

# Safety On Board —

from Transport Canada and the Canadian Red Cross

**T**o be out on a boat on a clear sparkling day; to be one with the blue sky and the water at the place they meet; to hear the gentle waves lapping against the bow, and smell the sweet scent of summer sea air; this is one of life's truly great pleasures.

For seasoned boaters, canoeists and kayakers, the call of the water is irresistible. They look forward to it and plan all through the winter for the time they can get out onto the water again. They also know how vitally important it is to plan water adventures, just as you would plan a hiking trip or campout.

To help you get ready for another happy and safe season on the water,

we've put together some current and valuable information from Transport Canada's Office of Boating Safety and the Canadian Red Cross "On Board" program. We have tailored this information to include what is needed for smaller craft (canoes, kayaks, small power boats).

## What you need to know

As a boater, you are responsible for equipping yourself, for operating your boat safely, and for ensuring the safety of those on board. You're expected to know the rules and regulations that apply on all of Canada's waterways.

The Small Vessel Regulations outline the minimum mandatory safety equipment required to be carried on a boat, safety precautions to follow before and while boating, and construction standards for building a recreational boat. All required safety equipment on board must be in good working order to satisfy the regula-

tions. See the Safe Boats section for more detail.

It's important to remember that you must not operate a small vessel in a careless manner, without due care and attention or without reasonable consideration for other persons. As the owner or person entrusted by the owner, you are in violation of the regulations if you operate any craft that does not have all the required equipment on board, or in good working order. The same applies if you loan it.

Also, every pleasure craft operator must render assistance, insofar as the operator can do so without serious danger to their own craft or persons on board, to every person on the water who is in danger.

Various other Regulations prohibit the operators of all vessels from dumping pollutants into Canadian waters. Pollutants prohibited in all Canadian waters include oil and oil-wastes, most hazardous chemicals, and gar-



**Be prepared for a safe outing on the water.**

Photo: Wayne Elsey

# Don't Rock the Boat!

bage. Discharging sewage is prohibited in all waters of Ontario and in certain areas in British Columbia and Manitoba - to find out these specific "no-dump" sites, contact your local Office of Boating Safety or the toll-free Boating Safety Infoline at 1-800-267-6687.

See the Safe Waterways section for more information.

## Safe boating is no accident

Every year, about 200 people die in boating accidents across Canada. There are some things you should know to help ensure your safety and prevent accidents:

*Wear your lifejacket.* Approximately 90 per cent of all drowning victims in recreational boating incidents were not wearing a lifejacket or personal flotation device.

The law requires boats to be equipped with a Transport Canada-approved PFD or lifejacket of an appropriate size for each person on board (except for any infant who weighs less than 9 kg or any person whose chest size exceeds 140 cm).

*Don't drink and drive.* At least 40 per cent of all power boating fatality victims had a blood alcohol level above the legal driving limit. Driving a boat while impaired is a Criminal Code offence. You could be fined \$600 or more, prohibited from operating a boat for up to three years and imprisoned, possibly for life, not to mention seriously injured or killed.

## Proof of competency

All operators of motorized pleasure boats less than four metres in length need to have proof of competency on board at all times. In addition, all pleasure boat operators born after April 1, 1983 must have proof of competency, regardless of vessel size.

There are three ways you can demonstrate proof of competency: prove that you have successfully completed a boating safety course before April 1, 1999; obtain a pleasure craft operator card; or complete a rental-boat safety checklist, obtain-

able from the boat rental agency. This safety checklist is only valid for the period of time for which the boat is rented.

For more information on safe boating, check out the Office of Boating Safety's Web site at [www.boatingsafety.gc.ca](http://www.boatingsafety.gc.ca) or call the Boating Safety Infoline at 1-800-267-6687.

**Weather can change in just a few hours, leading to conditions that can threaten your health. Be sure to bring proper clothing for longer outings.**

## Minimum Required Safety Equipment: Canoes, Kayaks, Rowboats and Rowing Shells (not over 6m in length)

- 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

- one manual propelling device (one of the following: a set of oars; a paddle; any other apparatus that can be used manually by a person to propel a vessel, including pumping the rudder on small open sailboats).

OR

- an anchor with not less than 15 m of cable, rope or chain in any combination

- a sound-signalling device or a sound-signalling appliance (required on **all** pleasure boats). These can range from a pealess whistle, a compressed gas or electric horn to electric whistles and bells.

- 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.

- one bailer or one manual water pump fitted with or accompanied by sufficient hose to enable a person using the pump to pump water from the bilge of the vessel over the side of the vessel. Bailers must be of at least 750ml with opening minimum 65 cm<sup>2</sup> and constructed of plastic or metal. If you choose to have a manual pump, the pump and hose must be able to reach the bilge and discharge over the side of the vessel. *A bailer or manual water pump is not required for any multi-hull vessel that has subdivided multiple-sealed hull construction (common example: pontoon boat) or any sailboat fitted with a recess-type cockpit that cannot contain a sufficient quantity of water to capsize the vessel.*

TIP: Making a bailer out of a 4 litre bleach bottle (useful for small open boats)

Step1: Secure lid

Step2: cut off bottom

Step3: Cut along side with handle.

## Other Suggested Items to Take Along

If you plan to be out for more than a few hours, there are a number of items that you should take with you:

*Spare clothing* in a watertight bag (weather can change dramatically in just a few hours and not having the proper clothing for the conditions can lead to conditions that can be serious threats to your health, such as heat-stroke and hypothermia);

*Drinking water* and high-energy snacks (water is the most important element here as lack of it can lead to fatigue and dehydration in a fairly short time).

TIP: Would you recognize the signs and symptoms of hypothermia, heat exhaustion, an allergic reaction to insect venom or food items? Do you know how to stem bleeding, perform

rescue breathing, treat shock? If you answered no to any of these questions, take a first aid course as soon as possible. Knowing how to provide this immediate, temporary assistance can make the difference between permanent injury and full recovery, or even life and death. Know before you go!!

**Tool Kits and Spare Parts** - *you may need to make repairs while out on the water. Take along a tool kit, spare parts (for example, fuses, bulbs, a spare propeller, nuts and bolts, penetrating oil to free-up stuck fasteners, duct tape, spark plugs), and tools and materials to temporarily stop hull leaks.*

Now that you have the tools available, do you know what to do with them? Take along the owner's manual and any other guide book you might need.

**First Aid Kit** - *when boating, you are likely to be some distance from medical assistance and such assistance may be difficult to find when you are in unfamiliar surroundings. Take a first aid kit along with you. Store it in a dry place and replace used and outdated contents regularly.*

### **It won't work if you don't wear it!**

The Office of Boating Safety is working towards improving the usage and wearability of Personal Flotation Devices (PFDs). Now more than ever, a wider range of approved types and colours of PFDs are available to boaters. Manufacturers now have the flexibility to respond to consumers' demand for comfort and fashion. PFDs now come in a variety of colours and various inflatable configurations. When shopping keep in mind your need for visibility on or in the water.

Open the PFD and look at the label – check for the Canadian Coast Guard, Department of Fisheries and Oceans or Department of Transport approval.

Lifesaving cushions are no longer accepted as approved PFDs.

In order for an inflatable PFD to meet this requirement, it must be worn while in an open boat, or worn while on deck or in the cockpit or be readily available to persons below deck of vessels with cabins.

Pouch type PFDs are only permitted for rowing and paddling activities but NO inflatable is approved for use for white water activities.

Lif jackets come in only orange, red or yellow, offering greater buoyancy and the ability to turn an unconscious person face-up in the water.

Choose a flotation device that meets your specific needs. Wear it.

### **Scouts Canada's Policy on PFDs**

Youth and adults participating in small craft (6 metres or less) boating activities involving powered and non-powered boats must wear Transport Canada approved, properly fitted, personal flotation devices (PFDs) or life jackets at all times. Canoes exceeding the 6 metre standard will also be included in this policy.

**(Transport Canada/Coast Guard and Scouts Canada recommends that approved PFDs be worn at all times while participating in watercraft activities.)**

*Bylaw, Policies and Procedures Section 10006.7*

### **Proper care of your flotation device**

Take good care of your lifejacket or PFD. Flotation devices that are

ripped or in poor condition are not considered approved. Flotation gear should not be used for kneeling, sitting or as a fender for your boat. Check its buoyancy regularly by wading out until the water is waist deep; bend your knees and see how well you float.

You should allow your flotation gear to dry in the open air, not close to a direct heat source. It should be kept in a dry, well-ventilated, easily accessible place.

Clean with a mild soap and running water. Strong detergents or gasoline should never be used. Do not dry clean.

### **Parents take note**

A lifejacket or PFD is no substitute for adult supervision.

Children should be encouraged to wear their lifejacket or PFD at all times. They should learn how to put them on in the water. Some lifejacket and PFDs are designed especially for children; select the one that best suits your child's size and weight. Because of the way their body weight is distributed, children do not float well in a face up position and tend to panic easily. Diapers, when wet, will adversely affect the performance of flotation devices. Children under 16 years of age should not wear inflatable PFDs as lifesaving protection.

**TIP:** If you are in a low freeboard craft, remember that you will be more difficult to see for other boaters. Choosing a brightly coloured PFD will help make you more visible to others.

<http://www.tc.gc.ca/BoatingSafety/menu.htm>

*Note: For more information on PFDs see article on page 14 of this issue.*



## **Scouting's Mission**

The mission of Scouting is to contribute to the education of young people, through a value system based on the Scout Promise and Law, to help build a better world where people are self-fulfilled as individuals and play a constructive role in society.

## **Énoncé de Mission du scoutisme**

La mission du scoutisme consiste à contribuer au développement des jeunes afin de leur permettre d'atteindre leur plein potentiel physique, intellectuel, social et spirituel en tant qu'individus, citoyens et membres de la collectivité sur les plans local, national et international par l'application de nos principes et pratiques.



## Boating Safety Program - "On Board"

### Why study the Canadian Red Cross "On Board" manual?

If you own or operate a power boat or personal water craft (PWC), Canada-wide regulations\*, introduced September 15, 1999, require you to have a Pleasure Craft Operator Card (PCOC). The Red Cross "On Board" program includes everything you and your family need to know to pass a Canadian Coast Guard accredited test, and get your card. And, you can take the test with us too!

### Who should study the Canadian Red Cross "On Board" manual?

You - if you operate a power driven boat, and your family members if they operate the boat too! The Canadian Red Cross "On Board" manual is full of information with great pictures and diagrams making it easy for everyone to understand.

What is included in the Canadian Red Cross "On Board" manual?

- ☞ You will understand the legal responsibilities of being a boat operator.
- ☞ You will learn how to best to operate and maintain your boat.
- ☞ You will learn how to save lives if there is a boating mishap.
- ☞ You will be prepared to write the CCG (Canadian Coast Guard) accredited test with confidence.

☞ You will have fun while learning and preparing yourself to join the select group of boaters who have the Card!

### A few easy steps is all it takes for you to be on your way to obtaining your Pleasure Craft Operator Card:

Order your Red Cross "On Board" manual. Go through your "On Board manual" at your own pace to prepare yourself to write the test. Take your CCG accredited test at any designated Canadian Red Cross Authorized Provider or Canadian Red Cross office. Once you have successfully passed your test, a permanent Pleasure Craft Operator Card will be mailed to you.

#### The best way to prepare:

- ☞ The Canadian Red Cross "On Board" manual - A 120 page full-colour book that includes pictures, diagrams and checklists. Practice tests at the end of each chapter will help you prepare for your test.
- ☞ Complete your "On Board" study guide and carry a Pleasure Craft Operator Card for life!
- ☞ The Canadian Red Cross "On Board" manual has been accredited by the Canadian Coast Guard strictly on the basis that it meets the minimum requirements of basic boating safety knowledge set



## DID YOU KNOW...

**S**cout leaders who hold a valid and current Pleasure Craft Operator Card can apply to the Canadian Red Cross to be a proctor to teach and give the "On Board" course and exam, and/or the People Saver First Aid course (with a valid First Aid Certificate). Phone 1-877-356-3226 to discuss becoming a Red Cross Authorized Provider.

out in the Canadian Coast Guard Boating Safety Course Standard.

☞ [www.redcross.ca](http://www.redcross.ca)

\* Canada-wide regulations to be implemented in phases:

**September 15, 1999**

All operators born after April 1, 1983.

**September 15, 2002**

All operators of power driven pleasure craft under 4m (includes PWCs).

**September 15, 2009**

All operators of power driven pleasure craft. X

**One final check to make  
sure we have everything.**