



Policy Name:	SNRC Water Emergency Action Plan
Policy Owner:	Vice President Rowing
Date: Policy Version Number:	April, 2018 2.0

Policy Description

Water Emergency Action Plan

The objective of a Water Emergency Action Plan:

1. To save life
2. To prevent injury
3. To minimize damage to equipment

Emergency scenario examples:

Rower Overboard!

1. Emergency action by the rower overboard:

- When you sense that in a few seconds you will fall into water, use the few moments to mentally take control - you know what to do, so do it!
- Avoid jumping into cold water - try to slide into the water
- If possible, take a deep breath before hitting the water
- Be prepared for the shock of cold water
- Try to pinch your nose and keep your mouth closed
- Try to keep your face out of the water - keep your back to the waves
- Try to keep water away from nose and throat
- Don't be frightened if you feel disoriented or gasping for air, it will pass
- As soon as possible get your bearings - Where is your shell? Is it overturned? Where are other shells? Where is the coach boat?
- Hang onto your shell immediately and do not leave it
- Blow your whistle as hard and as long as you can
- Yell for help if you can
- Your priority now is to get as much of your body as you can out of the water. Pull yourself onto your overturned shell (torso on top of shell)
- If the shell is not overturned, hold on to anything on the shell with your torso out of the water as much as possible.
- Do not try to get back into the shell unless you are certain of very quick success.
- If you cannot get yourself onto the shell have your life jacket on or your PFD activated and assume a fetal position to conserve body heat.
- Do not leave your shell and do not try to swim to shore.
- Avoid all unnecessary movement while waiting for rescue.
- In "warm" water - if you are close to a safe haven - you may slowly swim towing your shell to safety - never leave your shell!



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2. Emergency action by other shells or coach boats in the vicinity:

- Each coxswain, bow person and rower must always keep an ear open for whistle sounds or cries for help
- Respond immediately!
- In coxed shells, coxswain takes charge of the rescue, the bow person takes charge in coxless shells
- "Hold water"
- Whistle, yell, wave both arms to hail coach boat
- Show direction of "help needed" by waving one arm
- Approach rower in water from the lee side (downwind side) if possible
- Ask rower in water: "Are you OK? Any injuries?"
- Instruct rower to stay with the shell and lift torso onto shell
- Assure rower that help is coming
- Stay with rower
- When coach boat arrives, report how long the rower has been in the water and pass on any information about the rower's condition

3. Emergency action by the coach/safety person in the coach boat

- Wear your life jacket or pfd
- Approach the site from the lee side to into the wind to prevent the launch from being pushed into the accident and to ensure maximum control.
- The crew in the coach boat should never stand up in a small open unstable boat.
- Turn the motor off as soon as you are in position to bring the athlete on board. Do **not** leave motor in neutral, idling
- Take charge of the situation: "We are here!" Reassure rower in the water. Enquire: Are you OK? Any injuries?
- Get further information from coxswain or rowers of nearby shells
- Aide athlete out of the water safely
- Rower who is shivering but who is rational, and not injured otherwise should be helped into the coach boat, wrapped up in blankets and taken immediately to the dock.
- If still OK, have rower go into the shower (with someone accompanying him/her), ensure clothes removed and person gets in warm shower. The rower should be observed for couple of hours and should avoid activity until fully recovered.
- Rower showing disorientation, problems with breathing, falling into unconsciousness, etc. should be lifted into the coach boat with utmost care and kept in the horizontal position as much as possible. Once in the coach boat, the rower should be kept as still as possible.
- Cover the rower with a blanket and speed to the nearest dock. If possible, call ahead for help and urgent transport to a hospital.



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Safety Boat

It may be necessary to use the safety/coach boat for the recovery.

Conscious – not injured

- Recover the casualty from the safety boat. Ask the rower to leverage themselves up on the bow of the boat and assist them in any way they need.

Conscious – injured

- Recover the casualty facing away from the boat, lift under the arms or by clothing; ensuring that no further injury is caused. First, lift the victim to assess, and then help manoeuvre the person around and into the boat. Ensure that the person is placed in a comfortable position, low in the boat to avoid any further injuries.

Unconscious

- Place the casualty facing away from the boat, lift under the arms or by clothing; ensuring that no further injury is caused. First, lift the victim to the top of the gunnel and assess, and then help manoeuvre the person around and into the boat. Ensure that the person is placed in a comfortable position, low in the boat to avoid any further injuries.
- If there are two people in the safety boat, it may be necessary for one of the two to move to the far side of the boat to rebalance the list (heel) of the vessel and ensure that the boat does not take on water on the side where the casualty is being recovered. This is specific to the boat and training will ensure that crews understand the dynamics of the vessel

More than one rower overboard!

The principles outlined above can be applied to the situation. Be aware of the space limitations of the coach boat. Immediately call for extra coach boats.

Collision between shells or a floating or stationary object with rower overboard

- In coxed shells, coxswain in charge (or bow person in coxless shell)
- Immediately whistle, yell, or signal with both arms waving for coach boat
- Immediately throw lifejacket to rower(s) in water
- If need be, detach one oar and push it to rower
- Under no circumstances, leave the shell or have any rower swim from the shell
- While waiting for coach boat, keep watching and assisting rower in water
- Assess the situation: is anyone in the shell(s) injured?
- Does the injured require immediate first aid?
- If so, order all to balance shell, rower behind injured rower to administer aid



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- Assess the shell: is there damage to the shell(s)?
- Is the shell taking on water?
- Can the shell be rowed back to the dock or to a safe haven?
- If so, wait till coach boat (or other vessels assisting) arrives to rescue rower in water

Shell is swamped but floating and rowers are still in the shell

- Coxswain (or bow person in a coxless shell) in charge
- Immediately signal for help
- Start bailing immediately
- Untie shoes
- Put on lifejackets or PFD's
- Put on whatever extra clothing is available, including hats
- Cox and bow person constantly account for all rowers and each other

Note: If the shell fills with water to the gunnels, it will still float; however, if gunnels are below water level, the shell may break up. If shell is breaking up, one at a time the rowers should slip into the water, keep hold of the shell for flotation. (DO NOT JUMP into the water). Remove the oars and place them parallel to the hull. Move to the ends of the shell and attempt to roll the shell over. Rowers must buddy up and hang onto each other with torso's over the hull while waiting for rescue.

Sudden sickness while rowing:

- If rower becomes sick, return shell to dock immediately.
- In warm weather conditions, consider heat exhaustion or heat stroke.
- Symptoms include headache, nausea, pallor, rapid pulse - skin may be warm, flushed, without sweat - pulse may become rapid, pounding. There may be behaviour changes and even unconsciousness.
- Even while moving back to the dock, douse the rower with cool water, shade from the sun, fan the face, and loosen clothing.
- Call ahead for immediate paramedical/medical attention.

In the event that an individual is unconscious, injured and/or can not be brought back to the dock, proceed to either the start line dock, finish line tower or hot seat dock; whichever is closest. Look for help, call 911 yourself and then telephone the portable for help requesting either the Head Coach or On-sight Safety Representative.

Post rescue

- Coach in charge
- Inspect rescued or injured person
- Stop bleeding
- Ensure clear airway
- Provide warmth - or in case of suspected heat exhaustion or heat stroke, cool person down



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- In all situations, use common sense and err on the side of caution: send for paramedical help
- Do not transport injured or sick persons in your personal vehicle
- Record information about the person and the event for the club records: submit it to the Safety Officer or the Rowing Section Captain for safekeeping
- Determine if any further follow up is needed to help improve safety culture

Recovering the Rowing Shell

- Remove the oars from the oarlocks and place in coach boat
- Using one rigger pull the shell towards the side of the coach boat so the shell is parallel to the coach boat
- Holding onto rigger, put the coach boat in drive and idle slowly towards the dock
- Should a shell fill with water or submerge and safe harbour is not possible, the following procedure is to be followed: The shell should be rolled upside-down to increase buoyancy by trapping as much air as possible. If wind is a factor, roll shell with the wind. Oars should remain in the oarlocks to increase buoyancy.

If needing an emergency agency:

In the event of an emergency requiring outside assistance, the following three positions and responsibilities should be assumed:

1. Charge Person:
 - This should be the coach that first approached the situation. They are to administer CPR if needed and attend to injured person(s).
2. Call Person:
 - This person should call the required emergency agency, provide the address to the club and the specific location the emergency vehicle is needed (Boathouse, Hot Seat Dock, Finish Line Tower, or Start Line Dock.) They should then wait at the access point to the road to direct the emergency vehicle to the accident. Once at road access point, they can phone the Head Coach or the Safety Representative to make them aware of the situation able to do so.
3. Control Person:
 - This individual should control the crowd, which may include other athletes, parents etc.

Emergency Contact Information:

South Niagara Rowing Club Address: 270 Colborne St., Dain City, L3B 3P1

Hospital, Fire, or Police: 911

Head Coach: Don LeClair (519) 933-4366

Safety Representative: Kevin Keith (289) 990-8236

President: Kevin Fuller (905) 321-1113



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Directions from Hospital to Boathouse:

- Leaving hospital, turn left on to Third St.
- Follow Third until King St.
- Make a left hand turn onto King St.
- Follow King St. until next major intersection at Ontario St.
- Turn right onto Ontario St.
- Follow Ontario St. to next set of traffic lights and turn left onto Canal Bank St.
- Follow Canal Bank St. until next lights.
- Proceed through intersection following Canal Bank St.
- Boathouse is visible on right hand side.
- To reach **parking lot**, continue down Canal Bank St. until you approach a stop sign at Forks Rd. W.
- Turn right and cross bridge.
- Once across bridge, immediately turn right onto Colborne St.
- Follow Colborne St. until you reach parking lot on right hand side.

Directions from Hospital to Start Line:

- Leaving hospital, turn left on to Third St.
- Follow Third until King St.
- Make a left hand turn onto King St.
- Follow King St. until next major intersection at Ontario St.
- Turn right onto Ontario St.
- Follow Ontario St. to next set of traffic lights and turn left onto Canal Bank St.
- Follow Canal Bank St. until next lights.
- Proceed through intersection following Canal Bank St.
- Boathouse is visible on right hand side.
- To reach **Start Line**, continue down Canal Bank St. until you approach a stop sign at Forks Rd. W.
- Continue straight through intersection on Canal Bank St.
- Travel 2 km and Start Line area and dock will be on right hand side.

Directions from Hospital to Finish Line Tower:

- Leaving hospital, turn left on to Third St.
- Follow Third until King St.
- Make a left hand turn onto King St.
- Follow King St. until next major intersection at Ontario St.
- Turn right onto Ontario St.
- Follow Ontario St. to next set of traffic lights and turn left onto Canal Bank St.
- Follow Canal Bank St. until next lights.
- Proceed through intersection following Canal Bank St.
- Boathouse is visible on right hand side.
- To reach **Finish Line Tower**, continue down Canal Bank St. until you approach a stop sign at Forks Rd. W.



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- Turn right onto Forks Rd. W. and travel across bridge, turning left immediately after bridge into parking lot
- Approach tower and dock from parking lot.

Directions from Hospital to Hot Seat Dock:

- Leaving hospital, turn left on to Third St.
- Follow Third until King St.
- Make a left hand turn onto King St.
- Follow King St. until next major intersection at Ontario St.
- Turn right onto Ontario St.
- Follow Ontario St. to next set of traffic lights and turn left onto Canal Bank St.
- Follow Canal Bank St. until next lights.
- Proceed through intersection following Canal Bank St.
- Boathouse is visible on right hand side.
- To reach **Hot Seat Dock**, continue down Canal Bank St. until you approach a stop sign at Forks Rd. W.
- Turn right onto Forks Rd. W and travel across bridge, turning right immediately onto Colborne St.
- Hot Seat Dock is on right hand side, down a pathway that begins before crossing the train tracks.

Any event that results in an injured person(s), the requirement of an emergency agency or substantial damage to equipment must be reported to the Safety Representative and the Head Coach by means of a written report which includes the events that occurred, the people involved, any recommendations for the future and personal contact information for follow up regarding the situation.

Reference Documents

Approved By:

K. Fuller