



Nelson Paddling Club Safety and Risk Management Plan

Prepared by:

Darcie Quamme (2014-18), NPC

Karen Redfern (2016-17), NPC

Reviewed by:

Mallorie Nicholson, CKBC Instructor, World Champion Canoeist (2016)

Updated and Reviewed by:

Marc Deschenes, NPC Safety Officer (2019, 2020, 2022)

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Introduction

In 2019, the Nelson Kayak and Canoe Club (NKCC) changed its name to the Nelson Paddling Club (NPC) in order to include Standup Paddle Boards (SUP) activities and programs. From 2015-2019 the NPC made efforts to establish safety protocols, with assistance from Canoe and Kayak BC (CKBC), to complete a written guidance document pertaining to risk management. The NPC has also developed a Staff Policy Manual for its club that is reviewed by all coaching staff at the start of each paddling season.

The NPC's safety policies are in compliance with the current Canoe Kayak Canada's Code of Safety (Feb. 2022). CKC's Code of Safety outlines the standards for safety in training and regattas and are the recommended minimum requirements for all clubs. The NPC signs off a compliance statement with respect to Canoe and Kayak BC membership policies.

- [Code of Safety](#): responsibilities of participants, coaches, safety officer and boat drivers
- [Canoe and Kayak BC Compliance statement](#), links to policy standards including employment and harassment standards.

The Canadian Center for Health and Safety for young workers also provides the most up-to-date standards for young workers and employers and will be reviewed each year with volunteers and employees. www.ccohs.ca/youngworkers/youngworkers.html.

Because the NPC safety procedures continue to be developed based on risk management best practices, the NPC would like to encourage ongoing discussion around safety, "close calls", or ways to improve safety and risk management of our members and participants. We encourage participants to bring safety concerns to the NPC.

Resources: Safety documents.

The Nelson Paddling Club follows safety standards developed by Canoe Kayak Canada including:

- **Canoe and Kayak Canada:** [General safety](#), [Cold water safety](#)
- **Canadian Center for Health and Safety:** [Safety for young workers](#)
- **National Coaching Certification Program:** Example of a [Canoe Kids Coaching Manual](#)
- **National Coaching Certification Program:** [Coaching Athletes with a Disability](#)

NPC Staff Policy Manual

The NPC has developed an in-house Staff Policy Manual available to supervisors, coaches, athletes, and trainees located through the NPC web site. For further information please contact: nelsonpaddlingclub@gmail.com.

NPC Safety and Risk Management

Emergency Action Plan

The NPC is committed to providing a safe environment. We are endeavoring as a club to control and manage risk in a responsible and effective way. Thus, we have developed a comprehensive **Emergency**

Action Plan (Appendix 1). The plan is intended as a guide for Coaches and on-water supervisors, but does not replace formal first-aid and lifesaving training.

Safety Coach Boat

The coach boat is to be used exclusively for the purposes of providing safety and instruction for NPC members and participants in NPC programs. The coach boat must be operated in a safe and responsible manner, with due care and attention to people and property in and around the boat, other boating traffic, and potential hazards. The program supervisor of the training practice will, in general, use the safety boat for supervision of on-water training. In calm conditions, experienced sprint paddlers are not required to have a safety boat on the water as long as all participants are aware and take precautions i.e. paddling with a buddy, staying close to shore, wearing a PFD if appropriate etc. Boating safety regulations require that sprint canoe and kayak paddlers must have a bailer, a throw line, a whistle and a lifejacket when paddling without a coach boat.

Boat Operator Qualifications

The coach boat is for use by authorized personnel, including:

- Coaches working/volunteering for the NPC
- Parents assuming coaching/supervision duties;
- Officials and safety boat drivers during a regatta;
- NPC members over 16 years of age who have permission from the Head Coach.
- All coach boat operators require a valid and current **"Pleasure Craft Operator Card"**.

All coach boat operators must have current CKBC membership. To ensure CKBC's insurance covers the club's operations and programs, NPC officials, athletes (competitive or recreational), and coaches registrations must be completed.

Coach Boat Safety Equipment

In accordance with Canada Coast Guard regulations, the Coach boat shall carry the following:

- One Government of Canada approved life jacket (or PFD) of appropriate size for each person on board
- A buoyant heaving line of at least 15m
- One manual propelling device (e.g. oars)
- One bailer or manual water pump.
- One class 5 BC fire extinguisher
- One water tight flashlight
- One sound signaling device

Coach Boat Refueling

All passengers must be ashore for refueling. Shut off engines, extinguish all open flames, and do not operate electrical devices while refueling. Remove portable tanks from the coach boat for refueling.

Personal Flotation Devices (PFDs)

Safety is the paramount concern of the NPC and as such, all members participating in NPC Programs competitions, events, and all non-members using NPC equipment, must wear PFDs of the appropriate size. The only exception to compulsory use of PFDs is for athletes 16 years or older who, while training for competition, or competing while the water temperature is greater than 10 degrees Celsius, may stow the PFD in the back of their boat so that it can be put on in the water if needed.

Weather and Seasonal Concerns

Paddling activities are very much dependent of weather conditions and therefore the NPC complies with the strict safety guidelines. Discontinue paddling programs and prohibit use of equipment in the event that:

- Wind speed exceeds 15 knots
 - Thunder and/or lightning occurs
 - *“Use the 30/30 Rule to help you. If you can count 30 seconds or less between seeing lightning and hearing thunder you should seek shelter immediately. Do not resume any outdoor activities until you have waited at least 30 minutes after hearing the last clap of thunder. It is crucial to ensure that the risk of a lightning strike has passed completely. “*
 - Early spring or late fall, cold water safety:
 - During the shoulder seasons while the water is cold all paddlers will be required to wear cold water immersion clothing including wetsuit or dry suit, neoprene paddling wear
 - Adhere to the NPC cold water safety protocols outlined below
 - Summer overheating and hydration
 - All paddlers should wear hats, glasses and have water bottles on shore.
 - Follow guidance from Canada Centre for Occupational Health and Safety for [hot temperature conditions](#).
 - CKC Code of Safety: Extreme Heat and Humidity safety guidelines:
If the Wet Bulb Globe Temperature (WBGT), as opposed to the standard meteorological measured temperature, reaches 30.1 degrees C, competition or training shall be stopped immediately until the WBGT descends to at least 28 degrees C.
-
- Wear Personal Flotation Device (PFD) on the water
 - Carry a whistle when on the water
 - Paddling programs may be cancelled if athletes, coaches and/or club officials determine it is unsafe. In the event that a paddling program is cancelled, the Head Coach or Program Supervisor will do his/her best to communicate the decision via phone or email.

NPC Cold Water Safety

Kootenay Lake is a large, cold water lake with water temperatures ranging from 7°C to 11°C from May to late June. During summer months (late June to early September) lake temperatures range from 11°C to 16°C. In the fall and leading into October, temperatures decrease to <11°C. In 2019, the NPC developed a specific cold-water safety protocol for early and late season paddling which complies with the current **Canoe Kayak Canada's Code of Safety (2022)**.

Cold Water Immersion Protocol Shoulder Season: April through June and September through October

CKBC and NPC strive to ensure the highest levels of safety in our programs. Paddlers will be required to adhere to these safety protocols to participate in club activities and when using club equipment. Failure to adhere to these safety protocols will result in a suspension of participation for the practice or activity. When water temperatures are < 8 °C, all paddlers engaged in on-water activities must:

- Wear a Government of Canada approved Personal Flotation Device (PFD) on the water.
- Wear cold water immersion clothing on their top and bottom appropriate for the weather and water conditions.
- Be accompanied by a safety boat
- Carry a whistle when on the water.
- Training will take place as close to shore as possible

Examples of Cold Water Immersion Clothing

- A vest, jacket and legging combination is recommended for layering. Ideal for adjusting to changing temperature conditions that occur particularly during the shoulder seasons while still allowing maximum flexibility for paddling sports.
- Wet suit - two-piece top and bottom combo - Farmer John
- Neoprene apparel - two-piece top and bottom combo – vest, Jacket and leggings

Cold Water Immersion Protocol Summer Season: July through September

- Athletes will be required to discuss and obtain permission from their parent or guardian to participate in practices without wearing the cold-water immersion apparel that is recommended by the NPC once the shoulder season requirements have been lifted by NPC Executive.
- Coaches maintain the right to require athletes to wear the cold-water immersion apparel if they deem it necessary which may include unusual circumstances where the water remains cold (<8 °C)
- If your balance is not strong, coaches may recommend that a paddler wear the cold-water immersion apparel so you can continue with the full practice (coaches will require athletes to be prepared to fully participate in practices)
- If an athlete needs to come off the water due to exposure to cold, put on dry clothes and continue the practice by completing dry land drills as outlined by your coaches.

Other hazards

Other hazards should also be evaluated and mitigation measures taken. Canoe Kayak Canada's Canoe Kids risk assessment checklist can be used.

- Broken equipment (cracked paddles, broken rudders, etc.)
- Paddlers who can't swim
- PFDs that don't fit
- Shallow water
- Hazards in the water, including submerged obstacles (rocks, logs, ...)
- Water depth
- Rough or moving water
- Wind
- Sun
- Cold
- Heat
- Storms
- Lots of kids and only one coach
- Access ramp down to dock

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

PPE for Recreational Canoes and Kayaks

Recreational canoes and kayaks not over 6 meters in length must carry the following safety equipment when in use:

Personal Protection Equipment

- one Canadian-approved personal flotation device or lifejacket of appropriate size for each person on board
- one buoyant heaving line of not less than 15 m in length

Boat safety equipment

- one manual propelling device or
- an anchor with not less than 15 m of cable, rope or chain in any combination
- one bailer or one manual water pump fitted with or accompanied by sufficient hose to enable a person to pump water from the bilge of the vessel over the side of the vessel

Navigation equipment

- a sound-signaling device or a sound-signaling appliance
- navigation lights that meet the applicable standards set out in the Collision Regulations if the pleasure craft is operated after sunset and before sunrise or in periods of restricted visibility

For more information: <http://www.tc.gc.ca/marinesafety/debs/obs/menu.htm>

PPE for Racing Canoes and Kayaks

A pleasure craft that is a racing canoe, racing kayak or racing rowing shell is not required to carry personal protection equipment, boat safety equipment and distress equipment if the craft and its crew are engaged in formal training, in an official competition or in final preparation for an official competition and

- it is attended by a safety craft carrying a personal flotation device or lifejacket of appropriate size that can be donned in the water for each member of the crew of the pleasure craft; or
- it carries
 - a personal flotation device or lifejacket of appropriate size for each member of the crew,
 - a sound-signaling device, and
 - a water-tight flashlight if it is operated after sunset and before sunrise.

"Final Preparation", with respect to an official competition, means activities to prepare for the competition that take place at the competition venue and during the times specified by the organizer of the competition.

"Formal Training" means practice for an official competition under the supervision of a coach or official certified by a governing body.

"Governing Body" means a national water sport governing body

- that publishes written rules and criteria respecting conduct and safety requirements during skill demonstrations, formal training or official competitions; and
- that
 - certifies coaches and coaching programs,
 - certifies officials and programs for officials, or
 - recommends training and safety guidelines for certified coaches or officials.

"Official Competition" means a competition or regatta organized by a governing body or by a club or an organization that is affiliated with a governing body.

For more information: <http://www.ccg-gcc.gc.ca/obs-bsn/regs-stds>

Appendix 1. Emergency Action Plan

NPC Emergency Action Plan

911 Emergency - Police, Fire, Ambulance & Poison

Location of nearest landline: Rose Garden Café: (250) 352-0059

Directions for Emergency Personal: From BC Ambulance Service; Head South on Nelson Ave/BC-3A North towards Kokanee Ave., Turn right on Kokanee Ave, Turn Right onto 2nd St., Turn left into Lakeside Park parking lot walk to Lakeside Boathouses/Beach.

Team: Nelson Paddling Club Sprint Team

Site: Lakeside Boathouses/Beach.

Charge Person: Andrea Howland (Head coach)

Alternate Charge Persons:

Jason Rusu (Coach Liaison)

Brooke Campbell (BoD executive)

Marc Deschenes (Safety Officer)

Cell numbers in event of emergency:

Andrea Howland 705-257-7879

Jason Rusu 778-962-0073

Marc Deschenes 250-551-0644

Brooke Campbell 250-505-3326

Dan Gaudreau 250-354-7313

Volunteers

Cathy Potkins: 250-505-7865

Non-emergency

Poison Control: 1-800-567-8911

Ambulance: 250-352-2112

Fire: 250-352-3103

City Police: 250-354-3919

RCMP: 250-352-2156

Kootenay Lake Hospital: 250-352-3111

Kootenay Lake Drop-In Clinic: 250-352-4666

Distress numbers:

BC Nurse line: 1-866-215-4700

Crime Stoppers: 1-800-222-8477

Search and Rescue: 1-800-567-5111

Kids Help Phone: 1-800-668-6868

Appendix 2.

NPC - Safety Considerations from the National Coaching Certification Program and Canoe Kids Manual

Safety Procedures

Life Jacket and PFD selection

- ★ All Canoe Kids must wear appropriately sized PFDs.
- ★ Check to ensure that the jacket is the correct size for the participant – usually determined by the participant’s weight.
- ★ Take the time to explain how to find the right size and how to fasten it up securely.

Buddy System

- ★ Have participants pair themselves up with someone of approximately the same size to work with, and as a means of accounting for the presence of everyone in the group in case of an emergency.

Whistle System

- ★ Use the whistle system as a method of communication when the group is on the water.
- ★ One whistle means freeze and listen.
- ★ Two whistles means find your respective buddy and raise each other’s hands.
- ★ Three whistles means return to the dock immediately.

Safety Rules

- ★ A life jacket or PFD must be worn at all times when near or on the water.
- ★ No one is to take a boat without the coach’s permission.
- ★ No swimming unless authorized by the coach.
- ★ Stay within the designated area for paddling.
- ★ Wear light clothing and a hat to avoid sunburn or sunstroke.
- ★ Keep plenty of water handy for regular hydration – especially important on hot days.
- ★ Use the buddy system at all times.
- ★ Don’t overload the boats.
- ★ If you capsize far from shore, stay with your boat. Don’t swim for shore or go after drifting paddles.
- ★ Always inform the coach of any health issues.

Water Emptying Procedures

Canoes

1. Remove all equipment from the boat.
2. With the boat upright, hold the bow and slowly lift. This allows the water to slowly drain from the stern. This may take five or more of the younger paddlers.
3. Once most of the water has been drained, the paddlers may remove the boat from the water (opposite to launching procedure) and turn the boat upside down to empty it completely or use the bailer while the boat is still in the water.
4. In most cases, the coach should assist the paddlers in emptying the boats as they are extremely heavy when filled with water.

Kayaks

1. Always assist paddlers in emptying boats as they are very heavy when full of water.
2. Remove the equipment from the boat.
3. Hold the stern and push the bow away from the dock.
4. Push the stern down to allow the water to flow from the bow to the stern.
5. In a single motion, lift and turn the boat to allow the water to flow out of the cockpit.
6. Repeat this motion until the boat is completely empty.
7. IF the boat is extremely full of water, turn the boat over and slowly lift the stern to allow half of the water to flow out. Continue with the above procedure.

Capsizing Procedures

Canoes

- ★ Explain this procedure prior to taking any boats out on the water.
- ★ Paddlers must stay with their boat.
- ★ If there are two paddlers, have them turn the canoe upside down so that they may hold each other's hands over the bottom of the canoe (one paddler on each side of the canoe).
- ★ If the paddlers are very close to the shore, have them upright the canoe, place equipment inside the canoe, and swim or walk the canoe to shore.
- ★ If the paddler is alone, instruct him/her to hold the bow and swim or walk to shore ONLY if they are very close to the shore.
- ★ If one paddler falls out of the boat and the other stays in, have the paddler in the boat tow the other to shore instead of trying to lift him/her into the boat.
- ★ It is sometimes appropriate to capsize the canoes on purpose as a drill to ensure paddlers are familiar with the procedure and do not panic in the real situation.

Kayaks

- ★ Explain this procedure prior to taking any boats out on the water.
- ★ Immediately upright the kayak when it is tipped to stop the boat from filling up with water.
- ★ Put the paddle, seat, or any other equipment into the cockpit.
- ★ Leave the equipment where it is to be picked up later if it has floated out of reach.
- ★ Swim to the bow, hold it and swim with the boat to the dock or shore.
- ★ The boat floats, so paddlers must always stay with their boats!

Examples of Safety Scenarios

Safety Scenario #1

You are a new coach at the local canoe club. You have been assigned 10 new paddlers. Of the 10, only 2 can swim. The others vary from being afraid of the water to being non-swimmers, but not afraid of falling in.

What types of safety concerns would you have when on the water? How could you address them?

Safety Scenario #2

Two of your co-coaches have called in sick today. You are the only coach at the club today and more than 20 paddlers have shown up. One third of the group are confident bantams who are eager to get out on the water and train for their upcoming regatta. Another third of the group is a Canoe Kids program at the yellow (first) level. The final third of the group are second year peewees who have more confidence than skill.

What types of safety concerns would you have when on the water? How could you address them?

Safety Scenario #3

You have arrived at the club 30 minutes before your group's workout only to discover that equipment assigned to your group has been damaged. Three of the canoe paddles are cracked and two of the kayaks have broken parts.

What types of safety concerns would you have when on the water? How could you address them?

Safety Scenario #4

You are working with a group of competitive bantams. This is their day for a heavy load workout and you have planned sets of 1000m intervals at 80% race pace. The weather prediction for the day is extreme heat with high humidity and an air advisory warning. What types of safety concerns would you have when on the water? How could you address them?