

**ST. CATHARINES ROWING CLUB**  
**WARM WATER ON-WATER SAFETY CODE**

Rowing Canada Aviron, in its publication "Rowing Safely RCA Safety Requirements and Safety Guidelines" (April 29, 2022), requires that all member rowing clubs have an on-water "Safety Code" and a designated "Safety Advisor". This is the St. Catharines Rowing Club's (SCRC) On-Water Safety Code for *Warm Water* Rowing. The SCRC Club Captain is the club's Safety Advisor.

Safe enjoyment of the sport is the aim of the St. Catharines Rowing Club and personal safety is of paramount importance. Rowing is an outdoor water sport that carries inherent risks of personal injury either from a collision, or from drowning as a result of falling into the water.

**This On-Water Safety Code for Warm Water Rowing is in effect when the temperature of the water in Martindale Pond is equal to or greater than 11 degrees Celsius.**

All risks are heightened in cold water. The SCRC On-Water Safety Code for when the water temperature is 10 °C or colder can be found in a separate document.

The following are the rules that must be followed to comply with the Warm Water On-Water Safety Code. The consequences of failing to comply with the rules are outlined at the end of the Code.

**SWIM TEST AND SAFETY TRAINING**

1. When Warm Water rules are in effect, *all* participants of the club's on-water activities shall be able to swim. Details of the swimming ability requirements can be found in the SCRC "Ability to Swim/Attestation Form".
2. Each year all rowers, coxswains, coaches and safety boat drivers are to complete the RCA on-line education module "Rowing Safety" <https://safety.rowingcanada.org/en/#/> as part of the club's membership registration process.

**LAUNCHES**

1. Coach boats and safety boats, for the purposes of on-water coaching and safety, shall be regarded as the same type of vessel. They are referred to herein as "launches" for brevity.
2. The drivers of launches are required to carry on board their Pleasure Craft Operator Card (PCOC). The Club Captain shall keep a copy of PCOCs on file.

3. Each launch operator must ensure the launch under their control is in a well maintained, serviceable and safe condition. Operators must report any mechanical/operational issues with a motor or launch immediately to the Club Captain.
4. When in a launch, the first responsibility of the driver is safety for all. Any time there is an emergency with any club, any person, or any equipment, launch drivers are obligated to respond to someone in distress. In an emergency, any coach from any club can use SCRC equipment to help out. In an emergency, safety comes first; the Club colours we wear go away immediately and without question.
5. There shall be a maximum of two persons on board a launch when being operated as a coach boat or safety boat.
6. All launches must carry the equipment as required in the Transport Canada (TC) Small Vessel Regulations (SVR) at all times. This includes the following:
  - i) A Personal Flotation Device (PFD) for each person on board the launch. If a person on board is less than 16 years of age, the PFD shall be inherently buoyant;
  - ii) Nine (9) PFDs for the rowers under the launch driver's supervision;
  - iii) A paddle;
  - iv) A plastic or metal bailer with an opening of at least 65 cm<sup>2</sup> and a capacity of at least 750 ml;
  - v) 15 m buoyant heaving line;
  - vi) Watertight flashlight;
  - vii) Pealess whistle;
  - viii) A reboarding device;
  - ix) Navigation lights, if operated before sunrise or after sunset, or in periods of restricted visibility; and
7. Each launch driver shall affix the 'kill switch' to their person when operating the boat.

## **ROWING SHELLS**

1. Prior to launching, rowing shells are to be checked by the user(s) to ensure that the shell meets the RCA Rules of Racing equipment requirements, that the hull and riggers are sound and any steering mechanism is functional, and that equipment required under the TC SVR is carried on board. Crews must report any mechanical/operational issues to their coach or to the Club Captain immediately.

2. The following equipment must be carried on board:
  - i) A pealess whistle;
  - ii) A white light, if the shell is operated before sunrise or after sunset or in periods of restricted visibility. A red (port side) and green (starboard side) light on the bow is preferred.

### **TRAFFIC PATTERN**

1. All crews and scullers will follow the traffic pattern as outlined on the traffic pattern map posted in the boathouse compound.
2. There shall be no rowing upstream of the starting gates.

### **WARM WATER PROGRAM SPECIFIC RULES**

1. All crews must sign out and in using the clothes pin system on the dock.
2. **U15, U17 and U19 athletes** may only row when accompanied by a supervising launch. The maximum ratio of shells per launch is 6:1. The shells may not be more than 500 m from the supervising launch. It is not enough for rowers to simply be within 500 meters of any launch. Crews need confirmation from the designated launch driver that their row will be monitored.
3. **U23, Seniors and Masters athletes** may only row when supervised by a designated launch. The maximum ratio of shells per supervising launch is 10:1. The designated launch driver shall track shells under its supervision, noting shells which have embarked/disembarked.

If shells are to row more than 500 m distant from the supervising launch, they must comply with the following conditions:

- a. Carry a PFD for each athlete in the shell;
- b. Carry a pealess whistle;
- c. Employ a buddy system by rowing with at least one other shell within hailing distance;
- d. The launch operator and the crew(s) for which he/she is responsible shall have discussed the training plan and traffic pattern the crew(s) will be using.

### **TIME ON THE WATER**

1. In the morning there shall be no rowing prior to ninety (90) minutes before sunrise.

2. In the evening, all crews shall be off the water by civil twilight.
3. Sun rise, sun set and civil twilight end will be posted on the notice board each month by the Club Captain.

#### **ADVERSE WEATHER**

1. Crews should not launch if fog reduces visibility to less than 500 metres.
2. If the density of fog increases when crews are already on the water, and the visibility drops to less than 250 metres, crews shall end their practice and slowly make their way back to the main dock.
3. At any time crews or launch drivers see lightning, crews are to immediately head back to the dock or the nearest shelter area.

#### **EMERGENCY**

In any emergency, call 911 and follow the instructions posted on the Emergency Action Plan.

#### **COMMUNICATION**

1. The Warm Water On-Water Safety Code will be reviewed annually and posted prominently at the rowing club by the Club Captain.
2. The Warm Water On-Water Safety Code will be required reading by athletes and coaches during the high school and club's membership/registration process.
3. The Club Captain will review the Warm Water On-Water Safety Code with all coaches prior to the rules taking effect.
4. Coaches will review the Warm Water On-Water Safety Code with their athletes when the Captain declares the Warm Water Code to be in effect.

#### **MONITORING AND PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS**

1. Adherence to the Club's Warm Water On Water Safety Code is the duty and responsibility of every SCRC coach and member. Failure to follow the rules outlined in this safety code could result in disciplinary action and/or suspension of club privileges, at the discretion of the Club Captain. Final interpretation and

enforcement of the rules is the responsibility of the Club Captain, and if needed, in consultation with the Rowing Committee.

2. The Club Captain shall have the final say in matters related to rowing times, safety, equipment maintenance and usage. If the Club Captain is not present, the most senior coach, or any other individual so designated by the Club Captain will assume this responsibility.
3. The Club Captain shall employ the following progressive disciplinary steps when rowers and coaches are non-compliant with the Warm Water On Water Safety Code:
  - a. First Offense – Conversation and Reminder of Rule(s) – This conversation should seek to understand what the athlete/coach believes the rules to be and the steps they have taken to follow them. If the athlete’s/coach’s interpretation of the rule(s) is incorrect, the Club Captain will clarify and reinforce the rule(s) to the individual(s).
  - b. Second Offense – Formal Oral Caution – The Club Captain will investigate the offence, and if warranted, will give the offender(s) a formal oral caution.
  - c. Third Offense – Formal Written Warning – The Club Captain will investigate the offence, and if warranted, will give the offender(s) a formal written warning.
  - d. Fourth Offense – Suspension of Club Privileges – The Club Captain will investigate the offence, and if warranted, will suspend the rowing privileges of the offender(s) for a period of time to be determined by the Club Captain.
  - e. Ongoing Concerns – Termination of Membership – The Club Captain will investigate the ongoing offences, and if warranted, recommend to the SCRC Board of Directors to terminate the membership of the offender(s).

Finalized by the Board of Directors May 3, 2023. To be reviewed annually.