going airborne and striking a boulder underneath a bridge and then striking the bridge pillar.

14.	02/04/10	Town of Meenon	Struck by Snowmobile	41	0.208	No
	12:50AM	Burnett Co (Road)	Speed/Alcohol	M	WI	Yes

The victim was riding a snowmobile down a road with three other snowmobilers. The victim collided with the snowmobile in front of him, was ejected and then struck by one or more snowmobiles that were following him. All the subjects were arrested for operating while intoxicated. Other charges are pending.

15.	02/05/10	Town of Freedom	Collision with a Fixed Object	66	0.0	No
	9:47AM	Forest Co (Trail)	Too fast for conditions/Inexperience	M	WI	Yes

The victim was riding last in a party of seven snowmobiles when on a gradual curve he left the trail and struck a tree.

16.	02/05/10	Town of Boulder Junction	Collision with a Fixed Object	26	0.0	No
	1:48PM	Vilas Co (Trail)	Too Fast For Conditions	M	IL	Yes

When the victim approached a curve to the right on the trail he lost control of the snowmobile. It appears that the traveled along the left side of the trail onto a banked edge of the trail, then crossed back over to the right side of the trail and fell, or was thrown from the snowmobile and struck a tree.

17.	02/08/10	Town of Mercer	Collision with a Fixed Object	44	.224	No
	3:00AM	Iron Co. (Trail)	Speed/Alcohol	M	WI	Yes
The victim attempted but was unable to stop at a stop sign, went off the trail into some bumps and was attempting to get back onto the trail when he struck a post.						
18.	02/09/10	Village of Bruce	Collision with Snowmobile	16	0.0	No
	3:35PM	Rusk Co. (Trail)	Failure to Stay Right	M	WI	Yes
The victim was operating a snowmobile in the center of the trail when an oncoming snowmobile collided with the left front side of the snowmobile. The victim and his passenger were both ejected. The victim's passenger, as well as the operator of the other snowmobile, sustained non-life threatening injuries.						
19.	02/15/10	Town of Green Lake	Collision with Fixed Object	31	0.284	No
	10:40PM	Green Lake Co. (Lake)	Alcohol/Speed	M	WI	Yes
The victim was traveling at a high rate of speed across the frozen lake when he struck an ice shanty.						
20.	02/20/10	Town of Lake Tomahawk	Collision with Fixed Object	29	0.0	No
	12:31PM	Oneida Co. (Trail)	Speed/Inexperience	M	MI	Yes
It appears the victim may have been looking behind him when he went off the trail on the right and over-corrected, colliding with a tree on the left side of the trail.						
21.	03/06/10	Town of Menominee	Collision with Fixed Object	51	0.137	No
	11:56PM	Menominee Co. (Lake)	Speed/Alcohol/No Helmet	M	WI	No
The victim was operating across a lake when he struck the shoreline and was ejected from the snowmobile into a large boulder. The victim was not wearing a helmet and is suspected of being intoxicated at the time.						

Complete a Snowmobile Safety Course

Learn more at WWW.DNR.WI.GOV



Remember to always wear your helmet.

If not for yourself, do it for your family and friends.

Ride for Life

- Alcohol related tragedies are a societal problem.
- Alcohol increases the risk of other factors such as speed, ice, night riding and road crossings.
 - Impairment starts with the first drink.
- Snowmobiling takes place in an unpredictable and uncontrollable natural setting.
 - Operating a snowmobile is much riskier than driving a car.



- “Zero Alcohol” means before and during your ride and is a personal choice.
 - “Zero Alcohol” will save lives and reduce injuries.
 - Most snowmobilers already choose to ride alcohol free.
- “Zero Alcohol” is a good news story that will improve public perception of snowmobiling.