

Fredericton Rowing Club
Rowing Safety Policy
September 2018

The Fredericton Rowing Club (FRC) Rowing Safety policies have been developed by the FRC in accordance with the standard set by Rowing Canada Aviron to foster a safe environment for our members. As a member, you are required to know and adhere to these policies. These regulations were designed by rowers, for rowers, to minimize the inherent risks of participating in a water sport. All participants must read, understand, and sign the club waiver prior to engaging in any Club activity.

Member requirements:

Rowers and coxswains must:

- Be registered and have an active membership with RCA.
- Demonstrate their level of rowing competency to a coach or experienced club staff member when first going on the water.
- Watch the RCA Safety Video on a yearly basis and attend the FRC Safety Briefing
 - Note: New members must attend the FRC Safety Briefing at their earliest possible opportunity.
- Be capable of swimming 50 m in light clothing and be able to tread water for 3 minutes without support.
- Rowers and coxswains are responsible for staying with their accompanying coach/safety boat.
- All crews are responsible for understanding and adhering to the Traffic Pattern.

Coaches are responsible for shells, equipment, and athletes in their charge. They must:

- Be registered with the FRC and have an active membership with RCA.
- Possess a valid Pleasure Craft Operator Card (PCOC) and have it on their person while operating the coach boat.
- Possess an up to date Criminal Record Check (available through Fredericton Police or New Brunswick RCMP).
- View the RCA Safety video and attend the FRC Safety Briefing, on a yearly basis.
- Wear an inherently buoyant PFD and have the kill switch attached to their person while operating the coach boat.
- Demonstrate how to get a rower out of the water and safely into the coach boat.
- Help enforce compliance of Traffic Patterns on the waterways.
- Be aware of the forecasted weather and evaluate the environmental conditions before deciding whether it is safe for rowers to go out on the water, taking into account the rowers' capabilities.

Safety Boat Operators must:

- Be registered with the FRC and have an active membership with RCA.
- Possess a valid Pleasure Craft Operator Card (PCOC) and have it on their person while operating the safety boat.
- Wear an inherently buoyant PFD and have the kill switch attached to their person while operating the coach boat.
- Be aware of how to get a rower out of the water and safely into the safety boat.
- Help enforce compliance of the Traffic Patterns.

On Land

It is the responsibility of FRC members and FRC staff to maintain an orderly and clean boathouse and dock space. It is also the responsibility of each crew to take care of their assigned equipment including

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on land handling and cleaning. Coaches are to be immediately notified of any problems with the equipment. Please refer to the procedures manual on equipment reporting and repair.

The boathouse is to remain locked if unoccupied by FRC staff or volunteers. Smoking and the consumption of alcohol is strictly forbidden on FRC grounds.

Coach Boat and Safety Boats

All boats and motors must be kept in good working condition. All motors equipped with a kill switch must be attached to the operator unless circumstances require otherwise. When on the water in darkness or moderate fog, boats must have navigation lights consisting of a bright solid white stern light and a bright green/red or blinking white bow light.

Coach and safety boats must carry the following safety equipment as required by law: bailer, whistle, 15 metre buoyant heaving line, working flashlight (if before sunrise or after sunset) and paddle, stored in an orderly fashion. Coach boats must not be overladen by too much gear or persons in the boat. No sharp objects or anchors are to be placed in the coach boat. Coaches and safety boat operators are to carry a working cellphone or a club-provided VHF radio and a copy of their PCOC on their person. Every coach boat shall be equipped with the number of inherently buoyant PFDs equal to that of the largest crew in their care.

Extra gasoline tanks are to be stored outside of the FRC boathouse.

Rowing Shell Safety Equipment

Each shell must have a bow ball of 4 cm diameter or greater, heel restraints (7 cm), tightened bolts, proper rigging and vents closed. Shells must have a whistle in bow or cox seat (on their person).

All rowers must wear PFDs unless an exception has been made by the recommendation of a coach and approved by the Athletic Director. If there is an exception, the PFD must be placed in an easily accessible location in the rowing shell.

Traffic Pattern

Shells heading downstream must stay closer to the shore, and shells heading upstream must stay further to the center of the river. Shells should not row on the northern half of the river due to sandbars and other hazards. Please refer to the FRC Procedures manual for a full map and description of the Traffic Pattern.

Adverse Conditions

Please see the attached Cold Weather Policy document regarding cold weather rowing policies.

Coaches and rowers are responsible for determining when weather conditions prevent shells from going on the water. These conditions include very cold weather or water, high wind, white cap waves, heavy fog, reduced visibility, hail, and lightning/thunderstorms.

In the case of thunderstorms, rowers must wait thirty minutes after the last lightning strike or clap of thunder before being allowed on water. If adverse weather conditions appear while shells are on the water, crews must return to the boathouse as quickly as possible or seek shelter on the nearest shoreline until the weather has cleared, depending upon the specific conditions. Athletes reserve the right to refuse practice if they judge it to be unsafe.

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All crews must return to the dock 30 minutes after official sunset at the latest. Crews launching prior to sunrise must attach a bright solid white stern light and a blinking white bow light to their shell. These lights must be visible from at least 500m away.

Accident Reporting Mechanisms

After an incident involving a collision or accident; all rowers, coxswains, and coaches present are required to write a short, formal incident report and will be submitted to the incident report binder within 24 hours of the incident.

In the event of a medical emergency, follow the steps detailed by the FRC Emergency Action Plan (EAP). The FRC will post relevant emergency numbers in the boathouse, and coaches will have access to the emergency contact numbers of each member of their crew.