

PASSPORT

OF BOATING SAFETY

FOR ANGLERS
AND HUNTERS



Transport
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EACH YEAR AN ALARMING NUMBER OF HUNTERS AND ANGLERS TAKING PART IN WATER ACTIVITIES UNNECESSARILY LOSE THEIR LIVES DUE TO NEGLIGENCE AND A LACK OF KNOWLEDGE OF WATER SAFETY RULES. THIS “PASSPORT” WILL HELP YOU PREPARE FOR A SAFE AND ENJOYABLE FISHING AND HUNTING EXCURSION.

» Introduction

CONSIDER THIS “PASSPORT” A PART OF YOUR SAFETY EQUIPMENT AND KEEP IT ON BOARD. REFER TO IT AND PUT INTO PRACTICE WHAT YOU LEARN.



» The ABCs of Flotation Devices

A large number of sport hunters and anglers die each year simply because they either neglected to wear their flotation devices or wore them improperly. More alarming still is that the majority of these had the life-saving devices on board their craft.

The regulation requires that each craft (regardless of the type of craft) have on board a **Canadian-approved** personal flotation device or lifejacket, **of the appropriate size, for each individual on board.**

STANDARDS OF APPROVAL

To **comply** with standards, you must ensure that the label inside the flotation device indicates that it has been **approved by one of** the following organizations:

- **Transport Canada;**
- **Fisheries and Oceans Canada;**
- **Canadian Coast Guard.**



Different Styles

Today you can choose from a wide range of personal flotation devices (PFD) offered in a variety of **different colours** and **styles**. Hunters and anglers can now find **PFDs designed specifically for their activity**.



Certain types have **greater room** to permit aiming for hunters, or freer casting for fly fishers. Some are also available in **camouflage** style. Other offer **compartments for storing** fishing tackle and accessories (flies, lures, etc.). Another interesting style, which is **light, comfortable** and most importantly **less bulky**, is the inflatable type (this one must be worn at all times to comply with standards).

It is important to note that the **most highly visible colours in the water** are **red, orange** and **yellow**. Wearing these colours increases your chances of being quickly located during a search and rescue operation.

Popular Misconception

Even if you are a good swimmer, it is very difficult to easily locate and put on a flotation device once you have fallen into the water.

The following are examples of why:

- » **Wind** and **waves** may make the task very difficult;
- » **Cold water temperatures** may paralyze you;
- » The **flotation device** itself may **remain in the boat**, away from your reach.



Tip

Make sure you shop around for a **flotation device** that is appropriate for you. Ensure that the style you choose fits you **comfortably** and, above all, **wear it at all times on the water**. A flotation device, even within hand's reach, is too far away. Checking the condition of your flotation device and trying it out in the water is strongly recommended.



Overloading and Stability



It is extremely dangerous to overload your craft. Doing so could have serious consequences. The most common cause of drowning during recreational boating is **capsizing**, followed closely by **falling overboard**. Many precautions may be taken to reduce loss of life:

- » **Respect the recommended limits** indicated on the **capacity plate/label** regarding the maximum load or number of occupants that the craft can safely carry;
- » Ensure even **weight distribution** of occupants and equipment;
- » Maintain the **lowest possible centre of gravity** within the craft;



- » Properly **secure equipment** to avoid shifting, which could interfere with the craft's stability and lead to capsizing;
- » **Ensure** you are familiar with your **craft's limitations** and **handling**. Overloading affects stability and causes the craft to be more difficult to manoeuvre;
- » **Avoid standing in a small craft**. If you must move around, keep your centre of gravity (weight) as low as possible.



» Maximum Load

It is important to note that the maximum load calculation is based on use during fair weather conditions with a well-distributed load.

Reminder

The number of occupants that may be safely transported depends on the type of craft, the weight of on-board equipment, the weight distribution and weather conditions.

Alcohol Consumption

The consumption of alcohol in a pleasure craft is much more dangerous than most people realize. **Fatigue, sun, wind** and the **rocking movement** of the boat may all dull your senses. Alcohol intensifies this effect, **reducing your reaction time**, your **judgement** and, consequently, your **ability to navigate** your craft.

It is as dangerous and illegal to boat while under the influence of alcohol, as it is to drive a land vehicle while intoxicated.

Impaired operation of a watercraft is illegal and constitutes an infraction of the ***Criminal Code of Canada***. Anyone operating a watercraft while under the influence of alcohol is committing an **infraction** that could result in them **losing** their **automobile driver's licence**.

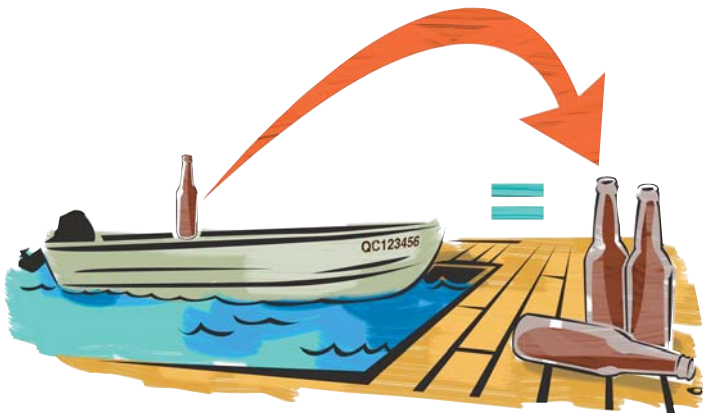
Keeping this in mind, wait until the day of fishing or hunting has ended before having a drink. Don't forget that **you are responsible** not only for your **own safety**, but also for the **safety of others on board**.



Did You Know?



Drinking **one** alcoholic beverage aboard a boat is the equivalent to drinking **three** on land.



Mandatory Safety Equipment on board a Small Craft

During each outing, examine the condition of your equipment and ensure that you have all the required safety equipment on board. The **minimum requirements** are based upon the **craft's length**. For a **motorized craft no greater than 6 metres (19 feet 8 inches) in length**, the following equipment is required:

- » An appropriately sized Canadian-approved **personal flotation device (PFD) or lifejacket** for each person on board;



- » A **buoyant heaving line** (15 metres in length);



- » **Manual propelling device or anchor** with at least 15 metres of rope, cable or chain;



- » **Bailer or hand pump;**



- » **Sound-signalling device;**



- » **Navigation lights** if the craft is used between sunset and sunrise or during periods of reduced visibility (fog, rain, etc);



- » **A class 5BC fire extinguisher** for any craft equipped with an inboard motor, fixed fuel tank, and/or any fuel-fed cooking, heating or refrigeration units;



- » **A waterproof flashlight or 3 Canadian-approved flares** (type A, B or C);



- » **A boat licence number** if your craft is outfitted, even temporarily, with any **motor** of **10 hp (7.5 kW) or more**. **Ensure your vessel is properly marked** and you carry a copy of the pleasure craft licence.

The two last items (**in yellow**) are not mandatory if your craft is not equipped with a motor (canoe, kayak, etc.).



Did You Know?

All requirements apply to you even if you are just **renting** or **borrowing** a craft, regardless of its size. **The responsibility** for possessing required equipment is **shared** equally by the **lessor** and **lessee**.

Remember that the **equipment** must be in **good working order**, **easily accessible** and **useable** by everyone on board.



Tip



Apart from the required equipment, certain **items** could be **extremely useful** in order for you to have a pleasant time on the water. If your trip is for several hours, **you should have** with you:

- » **spare clothing** in a waterproof bag (weather can change without notice, and it's best to be prepared);
- » **drinking water** and **snacks**;
- » **tools** and **spare parts** (fuses, spark plugs, etc.);
- » a **first aid** kit.

Hypothermia and Survival in Cold Water

Fishing and hunting are activities that generally start early and end late in the boating season. Waters are usually cold during those periods, exposing you and other recreational boaters to **hypothermia** and **cold shock**.

Cold shock is probably responsible for more deaths than hypothermia. A sudden exposure to cold waters can instantly **paralyze your muscles**, leave you **breathless**, cause you to **swallow water** and **suffocate** you within moments of immersion. Should you survive the shock of the cold water, hypothermia is the next imminent danger.

Hypothermia is a drop of body temperature below normal (37 °C) that results from a prolonged exposure to frigid waters. The **signs** and **symptoms** of the three different **stages of hypothermia** are:

- » **First stage:** shivering, reduced circulation;
- » **Second stage:** slow and weak pulse, slowed breathing, lack of coordination, irritability, confusion and sleepy behaviour;
- » **Advanced stage:** weak, irregular or absent respiration and pulse. The person may lose consciousness.

Should you **find yourself in the water** it is essential to do everything possible to keep your energy and body heat. To **lengthen your survival time**, the following is important:

- » **Wear your personal flotation device (PFD)** or lifejacket. This will help you to stay afloat and keep your head out of the water without wasting your energy;
- » Swim only if you can join others or reach a safe shelter. **Do not swim to keep yourself warm**, this will only hasten your loss of body heat;
- » If possible, **climb on top of a floating object** (such as your craft) to keep as much of your body as possible out of the water. Frigid water lowers body temperature faster than air (25 times faster);



- » Take the fetal position, or if you are not alone, huddle together;



- » Remove the wet clothing of anyone who has fallen into the water and warm him or her with dry clothes.

Popular Misconception

Contrary to popular belief, **alcohol does not warm up** but, rather, has the **opposite effect**. To warm up, it is preferable to **drink a warm, sugared, non-alcoholic drink** that is **free of caffeine**.



Tip

Wear layered clothing under a windbreaker rather than one thick layer. **Wool**, even when wet, **retains more heat** than synthetics (polyester).

Pre-departure Checklist

Before setting out, it is important to **verify certain elements** to ensure the safety of all aboard:

- » Be aware of the **weather forecast** and of all **local hazards**;
- » Always **inform a responsible person** of your destination, the time of your expected return and a description of your craft;
- » Check your **fuel supply**;



Did You Know?

A good rule of thumb regarding **fuel** is to ration **one-third** for the **trip out**, one-third for the **return** and one-third as **reserve**.

- » Whether you **own** or plan to **rent** or **borrow** a **watercraft**, always ensure that it is in **good working order** and **well equipped**;
- » Have on board all **required safety gear**, ensuring that it is in good working order;
- » Make sure that the **load** is **well distributed** in the craft;
- » Bring along a **communication device** to call for help should you need it; and
- » Always ensure that the **drain plug** is **properly secured** before launching your boat.

Need Help?

In case of **emergency**, it is important to know how to **send distress signals** and ask for help. It could mean the difference between life and death:

- » On waters serviced by the **Coast Guard**, the **VHF marine radio** is generally the most effective way to broadcast your distress. Use **channel 16** and repeat "**Mayday**" three times;



- » A **cellular phone** is also a means of asking for help. The telephone number to reach the **Coast Guard** is **1-800-463-4393**. Some cellular service providers also offer the ***16** service to reach the Coast Guard. Should you find yourself in need of assistance on waters not serviced by the Coast Guard, you can call the **Sûreté du Québec at 310-4141 (*4141)** or the police by dialing **911**;



- » If you are planning a **longer excursion of several days** in a **remote area**, you may wish to consider obtaining a **satellite phone** or an **Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon (EPIRB)**, which transmits a coded signal used only in times of distress. On activation of the EPIRB signal, Canadian Search and Rescue forces are deployed to your rescue.



Did You Know?

To function properly, the Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon must be registered with the **Canadian Beacon Registry** by calling **1-800-727-9414**.

Sail Plan

Whether leaving for a few hours or several days, a **sail plan** remains one of your most important **lifesaving** tools.

The **sail plan** holds **information** on the **route** you plan to take as well as **details** about your **watercraft** and the **people** accompanying you on board.

It is important to always **leave** a **sail plan** with a **responsible person** before setting out. This person should be advised to alert the appropriate authorities (Coast Guard or police) so that rescue can be sent if you fail to return on schedule.

When undertaking a **long trip** it is recommended to report your location daily.

Important

Always let the person you entrusted with your **sail plan know of your return** to avoid **unnecessarily** deploying a **search**.

Navigating in Commercial Shipping Channels

- » Respect right-of-way rules and keep clear of the path of larger vessels;
- » Do not obstruct the channel; for example, never moor to a navigational buoy;
- » Be seen. A radar reflector helps larger vessels detect your presence on their radar screens;
- » Have on board the marine charts for the region you are navigating in.



The Importance of Proper Training

Whether you **own, rent** or **borrow** a pleasure craft, there are rules and information that you must know before setting out. Furthermore, you have the **same responsibilities** as **other boaters** (pleasure craft or personal watercraft operators).

Important

If you are **loaning** your boat, ensure that the operator knows the existing Canadian regulations and safety measures to follow. Take the time to ensure that the operator is familiar with the **boat's handling** and if required, that he or she **holds a proof of competency**.

According to the ***Competency of Operators of Pleasure Craft Regulations***, all operators of a motorized pleasure craft, on all Canadian waterways, must obtain a proof of competency for navigating the craft in 2009. This is already **mandatory** for any person **born after April 1, 1983**, and for those **navigating crafts of less than 4 metres (13 feet 1 inch)** in length. All other boaters must obtain certification by **September 15, 2009**.



The **best way to obtain a proof of competency** is to take a course and **successfully complete an accredited boat safety test**. Learning proper navigational techniques and becoming well acquainted with existing regulations will allow you to use your pleasure craft safely and fully enjoy your preferred sport.



Did You Know?

Occasional users wishing to **lease a motorized craft** must obtain temporary proof of competency with **each rental** by co-signing a rental **boat safety checklist** with the lessor before setting out. This allows the operator to be familiar with the proper **functioning** of the craft, the **geographic characteristics** and **any hazards** that might be present in the area, as well as **boating safety rules**.

The operator must have on board a copy of the verification list signed by both parties as proof of competency.

For further information:

To learn more about boating safety or to obtain a free copy of the **Safe Boating Guide** call

1-800-267-6687

or visit

Transport Canada's Office of Boating Safety at

www.boatingsafety.gc.ca

