### Officers can provide regulatory information, valuable reports on current water conditions and other useful information. It is your responsibility to know the regulations which apply to where you boat.

### Cold Water

*Stay away from strainers!*

Strainers are a hazard to boaters. Strainers can be anything that blocks passage but lets the water filter through. Both strainers and low-head dams are regarded as “drowning machines.” These hazards are dangerous—avoid them, portage around them, and **ALWAYS SCOUT AHEAD!**

### Dress for Safety

**Be prepared for your type of paddling by being dressed and outfitted properly.**

- **Helmet**
- **Sunglasses**
- **Pocket Knife**
- **Wet Suit**
- **Proper Shoes**
- **Life Jacket**
- **Rescue Throw Bag**
- **Water Bottle**
- **Waterproof Container**
- **Dry Bag**
- **Waterproof Bag**
- **Sweater**
- **Hat**
- **Hat with Brim**
- **Hood**
- **Dry Clothes**
- **Sunscreen**
- **Whistle**
- **Knife**
- **Thumb Stake**
- **Beached Boat Signal**
- **Duct Tape**
- **Deflatable Raft**
- **Inflatable Boat**
- **Frames and Ropes**
- **GPS Device**
- **H.E.L.P. or Huddle Poses**
- **Heat Escape Lessening Positions**

### The Law and You

**Officers can provide regulatory information, valuable reports on current water conditions and other useful information. It is your responsibility to know the regulations which apply to where you boat.**

- **Wear your life jacket.**
- **File a float plan.**
- **Never go paddling alone.**
- **Scout ahead for water hazards.**

### Remember to...

- **Wear your life jacket.**
- **File a float plan.**
- **Never go paddling alone.**
- **Scout ahead for water hazards.**

### Know and Enjoy More!

Visit [www.fishandboat.com](http://www.fishandboat.com) for more boating and paddling safety tips, regulations, and resources.

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### Paddling Hazards

- Rocks
- Strainers
- Low-head dams
- Heavy current
- Lightning
- Other bad weather

Strainers can be anything that blocks passage but lets the water filter through. Both strainers and low-head dams are regarded as “drowning machines.” These hazards are dangerous—avoid them, portage around them, and **ALWAYS SCOUT AHEAD!**

Leaning shoulders outside the edge of the boat can lead to a capsize. Keep your weight low and balanced over the centerline of the boat.

H.E.L.P. or Huddle Poses along with wearing a life jacket improve your chances of survival in cold water.

Conserving your body heat is important. Using the H.E.L.P. or Huddle Poses along with wearing a life jacket improve your chances of survival in cold water.

Cold water can be a KILLER! Cold water shock, the loss of body heat, the possibility of hypothermia, and at the very least, the end of your float trip can be a result of falling into cold water.

Whether alone or in a group, it’s important to conserve your body heat. Using the H.E.L.P. or Huddle Poses along with wearing a life jacket improve your chances of survival in cold water.
Prepare to Paddle Safely

PFD TYPES

TYPE 1: Intended for offshore use. Because of their bulk, they are not recommended for paddlers.

TYPE 2: Near-shore buoyancy vests. They are not recommended for paddlers.

TYPE 3: Flotation Aid. They are recommended for paddlers.

TYPE 4: Throwable devices. These are not required on canoes or kayaks and are not to be used as substitutes for life jackets.

TYPE 5: These are special use life jackets. They may be appropriate and recommended for certain uses by paddlers.

Read the USCG-approved life jacket label. The right fit provides the right flotation. Remember, it doesn’t work if you don’t wear it!

Best Paddling Practices

Pay Attention!

STAY ALERT and be ready to move out of the way of danger.

STAY VISIBLE because others may not see you.

SHARE THE WATER:

Give others the room they need to enjoy the waters.

Never Boat Under the Influence

While paddling can be easy, it’s no excuse to paddle under the influence. Paddling a kayak or canoe requires a responsible, safe and aware operator. Don’t blur that operation with alcohol and drugs.

A group of paddlers is safer, but this should not become a drinking party!

Know Before You Go!

Know the waters you plan to float.

Changes in weather can affect your trip.

Practice Re-entry

If shore is too far away...

your buddies can help you empty and... re-enter your boat.

Although you may intend to be IN your canoe or kayak...

Expect the unexpected and know what to do if you find yourself IN the water. Stay calm and stay with the boat.

If you fall out in current, keep your feet on the surface and swim to shore.

In most cases, getting wet or swamping your boat is no reason to end your trip.

Just dump the water out, re-enter and you’re on your way.

Boarding and Re-entry

Keep at least three points of contact and stay low for balance.

Capsizing while ON the water can put you IN the water, so...

Boarding

Be a steadying influence on your partner!

A group of paddlers is safer, but this should not become a drinking party!

Plan to Get Wet!

Expect the unexpected and know what to do if you find yourself IN the water. Stay calm and stay with the boat.

If you fall out in current, keep your feet on the surface and swim to shore.

In most cases, getting wet or swamping your boat is no reason to end your trip.

Just dump the water out, re-enter and you’re on your way.

Know Before You Go!

What waters do you expect to paddle and are you prepared?

Maps & Guides

Weather Report

www.fishandboat.com