

FORT LANGLEY COMMUNITY ROWING CLUB

SAFETY CODE:

- A. It is the responsibility of each member to be familiar with RCA's *Rowing Safely: RCA Safety Requirements & Safety Guidelines* which are found at this link:
<https://safety.rowingcanada.org/en/#/>
- B. All RCA Safety requirements are required of FLCRC members. *(The Transport Canada safety requirements noted in these modules are statutory in nature and therefore are assumed as required elements of the FLCRC Safety Code.)*
- C. The Rowing course is primarily within the Bedford Channel ("tip to tip") and the rowing pattern is in the one third of the water that is closest to your starboard shore.

In addition to the Safety Code, our Club has adopted a number of SAFETY RULES which require members' adherence. These rules include elements of courtesy when rowing in a coached session.

SAFETY RULES FOR COACHED ROWING:

1. Wear a waist pouch **PFD**, or add one of the club PFDs to your rowing shell. *It is the responsibility of all rowers using club PFD's, to be familiar with the fitting prior to each row and to position the PFD in a readily accessible manner in the boat.*
2. Wear **high vis shirt or hat** - make it easy for other rowers, and the coach, to see you.
3. Ensure that you have a **whistle** - some of our boats have whistles attached, our PFD's have whistles, or there are some whistles hanging near the oars that can be worn around your neck, (or you can bring your own).
4. Ensure that the equipment is functional and is properly set, including oars, oarlocks and spacers, foot stretchers, seat tracks, plugs, and vents. *These are easier to adjust on the dock. The coach keeps an eye on this but it is the individual's responsibility to achieve a comfortable set up.*
5. Push off the dock once you have instructions from the coach. The warm up area, while waiting for the whole group, is the 500 meters from the boathouse to the large yellow sign to the west.
Do NOT go through the bridge unless directed by the coach.
6. Row **within sight of the coach/coach boat - within 500 meters and visible** it is incumbent upon rowers to stay within sight of the coach boat at all times.

SAFETY ADVICE: In the event of a capsize - **GET YOUR BODY OUT OF THE WATER ASAP**. Drape yourself over the shell, THEN consider whether you can get yourself back in the shell, move to the nearest shore, or wait for assistance. Use your whistle if it is not immediately evident that the coach knows of your capsize.

SAFETY ON THE WATER

1. It is *not* the responsibility of the coach to enforce club rules. Both the safety code and safety rules are required of members, and *it is a collective membership responsibility to ensure adherence*. Recurrent infractions may be referred to the ad hoc Safety Committee of the Board.
2. The coach has the autonomy to cancel practice when conditions are unsafe. In the event of cancellation, the coach's decision is final. In non-ideal conditions, the coach may consult with member participants about their individual ability to manage in the condition and possible degradation. In the event the coach determines that conditions are acceptable, *it is still the individual member's decision whether to accept the risk and participate*.
3. Ultimately safety on the water means understanding the risks and mitigating them where possible, and where not possible, making an individual decision whether or not to take the risk. Many fatalities are the result of individuals underestimating the risk and overestimating their ability to manage that risk. Unforeseen risks such as environmental conditions of fog or fast water are in a gradient which is why the responsibility always *ultimately resides with the individual whether one feels safe to partake*.
4. As a club, we strive to instill a culture of safety on water by modelling good practice rather than by prosecuting infractions to our safety code. A good foundation for members is in their understanding of the risks and their responsibilities to mitigate those risks. Our safety code embodies the principle and common individual responsibilities which contribute to a safe on the water experience. These are neatly summarized in the RCA on water safety module and include the standard statutory marine requirements (Transport Canada).
5. The FLCRC has an ad-hoc safety committee which convenes at the request of any member to review a situation, an incident, activity, behaviour or policy that gives one a concern over member safety. *It is each member's responsibility to contribute to safety, seeking any clarification or expressing any concern about how the RCA Safety Requirements & Safety Guidelines apply in the particular context of our club activity, the watercourse, and the weather*.
6. For our watercourse, there are some known hazards. In the best of rowing conditions, the main hazards are deadheads and transient floating debris. Occasionally, other boaters pose a particular threat when they ignore their statutory responsibilities about speed and wake. Seasonal conditions are, in the spring, sudden weather changes—wind and chop (worse above the bridge in Bedford channel), fast current (sessions are cancelled when the freshet is strongest in the later spring), and morning fog, most prevalent in the late summer and fall.