

Fredericton Rowing Club Cold Weather Rowing Policy

Updated August 2018

Cold Weather Rowing Policy

FRC Hazard Level	FRC PROTOCOL	Air & Wind Chill	Water	Water Hypothermia Index	Expected Time Before Exhaustion or Unconscious	Wind & Direction (kmh)
SEVERE	NO ROWING	Below 0°C	Below 4°C	Extreme-Severe	15-30 minutes	N/A
HIGH	COLD WATER PRECAUTIONS	0°C to 5°C	4°C to 10°C	High	30-60 minutes	East: < 5 West: < 10 North: <10 South: < 10 Gusts < +5
CAUTION	Normal RCA/FRC Safety Protocols	Above 5°C	Above 10°C	Medium-Low	60-120 minutes	East: < 10 West: < 15 North: < 15 South: < 15 Gusts < +5

In accordance with the Air and Water Temperature Chart above, the following policies will be adhered to by FRC members and staff during “Cold Weather Rowing” to minimize the risk associated with cold water or cold weather rowing:

1. Prior to the start of the rowing season, the FRC Safety Advisor shall confirm the proficiency and suitability of individuals deemed qualified and subsequently endorsed by the FRC, before being permitted to act as part of cold weather coaching crews. The coach must have full confidence in their crew’s abilities to handle themselves on water when training in cold weather.
2. There must be at least one coach boat with two experienced safety personnel attending each program, and they must maintain close contact (within 300 metres) with the crews in their care. These safety personnel must be endorsed by the Athletic Director and the Safety Advisor. All other coach boats attending to that session require only one experienced staff member.
 - a. Exceptions to these distances may be allowed in special circumstances, such as during time trials with case by case permission from the Athletic Director, or in emergency situations.
3. Coach boat/athlete ratio should not exceed:
 - a. 1 coach boat:14 athletes for experienced crews, and no more than three small (1x/2x/2-) shells total
 - b. 1 coach boat:9 athletes for novice crews, and no small shells
 - c. The largest shell on the water cannot exceed the combined rescue capacity of the coach boats on the water.
 - d. Exceptions to the ratios will be considered on a case by case basis by the Athletic Director and Safety Advisor.
4. No boat should be more than 100 metres from shore at all times.
5. If conditions do not allow for a coach to keep his or her group together (or within 100 metres of shore), they must return to the club or a safe haven until conditions allow for rowing in the appropriate area.

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6. All rowers 16 years and older must wear inflatable PFDs at all times. Athletes under the age of 16 must wear inherently buoyant, low-profile PFDs at all times.
7. The club reserves the right to extend the use of cold water rules should certain circumstances warrant an extension (eg. A cold snap, the volume of debris in the water, flooding, etc).
8. In the event of a capsized shell, coaches must first ensure the safety of their capsized crews by helping them return to the boathouse as quickly as possible to prevent hypothermia. Remaining crews should row together in a “buddy system” in the coach boat’s absence. Once capsized athletes have returned to the boathouse for rewarming, the coach should rescue the shell.
9. The Boat House should remain open with an FRC Volunteer in support of a possible rescue effort by:
 - a. Maintaining a visual/radio/phone contact with coach boats
 - b. Initiating a 911 response if necessary, and preparing a warm first aid environment
 - c. Assisting first responders as necessary, including providing medical information and emergency contact information.
 - d. Recording any pertinent information.