

UNITED STATES LIFESAVING ASSOCIATION

National Lifesaving Statistics Report 2023

Background

Since its inception as the National Surf Life Saving Association in 1964, the chapters and agencies involved in lifesaving efforts in the United States have endeavored to record the activity performed by their lifeguards. These records have been compiled in a statistical format to record the various categories of activity performed by these agencies. The Association, now known as the United States Lifesaving Association (USLA), has published this information for many years for several purposes. The main function is to educate the public about the profession of lifesaving. The statistics also serve to highlight particular professional areas of interest, provide tools in agency budget development, and further the knowledge base about the open water environment. This report highlights the 2023 statistics of the USLA. Complete records of USLA statistics dating to 1960 may be downloaded from USLA's Website at www.usla.org.

The United States Lifesaving Association

The United States Lifesaving Association is a non-profit, professional organization of lifeguards who work at open water beaches (both surf and inland). Members are organized into chapters, which are generally formed by reason of a common employer of the member lifeguards. Since this is not a union, membership extends to all ranks of lifeguards and there is strong participation from management level employees through line lifeguards. Open water lifeguard agencies, most of which are governmental bodies, participate in USLA through their employees and benefit through various means, such as promulgation of public safety material, collection and dissemination of statistics, development of lifeguard educational material, and the USLA Lifeguard Agency Certification Program.

Beaches, Collection and Categories

The USLA collects lifesaving statistics for all beaches affiliated agencies and also accepts reports from other ocean beaches indirectly associated with the USLA. The collection efforts date to 1960 and for much of the first twenty years, focused exclusively on California beaches, especially the greater Southern California area. In the late 1980's, collection efforts began in earnest for the entire United States. This reporting system reflects more than twenty years of active national statistics collection, with a gradual progression from a west coast based report to the more national look presented here. USLA now reports lifesaving statistics from nine geographical regions of its organization. Typically, more than 140 agencies/beaches report each year, with total agency numbers increasing annually. These include most of the major United States beach lifeguard agencies such as the County of Los Angeles, the State of California, the City of San Diego, the City of Huntington Beach, the City and County of Honolulu, the County of Volusia, the City of Fort Lauderdale, Cape May and Long Beach Township, New Jersey.

2023 National Lifesaving Statistics	Nationwide Incident Data
Beach Attendance	292,660,201
Rescues	64,578
Preventive Actions	9,336,911
Medical Aids	243,320
Boat - Rescues	1,341
Boat - Passengers	2,393
Boat - Vessel Value	\$118,031,970
Drowning - Unguarded	104
Drowning - Guarded	16
Lost and Found Persons	8,481
Public Safety Lectures	126,462
Students Attending	679,190

Website Upgrades

During this year, several upgrades have been made to the new reporting system. First, Watchtower, our database provider, has automated the reporting process for their agency clients. Eventually, as more agencies choose to engage with Watchtower, more data will be loaded into the overall database directly, without necessary intervention by USLA staff. Second, in conjunction with the ED's review process, Certification Officers are now checking to ensure any applicant for renewal of their Certification has their agency statistics current. Finally, several new search functions have been added to the Long Term Statistical Trends Tab/Page. Researchers can now sort by Year, Region, State, County and Agency. Using the tool, it is possible to drill down to a more defined look at a particular agency or area. We have also added a caveat to the system: *A Note to Researchers, Media and other Data seekers: These statistics are limited to data contributed by USLA Certified Agencies annually and others who may choose to participate. Not all beaches in the United States contribute to the database. Users should carefully review the data for research or contact USLA with inquiries.*