



## **Safety Policies and Procedures**

These policies and procedures were developed to ensure the safety of Kootenay Rhythm Dragons team members and guests paddling with the team.

### **Policies**

- a. The Kootenay Rhythm Dragons will have an Emergency Plan in place.
- b. At the beginning of each season the Nelson City Police, Nelson Fire Department, Nelson Ambulance and Nelson RCMP will be informed of the paddling schedule of the Kootenay Rhythm Dragons.
- c. KRD will establish a Safety Committee for review of the procedures annually.
- d. Safety Committee members will take Pleasure Craft Certification course.
- e. Safety Committee members will review safety measures with team members at the beginning of each season and provide copies of safety procedures to each member.
- f. Each team member and guest will sign a waiver prior to the paddling.
- g. Each team member and guest is required to wear proper pfd during paddling practices and races.
- h. The steers person determines the minimum number of paddlers in the boat each time it is taken out.

### **Procedures**

#### **Administration**

1. Safety Committee will ensure each member has signed a waiver of responsibility prior to paddling in the boat.

#### **At the Dock**

1. Safety Committee will ensure each paddler has proper pfd.
2. Each team member and guest will sign roster sheet, to be left on the dock
3. Each paddler will know their seat partner
4. Row 10 is responsible for steersperson
5. Row 1 is responsible for drummer/coach
6. Count off rows and number of team members in the boat before leaving the dock.
7. Non swimmers will be identified prior to leaving the dock
8. Coach is responsible to ensure boat is properly loaded

#### **Safety Equipment**

1. Sound signaling devices - recommend everyone carry a pea-less whistle
2. Bailers - minimum of 2
3. Buoyant weighted throw rope 25 ft

#### 4. Two extra paddles

### **Boat Commands**

Each team member must learn and understand the basic commands of the boat. The steersperson is in charge of the boat and his/her commands must be obeyed to ensure everyone's safety.

### **Emergency Back Up Plan**

In case of capsizing or collision, the following measures will be taken:

- **Stay Calm**
- **Always listen to your steersperson for direction**
- **Buddy System** - Each paddler will ensure location of their seat partner. The first and last seats in the boat must check for the Coach and Steersperson
- **If the Boat Rolls Over** - It cannot stop once it starts to turn. Paddlers on the higher side of the boat when it begins to go over try to jump clear of your seat partner to avoid injury. If a paddler comes up under the boat there will be an air pocket available to catch a breath, get bearings and feel the way to the side of the boat and then surface on the outside. Immediately call out to your buddy to let them know where you are.
- **Stay With the Boat** - Paddlers will hold onto the boat spread out even around both sides of the capsized boat holding onto the top edge (gunwale). The boat has the capacity to support a full crew even when fully submerged. If the dragon boat is upside down after capsizing spread evenly around the outside and gently roll it over. Look out or call out to your "buddy" and obey the instruction of the rescue Boat. Once the Rescue Boat has arrived, they are in charge. If other paddlers are injured or having difficulty reaching the boat give them assistance and make the rescue boat aware of the situation.
- **Listen to Instructions from the Rescue Boat** - rescue boat will help you right the boat and get it bailed enough to paddle it back to shore. In the event the boat must be towed, listen to instructions from the rescue boat as to where to proceed. Do not go elsewhere or valuable time may be wasted looking for you even though you are safe.

### **Other Basics to help make Dragon Boating safe and enjoyable**

- ❖ Always carry a bottle of water with you. Dehydration can happen quickly while paddling.
- ❖ Dress appropriately. Dress in layers to insulate your body. Water repellent or waterproof clothing is best - cotton is not a good choice.
- ❖ Apply proper sun protection. Sunburn can happen quickly on the water and a hat for sunstroke protection is advisable on hot days.
- ❖ Keep a spare paddle on board in the event of a break

**Have a fun and safe Dragon Boating season, Kootenay Rhythm Dragons Safety Committee**

