



ONTARIO MARATHON CANOE AND KAYAK RACING ASSOCIATION (OMCKRA)

OMCKRA SAFETY POLICY

GENERAL COMPETITOR SAFETY FOR OMCKRA SANCTIONED EVENTS

1. A lifejacket or personal floatation device (PFD) must be carried for every competitor in a boat.
2. All lifejackets and PFDs must meet federal government approval and be of appropriate size for the paddlers.
3. All U14 paddlers (age 13 and under as of January 1st of that racing season) must wear a lifejacket or PFD.
4. All U17 paddlers (age 14 – 16 as of January 1st of that racing year) must wear lifejacket or PFD while in a North Canoe and Montreal Canoe.
5. Before May 1st and after October 1st, all paddlers in every class must wear a lifejacket or PFD.
6. It is highly recommended that all weak and non-swimmers wear a lifejacket or PFD throughout the entire race.
7. It is recommended that all competitors be able to swim, tread water, or be familiar with drown proofing.
8. In order to comply with Canadian Coast Guard regulations (April 1, 1999), all racing canoes and racing kayaks must carry a sound signaling device (whistle) in addition to lifejackets or PFDs. When there is poor visibility or a possibility of participants finishing near or after sunset or the race continues after sunset and before sunrise, all craft must also be equipped with a watertight flashlight.
9. In addition to the safety equipment in paragraph (8), it is recommended that recreational canoes engaged in competition carry not less than 15 m (50 ft.) of buoyant heaving line and a bailer with a minimum capacity of one litre.
10. For events where competing craft may be isolated (out of sight of other craft and race officials) on the course, it is recommended that all safety equipment be carried by all competing craft i.e. lifejackets or PFDs, a sound signaling device (whistle), not less than 15 m (50 ft.) of buoyant heaving line, a bailer with a minimum capacity of one litre, and a watertight flashlight where time of day dictates.
11. visibility and within view of race officials, the safety equipment described in Paragraphs (8) to (10) does not have to be carried in individual competing craft provided that the motorized safety craft carries a lifejacket or PFD for each crew member of the largest competing craft (most crew members) in addition to its own safety equipment. Nevertheless, it is recommended that North/Voyageur and outrigger OC6 canoes carry bailers of sufficient capacity to bail and refloat the canoe in reasonable time in the event of capsizing.
12. Paragraph (11) notwithstanding, U14 age paddlers, spring and fall races and non- swimmers are subject to paragraphs (3) to (6).

U14 RACES:

1. All U14 races must be supervised by one safety boat for three teams. The safety boat can be a canoe or a motorized craft.
2. The recommended maximum distance is 5 Km. Distance is at the discretion of the race organizer.
3. An U14 race should be postponed or cancelled in the event of poor weather or water conditions. This is also at the discretion of the race organizer.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR RACERS:

1. If you come across competitors who have tipped, or are in trouble, you should ask them if they need help and whether they can swim. Provide assistance if needed. Racers should be able to perform a canoe over canoe rescue.
2. If a racer pulls out of a race before the finish, he/she must inform the race organizer as soon as possible.
3. Failure to do so may result in suspension of OMCKRA membership.
4. Race competitors and officials may not use alcohol or illegal drugs before, or during the race. Failure to comply will result in disqualification and local authorities will be informed.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR RACE ORGANIZERS:

1. If a change in the race course is required, the Race Chairman must be available and be prepared to make changes. If poor weather conditions or water conditions threaten the safety of racers an alternate route should be available.
2. No race shall start in a thunderstorm.
3. The OMCKRA Safety Policy must be posted at each race site.
4. An emergency action plan (EAP) must be implemented. The EAP consists of appointing an "in charge" person to make decisions in the event of an emergency; a "call" person to arrange for medical assistance and transport to medical facilities; and the preparation of an EAP outline that contains phone/contact numbers for medical facilities (hospitals and clinics, St. John Ambulance, etc.), police, fire department, doctors (e.g. 911 services if



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available). Routes to the site for access by the various outside medical assistance should be described in the EAP outline. The EAP outline must be posted with the Safety Policy in a readily accessible location at the race site start.

5. Waivers must be signed by all competitors; competitors under 18 years of age require the signature of a parent or guardian (respective team or club coach). Waivers must inform the participants of the potential dangers and personal risks involved with canoe and kayak racing. Waivers must be retained for at least one year after the event or returned to the OMCKRA race secretary.
6. The entire race course, including portages, must be inspected for hazards before the race with these removed where possible. Where hazards cannot be removed, they should be clearly marked and the participants informed as to the nature and locations of the hazards during a pre-race briefing. Where hazards exist on the course, there must be safe routes to by-pass them.
7. All portages should be clearly marked, groomed, and if possible supervised and clear of spectators. Portages on roads should be closely supervised, by local police if necessary, with traffic controlled.
8. Motorized patrol boats must be used for lake portions of races, unless the entire race is within view of the race organizers, and the course is never more than 200 meters from the nearest accessible shore line. If possible, contact the Ontario Provincial Police for assistance. On rivers, provide a patrol boat if possible. If this is not possible, use a check point system.
9. A map of the course should be posted at each race site. A briefing before the race should describe the course and refer to the map.
10. Race organizers must ensure that all racers have finished the course safely and are off the course after a predetermined posted time.
11. A sweep boat or a tally system must be used to ensure that all competitors have been accounted for.
12. First aid kits must be available at the race. It is recommended that personnel with St. John's ambulance or equivalent first aid training be available at the race. At least one vehicle at the race site should be designated and be available for emergency medical transportation.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COACHES

1. All coaches must be familiar with, and enforce, this OMCKRA Safety Policy.
2. Before coaching at a site, a coach shall familiarize him/herself with the site and water conditions and be aware of hazards or obstacles.
3. Coaches are responsible for inspection of canoeing/kayaking equipment to ensure it is safe and that it is appropriate for the participants and racing/training conditions at the site.
4. It is recommended that all coaches be able to swim the equivalent of the Canadian Red Cross Society Level 9 or above, or must, when on the water, wear a lifejacket or PFD.
5. It is recommended that coaches be trained in First Aid and Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR), water safety and lifesaving.
6. It is recommended that all coaches in charge of, or supervising, on-water activities have, as a minimum, NCCP Level 1 Certification.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR OMCKRA EXECUTIVE MEMBERS

1. Monitor the Safety Program and act as resource persons for race organizers and new paddlers.
2. Compile an updated list of rules and a safety policy that is to be forwarded to all race organizers prior to the racing season.
3. Review Safety Policy annually prior to the Annual General Meeting.

Safety policy updated for age categories January 2021