

# US Duck Boat Operators Under Scrutiny Following Branson Drowning Tragedy

A common attraction at major U.S. waterfronts and tourist destinations, the amphibious WWII-era vehicles known as Duck Boats have a long record of design flaws that make them unstable in rough water with often tragic results, according to a post on the web site of **Androvett Legal Media & Marketing**.

When a sightseeing boat in Branson, Missouri, sank last week in a sudden storm, killing 17, the tour company's president acknowledged that the boat should not have been on the water during the storm. Safety experts renewed criticism of the boat's unstable design, including a canopy that can prevent occupants from escaping. More than 40 people have died in Duck Boat accidents since 1999.

"The problems with these boats are well-known. This latest tragedy should spur operators everywhere to take a close look at safety procedures and design issues and ensure that personnel are properly trained to respond to emergencies," said **Steve Fernelius** of Houston-based **Fernelius Simon**, who represents plaintiffs and defendants in personal injury and product liability litigation. "This tragedy must prompt operators to re-examine procedures to ensure there is no chance passengers will be caught in rough water. As these tragic deaths continue to be associated with Duck Boats, the potential liability for operators continues to grow."