

ELECTRICAL SHOCK DROWNING

At the 2017 Kentucky State Fair, brochures (<http://www.electricschockdrowning.org/preventing-esd.html>) were distributed to raise public awareness of what can happen when electricity and water mix: **electric shock drowning**.

Electric shock drawing (ESD) occurs when there is an **electrical current in water that immobilizes a person, causing him or her to drown**. Those around the victim may attempt to rescue him by jumping in the water, but they end getting shocked by the same electrical current. Not only is the rescuer unable to help the first victim, but in many cases, ends up needing to be rescued as well.

Some states, like Tennessee and West Virginia, have put regulations into place that require electrical maintenance at public docks and marinas using a qualified electrician. Other states are following suit with similar legislation.

In Kentucky, legislators passed the Samantha Chipley Act (<http://www.lrc.ku.gov/recorddocuments/bill/17RS/HB437/bill.pdf>), in KRS Chapter 235.

In the unofficial web copy of the act, boat dock and marina owners must comply with certain regulations, including the installation of electrical wiring by a KY licensed electrician, the use of ground-fault protection, the biennial inspection of the dock/marina by a KY-certified electrical inspector, and permanently installed proper signage throughout the dock or marina.

In addition to state regulations, standards have been set, and are still being discussed, to make recreational water areas safer. The National Electrical Code has construction requirements concerning the installation of electrical equipment around water. These include the required use of ground-fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) at boatyards and marinas. The NFPA 303 addresses the construction and operation of marinas and related facilities. The American Boat and Yacht Council develop electrical safety standards for recreational boats. The Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI) teams up with other like-minded organizations to educate the public on electrical safety and ESD.

Source: Ken Sellars (<https://www.e-hazard.com/blog/author/ken-sellars/>)