



WHITEWATER ONTARIO SAFETY & RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY

Purpose

This policy applies to Whitewater Ontario (“WO”) members and clubs conducting on- water activities. It is intended to alert event organizers and participants of important safety practices to minimize and manage the risk of accidents.

The procedures outlined in Part 1 must be followed at all WO sanctioned events/trips and all WO sanctioned club events/trips (“Event/Trip”). Failure to follow the procedures could result in the insurance company rejecting a coverage claim.

The procedures outlined in Part 2 are recommended for WO sanctioned events/trips and should be applied as appropriate according to the judgment of Event/Trip Leaders (“Leaders”).

Part 1. Mandatory Safety Practices

- 1) When in a kayak/canoe while on moving water, every paddler **must**:
 - a. wear a lifejacket or personal floatation device (PFD)¹;
 - b. wear a helmet; and
 - c. carry a sound signaling device (whistle)².

^{1,2} Required according to Transport Canada, *Safe Boating Guide - TP 511E (2011)*, “Minimum Safety Equipment Requirements”

- 2) Leaders, or a designate in the group, **must**:
 - a. carry a safety throw rope;
 - b. have a first aid kit on the river or in an accessible location on shore; and
 - c. advise participants that each person is responsible for the safety of their own equipment.

Part 2. Recommended Safety Practices

- 1) It is recommended that all paddlers:
 - a. Be able to swim with a life jacket and be familiar with safe practices when swimming in rapids (e.g. feet first, do not attempt to stand due to risk of entrapment or river obstacles).
 - b. Have canoe/kayak equipment that is safe, appropriate for the paddler and the current water conditions.
 - c. Have flotation devices in their boat.
- 2) It is recommended that Leaders, or designates in the group:
 - a. Know the current water conditions and river level.
 - b. Discuss potential hazards with the participants.
 - c. Use common river running safety practices (e.g. head counts, sweeper boats)
 - d. Respect the skill levels of all participants when planning an Event/Trip.
 - e. Set up throw ropes and/or safety boaters where needed.
 - f. Wear a safety boat harness tow system when running a river.
 - d. Have a contingency plan for emergencies that includes knowing the route to the site and the access points.
 - e. Have at least one Leader or participant experienced in First Aid and Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR).
 - f. Have at least one Leader or participant experienced in swift water rescue.