



May. 20, 2002

ENQUIRER HOME

LOCAL

SPORTS

BUSINESS

TEMPO

ENTERTAINMENT

CLASSIFIED

ARCHIVE

SE

TODAY'S ENQUIRER

Front Page

▶ Local News

Sports

Business

Tempo

Travel

Health

Technology

Weather

Back Issues

Search

Subscribe

SPORTS

Bearcats

Bengals

High School

Reds

Xavier

PERSPECTIVE

Jim Borgman

Columnists

Photographers

ENTERTAINMENT

Movies

Dining

Horoscopes

Lottery Results

Local Events

Video Games

CINCINNATI.COM

Giveaways

Maps/Directions

Send an E-Postcard

Coupons

Visitor's Guide

CLASSIFIEDS

Jobs

Cars

Homes

Obituaries

General

Place an ad

HELP

Feedback

Subscribe

Search

Survey

Monday, May 20, 2002

Latest Headline

Updated Every 30 Mi

River is 'a very dangerous place'

By Tom O'Neill toneill@enquirer.com
The Cincinnati Enquirer

For commercial transportation, few of the nation's "highways" beat the 981-mile-long Ohio River.

It's been a strategically located artery for centuries.

With the river inching closer today to flood stage, and choppy, wind-swept waters a week ago claiming two fishermen's lives, everything slows down.

A commercial towboat also sank last week, but no lives were lost.

The slower business moves, the higher the cost of doing business, which typically filters down to consumers.

But it beats the alternative of compromising safety, say those who work the river.

"You do things with extreme caution," David Hammond, vice president of Edgewood, Ky.,-based Inland Marine Services, said Friday. "It costs money to make these adjustments, but in the big picture, we're limiting our exposure. You won't take the risk."

Inland moves about 90,000 tons of product daily, most of it coal going to Cinergy. Coal now represents 55 percent, by tonnage, of all commercial transport that finds its way to you via the Ohio, according to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

"A barge alone could cost \$300,000, plus the product," Mr. Hammond said. "By the time you have an accident and sink one, you're looking at a \$600,000 to \$800,000 loss."

Commercial traffic on the Ohio has increased about 30 percent in the past decade, according to the Corps of Engineers. From 1989-98, the number of tows increased 25.3 percent at Meldahl Dam 45 miles east of Cincinnati in Clermont County, from 4,474 annually to 5,604.

That's a problem, because commercial crafts are far more difficult to maneuver than personal boats and crafts like jet skis.

AP TOP HEADLINE NEWS

- [Bush Tough on Cuba Unless Co Eases Up](#)
- [U.S. to Use Lie Detectors in Ant Probe](#)
- [FBI Warns Suicide Attacks Like U.S.](#)
- [U.S. Questions bin Laden Health News](#)
- [Israel Suffers 2 Bombings in As Many Days](#)
- [SEC Alleges Ernst & Young Bro Rules](#)
- [Dow Ends Down 124; Nasdaq D 40](#)
- [Red Sox Rip White Sox 9-0](#)

NATIONAL NEWS

- [FBI: Suicide Attacks Likely in U.](#)
- [US Plans Polygraphs in Anthrax Probe](#)
- [More Terror Warnings May Go Public](#)
- [Court to Hear Sex-Offense List](#)
- [Thousands Needed for Air Secu](#)
- [Police Testing Foster Child's Df](#)
- [Famed Harvard Biologist Gould](#)

WORLD NEWS

- [Israel: Tel Aviv Tower Attack Thwarted](#)
- [Sharon Dismisses Cabinet Mini](#)
- [Bush Refuses to Lift Cuba Emb](#)
- [Beirut Car Bomb Kills Son of Le](#)
- [Tensions Flare Between India, Pakistan](#)
- [Troops Look for al-Qaida Force](#)
- [DNA to Determine if Body Is Pe](#)

BUSINESS NEWS

- [SEC Alleges Ernst & Young Bro Rules](#)
- [Justice Dept. Scraps Antitrust P](#)
- [Worries Drag Stocks Down Stor](#)
- [Leading Economic Indicators Sl](#)
- [Probe May Hamper Sale of Adel](#)
- [Judge Rules in Utah Newspaper Case](#)
- [Andersen Trial Jurors Watch Vi](#)

SPORTS NEWS



It's a cautionary tale lost on some pleasure boaters, Coast Guard Lt. Commander Robert Bowen said Friday.

Today is the start of National Safe

Boating Week, when local, state and federal agencies, including the Coast Guard, will again emphasize three key boating lessons:

- Always wear a life jacket.
- Boat carefully, especially around commercial craft, and without impairment.
- Get continued boating safety education, which is available in every state, often free of charge.

Though the increase in overall boating injuries and deaths is, in part, due to the rise in personal boat ownership in the past decade, the statistics are troubling, Lt. Bowen said.

According to Coast Guard figures from 2000, the most recent year available, Ohio had 198 water crashes, including 22 fatal accidents that killed 25 people.

The leading cause of crashes was collision between two vessels, with 59. Such collisions also were the leading cause of crashes in Kentucky, with 32 of the state's 98 crashes.

Ohio has the most boat registrations of any state in the United States, according to Coast Guard statistics.

For many years, Joe Betz, an 80-year-old Navy veteran from Mount Washington, had one of those.

The lifelong boater went down to Captain's Cove Marina on Columbia Tusculum Friday to look at the fast-moving Ohio River. He sized it up this way:

"It's a fun place but you can't mess with it, you gotta respect the river," Mr. Betz said, avoiding the torrential rain by sitting in his car with his wife, Norma. "It's a dangerous place."

This is the heart of Lt. Bowen's message.

"Towboats and barges are like a train on the tracks, they cannot stop," he said. "They're restricted in the ability to maneuver. Pleasure crafts can turn quickly, these can't.

"The rules of gross tonnage apply."

The perilous nature of the Ohio River is not always obvious from its banks.

Stand at the edge, close your eyes and listen to the majestic Ohio River lap its shore like a subtle metronome. It

- [Avalanche Survive Red Wings 4 OT](#)
- [Bryant in Lineup Despite Illness](#)
- [Red Sox Rip White Sox, 9-0](#)
- [Cowboys Cut Ryan Leaf From T](#)
- [McCombs Is Considering Viking Sale](#)
- [Mariners Survive Bus Fire](#)
- [NASCAR Opens New Training School](#)

soothes the soul.

Open your eyes and watch seemingly calm water sweep west, calling boaters and recalling the painters and postcards that captured Cincinnati's famous front door.

It's all a lie.

"It's a very dangerous place to be," said Dale Appel, Boone County Water Rescue captain. "Fishing, pleasure crafts, any body. Even the commercial people are having problems. It's not a safe place to be."

It is unclear what led to the capsizing of the small boat in which longtime friends Danny Eaton, 27, of Foster, Ky., and Robert Wood, 24, of Falmouth, Ky., were fishing Monday near the Meldahl Dam.

A companion, Jeremy King, 25, of Colmansville, Ky., was rescued by a towboat.

Mr. Eaton and Mr. Wood are presumed drowned. The river currents were so strong in the days that followed, no divers or underwater equipment could be used in the recovery effort.

['After pastor' to help parish heal](#)
[March shows Catholic pride](#)
 ▶ River is 'a very dangerous place'
[Flower Power blooms downtown](#)
[Record low of 30 shivers Tristate](#)
[BRONSON: Lettuce pickers in robes](#)
[Cemetery operator's trial begins](#)
[Ballpark's safety record pays off](#)
[College Hill wants police help in reclaiming neighborhood](#)
[Fake injury claim leads to arrest](#)
[Police investigate death of woman in parked car](#)
[Woman stabbed; son arrested](#)
[YWCA to honor women achievers](#)
[Arts Jam draws in families](#)
['Cappies' program plans Tristate gala](#)
[Good News: Climb raises \\$30,000](#)
[Growth battle expands](#)
[Hamilton resists reopening fishing spot](#)
[Journalists go to fire boot camp](#)
[You Asked For It](#)
[Ohio to speed up DNA analysis in rape cases](#)
[Minister serves two churches](#)
[School violence examined](#)
[Three vie to be GOP candidate](#)

May. 20, 2002

[ENQUIRER HOME](#)
[LOCAL](#)
[SPORTS](#)
[BUSINESS](#)
[TEMPO](#)
[ENTERTAINMENT](#)
[CLASSIFIED](#)
[ARCHIVE](#)
[SE](#)



[SUBSCRIBE](#)
[TRAFFIC](#)
[WEATHER](#)
[HOMES](#)
[CARS](#)
[JOBS](#)
[BENGALS](#)
[REDS](#)
[WCPO](#)
[ENQUIRER](#)
[CINCINNATI](#)

[Search](#) | [Questions/help](#) | [News tips](#) | [Letters to the editors](#) | [Subscribe](#)
[Newspaper advertising](#) | [Web advertising](#) | [Place a classified](#) | [Circulation](#)

[Copyright](#) 1995-2002. [The Cincinnati Enquirer](#), a [Gannett Co. Inc.](#) newspaper.
Use of this site signifies agreement to [terms of service](#) updated 4/5/2000.