



Safety & Boat Handling Handbook

Calgary Rowing Club

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Table of Contents

Introduction.....	3
Member Requirements.....	3
Safety	3
Safety Rules	3
First Aid Equipment.....	6
Emergency Response	7
Oar Handling Requirements	7
Boat Handling Requirements	7
Steps to Take Out a Boat	8
Stepping into a Boat.....	8
How to Carry a Single:	9
How to Carry a Pair or Double	9
How to Carry a Quad	9
How to Carry a Four	9
How to Carry an Eight	9
Bringing the Boats Back into the Boat Bay	10
Code of Conduct	10
Other Reservoir Users.....	10
Boat and Equipment Movement	11
Coach Boat Requirements.....	11
Boat Transportation Safety	11
Safety and Coach Boats	12
Personal Safety.....	13
Appendix 1 - Emergency Response Plan.....	14
Appendix 2 – Rescuing Athletes.....	15



Introduction

The Calgary Rowing Club (CRC) Safety and Boat Handling Handbook outlines the requirements that all club members must follow. Following these guidelines will help ensure that all athletes will have a safe and rewarding experience on and off the water.

Member Requirements

- Act in a manner that will not compromise the safety of themselves, club members, other water users and the public.
- Assess risks before rowing based on your own abilities.
- Abide by the Club's safety rules.
- Be proactive in warning others of impending danger.
- Inform Coaches, Club Manager and other crew/Club members of any medical condition that may present a risk to themselves and/or their crew. In the case of Juniors, parents have a duty to advise the Coach/ Club Manager.
- All crews **MUST** sign themselves out each time going out on the water in the BOAT-USE LOG Book between the Club bays 2 and 3. It is the responsibility of the Bow to sign in and out the boat with the log book. If you do not sign out no-one will know you are on the reservoir and to watch out for you.
- Always let someone know that you are going out on the reservoir and when you expect to return home. This applies to coached practices and individual/private rows.
- Recognize the signs of heat stroke and carry water bottles, sunscreen, eye protection and wear hats during the on-water season.
- Recognize the signs of hypothermia and ensure that athletes are dressed appropriately for conditions when cold water rules are in place.

Safety

Safety Rules

As a member of CRC and user of the reservoir, it is critical that these safety rules are reviewed at the beginning of the on-water season to ensure the safety of all members.

Flow Pattern

- Always in a clockwise direction outside of the course. Review the posted map on the CRC website showing the flow pattern.

<http://www.calgaryrowing.com/Safety>



- On calm days, program coaches may allow rowers to row around the full reservoir or towards the sailing club. In both instances, a clockwise direction must be adhered to. At all times, CRC rowers must watch out for members of other boating clubs as well as members of the public who may follow different rules.

Course Hazards

Referencing the course flow pattern map (<http://www.calgaryrowing.com/Safety>), hazards include:

- A concrete outcropping along the shore at the 750m mark on the north side.
- Large rocks along the north shore at the Glenmore causeway.
- Low-water sandbar at the 1750 point (beyond the finish line area).
- Frequent deadheads and floating logs throughout.

Launching and Docking

- Shells should be launched from the dock with the bow facing north to blend into the correct circulation pattern.
- Shells should be docked from the south end of the dock with the bow facing north.
- Shells should be docked and launched on the Rowing Club side (causeway end) to avoid potential congestion with the Canoe Club on the other end.

Shell Safety Equipment

- All shells must have a whistle to attract attention in the case of emergency.
- Before rowing, the bow ball, heel restraints, closed vents, and all rigging should be in proper order (e.g., no pins missing, speed washers in place, bolts are in place and tight).

PFDs

- Must be worn at all times by all rowers (belt pack), coxswains (Horse collar PFD required), and safety boat operators (chest PFD), and coaches (chest PFD). This is a city by-law.
- PFDs are not required to be worn during competition in RCA sanctioned events but must be carried in the boats if required to comply with city by-laws.

Rowing Times

- No rowing is allowed before sunrise or after sunset.

Rescue Procedures (flipped shell)



- Stay with the shell and remain calm. Use your PFD if required and whistle to attract attention. Crew members should attempt to get back into the shell.
- In cold conditions, crew members should climb on top of the flipped shell to get out of the cold water.
- Other crews should stop rowing and support the flipped crew and gain the attention of the coach boat. Crew can continue rowing once the coach boat has reached the rower.
- Use the whistle attached to the stroke seat to attract attention.
- As a last resort swim the boat to shore if no help is available and you cannot get back in.
- Never leave your boat and try to swim ashore.
- If flipped during cold water rules, the athlete should go indoors, change into dry clothes or use a blanket and drink a warm drink to slowly warm-up and avoid hypothermia.

Note: Watch the RCA safety video <http://rowingcanada.org/rca-safety-video> to learn how to get back into your boat.

Note: For more information about hypothermia, please see the Canadian Red Cross' fast facts sheet <http://www.redcross.ca/cmslib/general/hypothermiafastfacts.pdf>

Adverse Weather Conditions

- Coaches and rowers are responsible to know their limitations and when it is suitable to row.
- Conditions not suitable for rowing include high winds, thunder and lightning storms, fog and heavy rains.
- If lightening is seen or if the golf course lightening horn is activated, all rowers must return immediately to the boathouse.

Cold Water Rules for Club boats (May and October)

- No rower or crew is allowed on the water without a safety boat present.
- Inform safety boat of your presence on the water if its your practice or not and stay in sight of the safety boat at all times.
- All boats will use the buddy system, row within proximity of each other, and support each other in the event of an incident.
- Rowing is prohibited if ice is on the water.
- Owners of private shells are encouraged to follow the cold-water rules.



Note: Cold water rules may be extended beyond May 31 or prior to October 1 in the case of exceptional ambient conditions. This determination will be made by the Club Manager in conjunction with the program coaches.

Emergencies

- Emergency response information is posted in the boat-bay office, by the shell sign-out book and the AED location beside the entrance to the rowing tank.

Equipment

- Never leave any piece of equipment in a dangerous position or state that could cause injury.
- Report any hazards to your coach or CRC staff members.

Docks

- Docks are to be kept clear of tripping hazards like shoes, clothes, water bottles and oars if not in use. Para athlete equipment (wheelchairs and para ladders) should be left in the middle of the dock when para athletes are on the water.

Incidents

- Report all near-miss and actual incidents using the incident report procedure and paper forms located at the boat sign-out binder.

Swimming

- There will be no intentional swimming in the reservoir.

First Aid Equipment

There are first-aid boxes around the club, if you require them. They are:

- In the boathouse office (by the private bay 1)
- In the coach boats
- Under the Boat Log Book between Bay 2/3
- In the Club Managers' office

AEDs (automated external defibrillator) are in alarmed cabinets on the outside wall between boat bay 2 and 3 during the rowing season (May – September) and beside the entrance to the rowing tank (year-around). The AED on the outside wall between boat bays 2 and 3 is owned by Boat Patrol. Boat Patrol places the AED in the cabinet at the beginning of each day and removes it at days end.



Emergency Response

Emergency response posters (Appendix 1) are posted in the coaches' office, beside the boat sign-out log book and beside the AED at the entrance to the rowing tank. There is a phone with direct line to Boat Patrol outside of boat bay 3.

Sanctioned regattas will have their specific emergency response plans that build on the club emergency response plan.

Oar Handling Requirements

- Inspect the oar for any damage and check that the collar is tight and secure. Collars are not to be adjusted unless authorized by the club manager or program coaches.
- Rowers will first bring oars down to the dock before taking boats out of the boathouse for pre-row safety inspection to speed up dock time.
- Oars are to be carried with the blade tips up and in front of rower's body to prevent damage to the corners from hitting surfaces and the tarmac. Grips can be replaced.
- Oars are to be stored in the middle of the dock in a neat pile with crew members oars. Oars must be placed spoon up on the dock (figure 1).



Figure 1: Oar position on dock

- Oars must be inspected after use for any damage and cleaned with the sanitary wipes provided to remove any bodily fluids (e.g., blood, blister serum etc) that may be on the grips.

Boat Handling Requirements

Boats are expensive. Training is provided through learn to row programs and by the coach on how to handle singles and other coxless boats. The bow person of any coxless boat is always in charge of boat movement. In coxed boats, the coxswain will be in charge.

Note: Always ask for help to carry a boat if needed.



Steps to Take Out a Boat

1. The bow person/cox **MUST** sign out the boat using the boat sign-out log
2. Recruit additional athletes to help bring a boat out if required.
3. All athletes must listen to their bow person/cox who will be in charge of safely bringing the crew boat from the boathouse to dock and on water.
4. Position boat stretchers outside the boat house for a boat safety check.
5. Take the boat out of the boat house and carefully lower it to the stretchers for an equipment safety check. Lower the boat onto the canvas areas of the stretcher only. The boat must be checked for:
 - loose rigger and nuts
 - missing or worn heel restraints
 - missing or damaged bow-balls
 - hatch covers in place
 - seats and slides
 - and any other obvious defects to the boat

Note: If there is any damage please report on white board and tell your coach or a staff member.

6. When lifting, remember to lift with the legs. Never lift a boat with your back. Always lift boats with your legs and arms, keeping your back straight and the core muscles strong.
7. Watch out for hazards and move slowly. There will be other people around the club and on the dock. Call out to them to let them know you are moving towards them. Make sure that you do not hit them with any part of your boat. If the dock, or boathouse, is full of moving boats wait patiently before removing yours from the racking or placing it in the water.

Stepping into a Boat

- Do not step into shells with your shoes on as debris from your shoes may damage the boat and slides. Leave your shoes on dock in a neat pile.
- Only step on the boat seat deck, particularly on the strip of sandpaper if it is present.

Note: NEVER step into the bottom of the boat as your foot will go through the boat.



How to Carry a Single:

By Yourself

- Shell must be carried on the head or shoulder at the balance point. Both hands must be on the riggers when carrying on the head.

Note: If you have never carried a shell by yourself, always ask for help.

- Lower stern end first to ensure fin is safe then lower the rest of the shell into the water.
- Carry level the single to the ground or ramp.
- When placing single in the water, place stern in the water first to ensure the fin is safe.

Do not overestimate your boat carrying abilities. Carry a single with two people if you are not an experienced rower or if its windy.

- One person is located at the boat name, the other past the fin.

How to Carry a Pair or Double

- One person is located at the boat name and the other just past the fin but at least 1ft from each end of the shell.
- Both athletes must carry the shell on the same side.

How to Carry a Quad

- Two people are located on each end of the cockpit (bow pair on the bow side of cockpit - one on star and one on port, stroke pair at stern side: one on star and one on port).

How to Carry a Four

- Each athlete is opposite their rigger and anticipates the backstay swing when the shell is lowered into the water.

How to Carry an Eight

- Each athlete is opposite their rigger and anticipates the backstay swing when the shell is lowered it to the water.
- Cox helps lower boat to water and is responsible for the protection of the fin.

Note: When removing or returning boats to a rack, keep the “rack-side” riggers higher but just high enough to get the cockpit edge on the rack, then slide in. Don’t try to go “straight in” sideways. This risks scratches/dings from above and scratching/dinging below.



Bringing the Boats Back into the Boat Bay

- Stretchers need to be put out first, then boats moved from dock. All boats need to be wiped down before returning them to their dedicated spot in the boat bay.
- Check the boat for any damage that may have occurred or if there is blood in the boat or on the oar handles.

Note: Blood must be cleaned with bleach spray to avoid infection to other rowers

- Athletes must be aware of their surroundings and careful when putting the boat back on the racks.
- Recruit additional athletes to help bring a boat in if required.
- Ensure the boat is carried to its rack in its designated direction (e.g., bow or stern first)
- Once the shell is put on racks, gather your oars and return them to their designated location.
- The bow person or cox must report all issues/incidents/near-misses. Incidents include boat damage, flipping, injury, oar damage, crashes with another boat/ shore, etc. See the Incident Reporting Procedure on the CRC website or fill out the paper form at the boats sign-out binder.
- All issues with foot stretchers, shoes, slides, wheels and seats must be reported to coaches and noted on the white board by the boat sign-out log immediately so they can be fixed.
- Please fix issues such as missing bolts, flat washers, lock washers, nuts, speed washers by getting appropriate tools at the workbench. Ensure all the rigger and bolt parts are tight after your row and use a wrench to tighten should it be necessary.

Rigging and Oars

- Athletes will not change rigging on boats or oars unless advised by coaches.
- All boats will be rigged by the staff/coaches to make sure pitch etc. is set to boat type/weight club standard.

Code of Conduct

Other Reservoir Users

Be courteous. Do not overtake in dangerous places and always give another crew room. Always call out to other crews that are gaining water on you “Heads Up”; they may



not see you and you may not be able to get out of the way in time. If the faster crew is passing on your port side, move to the starboard and vice versa.

Boat and Equipment Movement

- Always give priority to crews coming off the water.
- As crews reach the end of their outing and prepare to approach the dock, those that arrived first should land first. If in doubt, the largest crews should be given priority so that the fewest people are left waiting on the water.
- All rowers must launch and dock from the Rowing Club (causeway end) of the dock. Be respectful of other Glenmore Reservoir users.
- Use the full length of the landing stage so that multiple boats can boat and land at the same time within the Rowing Club (causeway end) of the dock.
- During wavy conditions, some athletes must hold the shell off from the side of the dock to prevent damage while the other athletes retrieve shoes.
- Always ensure that blades and stretchers are already nearby so that boating and docking can be done as quickly as possible. Be efficient with your and everyone else's time.
- Water bottles used in the boats must be inserted in a sock or other soft covering to protect the boat.
- Boats left on outside racks must be tied down. This is a requirement of our insurance.

Coach Boat Requirements

All motor boats or other craft used for coaching, officiating, or for regatta safety must meet the minimum requirements as set down in the Canada Shipping Act-Small Craft regulations, and as modified, amended or added to by Provincial or Municipal bylaws.

Equipment safety ought never to take priority over the safety of an athlete in any situation.

Boat Transportation Safety

The boat trailer must be maintained and licensed to the standards of the Alberta Provincial Government. Boats must be tied securely and individually to the trailer.

Trailer hitch and the towing vehicle coupling must be compatible. Safety chains will be affixed between the trailer and the club truck.

When transporting boats outside of the Province, all boats need to be cleaned, drained and dried. The vents need to be opened and boat compartments dried before boats are loaded onto the trailer. When transporting boats across provincial and federal borders, trailer drivers must



stop at the mandatory boat inspection sites and inspections for Zebra mussels and other invasive species must be conducted in Alberta. The inspection results must be submitted to the CRC Club Manager. This is required to prevent invasive species from entering the Calgary reservoir.

Safety and Coach Boats

- Boats must to comply with Transport Canada requirements and include the following safety equipment:
 - Paddle
 - Bailer
 - Rope
 - Signaling device
 - Fire extinguisher
 - Tools for minor repairs to the rowing boats
- Those in the safety boat must wear DOT approved life jackets.
- Coaches must be familiar with the operating of an outboard motor as well as the practical applications involved with rescuing athletes (appendix 2).
- Coach boats will always approach a shell from the side where the wind will not push them into the shell, thereby further complicating a dangerous situation.
- All coaches will use local weather radar reports and assess wave and wind conditions before allowing boats onto the water. Coaches have the power to refuse the athletes the right to row in weather conditions deemed unsafe.
- Coaches must be trained in first aid and recognize the symptoms of heat stroke and dehydration that accompany hot weather conditions and hypothermia in cold weather conditions.
- The coach boat driver should have a cellular phone and the phone number to contact 911 or the City of Calgary Boat Patrol for assistance.
- Coach Boat Requirements:
 - Check the inflation of the coach boat. If ripples in the sides are seen use the manual pump located underneath the boat sign-out binder shelf.
 - Only CRC Staff members or coaches can drive the coach boat onto the trailer.
 - The securing chain on the dock must be used to winch the coach boat out onto the trailer



Personal Safety

As members of the Calgary Rowing Club, we are fortunate to be part of a vibrant community and participating in a sport that we love. Club members are reminded that the CRC is situated in a public environment. As such, club members should be mindful of their personal safety. This may include, but is not limited to the following:

- working with a buddy to close the boathouse up after practice, rather than doing so individually.
- Walking to your vehicles in the parking lot with a buddy following an evening meeting at the club.
- speaking to your coach or CRC staff if you are concerned about the actions of a member of the public around the boathouse/tarmac.



Appendix 1 - Emergency Response Plan



Emergency Response Procedure

For All Emergencies Call 9-1-1

Required 911 Information

Boathouse Address

Calgary Rowing Club

North Glenmore Park, West End of Glenmore Reservoir

Directions: Go as far south onto Crowchild into the Lakeview community and into Glenmore Park. CRC is the big blue building on the left.

911 Script

Ask for the fire department, no matter the severity of injury, a missing person or other circumstance.

My name is _____. There is an injured person who needs medical attention/ boat rescue, etc. He/She is located _____.

The CRC boathouse is located in North Glenmore Park, at the West End of the Glenmore Reservoir.

I will send someone to meet the ambulance at the driveway to The Calgary Rowing Club.

DO NOT HANG UP: Stay on the line and answer any questions asked by the dispatcher. Provide dispatch with an alternate phone number if you are concerned about getting cut off.

CRC Emergency Contact

Immediately after the 911 call is completed, contact the CRC Office Manager at **403-249-2880** with details of the event.

Non Emergencies

For non-emergencies (e.g.: stranded or swamped boats) call the Boat Patrol at (403) 371 - 8674.



Appendix 2 – Rescuing Athletes

Always remember that prevention is the best and first line of defense when dealing with dangerous situations.

Ensure all participants have their PFD's and know how to deploy them when rowing on the reservoir, and if conditions are unsafe, (i.e., very windy, extreme cold etc.) reschedule the session. For a learn to row group, ensure that everyone sticks together in the safest areas of the reservoir. Keep the group close together especially during the first few rows on the water when the skill level of the learn to row participants is low

A coach can be expected to be one of two situations when rescuing athletes.

1. Coxing a boat
2. In the coach boat

Coxing a Shell

If flipped:

1. Focus on obtaining the attention of the coach boat. Visual signaling (waving your hands etc.) to the coach boat is the most effective method as your voice may be difficult to hear over the sound of the boat motor.
2. If the coach boat is not nearby, do not leave the rowers alone in the water. A large group is easier to see than a small group.
3. Keep the rowers in the water calm by talking to them and reassuring them, advise them to stay with the boat, even flipped it will float and provides a floating platform for the rowers to rest against.
4. If temperature and hypothermia are a concern advise the rowers to try and raise their core out of the water by resting it across the boat. If necessary, have the rowers in the water deploy their PFD's.

In the Coach Boat

If you are driving the coach boat, always have a general idea of the location of rowers on the water. If you are working with another instructor coordinate the route your rowers will take on the water and then stick to it. When you see that a shell has flipped:

1. First advise the rowers you are coaching that someone has flipped and that you will be attending to them.
2. If the group is together, have everyone stop rowing and stick together, if the group has separated, use your judgement but try and bring everyone back into a group in a safe and efficient manner (e.g., with traffic flow).
3. As you approach the flipped crew, remember that your priority is to make sure the rowers are safe.



4. Note the location of the kill switch for the motor and approach the rowers in the water at a slow speed on the lee-ward side of the rowers.
5. Position the coach boat on the leeward side of the shell close to the rowers and keep the motor away from them. Once close to the rower, make sure that you use the kill switch to turn off the motor.
6. With the boat in neutral help the rowers into the coach boat, they should be able to grasp the rope on the side of the boat and pull themselves in. Some rowers may not have the upper body strength necessary and may require help.
7. Once the rowers are in the coach boat and out of the water, assess their physical situation, look for any injuries or signs of hypothermia. If you are concerned about their immediate health, return to the dock, the shell can always be retrieved later. There are aluminum safety blankets located inside the coach boat that you can use should the rower exhibit signs of hypothermia.

Retrieving the Boat

To retrieve a shell after a crew has flipped:

1. Remove the oars. If the oars are not removed, they can become trapped under the hull and snap when the boat is being towed back.
2. Pull the shell up against the side of the coach boat right side up, while holding onto the riggers (you may require assistance in the coach boat for this) drive slowly back to the dock with the shell.