

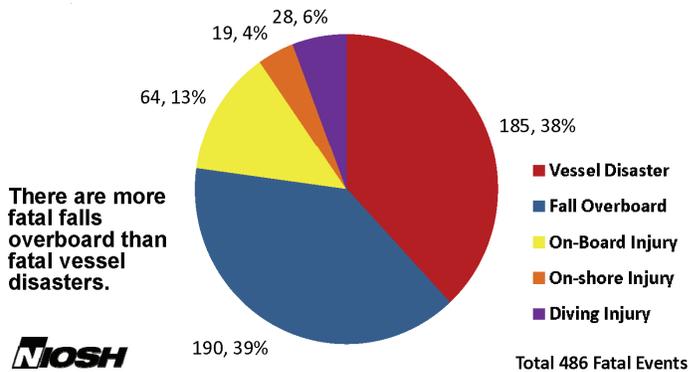


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Issue 4E update

Falls Overboard from Commercial Fishing Vessels

Fatal Events, 2000-2012



From 2000 to 2012, 191 U.S. commercial fishermen drowned after falling overboard. Only two were wearing Personal Flotation Devices (PFDs), and many were within minutes of being rescued when they lost their strength, sank below the surface, and drowned. Those deaths could likely have been prevented if the fishermen had been wearing a PFD.

To reduce the risk of falling overboard:

- Use safety lines when appropriate.
- Install or extend guard rails where possible.
- Keep decks clean to prevent slipping or tripping.
- Use nonskid material on decks.
- Never go out on deck alone.
- Orient all crewmembers regarding vessel rules for the prevention of falls overboard and when the wearing of PFDs is required.

For successful rescues from the water:

- Always wear a PFD on deck.
- Keep a Man Overboard Recovery Device aboard your vessel.
- Have a rescue plan and practice it frequently.
- Ensure that more than one person on board can operate the vessel in an emergency.
- Use a man overboard alarm system.

New PFDs are light, comfortable & minimize snag hazards.

There are many models and styles of PFDs available today that are designed for commercial fishing. Most fishermen who have tried one of the new styles of PFDs found one that is comfortable to wear. Fishermen concerned that PFDs could snag on fishing gear found smooth, thin PFDs without protrusions.

The key to finding the proper PFD is to try on different styles until you find one that will work for the specific activities related to your type of fishing. For instance; fishermen who work in hot weather may prefer a light inflatable vest, whereas fishermen who work in cold weather may prefer a PFD with foam padding for insulation against the weather.

Inflatable PFDs may be the most comfortable to wear while working. Maintenance and care of the inflation devices are critical if the PFD is to perform as intended. Foam PFDs are low cost, thicker, low maintenance and can be worn under rain gear.

You can use PFDs on deck even if they do not have Coast Guard approval numbers, as long as the vessel also has the correct number and type of PFDs/Immersion Suits required by the regulations.

The best PFD is the one you wear! Find one you like. Then take care of it, and when on deck, always - WEAR IT, WEAR IT, WEAR IT !.

Auto-Inflate Work Vest



Man Overboard Recovery Device

