

Paddle Safe Week

Partner Resources



The Paddle Safe Week campaign, July 22-28, 2024, focuses on encouraging people to learn more about safe paddling practices and to stay safe on the water throughout the year. Use the following talking points to help amplify the message!



Washington State Recreational Boating Safety Statistics and Information

- According to Washington’s recreational boating accident data, in 2022: 55% of fatal recreational boating accidents occurred on human powered watercraft.
- According to the Outdoor Foundation’s 2019 Special Report on Paddlesports and Safety, paddlesports continue to grow in popularity – especially kayaking and stand up paddling. Yet only 23% of kayakers and 31% of stand-up paddlers have considered taking formal training to further their skills.
- Kayaks, canoes, stand-up paddleboards and other paddlecraft are vessels and subject to federal, state and local recreational boating laws and ordinances.
- Paddlers are responsible for knowing the legal requirements.
- Legal requirements are minimal and do not maximize chances of being rescued in a timely manner or surviving an accident.
- According to national and state recreational boating accident data, paddlecraft are at a higher risk of capsizing and swamping.
- Since 2012, close to half of all boating fatalities in Washington state involved paddlecraft.
- Nationally, where cause of death was known, 79% of paddle-related fatalities from 2015 to 2017 involved drownings. Of those drowning victims, 74% were not wearing a life jacket.
- Accidents can happen to anybody, at any time, and when it’s least expected.

Videos

[Canoe & Kayak’s Safer Paddling Series](#)
[Safe SUP Choices](#)
[American Canoe Association](#)

Reports

[2019 Outdoor Foundation Special Report on Paddlesports](#)
[2019 U.S. Coast Guard Recreational Boating Statistics](#)

Other Resources

<https://americancanoe.org/education/resource-library/>

National Safe Boating Week

Partner Resources - May



Example Social Media Posts:

- Know before you go! Life jackets are required by law on all vessels, including kayaks, canoes, and stand-up paddleboards. It's up to you to wear it! Paddlesport experts choose to wear a life jacket for a reason—life jackets save lives. #WearItWA #PaddleSafeWeek
- Do you stay safe while enjoying paddlesports? Being drunk or high on the water increases the likelihood of an accident and lowers the chance of surviving. Operating a kayak, canoe or stand-up paddleboard while under the influence is not only unsafe — it's illegal. #PaddleSober #PaddleSafeWeek
- Paddlesports is fun but comes with risks. Learn essential information from the experts, find a local club or outfitter and take a class. There are even online courses! #PaddleSmart #PaddleSafeWeek
- Hey paddlers! Did you know being weather aware is crucial to safety? Air temperature is less important than wind speed and direction, wave height, tides and currents or river flows—as these conditions impact your ability to control your vessel. #PaddleSafeWeek
- Paddlers, what do you do to be seen? It's hard for other boaters to see you in a paddlecraft that sits low on the water. We recommend wearing bright neon colors, put reflective tape on your paddles, and carry a light. #PaddleToBeSeen #PaddleSafeWeek
- Pre-plan and study your paddle route before going out on the water. Even if you're only going out for a brief time, always file a float plan. Tell someone who, where, when, what to do if you don't return on time. Make this part of your routine every time you go paddling. #PaddleSafeWeek
- Safety on the water starts with you. Whether you kayak, canoe, or SUP — legal requirements are minimal and do not maximize your chance of survival in an accident. Research and carry essential gear for safety, emergency communications and comfort. #PaddlePrepared #PaddleSafeWeek

Short on Time?

- Post existing imagery you might have on hand, don't worry about making it look perfect! The message is the most important part.
- Reshare content from other sources to help boost existing messaging. Some great accounts are: Safe Boating Campaign, National Safe Boating Council, Washington State Parks, and the National Weather Service

Through repeated exposure to safety messaging, we can promote boating safety practices with the intention of reducing fatal boating accidents in the state. We'll provide a monthly toolkit that will support you in sharing key boating safety messages during the boating season. For questions or additional support please contact Ashley.Seydel@parks.wa.gov