

Instructor's Guide to Accompany

"A Paddler's Guide to Safety"



Presented by the
U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary
in cooperation with the
American Canoe Association
February 2016



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This course was prepared by Dr. Robin Pope, American Canoe Association, and Dr. Don Goff, Dana Kirk, K.C. Murphy, and Stephen Ellerin of the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary under the direction and with the cooperation of the Education (“E”) Department.

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Instructor's Guide to Accompany "A Paddler's Guide to Safety"

The "A Paddler's Guide to Safety" has been prepared by the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary in cooperation with the American Canoe Association. It is designed as a stand-alone course that can precede or supplement on-the-water experience.

There are three major points:

- The need to have and wear a proper life jacket,
- The need to be prepared and have proper safety equipment, and
- The need for general awareness about all aspects of paddling safety, including situational awareness and the need to practice skills.

The class is designed to be flexible and modular. Unlike many U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary courses, the Instructor may tailor aspects of the course to his or her specific audience. For example, Stand Up Paddlers (SUP) will need less education about much of the safety equipment needed by kayakers. Kayak fishermen have special safety needs that differ from SUPs. The Instructor may use the material here to meet the needs of specific audiences.

There is no prescribed time for this instruction. The length and content can be tailored to meet paddlers' needs. It may be offered shore-side at a livery prior to departure in a time of 30 minutes or so. It may be offered at a public affairs event in a similar time frame. It may be offered in a classroom and expanded, with examples and details into a two hour or more course.

This is a "seminar" course. There is no text and no final exam. Students receive no "credit" or "certification" for completing the course. Instructors may award a "certificate of attendance" at their own discretion, but such a certificate is not evidence of mastery neither of the material nor of paddling skill.

Students should be encouraged to obtain subsequent skills training and practice under the guidance of a certified on-the-water instructor.

This Instructor's Guide expands on the materials provided in the speakers notes provided under each slide. There are a set of "Sea Stories" appended that give specific examples of paddling events that the instructor can use to illustrate specific points. There are materials appended about specific issues including alcohol use, visibility, flotation, and communications.

There also are supplemental materials that the instructor can photocopy and distribute to the class participants. These materials include a recap of the top ten safety tips and pre-underway check lists. The reference to urine containment devices may seem indelicate, but drownings have occurred as a result of ignoring this basic human need afloat. Instructors are advised to use their good judgment with public audiences.



A Paddler's Guide to Safety

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Slide 1. Title and Course Objective

The objective for this course is for you to be aware of the basic issues and needs for paddling safety, the basic equipment you should have, and to provide some info about paddling that will help you be a more knowledgeable and safer paddler.

Starting Out – Basic Paddlecraft and Equipment



Slide 2. Starting Out – Basic Boating Equipment

The Boat

* Match the craft to the paddler and the desired activity

- *basic boating terms (beam, length, freeboard, and their impact on function)
- *kayak (touring vs. whitewater vs. rec boat, sit in vs. sit on top) (See definitions in Appendices)
- *SUP
- *canoe (touring vs. whitewater, solo vs. tandem)(see definitions in appendices)
- * Follow manufacturer's guidelines for boat use and care (basic maintenance)
- * Don't overload the boat
- * Take care of the boat – keep it clean, check for hull and hardware integrity, and make sure any damaged parts are repaired before heading out

The Paddle

- * Match the paddle to the paddler and the desired activity
 - *canoe and SUP paddles are single bladed, kayak paddles are double bladed
 - * review paddle terminology (grip, shaft, throat, blade, tip, feather)
- * Follow manufacturer's guidelines for paddle care and use
- * Avoid grinding the blade into the ground and avoid using the shaft for prying things

Flotation

- * Most boats have minimum flotation when purchased--this flotation only creates neutral buoyancy
- * Add inflatable or cell flotation to displace water and decrease the amount of water that could come in when you capsize. This is probably your most important investment after the boat, paddle, and life jacket.

Life Jackets

- USCG-approved Life Jacket
 - May be inflatable
 - Should be worn
 - Wear is required for certain ages, conditions-
check locally
- “Sound device”—a whistle—attached to the Life Jacket



Slide 3. The Lifejacket (PFD or Personal Flotation Device)

The lifejacket (PFD or personal flotation device)

- * Properly rated (according to weight) USCG approved lifejackets are required for every person in the boat, and should be worn by everyone whenever they paddle
- * Lifejackets need to be fitted and adjusted appropriately
- * Bright colors such as red, yellow, or orange enhance visibility and are preferred over blue, olive, or camo on mixed use waterways
- * Match the lifejacket to the paddler and the desired activity
- * Capsizes and falls overboard are common among paddlers – wearing a lifejacket dramatically reduces the risk of injury or death during such an event
- * Lifejackets not only reduce the risk of drowning, they also can provide protection from rocks and other debris in rivers, provide a place to store critical emergency equipment (e.g., whistle, signal mirror, light), and can help keep paddlers warm.
- * Inflatable lifejackets should only be orally or manually inflatable—not “automatic”.

Other Equipment



Slide 4. Other Equipment to Consider Bringing

- * Wear clothing designed for weather and water conditions—visible colors!
- * Bring adequate food, water, and extra clothing. Fill the bottle half way so it floats and is easy to see —full may be more difficult to see due to neutral buoyancy
- * Use clothing and equipment (e.g., hats, sunblock, extra clothes) to reduce the risks of environmental problems such as hypothermia and sunburn

- * Match extra gear (e.g., helmets, radios, flotation bags, spare paddles, navigation tools) to the paddler, the group, the environment and the desired activity
- * Carry appropriate rescue gear and learn how to use it
- * Navigation lights, distress signals and sounds signals may be required. Check with your local state boating officials to find out what you need to carry with you. Every paddler should have a whistle attached to their lifejacket.
- * Printed pre-underway checklist
- * Pen or pencil
- * Notebook/logbook
- * Sponge and/or manual pump for dewatering
- * Other gear needed for safe operation and self-rescue of the particular type of paddle craft: e.g., paddle float, paddle leash, spray skirt
- * Drinking water
- * Visual Distress Signals (VDS)
- * Bow line and/or stern line ("painter") to tie up along a dock or ashore
- * Label or Nameplate affixed to interior of vessel, identifying Owner and "if found" phone numbers
- * In coastal waters, one waterproof VHF marine radio or portable VHF radio in clear plastic waterproof bag
- * Watch, (waterproof)
- * Cell Phone in waterproof container as backup
- * Flashlight or Headlamp
- * Flotation foam or bags sufficient to permit self-rescue
- * GPS
- * Compass, hand-held or mounted
- * Rescue throw bag (smaller size for paddle craft, 30' max recommended)
- * Spare paddle/oar
- * First Aid Kit
- * Emergency survival blankets (2) "space blankets"
- * Chart of Local Area
- * Repair equipment such as extra rudder cable, spare foot peg, and drain plug
- * Additional rescue gear specific to your trip

Be sure to securely attach everything to your boat so nothing can float away after a capsize!

Legal Requirements

- Boater Education—not required for paddle craft
- Boat registration—varies from state to state; go to <http://www.americasboatingcourse.com/lawsbystate.cfm> to find your state.
- Your dealer should know.

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Slide 5. The Law and How It Affects Paddlers

Registration and education

* Boat registration and education laws vary from state to state. Make sure you know the requirements that apply in the area you're paddling; check at your state boating regulator's web site.

Local rules

- * Be sure to learn any rules or laws that apply to access and use of a waterway.
- * Obey all applicable local, state and Federal regulations
- * Boats with motors or sails have requirements that can be very different from hand powered craft – be sure you know what your boat requires

Operator responsibilities

- * Boaters are responsible for their actions. Be polite and respectful of others on and around the water.
- * Avoid large vessels and navigable channels, where large boats may have restricted mobility
- * Stay well away from military and law enforcement vessels unless they direct you to approach
- * Follow all marine and aquatic environmental laws – don't ask others to paddle in your trash
- * Invasive species transfer

Trip Planning



Slide 6. Planning Your Trip

Anticipated destination

- * Match the paddler's skill with the planned destination – it is important for new paddlers to be conservative and choose paddling venues with minimal hazards
- * Check for weather and water conditions
- * Learn about local hazards
- * Learn about access points
- * Have a back up plan
- * Develop and file an appropriate float plan for your trip, describing your route and access points, length of trip, number of people and boats on the trip, when you would be overdue, and what to do if you are overdue.

Equipment

- * Make sure you have appropriate equipment for your type of boat and the area you plan to paddle
- * Make sure your equipment is in good working order before you head out
- * Stow the equipment properly; plan for a capsize
- * Make sure you have appropriate charts, maps and directions

Group

- * Paddling with a group is safer (3 people / two boat minimum)
- * Ensure each group member has appropriate knowledge, skills and equipment for the trip

Getting to the Water



Slide 7. Getting to the Water

Transporting and securing your boat:

- * Drivers are responsible for the load on, or towed by, their vehicle! If it comes off and damages someone or something, you are liable.
- * Use appropriate knots, ropes and straps to secure your boat
- * Tie at two points across the beam to secure to the rack, tie bow and stern to secure to vehicle (4 point tie down is best)
- * Ensure nothing can blow out during transport
- * Use appropriate racks or trailers for your boat
- * Consider using locks to secure your boat
- * Shock cord or other stretchy material is not adequate—use stout line (rope) or locking straps

At the Water's Edge

- Check equipment again-use a check list instead of memory
- File your float plan
- Clarify your group communications with each other and with backups



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Slide 8. At the Water's Edge

Equipment

- * Make sure everyone has appropriate safety and protective equipment, including a life jacket that is being worn and used appropriately.
- * Make sure that everyone's boat, paddle, lifejacket and additional equipment is in good working order before setting out—look for cracks, holes, tears, other damage.
- * Appropriately secure all equipment in the boat, both so the boat is properly balanced and to ensure equipment is not lost during a capsize.

Navigation

- * Make sure everyone knows the planned route
- * Make sure that, if needed, some type of shuttle is set
- * Make sure everyone understands navigational markers in the area in which they will be paddling (e.g., channel markers, dam warnings, restricted areas)
- * Make sure everyone understands any potential “no-boating” areas, such as security areas around military vessels
- * Avoid navigable channels and stay as close as feasible to shore; when crossing channels spend as little time as possible in them
- * PADDLE DEFENSIVELY! Don't get in the way of other boats because many boaters won't see you and you may get run over. It's best to take steps to avoid collision or a near miss—remember—they are bigger and heavier and will always win in a collision. You are small and may be invisible to a commercial vessel. Avoid the main channel or stay well to the right side.
- * Review hand and arm signals
- * Test radios or phones and ensure they are waterproofed

- * Learn the sound and visual signals, especially 5 short blasts for Alert! or Emergency!
- * Some paddlesports such as American Whitewater's signals for whitewater rivers have their own whistle and signal language. Learn these if necessary.

On the Water



Slide 9. On the Water

Boarding, exiting and moving about the boat

- * Don your life jacket before boarding, and keep it on all the time during the paddling trip
- * When boarding or exiting a boat, keep weight low, and move slowly to reduce the risk of capsize
- * Maintain at least 3 points of contact when boarding, exiting, or moving about the boat
- * Avoid switching positions once away from shore. If you do move, use good principles (such as moving one person at a time, moving slowly, moving along the centerline and maintaining a low center of gravity)
- * Avoid sudden movements in the boat

Paddling

- * Paddling in groups of three or more is generally safer
- * Do not use drugs or alcohol while on the water
- * Boat politely – look out for yourself and everyone else on the water
- * Boat conservatively – stay within your skill level
- * Hands-on instruction makes paddling safer and more fun

Other activities

- * Anglers and hunters should be extra vigilant about weight shifts, appropriate equipment, and lifejacket use
- * Animals should use properly fitted lifejackets
- * Anticipate sudden movements from animals in boats

Awareness

- Be aware of other vessels such as powerboats and commercial boats
- Learn the Navigation “Rules of the Road” and apply them!



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Slide 10. Awareness

- *Situational awareness is necessary for safety
- *Human powered craft are especially vulnerable because they are hard to spot and can be run over by powered vessels, both recreational and commercial
- *The Navigation Rules provide a structured way to learn the relationship between various types of boats and ships.
- *If paddling on navigable waters be especially aware of other boats and of your, the paddler's, responsibilities to keep clear.

Visibility

- Paddle Flash
- Motion
- Clothing



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Slide 11. Visibility

- * Maximize your visibility through color and contrast
- * Bright clothes, lifejackets and boats are easier to see
- * Carry a bright white light if there is any chance you may paddle at night
- * consider carrying bright or reflective flags to increase visibility
- * Your paddle will glint—that will be the first thing an oncoming boat is likely to see. Second is the motion of the paddle. The paddler is third.

Closing Distance



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Slide 12. Closing Distance and Time

At one quarter of a mile—the distance a boater is apt to first see a paddler, the reaction time is proportional to speed. Increase your visibility to reduce your risk. Be aware of boat traffic and stay to the right side or away from the main channel as much as possible.

Emergencies

- Weather-related
- Human-induced: alcohol and drugs
- Accidents or illness
- Practice your self and team rescues--regularly



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Slide 13. Emergencies

Avoid problems

- * The best rescue is the one that is prevented
- * Check water and weather conditions, and be flexible when what you expect doesn't match what you find
- * If bad weather or water conditions are forecast, wait for better conditions
- * Use knowledge, skills, abilities and equipment to avoid problems, and to reduce the impact of problems when they happen
- * Alcohol and illicit drugs have no place in paddling. Consider the effect of medications – some medications may affect your judgment or make you drowsy, others may increase your sensitivity to sunburn or dehydration

Manage problems

- * Capsizing and falls overboard are part of paddling – learn how to manage them when they happen
- * Conditions that can lead to hypothermia (abnormally low body temperature) are common when paddling – learn how to prevent and treat it. Recognize that hypothermic paddlers may be unable to help themselves. Recognize that good judgment is one of the first things lost in hypothermia.
- * Conditions that can lead to hyperthermia (abnormally high body temperature) and dehydration are common when paddling – learn how to prevent and treat them
- * Boaters depend on each other – learn how to help other boaters and make sure you have appropriate rescue knowledge, skills and equipment

After the Problem

- Accident reports—forms and instructions are available on the ACA and USCG apps, as well as reporting requirements
- Check for additional local rules

Slide 14. After the Problem

- * Accident reports are required anytime a fatality occurs, a person has to go to the hospital, the boat is lost, or significant property damage occurs
 - * Check with your state boat law administrator for state specific rules
- Accident reports should be made to the local state boating law administrator

Coast Guard form on CG and ACA Apps or at: https://www.uscg.mil/forms/cg/CG_3865.pdf

After Your Trip

- Had fun?
- Plan to do it again
- **Keep learning**



- Clean, repair and protect your gear

Slide 15. After Your Trip

Keep learning and paddling

- * Local clubs and schools, and local paddling shops, are a great resource for paddling information and for paddling partners
- * Regional and national programs can help you find a local instructor
- * ACA's website provides lists of instructors and clubs, and lists of water trails
- * Paddlesports are a lifelong activity

Take care of your gear

- * After your trip, clean and store your equipment appropriately. Avoid phosphate containing soaps and avoid transporting aquatic plants and animals
- * Check your gear to make sure it is still in good working condition
- * Repair any damaged gear before you need to use it again

SUPs



Slide 16. SUPs

Stand Up Paddleboards-SUPs-are legally vessels. Operators must have a life jacket aboard EXCEPT in a surf zone. Inflatable lifejackets are commonly used.

The paddler on the left is using a board too small for his weight. He has no (required) life jacket. Despite the rocky shore, he has no suitable footwear.

The woman on the right side has the right size board, is properly wearing an inflatable life jacket, has on suitable footwear, and has a leash that attaches her to the board by way of her right ankle. Ankle leashes are useful, but not for surf, swift currents, or conditions where being tied to the board could prove dangerous—situational decision making applies.

Top Ten Safety Tips for SUPs

1. Wear a lifejacket and carry a whistle
2. Be a competent swimmer
3. Know how to self rescue
4. Know how to tow another board
5. Know the local regulations and navigation rules
6. Understand the elements and hazards—winds, tidal ranges, current, terrain
7. Know when to wear a leash
8. Be defensive—don't go where you aren't supposed to be and avoid other swimmers, boaters, paddleboards
9. Use proper blade angle to be the most efficient paddle boarder
10. Take a safety course - See more at:
<http://coastguard.dodlive.mil/2012/05/top-10-tips-for-stand-up-paddleboarding/#sthash.YugM91N4.dpuf>

Slide 17. Top Ten Safety Tips for SUPs

This slide is also in the appendix and can be reproduced to distribute to the class.



Slide 18. Kayak Fishing

Fishing alters your trim—bringing in the Big One will challenge your balance and can pull you in—practice—and wear your life jacket

Anchoring

Anchor from the bow, not the cockpit. Kayak anchoring requires some special equipment and knowledge to learn.

Take an empty bottle to relieve yourself. Mark it with duct tape so you don't confuse it with your water bottle.

Lines in the water, and gear on deck, can make it difficult to re-enter the boat. Hooks and lines in the water also can make swimming around the boat dangerous.

Top Ten Safety Tips

1. Take an On-Water Skills Course
2. Wear Your Lifejacket
3. Cold Water and Hot Weather Safety
4. Rules of the Road
5. Safety Check
6. Practices, Ethics and Conduct
7. Know Your Limits
8. River Paddler's Guide to Rescue - The basics, just in case...
9. Best Practices for Paddlers and Paddlesports Programs
10. Trip Preparation and Planning

Slide 19. Top Ten Safety Tips

For kayakers and canoeists:

1. Take an on-water Course - whether it's a safety or skill development course, an instructor-led on-water instruction course provides the information you need for canoeing, kayaking, stand up paddleboarding, rafting or safety & rescue.
2. Wear Your Lifejacket - Expect to capsize and swim occasionally when paddling a canoe, kayak, SUP or raft? Learn more about PFDs and how they might just save your life.
3. Cold Water and Hot Weather Safety - Cold water is extremely dangerous! Heat stroke can be fatal. Learn the essentials of on-the-water temperatures and first aid. Learn more about protecting yourself in this environment
4. Rules of the Road - What paddlers need to know when sharing the waterways
5. Safety Check - Safety tips you need to consider the next time you head out on the water
6. Practices, Ethics and Conduct - Key points on how to appropriately share, and enjoy our natural paddling resources: https://c.ymcdn.com/sites/aca.site-ym.com/resource/resmgr/sei-educational_resources/brochure_practices-ethics-co.pdf
7. Know Your Limits - Good things to contemplate before you leave shore
8. Learn and Practice Essential Rescue Skills
9. Learn and Practice Best Practices for Paddlers and Paddlesports Programs:
https://c.ymcdn.com/sites/aca.site-ym.com/resource/resmgr/sei-educational_resources/brochure_best_practices.pdf
10. Trip Preparation and Planning - Getting ready to schedule your next trip? File a Float Plan
Learn and Practice Essential Safety skills.

Put your name and your home
telephone number on your boat!



If you had your cell phone in the kayak, it won't work wet!

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Slide 20. "If Found" Stickers

You need to put your name and a contact phone number on your boat in case it blows or floats away—or in case you are overboard. Use an indelible marker, a paint stick, or nail polish so it doesn't wash away. Place the sticker in a prominent location--inside the gunnel on the starboard side is a good location. They may fade if they are put on the deck.

With this information, first responders will call and determine you are safe or if they need to search for you.

If you can't get a printed form, use a piece of duct tape and a waterproof marker. Anything is better than nothing.



Slide 21. "Smart" Resources

Both of these apps are available for either Android or iOS at the App Store.

The ACA app "Paddle Ready" app includes the following functions (version 1.0):

- * Environment
- * Gear—specific to paddle craft type
- * Float Plans
- "Save a Life" – detailed information about life jackets and other safety gear
- * Education—
 - Signs and Signals
 - How to Rescue
- * Accident Report Form
- * ACA contact—phone, email, or snail mail
- * Organizations—Paddling clubs and groups by state
- * Instruction finder—Zip Code sort to locate an instructor for your specific paddling discipline and geographic area

U.S. Coast Guard Safe Boating app includes the following functions:

- * Emergency Assistance direct contact capability (requires registration)
- * State Boating Information
- * Safety Check Request (yes, paddle craft can have a vessel safety check)

- * Safety Equipment review (generic)
- * Float Plan (form)
- * Rules of the Road
- * NOAA buoys – these give current conditions of wind and water. Temperatures. Directions.
- * Hazard Report procedure
- * Pollution Report procedure
- * Suspicious activity report

Paddle Sport Participation

The 2015 *Special Report on Paddlesports* shows paddlesports are on the rise, again setting a record for the number of participants.

In 2014, 21.7 million Americans — 7.4 percent of the population — enjoyed paddling.

*This represents an increase of more than 3 million participants since the study began in 2010, 14% more.
(source: The Outdoor Foundation)*

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Slide 22. Paddle Sport Participation

Paddle sport participation has grown dramatically in recent years. Low entry cost, easy storage, less maintenance and flexibility are reasons many have decided to become paddlers, compared to power or sailing craft.

“Boats in Aisle Five”

- Most boats are now sold by retailers who are not paddlers
- Most boats are sold without any instruction or guidance



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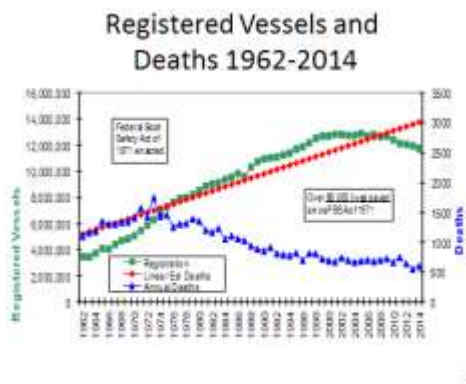
Slide 23. “Boats in Aisle Five”

In the past, would-be paddlers often went to specialty stores to get information and advice from retailers who were paddlers themselves.

The majority of boats sold now come from general merchandisers and “big box” outlets whose staff are not particularly knowledgeable about the details of the sport.

In addition, the safety equipment offered for sale may be generic rather than specific to the location.

This makes hands on training from a qualified paddlesports instructor even more important.



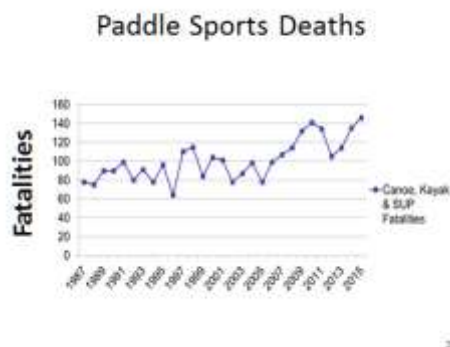
Slide 24. Registered Vessels and Deaths

Since the early 1960’s when the Coast Guard began tracking recreational boating accidents, overall, fatalities have come down both in percentage and real terms for power boats.

The number of registered vessels has increased. (green line)

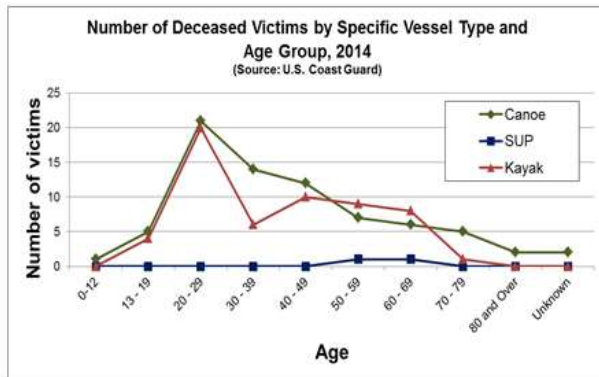
A linear projection of fatalities using the 1962 numbers shows nearly 3000 deaths could have been expected in 2010 (red line)

Public awareness and PE classes have contributed to a dramatic reduction in the actual outcome (blue line)



Slide 25. Paddle Sports Deaths

Unlike power boats, with the growth in paddle sports, the number of fatalities has gone up. In the most recent reporting year, 2015, 29% of boating deaths were paddlecraft related. In 2016, fatalities climbed even higher.



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Slide 26. Victims' Ages

We have done a fair job protecting youth, according to these figures from 2014.

We might expect young men, especially those using alcohol, to have a relatively high rate.

But these figures show that paddlers over age 50 are dying just as younger paddlers are.

All Fun, but....



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Slide 27. All Fun, but....

Risks are always at hand when you are on the water.

Our hope is that you learn about paddling so you can stay safe and have fun on the water.

Other Resources

A collection of current web site links is available at the Coast Guard Auxiliary WIKI links site:

<http://auxbdeptwiki.cgaux.org/index.php?title=Paddlesports> *This collection includes links to instruction, clubs, and information specific to paddlers' needs in text and video formats*

The American Canoe Association website is at:

http://auxbdeptwiki.cgaux.org/index.php?title=Main_Page *This site will help you find skills instruction*

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Slide 28. Other Resources

Link to Coast Guard Auxiliary collection of web sites with information for paddlers.

Link to the ACA website for information about skills instruction



The American Canoe Association and the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary signed a Memorandum of Agreement in 2011 to promote safety among those who use kayaks, canoes and other paddle craft.

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Slide 29. USCG AUX- ACA MOU

In 2011, the Auxiliary and the ACA completed a Memorandum of Agreement to work together to promote paddle sport safety. General provisions include:

- Fostering a partnership between the Auxiliary instructors and vessel examiners and their counterparts in the ACA.
- Establishing local contacts with each other
- Enhancing the paddlesports education experience
- Identify and share resources as needed
- Formal (institutional) interactions through Auxiliary liaisons to the ACA and National Safety Education and Instruction Council (SEIC)
- Shared use of media resources of the ACA and the Auxiliary to raise safety awareness

“But the ACA has been around since the 1880s and the Coast Guard since 1915, so why the sudden interest in paddling?” The answer is growth in participation and an increase in the number of drownings.

The memorandum is available at: <http://www.americancanoe.org/?page=Partners> Then click on Coast Guard Auxiliary.

Appendix A. Safety Tips

Top Ten Safety Tips (for Kayakers and Canoeists)

1. Take an On-Water Skills Course - whether it's a safety or skill development course, an instructor-led on-water instruction course provides the information you need for canoeing, kayaking, stand up paddleboarding, rafting or safety & rescue.
2. Wear Your Lifejacket - Expect to capsize and swim occasionally when paddling a canoe, kayak, SUP or raft? Learn more about PFDs and how they might just save your life.
3. Cold Water and Hot weather Safety - Cold water is extremely dangerous! Heat stroke can be fatal. Learn the essentials of on-the-water temperatures and first aid. Learn more about protecting yourself in this environment
4. Rules of the Road - What paddlers need to know when sharing the waterways
5. Safety Check - Safety tips you need to consider the next time you head out on the water
6. Practices, Ethics and Conduct - Key points on how to appropriately share, and enjoy our natural paddling resources: https://c.ymcdn.com/sites/aca.site-ym.com/resource/resmgr/sei-educational_resources/brochure_practices-ethics-co.pdf
7. Know Your Limits - Good things to contemplate before you leave shore
8. Learn and Practice Essential Rescue Skills
9. Learn and Practice Best Practices for Paddlers and Paddlesports Programs:
https://c.ymcdn.com/sites/aca.site-ym.com/resource/resmgr/sei-educational_resources/brochure_best_practices.pdf
10. Trip Preparation and Planning - Getting ready to schedule your next trip? File a Float Plan
Learn and Practice Essential

Top Ten Safety Tips For SUPs:

1. Wear a lifejacket and carry a whistle
2. Be a competent swimmer
3. Know how to self rescue
4. Know how to tow another board
5. Know the local regulations and navigation rules
6. Understand the elements and hazards – winds, tidal ranges, current, terrain
7. Know when to wear a leash
8. Be defensive – don't go where you aren't supposed to be and avoid other swimmers, boaters, paddleboards
9. Use proper blade angle to be the most efficient paddle boarder
10. Take a safety course - See more at: <http://coastguard.dodlive.mil/2012/05/top-10-tips-for-stand-up-paddleboarding/#sthash.YuqM93S4.dpuf>

Appendix B. Pre-underway Check Lists

Kayaking and kayak fishing sample checklist

Kayak—check for leaks in hull and cracks or tears in hatch seals and gaskets. Make sure drain plug is properly in place, if any. Check deck lines for wear and tear.

Paddle (1 per paddler), plus spare
Life jacket (1 per paddler) with attached whistle
Flotation bags—inflated and installed
Spray skirt
Dry bags (for gear organization)
Weather/VHF radio
Signaling devices (whistle, mirror, flares or distress flag)
Headlamp or flashlight (with extra batteries)
Towline/floating throw line (with throw bag)
Paddle leash
Paddle float
Bailer or bilge pump
Sponges
Maps and charts in waterproof case
Compass—hand held or mounted
GPS
Matches/lighter/fire starter in waterproof container
Knife or multi-tool
Cell phone in protective bag
Multifunction watch
First-aid supplies
Sunglasses
Sunscreen
Lip balm
Water bottles (filled half way)
Energy food (bars, gels, trail mix)
Beverages, non-alcoholic
Sealant
Spare foot peg
Bailing wire (copper, small roll)
Nylon cord (or bungee cords)
Putty
Replacement nuts/bolts
Repair/duct tape

SUP sample checklist:

Paddleboard

Paddle

Lifejacket, preferable worn; if inflatable, worn to front

Paddleboard leash attached to ankle

Water

Sunscreen

Sunglasses

Lip balm

Cell phone in protective bag

Multifunction watch

Spare fin

Footwear

Appendix C. “Smart” Resources

The ACA app “Paddle Ready” app includes the following functions (version 1.0):

- * Environment
- * Gear
- * Float Plans
- “Save a Life” – detailed information about life jackets and other safety gear
- * Education—
 - Signs and Signals
 - How to Rescue
- * Accident Report Form
- * ACA contact—phone, email, or snail mail
- * Organizations—Paddling clubs and groups by state
- * Instruction finder—Zip Code sort to locate an instructor for your specific paddling discipline and geographic area

U.S. Coast Guard Safe Boating app includes the following functions:

- * Emergency Assistance direct contact capability (requires registration)
- * State Boating Information
- * Safety Check Request (yes, paddle craft can have a vessel safety check)
- * Safety Equipment review (generic)
- * Float Plan (form)
- * Rules of the Road
- * NOAA buoys – these give current conditions of wind and water. Temperatures. Directions.
- * Hazard Report procedure
- * Pollution Report procedure
- * Suspicious activity report

Appendix D. Additional Resources

The Coast Guard Auxiliary Paddlecraft wiki contains bibliography and links to materials about paddle craft safety, including books, videos, and magazines. Some of these short videos may be useful to use in presenting this class. Go to the Coast Guard Auxiliary Wiki page:

<http://auxbdeptwiki.cgaux.org/index.php?title=Paddlesports>

One goal of this dockside class is to encourage novice and intermediate paddlers to get on the water skills instruction. To find instruction, clubs, and the details about specific paddling programs, go to the American Canoe Association home page:

http://auxbdeptwiki.cgaux.org/index.php?title=Main_Page

Appendix E. Safety Sidebars

Definitions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Kayak types:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sit in – boat has a deck over the paddler’s legs; paddlers may use a skirt to hold water out of the boat• Sit on top – boat has no deck over the paddler’s legs and no skirt is used• Touring/sea kayak – typically longer and narrower, designed to travel relatively long distances, generally has secure bulkheads and internal storage• Recreational – typically wider and shorter than a touring kayak, does not have secure bulkheads and internal storage• Whitewater – typically shorter and more maneuverable, with internal supports or bulkheads to provide extra structural strength• Canoe types:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tandem – designed to be paddled by two people• Solo –designed to be paddled by one person• Flatwater- typically with lower freeboard (to reduce windage) and less rocker (to improve tracking)• Whitewater – typically with more freeboard (to keep drier in rapids) and more rocker (to improve maneuverability)
Flotation
<p>Kayaks have two types of flotation, native and added. For most boats purchased from “big box” stores, the native flotation is the minimum required by regulation, that is, the amount needed to maintain neutral buoyancy in calm waters. Generally, kayaks that are roto-molded or injection-molded plastic have minimal flotation in the form of closed cell foam wrapped around the vertical support strut bow and stern. The paddler’s feet may straddle the front support. More sophisticated boats may have bulkheads that divide the cockpit from bow and/or from stern. In either case, adding inflatable bags will dramatically increase buoyancy if the boat capsizes and fill with water.</p>
“If Found” Stickers
<p>Orange “If Found” stickers should be placed on all paddle craft to identify the owner in case the</p>

boat blows away or there is a mishap. Absent registration, there is no way otherwise to identify the owner and make a determination whether a drifting boat was occupied or not. The stickers should have a phone number on them for first responders to use to find the owner. Auxiliarists can obtain copies for distribution to paddlers from the Auxiliary National Supply Center (ANSC).



Communications

A VHF radio is safer on inland and coastal waters than a cell phone. A cell phone goes point-to-point, a radio from point-to-multipoint—anyone within hearing range can receive the broadcast and provide assistance. Cell phones are seldom waterproof or floatable and smart phones cost a lot.

The best radios to get for paddling in coastal waters have built-in GPS and Digital Selective Calling (DSC) capabilities. The DSC allows the person in a distress situation to push one button and automatically send name, location, and type of vessel to the Coast Guard, when the radio is properly registered. A proper radio should be waterproof, floatable, have a light and/or reflectivity. These currently (2015) run about \$225-\$275; not a small investment, but potentially worth it.

Alcohol use

Alcohol use on the water has a multiplier effect—one drink afloat on a hot day is the equivalent of three ashore. The rule of thumb is no more than one per hour and no more than three per day--ashore. The best bet, save the cold one for after the outing.

Visual Distress Signals

Vendors sell flares as part of the safety equipment they "recommend". In some waters, flares are necessary, such as offshore more than a mile. But within the inland waters, aerial flares are undesirable—what goes up, must come down. Hand-held flares can be useful, though. For day use, a 3' X 3' distress flag—orange with a black ball and square—is a low cost way to add visibility in a distress situation. The flag is persistent and doesn't expire like the flares do. It can be tied to your paddle and waved like a flag or simply draped over yourself or your boat to

increase visibility both to avert danger and to allow assistance to spot you sooner.



Lights

At night or in periods of limited visibility—overcast, fog, or drizzle—an all-around white light is required. This can be an LED light that fastens to the boat or a hand held flashlight. Check the batteries regularly.

Personal Visibility

When you are in a multiuse waterway and are low down on the water, you are not very visible. While a paddler may nominally have the right of way, prudence dictates that you enhance your visibility by wearing bright clothes that contrast with the background. The subdued sages and tans that are good for Leave No Trace ethics in the woods can be a liability afloat. Hunter blaze is better for fishing, too.

You can also enhance the glint off your paddle by applying a light coat of liquid floor wax to both sides of the blade. This increases the shine and reflectivity. Best part is, it is inexpensive and after a few outings and scrapings on the beach, it can be redone in a couple of minutes with little problem.

Kayak Fishing Sea Story

A 57 year old male was kayak fishing in sheltered waters on a fine day. He had a six pack of beer along and drank a couple of them. Nature's call followed. Trying to go overboard, he went overboard. HE couldn't climb back in. He had a life jacket aboard, but was not wearing. HE decided to swim for shore.

A woman at home on shore saw him fall in and called 9-1-1. A helicopter was dispatched, but as the the EMT told his widow, he was still warm, but it was too late to resuscitate him. Strike one--alcohol; strike two-- not wearing his life jacket; strike three—leaving the boat. He was out.

(Illustrates risks of alcohol, need to plan for basic needs, to wear life jacket, and to stay with the

boat if overboard.)

Communications and Visibility Sea Story

Two women in a tandem kayak tipped over and could not climb back in. They had cell phones, but those were “fried” when they got wet and so wouldn’t work. About a mile from a main channel, they saw many boats pass them without spotting them, since they were low in the water—less than a foot above the surface. After two and half hours, they were seen by a “good Samaritan” boater who rescued them.

(Illustrates risks of relying on cell phones, value of persistent visual distress signals such as a flag.)

SUP Sea Story

A moderately experienced Stand Up Paddler was “waked” by a passing powerboat. The wave knocked him overboard. He was wearing a water ski vest life jacket, but did not have it properly sized or fastened. He had no leash fastened to his ankle. The wind blew the paddle board out of reach and he was trying to swim after his paddle. He was rescued by a passing boat after about 10 minutes in the water.

(Illustrates the importance of proper life jacket wear and the value of an ankle leash to the board.)

Visibility Sea Story

Three kayakers were spotted by a passing sailboat under power late in the afternoon in the middle of a main shipping channel. Of the three, two were in the water and none were wearing life jackets. A container cargo ship was bearing up the channel, about fifteen minutes away. They were rescued by the sailor. In fifteen minutes, they would have been run over and were very unlikely to have been seen by the commercial vessel.

(Illustrates the importance of lifejackets, distress signals and situational awareness.)

Collision Sea Story

Late one afternoon, a pair of tandem kayakers collided with a tourist “pirate” excursion ship. The woman in the forward position was thrown clear by the vessels bow wave. The man aft was hit by the bow of the ship and suffered broken bones and a week-long hospital stay.

(Illustrates need for situational awareness and visibility.)