

ATTENTION UNPOWERED-BOAT RENTERS



IMPORTANT REGULATIONS & TIPS FOR PADDLING

- **WEAR A LIFE JACKET AT ALL TIMES.** Children 12 years of age and younger are required by law to wear a life jacket when underway on any boat 20 feet or less in length and in all canoes and kayaks.
- **DRINKING AND BOATING DON'T MIX!** It is illegal to operate any boat while under the influence of alcohol or a controlled substance. PEN-ALTIES include fines up to \$7,500, two years imprisonment and loss of boating privileges for up to one year.
- **NEVER BOAT ALONE.** Anything can happen and you may need assistance.
- **EXPECT TO GET WET.** Even the best paddlers sometimes capsize, fall overboard or swamp their boats. WEAR WADING SHOES or tennis shoes to protect your feet when paddling.
- **STAY AWAY FROM DAMS.** The downstream side is just as dangerous as the upstream side. Signs and buoys mark many of these "drowning machines." It is illegal and dangerous to boat near them. Don't let the downstream side's safe appearance lure you too close to a dam.
- **AVOID STRAINERS.** A strainer is an obstruction that allows water to pass through but holds and traps boats and paddlers. A tree or fallen branch is the most common type. SCOUT AHEAD whenever possible.
- **PORTAGE** (carry) your canoe around any waterway section that has obstructions or about which you feel uncertain. Know your skill level. If you are in doubt about your ability to paddle a section, DON'T!
- **While paddling, KEEP PAINTER LINES (ropes tied to the bow)** and any other ropes coiled and SECURED in the boat.
- **NEVER TIE A ROPE TO YOURSELF** or to another paddler, especially a child.
- **Before entering a rapid, KNEEL** To increase your stability.
- **IF YOU COLLIDE WITH AN OBSTRUCTION** when paddling in current, LEAN DOWNSTREAM. This will usually prevent your capsizing or swamping the boat.
- **IF YOU CAPSIZE, HOLD ON TO YOUR BOAT,** unless it presents a life-threatening situation. If floating in current, position yourself on the upstream side of the capsized boat.
- **Always KEEP YOUR FEET UP AND POINTED DOWNSTREAM** if you capsize in swiftly moving water. Fend off rocks and obstructions with your feet while you work your way toward shore.
- **AVOID A DANGEROUS FOOT ENTRAPMENT.** If your boat capsizes in swiftly moving water, don't attempt to walk or stand. If your foot becomes pinned, the force of the current can push your body underwater and hold it there.
- **BE PREPARED FOR COLD WATER.** Sudden immersion in cold water places a severe strain on bodily systems, which can lead to cardiac arrest. If you fall into cold water, immediately cover your mouth and nose with your hands to prevent inhaling water. GET OUT OF THE WATER AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.
- **BAD WEATHER CAN KILL BOATERS.** If a storm is near, head for shore or a safe harbor.
- **FILE A FLOAT PLAN** with a reliable person, indicating where you are going and when you will return. Remember to contact the person once you have returned safely.
- **PROTECT YOURSELF FROM THE SUN** and sunburn. Use sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or more. Wear a hat and sunglasses. Take along plenty of drinking water to keep yourself hydrated.