



South Niagara Canoe Club

Safety Policy and Procedures

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Purpose

The South Niagara Canoe Club (SNCC) revised code of safety is adapted from the Sprint Code of Safety from Canoe Kayak Canada (2019), and the Dragon Boat Canada Safety Guidelines. The Sprint Code of Safety from Canoe Kayak Canada can be found at the following link: _

https://southniagaracanoeclub.wildapricot.org/resources/Documents/Policies/CKC-Sprint-Code-of-Safety_June13_FINAL.pdf

The Dragon Boat Canada Safety Guidelines can be found at the following link:

<https://southniagaracanoeclub.wildapricot.org/resources/Documents/Policies/dragon%20boat%20canada%20safety%20guidelines.pdf>

Section 1 - Implementation

SNCC and all its members recognize that safety is of the utmost importance. Implementation of the amended Code of Safety involves all members of our club. Safety should always be the priority of all club members. Members should understand their role in evaluating and minimizing risks faced by members/ participants involved in paddling sports.

All members/participants have a role in paddle sport safety; please identify which role(s) you assume in our club:

- participant (athlete)
- coach
- official
- parent
- volunteer
- boat driver
- spectator
- site manager or employee
- administrator

After you have identified your role(s), you will be able to better intervene and interact with the other team members. In this way, you will contribute to the creation and maintenance of a secure and safe environment.

The CKC Code of Safety operates under the regulations of the Transport Canada's Marine Safety. All users of this Code of Safety should be familiar with the Office of Boating Safety's "Safe Boating Guide". For convenience, the Guide is referenced in this document. It can be accessed at the following internet address:

http://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2015/tc/T34-24-2014-eng.pdf

Section 2- Extremes of weather

2.1 Cold water safety

When water temperatures are below 8 degrees Celsius all participants engaged in on water activities must:

- i- Always wear a Government of Canada approved PFD.
- ii- Be accompanied by a motorboat unless in a dragon boat or war canoe.
- iii- Wear clothing appropriate for the weather and water conditions.
- iv- Train as close to the shore as possible.

[See appendix C](#) for the effects of cold water on the human body.

2.2 Heat and humidity

- a) As per Environment Canada website/app, when the HUMIDEX reaches 45 degrees Celsius or above, all members/participants are to return to the shore and activity should be stopped until the humidex is below 45 degrees Celsius.
- b) Coaches are to use discretion based on the age and abilities of their participants to stop practice if the Humidex is less than 45 degrees Celsius and they feel the safety of the participants may be impacted by the extreme heat.

2.3 Thunder and lightening

- a) When there is lightening and/or thunder, all on water participants must immediately head for the nearest shoreline to seek shelter.
- b) In the event of lightning and thunder, a 30-minute rule will be implemented. All participants must remain sheltered and off the water for 30 minutes after the last thunder and lightning before resuming practice.

2.4 Winds

- a) Should winds exceed 39km/hr. or if conditions appear potentially threatening, coaches should determine whether to continue or postpone the practice.
- b) Reported *gale force winds or storm winds* will result in the immediate postponement of any practice.
- c) Safety boats will remain on the water until all on water participants have safely returned to shore.

Section 3 - Safety of Participants

1. A participant is defined as a person who is taking part in an on-water canoeing activity under the sanction of a CKC member club, of a Divisional Flag Officer, or of the Sprint Racing Council. This includes dragon boat, canoe and kayak.
2. All participants should, at a minimum, be able to swim at the level of the Canadian Red Cross “Swim Kids Level 6”. To reach this level the participant must meet the requirements detailed in [Appendix A - Canadian Red Cross Swim Kids Level 6](#).
3. Any participant who does not meet Swim Kids Level 6 must wear a Government of Canada approved Personal Flotation Device (PFD) in the way it was intended, while engaged in all on-water activities.
4. Participants may not be tied, strapped or secured to the boat or floorboard in any manner.
5. All paddlers under the age of 16 must wear a Government of Canada approved PFD of a type acceptable to the paddler’s division, in the way it was intended, while engaged in any on-water activity.
6. Once seated in the boat, each paddler in a War Canoe or dragon boat must identify a “buddy” (seat partner) at the start of the practice or competition. If the boat capsizes, each paddler must find their buddy. The steersperson then conducts a count to ensure all paddlers are above water and accounted for. Everyone stays with the boat, the boat is then swam to shore by the team, where the team can then safely exit the water.
7. On-water practices or competitions, should not take place earlier than one-half hour preceding sunrise, and not later than one half hour after sunset, e.g. if sunrise is 6:30 A.M then practices may not start before 6:00 A. M. If sunset is 8:40 P.M. then practices must be completed (paddlers off the water) not later than 9:10 P.M. If a practice extends beyond these times, the following shall be required:
 - All boats must be equipped with operating navigation lights in accordance with the Office of Boating Safety standards.
 - All participants must wear approved PFD’s regardless of age or swimming ability.
8. In order for a person of less than eighteen (18) years of age to participate in a training program or competition, one of their parents or legal guardian, shall sign a waiver form stating that they are aware of the risks of Sprint Racing Canoeing and Kayaking or dragon boating (see Appendix B for a sample).

Section 4- Responsibilities of the Participant

1. To observe all safety rules that may affect their own safety and/or the safety of his/her fellow participants.
2. If over the age of 15, all participants complete a "[Par Q and You](#)" health questionnaire every year.
3. All participants are to inform the coach of any change in their health which may affect their ability to safely participate in club programs, or which affects their well-being, or may endanger the safety of the other participants.
4. All participants are to inform the coach that he/she is using or under the effect of any prescription medication.
5. Refrain from drinking alcoholic beverages or using drugs, which may affect their ability to train or compete in a safe manner.
6. Be aware of and act in accordance with cold water rules and extreme heat rules.
7. Participants are to only go out onto the water in any SNCC boat under the instruction or direction of the SNCC coach of the participants member program.

Section 5 - Responsibilities of the Club

1. The club shall ensure that all participants always respect the code of safety.
2. The club shall ensure that a web-based version of the code of safety is easy to find on the website and that a hard copy is kept on site.
3. The club shall appoint a club safety officer every year, who will be responsible for ensuring the club's compliance with the code of safety. The club will notify the Division flag officer of this appointment no later than June 30 of each year.
4. The club will inform participants of cold-water rules and conditions.
5. The club will post a plan of the local waterway and draw special attention to local rules and hazards.
6. The Club should have an Emergency Action Plan (EAP), which must be known by key administrators, employees and coaches ([see Appendix E](#)).
7. A list of Emergency telephone numbers should be displayed prominently ([see Appendix E](#)).
8. The Club shall maintain a First Aid Kit ([see Appendix G - Sample First Aid Kit Checklist](#)).
9. The club does not have a public phone, all coaches are always to carry a fully charged cell phone.
10. The Club will complete incident reports and maintain records of incidents which occur during Club sponsored activities. Incident Reports shall be maintained with the Club membership database. Incident reports are to be kept for a minimum of 3 years. Incident reports are to be given to the club commodore for resolution action and if needed discussion at the board meeting ([See Appendix F](#)).
11. The Club shall ensure that all equipment is in proper working condition.
12. The Club will promote water-safety and take active steps to encourage members to learn life-saving techniques.

13. The Club will take active steps to ensure that coaching staff are trained in life-saving and resuscitation procedures by attending courses and other appropriate measures.

14. The Club will promote the “Safe Boating Guide” published by Transport Canada.

http://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2015/tc/T34-24-2014-eng.pdf

Section 6- Responsibilities of the coaches

1. Must be familiar with and help to enforce this Code of Safety as minimum level of safety.
2. They must always wear a Government of Canada approved PFD while on the water.
3. They will possess a copy of the club's Emergency Action Plan. They will know the sites emergency procedures and location of first aid kits and other safety equipment.
4. They will be trained in First Aid and CPR.
5. All head coaches, or designated lead coaches in charge of or supervising on water activities must have at a minimum NCCP level 1, ELCC certification or Canoe Kids Coach Training.
6. They will identify any discernible medical conditions of an athlete that can become a safety issue.
7. At the request of the safety officer, they will ensure that all "[Par Q and You](#)" health questionnaires are completed and have spoken to the participant regarding any follow up action required if they answered yes to follow up questions.
8. While coaching on water activities, they will ensure that all paddlers in a canoe or kayak not wearing a PFD do not stray 500m or more from the safety boat.
9. Must carry a charged cell phone or other means of communication during practice.
10. They have the responsibility to manage on water participants based on the water and weather conditions and must be constantly attentive to any indications that could impact water and weather conditions.
11. They must always carry the Fox 40 emergency safety dry bag on the boat or safety boat during on-water activities.

Section 7- Responsibilities of the Club Safety Officer

1. The club safety officer is responsible for ensuring that the club adheres to this code of safety as well as other safety measures which may apply.
2. To ensure that the club has enough safety equipment and that all safety equipment is in good working condition.
3. Work in collaboration with the head coach to conduct an annual club safety audit to ensure that all required safety equipment is sufficient and satisfactory for compliance with the code of safety.
4. Responsible for the continuous updating and maintenance of the club's emergency action plan, including key contact information and response procedures.

Section 8- Canoes, Kayaks, Dragon boats & Other Equipment

1. All canoes, kayaks and dragon boats shall be maintained in a safe and floatable condition.
2. Racing canoes and kayaks have special exemptions under the Canada Shipping Act, Small Vessel Regulations ([see Appendix D for a full description](#)).
3. All motorboats or other crafts used for coaching, officiating, or for regatta safety must meet the minimum requirements as set in the Canada Shipping Act, Small Vessel Regulations. In addition, there may be Provincial or municipal regulations which may also need to be followed. The following website address will take you directly to the minimum equipment regulations for powered pleasure craft not over 6 meters in length: <http://www.tc.gc.ca/marinesafety/TP/TP511/boat.htm>
4. It is the responsibility of all club members to inform coaches or other administrators of the club if a piece of equipment is damaged during practice or racing.

Section 9 - Responsibilities of Boat Drivers

1. All boat drivers (including coaches & officials) must comply with Transport Canada's Motorboat Regulations. Motorboat drivers, known in the regulations as 'operators of pleasure craft fitted with a motor' must have proof of competency as follows:

How this applies to operators	Date at which proof of competency required on board
All operators born after April 1, 1983	September 15, 1999
All operators of craft under 4m in length including personal watercraft	September 15, 2002
All operators	September 15, 2009

2. All drivers are to operate motorboats and equipment with extreme care. They should familiarize themselves with Transport Canada's Safe Boating Guide. It can be found at: <http://www.tc.gc.ca/marinesafety/debs/obs/menu.htm>
3. Boat operators must take the appropriate course and possess a valid operator competency card issued by Transport Canada.
4. Boat operators must be at least sixteen (16) years old.
5. Boats are to proceed at SLOW speed in the vicinity of docks and swimming areas.
6. Boats are to approach swimmers, wharves, canoes, kayaks, etc., in the safest possible manner depending on the circumstances.
7. Boat drivers are to monitor fuel tanks periodically and avoid interrupting their availability as an on-water safety boat.
8. Boat drivers are always to be alert, paying attention to instructions from officials.
9. Boat drivers are to be observant of all activity in their surrounding area, 360 degrees.
10. Motors are to be shut off before final approach to a swimmer, and the rescue boat should use a reaching assist to help retrieve the swimmer.
11. Extreme care must be taken to ensure that the wake does not interfere with, or cause hazard to racing boats, either on the course or on the course sides.
12. At a competition, boat drivers should be rotated as close to the scheduled times as possible, but at no time should a driver abandon his duties until relieved.

13. In the event of an overturned War Canoe or Dragonboat, the Safety Boat Drivers shall proceed immediately to the area of the swamped or overturned boat. The engine shall be stopped, and paddlers' heads must be counted to ensure that all paddlers have their head above water and are not having trouble.

Section 10 - Boat trailer, vehicle and driver safety

Trailers:

1. All trailers must be maintained and licensed to the standards of the provincial government. In some provincial jurisdictions, clubs should be aware of regulations which may require the towing vehicle to be matched to the trailer.
2. All plated trailers must be insured.
3. Boats must be securely and individually tied to the trailer. An additional safety rope should be affixed to encircle the boats on the trailer. Boats should be loaded in such a manner as to be balanced from front to back and left to right.
4. Trailer hitch and towing ball must be compatible.
5. Safety chains must be affixed between trailer and towing vehicle.

Cars/Vans/Trucks:

6. If transported by car, van or truck, boats must be securely tied to the vehicle.
7. All vehicles used to pull boats and trailers must be insured, either through personal vehicle insurance or by the organization that sanctions the related activity. Where personal vehicles are used to transport boats, the owner of the vehicle does so at his/her own risk should any damages occur that are not covered by insurance.
8. Drivers of trailers, trucks, cars or vans shall always be fit for duty when operating a vehicle. They shall not be under the influence or effects of any prescription medications, illicit or illegal drugs, alcohol, cannabis or fatigue that would impact or prevent them from safely operating a vehicle.
9. Vehicle drivers are responsible for ensuring that they only operate a vehicle in safe road and driving conditions.

Section 11 - Compliance

1. The safety officer, coaches and by extension, the SNCC board of directors is responsible for the enforcement of the Code of Safety at our club. They are also responsible for the safety of our participants at Regattas or other events. Our Club shall bear the responsibility to discipline or suspend any participants, coaches, or organizers violating the SNCC Code of Safety.
2. Please refer to the SNCC Code of Conduct for further details on enforcement for non-compliance with the Code of Safety ([See Appendix I for reference](#)).
3. We all need to be responsible. The safety officer cannot always be everywhere, please report to your coach, your teammates and visitors if you note that a Code of Safety violation is taking place.
4. The Division shall have the right to discipline or suspend any club, participant, coach, official or organizer who violates the CKC Code of Safety at a divisionally sanctioned event.
5. The Competition Committee at Nationally sanctioned events shall have the right to discipline or suspend any club, participant, coach, official or organizer who violates the CKC Code of Safety.