

BOATING

RELEVANT REGULATIONS AND RESOURCES

Canadian Coast Guard regulations for small craft <www.tc.gc.ca/BoatingSafety/regs.htm>

Minimum equipment requirements <www.tc.gc.ca/BoatingSafety/sbg-gsn/menu.htm>

Canadian Coast Guard approved testing agencies

<www.tc.gc.ca/BoatingSafety/providers/search/cp-list.asp>

Canadian Coast Guard *Safe Boating Guide*

GENERAL NOTES

This section applies to activities which occur within the normal camp boating areas, not an off-site trip or excursion.

Watercraft are divided into two categories:

1. Non-power boats include canoes, kayaks, sailboats, sailboards, and rowboats.
2. Power boats include Personal Watercraft (PWC, Jet Ski, Seadoo), inboard and outboard motorboats, and barges.

For the purposes of this section, water-skiing includes all activities where a person is pulled behind a power boat such as aquaplaning, wakeboarding, barefooting or tubing.

A Pleasure Craft Operator Card (PCO card) is required for anyone operating a power-driven recreational vessel and is obtained by scoring a minimum of 75% on a multiple-choice exam to prove a basic level of understanding of boating safety and Canadian regulations. There are many agencies which offer courses and examinations in order to obtain a PCO card.

QUESTIONS

BOATING STAFF

BT1 Does each activity head have a current Bronze Cross or NLS?

Each boating activity must have a designated "head". In the absence of the head, a person who meets the qualifications for head, must be designated acting-head.

BT2 Does each activity head, whose job includes operating a power boat, have a Pleasure Craft Operator Card?

BT3 Is each activity head trained, knowledgeable and skilled?

Certification, experience, knowledge and the number of staff affect a program's safety. An evaluation of the age, experience, maturity and skills of an individual indicates his/her suitability to supervise an activity.

BT4 Do the boating staff hold a minimum of a current Bronze Medallion or equivalent, as well as a Pleasure Craft Operator Card where required?

"Or equivalent" means a swimming certification from another province or country that is similar in its intent and scope. It is the camp director's responsibility to ensure to his/her satisfaction that the other certification is equal to or better than the standard's requirements. Boating staff are required to hold a PCO card if their job description includes operating a power boat.

BT5 For each boating activity, do the boating staff have the necessary training, knowledge and skill to teach and supervise?

A job description for each position defines the skill, knowledge, training, experience and teaching requirements needed to fill the position. Training for boating activities may include: the use of lifejackets; boarding, movement and disembarking of watercraft and self-rescue in the event of capsizing or swamping.

BT6 Are staff assigned to operate power boats provided with additional training in power boat operation and emergency procedures?

It is recommended that specific training be given for all boat drivers based on their responsibility. Training may include: common rules of boating; the use of throttle, shift and steering; the safe operation and fueling of the boat; procedures in the event of mechanical failure; safe loading and unloading; the procedure for downed skiers and any other relevant information.

BOATING PROGRAM AND EQUIPMENT

BT7 Does the camp have written operational procedures for each boating program area?

BT8 Does the camp have written emergency procedures for each boating program area?

Camp staff at waterfront activities must be trained in and practise the emergency procedures so that they are prepared to handle an emergency effectively.

BT9 Are the boating staff trained in both the operational and emergency procedures?

BT10 Do the boating operational procedures adhere to Canadian Coast Guard regulations?

The Canadian Coast Guard's *Safe Boating Guide* is an excellent resource and details required equipment, operator restrictions, and "rules of the water".

BT11 Are watercraft checked before each use to ensure the required equipment is in place?

Minimum equipment requirements are described in the *Safe Boating Guide*.

BT12 Are watercraft and related equipment checked on a regular basis for damage?

BT13 Are watercraft and related equipment repaired and maintained to be safe for use?

See also Tripping TR46

BT14 Is a system in place to track campers and watercraft at each program area?

Each waterfront area must have a check-out/check-in system to monitor the entry and exit of staff and campers and the condition of the watercraft.

BT15 Are watercraft banned from areas where there are swimmers?

BT16 Is a suitably-equipped emergency watercraft operational for emergencies at all times?

An emergency craft may be a power or non-power boat.

BT17 Does every person in a watercraft have a Canadian government approved PFD?

The PFD must be the correct size for each person on board. See also Tripping TR44

BT18 Do non-swimmers wear an approved PFD in a watercraft?

BT19 If the camp is unaware of a person's swimming abilities, is it mandatory for the person to wear a PFD in a watercraft?

BT20 Do sailors wear an approved PFD?

BT21 Do sailboarders wear an approved PFD?

BT22 Do all persons using a personal watercraft wear an approved PFD?

BT23 If conditions are such that there is an increased risk, does every person in a watercraft wear an approved PFD?

Increased risk can include non-swimmers, unassessed swimmers, inexperienced or untrained paddlers, fast currents, high winds, waves, cold water, or high levels of boat traffic.

WATER-SKIING AND POWERBOATING

BT24 Do all water-skiers wear an approved PFD?

BT25 During water-ski activities, does the watercraft have a designated driver and a spotter with designated seats for each of them?

The two people in a ski boat are:

1. The driver who holds a Pleasure Craft Operator Card and
2. The observer who is facing the skier.

The ski boat must have designated seats for both the driver and the observer while allowing for suitable safe space for a skier in case of an emergency. It is recommended that anyone who goes skiing should pass a designated skill test (eg. swim test) designed to show competency in an open and deep water environment.

BT26 Can the boat safely accommodate the skiers in the event of an emergency?

BT27 Does the camp have safety procedures to deal with a skier in distress?

BT28 If a PWC is used for water-skiing purposes, is it equipped with double spotter mirrors and an automatic emergency shut-off?

There must be room on the PWC for an observer.

BT29 Do the staff check the water-ski equipment regularly for wear and tear?

It is recommended that the equipment be checked before each use.

BT30 Do ski boats follow driving patterns in order to avoid obstacles and remain a safe distance from other boats?