

## **SAFETY GUIDELINES AND EXPECTATIONS**

Safety on the water and in the boathouse is our number one priority. The Safety Committee of the WRA has enacted a number of policies and procedures to help keep our junior and adult members safe. These policies cover many areas of safety; however, the Safety Committee expects all employees and users of the WRA to use Common Sense in applying existing safety procedures and policies to situations that are not covered.

### **Lighting And Visibility**

All boats rowing out of the WRA must have a properly functioning bow and stern light when operating in the dusk or dark (1 hour before sunrise or 1 hour before sunset). Rowers are strongly encouraged to wear high visibility or reflective clothing (high-viz) to increase their visibility.

- All lights should meet Coast Guard minimum standards with no less than one nautical mile of visibility for bow lights and stern lights.
- A 360°/all-around white light on the stern of each rowing shell when rowing between sundown and sunup. It should be visible enough to warn approaching vessels.
- The bow of every boat should have a red light on port side and green light on starboard side.

### **Weather**

Always use common sense and know what you can comfortably handle. Rowing in heavy waves is structurally hard on our boats and requires better than average technique. Rowing is prohibited under the following conditions:

- Whitecaps. If there are whitecaps on the lake when you exit the dock/swimming area turn around. If whitecaps develop while you are rowing, head for shore and find calm water or a beach.
- Thunder and lightning. Never row when there is the possibility of lightning. Do not start a row if you hear thunder; wait at least 30 minutes. If you hear thunder when you are out on the water, immediately head for shore.
- Fog. Do not row in fog. If you cannot see at least 100 yards, then you shouldn't start a row.
- Freezing temperatures. Do not row if there is ice at the edges of the water, or ice on the dock, or the potential of ice forming on the dock while rowing.

### **4 Oar Rule**

During particularly cold weather (air or air+wind = 32 degrees or colder), the Program Director, member of the Safety Committee, or Board Member may invoke the "4 Oar Rule" without warning. This rule is enacted for member safety. When the 4 Oar Rule is in effect, no WRA club 1x or 2- is allowed to launch from the WRA without a safety launch.

### **Independent Boat Use**

All rowers selecting to go out on the water without a coaching launch must adhere to the rules listed in the WRA Safety Guidelines and Expectations Handbook as well as meet the following requirements:

- All members of the crew must hold a current boat-use card and be checked out by an approved coach to go out on the water without a coaching launch.
- One USCG approved personal floatation device (PFD) for each person on board
- One sound signaling device per boat
- One phone per boat
- Leave a record: Always sign in and out of the logbook and make an entry on the WRA Boat Reservation Calendar. Be sure that someone on shore knows you are out on the water and when to expect you back.
- Dress for hi-visibility. It is VERY difficult for boaters to see rowers when shells are so close to the water. Wear light-colored, hi-vis tops and/or hats to improve visibility.

### **Youth and Junior Use of the WRA**

Individuals under the age of 18, including members of the WRA Youth programs or the WRA Junior Team, may only use the WRA facility during scheduled, coached practices or when with a coach or parent-member.

### **Coaches' Safety Certifications And Training**

All WRA coaches are required to have: current CPR, current First Aid, Washington State Boater ID, certificate of USA SafeSport training, and complete the WRA staff training.

### **Safe Sport**

The Whatcom Rowing Association is a SafeSport boathouse. SafeSport aims to eliminate any form of sexual misconduct, emotional misconduct, physical misconduct, bullying, harassment and hazing in our sport. Working with the United States Olympic Committee, the SafeSport program was developed based on education and training for coaches, as well as reporting and enforcement policies that include criminal background checks of all Whatcom Rowing Association staff. Learn more.

### **Health And Safety**

Clean hands and equipment make for healthy members! We provide antibacterial wipe dispensers throughout the facility to sanitize oar handles before and/or after use, and to clean the indoor exercise equipment. We strongly recommend all members use these supplies and wash their hands thoroughly after training.

### **Boathouse Emergency Response**

- First Aid - All first aid supplies are located in the cabinet under the TV. All launches and coxswain fanny packs are equipped with basic first aid supplies.
- AED - Our coaches are WRA first responders but should it be necessary to use the AED without a first responder present, call 9-1-1 for instructions. WA State has a "Good Samaritan Law" that protects responders unless there is gross negligence or willful or wanton misconduct. Note the posters and protocols by AED, which is currently located on the back wall by the TV. We encourage all rowers to take CPR AED training.

### **Incident Report Form**

The Incident Report Form must be completed in the event of any on-water or off-water incident whereby any persons, rower, coach, staff, volunteer, or visitor to the Whatcom Rowing Association is injured during a training session and/or competition; during volunteer, regular, or special event duties while on Whatcom Rowing Association grounds or in the boathouse, or off the premises while traveling or using Whatcom Rowing Association equipment or participating in a Whatcom Rowing Association program. All reports are submitted directly to the Director, Courtney Moeller, and will be reviewed by the Safety Committee.

