



Neptune Rowing Club
Safety & Emergency Document

Neptune Safety & Emergency Plan

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Introduction

It is the policy of Neptune Rowing Club to implement the Rowing Ireland Code of Practice for Water Safety <http://www.rowingireland.ie/rowing-ireland-water-safety-code/>. Neptune Rowing Club is committed to the safety of its members and its guests engaged in club-related activities. The aim of the Neptune Rowing Club Safety Plan is to ensure that all members and visitors are made aware of the safety requirements of participating in rowing, sculling and related activities at Neptune.

Safety is everyone's responsibility

- All members of the club have a duty of care towards safe rowing.
- No one is allowed on the water without prior agreement from the Captain /Coach.
- All members of the club need to be aware of what to do in case of a medical emergency.
- All members need to confirm that they are aware of their duties and responsibilities regarding safety.
- All members are responsible to report any incidents or damages.
- Coaches need to make athletes aware of responsible conduct on and off the water
- Coxswains should be aware of the rules of the river, hazards and what to do in case of an emergency or accident.
- The Safety Officer needs to report risk assessments on a regular basis to the committee.

WHAT YOU MUST DO TO ENSURE YOUR OWN SAFETY ***Safety for Neptune Athletes***

- ***You MUST be able to swim AT LEAST 50 metres in light clothing.***
- ***Know the rules of the river (See Appendix)***
- ***Bring a change of kit and towel to each session for use in the event of a capsized***
- ***Report damage to boats to the Captain***
- ***Report incidents on the water to your captain and Safety Officer***
- ***Assist any fellow rower in distress***
- ***Read the Rowing Ireland Water Safety Code.***
- ***Using a boat is only allowed when you have the specific permission to do so - if in doubt ask the Captain.***
- ***When going out in the evening or at dawn, use navigation lights.***
- ***Know how to make an emergency stop and be signed off as a capable cox.***
- ***Avoid injury whilst training by warming up, stretching and focusing on technique.***

General Water Safety

Rowing Equipment:

All rowing equipment must be checked by the crew before and after use and safety items such as bow balls, hatch covers and heel restraints must conform to the regulations of Rowing Ireland. Any faults should be reported to the Captain and the equipment should not be used again until it has been repaired.

Safety Equipment

The Club provides items of safety equipment to be used by its members while on the water

Lifejackets / Buoyancy Aids:

The wearing of a lifejacket or buoyancy aid is compulsory for:

- All coxswains.
Please note – coxswains should NOT wear an auto- inflate lifejacket in a bow-loader.
- All drivers and passengers of any launch used in connection with Club activities.

Throw Lines:

All coaches on the tow path and others offering safety cover from the slip should have a throw line. These are located in the Safety Box in Boathouse

Thermal Exposure Blankets: located in Safety Box in Boathouse

First Aid Kit

First Aid boxes are located in the Gym, Kitchen, Hall and Boathouse

Defibrillator

Defibrillator is located in the Entrance Hall of the Clubhouse.

Safety Lights

Neptune Rowing Club operates a Safety Light System for evening rowing. All boats must show lights after sunset. A white light should be mounted on the bow and a red light on the stern of the boat. LED lights are permitted. Lights should not be fixed to the riggers as they cannot be seen when negotiating bends and turning.

Incidents and Accidents

All members are responsible for reporting all accidents, incidents and near incidents that they know about or witness within 24 hours.

Members are to bring the incident to the attention of the Safety Officer, coach or club captain and complete an Incident Form.

All accidents and incidents will be reviewed by the Safety Officer, and these will be discussed at committee level; along with any additional control measures deemed necessary to avoid future repetition.

Emergency Services are to be contacted as appropriate to any accident or emergency situation.

Launches

Launches are to be used only by drivers authorized by the Captain and as checked out by the Safety Officer. All drivers and passengers are to wear lifejackets. The driver is responsible for ensuring that a safety bag / launch rescue kit is on board. Any items used or missing are to be notified to the Safety Officer as soon as possible.

The Launch safety Bag should include the following:

- A paddle in case of engine failure
- A bailing device
- A safety bag containing thermal blanket, a throw rope
- Kill cord
- Enough petrol for the outing
- Life jackets

All launch drivers should ensure that the launches are handled with consideration for other river users. The launches are designed to carry two persons, - the driver and the coach. In the event of a capsize recovery operation, the maximum number of persons on the launch may exceed two persons in order to safely convey athletes to the bank or boathouse.

Coxswains and Coxless Boats

In all coxed boats, the coxswain is deemed responsible for the overall safety of the boat and crew. The wearing of lifejackets or buoyancy aids by coxswains is compulsory. If front-loaders are being coxed, care is to be taken to

ensure that the lifejacket does not prevent a cox from escaping in the event of capsize or sinking. **Please note – coxswains should NOT wear an auto-inflate lifejacket in a bow-loader.**

In coxless boats, the person occupying the bow seat or steersperson is deemed responsible for the overall safety of the boat and the crew.

Coaches

All Coaches should have completed Rowing Ireland coaching courses and be Garda vetted

Coaches should ensure that:

- Crews are aware of the appropriate safety procedures
- Crews use safe rowing/sculling equipment
- Outings are conducted appropriate to the prevailing weather and water conditions
- Consideration is shown to other water users
- Crews are appropriately dressed for the session
- The Coach is to be particularly alert for symptoms of hypothermia and heat stroke/dehydration
- In particular, when coaching young children, the whole crew should be dressed suitably
- When coaching coxed boats, care must also be taken to ensure that the cox is properly dressed
- Particular attention is paid to the coaching of coxes as their competence is essential to water safety as well as the crew's success
- When coaching from the bank, all coaches must have a throw line
- The coach/athlete ratio for junior athletes should be one coach to no more than ten junior athletes

Junior athletes under the age of 18 are not allowed on the water unless accompanied by a coach.

Junior Members

No juniors members (rowers under 18 years of age) are to be on the club premises for any reason, training or otherwise, unless requested to do so by a coach and are supervised by that coach. They must not remain on the premises after the training session is over for longer than is necessary. If for some reason the coach cannot attend, the session then cannot go ahead unless arrangements are made for another coach to supervise. All coaches are approved by the committee and Garda vetted by Rowing Ireland.

Condition of Equipment

Prior to use, all equipment is to be checked to ensure that it is serviceable and appropriate for the purpose for which it is intended. Any faults or damage are to be reported to the Captain.

Outings without Coaches

Outings by individuals and crews outside of the normal club training sessions are at the discretion of the Captain. An estimated return time is to be stated along with crew details. Individuals are to ensure that they book in on return to avoid false alarms.

OFF-WATER SAFETY REQUIREMENTS

Lifting Boats

Coaches and crews are to ensure that every care is taken to prevent injury when lifting boats in and out of the racks and the river. One person is to be in charge of the manoeuvre, giving clear instructions before and during the lift.

Loading the Trailer

When crews are travelling to regattas or other training locations, the Captain will detail the trailer loading plan. Loading is to be strictly in accordance with this plan. The driver is to ensure that all boats and equipment are safely secured prior to departure and that the necessary requirements for rear projections and lighting are observed. Juniors should not load the trailer unsupervised.

Gym

All members are responsible for keeping the gym clean and tidy. After use, every member is responsible for returning all equipment to its proper location and for cleaning down all items of the equipment used to ensure good hygiene practice.

All members will be responsible for their own safety while using any of the Club's gym equipment. Should any member have any queries regarding the correct technique or use of any item of equipment, he/she should ask the Captain or a Coach.

Junior members are not permitted to use any of the gym equipment (rowing machines or weights) unless accompanied by a qualified coach or supervised by a person deemed responsible by the committee.

The use of any gym equipment by social members and by guests is prohibited.

Running

When running from the club, all members should wear hi-viz strips or vests especially in the dark. Junior members should not run alone.

No Smoking Policy

The Club has a No-Smoking policy and smoking is not permitted in any part of the Boathouse. Members are responsible for ensuring that their guests observe this policy.

Fire

In the event of a fire the Boathouse, Gym & Clubhouse are to be evacuated and the car park used as a muster point. An attempt is to be made to account for individuals. Members are responsible for the safety of their guests

Car Park

Extreme care is to be taken by all members when using the car park in order to prevent injury to people on foot or carrying boats. The club entrance is on a footpath and cycle lane so care should be taken when entering and exiting.

Telephones

There is no telephone at the club. A list of useful numbers is displayed on the wall in the entrance to the club and in the boathouse. Coaches and crews are encouraged to carry a mobile telephone (in a Ziploc bag) at all times when training on the water.

Key Locations & Telephone Numbers

All crews are advised to ensure they carry a mobile phone when on the water.

In an emergency call **999** or **112**

EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBERS

Nearest Hospital – St. James's **01 410 3000**

Nearest Garda Station – Kilmainham **01 666 9700**

Emergency Action Plan

Capsizing:

- If out of your depth & unable to wade ashore, **stay with the boat** and use it as a buoyancy aid & attempt to swim it to shore.
- If the water is cold, **get as much of your body out of the water** as soon as possible, draping yourself over the upturned hull (if necessary turning over the hull for this purpose).
- If possible, "buddy-up"; holding on to each other until rescued to provide mutual warmth and support and to help ensure all are accounted for.
- Other boats in the vicinity should fetch help or a launch if one is available. **DO NOT ATTEMPT TO RESCUE FROM ANOTHER ROWING SCULL** - you are likely to tip over, putting more people in the water with no one to get help.

Serious Incident:

- IN A MEDICAL EMERGENCY, INCLUDING A CREW MEMBER BEING TAKEN SERIOUSLY ILL OR BECOMING UNRESPONSIVE, IMMEDIATELY:
 - Raise the Alarm with a launch or with other boats if available.
 - Use a cell phone to dial for emergency assistance **999/112**; OR if no cell phone is available row to the nearest location where a safe landing can be made, get to a telephone and make a **999/112** call.

Hypothermia

The symptoms of hypothermia depend on how cold the environment is and how long you are exposed for

Mild cases - Symptoms include:

- shivering
- feeling cold
- low energy
- discomfort at higher temperatures than normal
- cold, pale skin

Moderate cases - Symptoms include:

- violent, uncontrollable shivering
- being unable to think or pay attention
- confusion (some people don't realise they are affected)

- loss of judgment and reasoning
- difficulty moving around or stumbling (weakness)
- feeling afraid
- memory loss
- fumbling hands and loss of coordination
- drowsiness
- slurred speech
- listlessness and indifference,
- slow, shallow breathing and a weak pulse

Severe cases - Symptoms include:

- loss of control of hands, feet, and limbs
- uncontrollable shivering that suddenly stops
- unconsciousness
- shallow or no breathing
- weak, irregular or no pulse
- stiff muscles

Emergency assistance should be sought immediately and CPR provided while the person is warmed. CPR is an emergency procedure, consisting of 30 chest compression followed by 2 rescue breaths.

Treating hypothermia

As hypothermia can be a life-threatening condition, seek medical attention as soon as possible. Hypothermia is treated by preventing further heat being lost and by gently warming the patient.

Things to do for hypothermia:

- Move the person indoors, or somewhere warm, as soon as possible
- Once sheltered, gently remove any wet clothing and dry the person
- Wrap them in blankets, towels, coats (whatever you have), protecting the head and torso first
- Increase activity if possible, but not to the point where sweating occurs, as that cools the skin down again
- If possible, give the person warm drinks (but not alcohol) or high energy foods, such as chocolate, to help warm them up
- Once body temperature has increased, keep the person warm and dry

It is important to handle anyone that has hypothermia very gently and carefully.

Things you should NOT do:

- Don't warm up an elderly person using a bath, as this may send cold blood from the body's surfaces to the heart or brain too suddenly, causing a stroke or heart attack
- Don't apply direct heat (hot water or a heating pad, for example) to the arms and legs, as this forces cold blood back to the major organs, making the condition worse
- Don't give the person alcohol to drink, as this will decrease the body's ability to retain heat
- Don't rub or massage the person's skin, as this can cause the blood vessels to widen and decrease the body's ability to retain heat. In severe cases of hypothermia there is also a risk of heart attack

Near-Drowning

In a near-drowning emergency, the quicker first aid can be applied, the better for the victim's chance of survival. Do not put yourself in danger while rescuing the victim.

Rescue options to reach the drowning victim in the water:

- Use a Throw Line
- Throw a rope with a buoyant object
- Use a long stick
- Bring a boat alongside the victim and tow the victim to shore. Do not haul the victim into the boat because it may cause the boat to capsize.
- You can attempt a swimming rescue if you are sufficiently trained in water rescue. Do not attempt a rescue beyond your capabilities. Otherwise, you may harm yourself
 - For a swimming rescue, approach the person from behind while trying to calm him/her as you move closer. A panicked victim can pull you under
 - Grab a piece of clothing or cup a hand or arm under the victim's chin and pull the person face up to shore while providing special care to ensure a straight head-neck-back alignment.

First aid

The focus of the first aid for a near-drowning victim in the water is to get oxygen into the lungs without aggravating any suspected neck injury. If the victim's breathing has stopped, give 5 mouth-to-mouth rescue breaths as soon as you safely can. This could mean starting the breathing process in the water.

Once on shore, reassess the victim's breathing and circulation (heartbeat and pulse). If there is breathing and circulation without suspected spine injury, place the person in recovery position (lying on the stomach, arms extended at the shoulder level and bent, head on the side with the leg on the same side drawn up at a right angle to the torso) to keep the airway clear and to allow the swallowed water to drain. If there is no breathing, begin CPR. Continue CPR (30 chest compression followed by 2 rescue breaths) until help arrives or the person revives.

Keep the person warm by removing wet clothing and covering with warm blankets to prevent hypothermia.

Remain with the recovering person until emergency medical personnel have arrived.

Weil's Disease

Weil's Disease (Leptospirosis) is rare in Ireland. It is carried by water organisms, so those taking part in water sports can be at risk. In the early stages, Weil's disease can often be mistaken for flu but can develop into jaundice, kidney and liver failure. While the risk of contracting the disease from recreational water is very small, the serious nature of the disease means that rowers must be aware of the dangers and should take simple, routine precautions to reduce the risk of infection.

The most likely place for Weil's Disease to be found is in stagnant water - water that is adjacent to farm land and any water where rats are common.

What are the symptoms?

Typically symptoms develop between 7 – 14 days after infection. Some cases may be asymptomatic, some may present with a flu-like illness with severe headache, chills, muscle aches and vomiting. Many of the symptoms of Weil's Disease are the same as for other diseases and diagnosis is based on clinical suspicion followed by a blood test.

Ways to avoid contracting Weil's Disease

- Wash or shower after rowing
- Cover minor cuts and scratches with waterproof plasters before getting in your boat
- Clean open wounds, such as blisters or calf abrasions with an anti-bacterial substance
- Wear trainers or boots to avoid cutting your feet before getting in your boat

What to do if you think you have symptoms?

- Early diagnosis and treatment is important
- If you develop flu-like symptoms after rowing go to your GP and say that you are a rower
- Weil's disease is treated with antibiotics which should be administered early in the course of the disease

STRONG RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Do not go out rowing alone, ever, when the water temperature is below 10°C. Hypothermia is quick at lower temperatures.
- Always row with at least one other boat, or with the coach/safety launch.
- Always have your mobile phone with you if there is no coach, so that you can call 999 for help. Keep it in a zip-loc bag .

Risk Assessment

Before every outing, consider the risks that day.

This is a list of some of the things you should think about, but is by no means exhaustive!

The Water

What are the conditions like?

- Is it windy?
- Is it choppy?
- Is it dark?
- Is the flow very fast?

If so, don't go out.

The Crew and Coaches

- Are your coach and cox capable of handling the conditions?
- Does your cox have a lifejacket and working cox box?
- Is everyone appropriately dressed?
- Is anyone sick or injured?

The Equipment

- Does your boat have a bowball?
- Are all your heel restraints connected correctly?
- Are all your hatch covers closed?
- Are your boat and blades in good condition?
- Do your boat and launch have appropriate lights?
- Does your launch have all its safety equipment (launch kit, bailer, throw rope, paddle etc.), enough petrol, a kill cord and a lifejacket for the driver?

IF IN DOUBT, DON'T GO OUT

Appendix 1

Islandbridge River Code of Conduct

Islandbridge River Code of Conduct

*Know the river, know the traffic regulations, be safe, be seen, and
don't take risks*

PERSONAL SAFETY

1. No boat shall take to the water without a functioning bow ball. Make sure it is secure and will not easily come off the boat if hit.
2. Fitted shoes must have a quick release mechanism to allow one-handed exit in the event of an accident. Each shoe must be independently restrained and the heel should not lift more than 7cm.
3. Coxes must wear suitable personal buoyancy aids when on the water.
4. Inexperienced crews/scullers should not be allowed on the river without a coach.
5. Inexperienced crews should not be on the water in a strong flow. If in doubt, go for a run.
6. Club Captains, Safety officers, all coaches and rowers should be aware of the Rowing Ireland Water Safety Code. See here: <http://www.rowingireland.ie/rowing-ireland-water-safety-code/>

LAUNCHING/RETURNING TO THE SLIP

1. All boats must launch downstream, except eights from Commercial and crews from Trinity Boathouse.
2. When returning to the north station slips:
 - a. Always approach from downstream: never pull into the slip while travelling with the flow.
 - b. Only cross the centre line of the river after you have checked the way is clear.

TRAFFIC PATTERNS

1. Keep to the south station (Trinity Boathouse side) going upstream and the north station going downstream.
2. All boats should keep well clear of the centre line of the river.
3. Slower boats should, as far as practicable, allow faster boats overtake them by staying close to the bank.
4. When rowing side by side or overtaking, the outside crew **MUST** give way to oncoming traffic. Collisions are to be avoided at all costs.

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