



Whitewater Canada

National River Safety and Rescue Course

Course Framework

Purpose

Introduce course participants to the basic safety and rescue theories, procedures, and techniques that are effective in contributing to safe and enjoyable river travel. The focus of the course is on personal/group safety, in terms of: knowledge, safety procedures, rescue techniques, and equipment that is easily carried by all paddlers. Through this course, Whitewater Canada, and the provincial paddling associations, strive to increase the paddling community awareness of river safety measures and river rescue considerations.

Objectives

Provide an effective 16-hour course on River Safety and Rescue, which focuses on simple and effective safety and rescue procedures that are applicable by the average paddler. The course outline contains 14 hours of core material, plus a 2-hour region-specific component. The course focuses on base-level safety awareness and is generic enough to be useful for a wide variety of participants in terms of backgrounds, skills, and motivations. The material is thorough enough to be useful as a national certification, with established standards, PSO & NSO acceptance, and paddling community credibility, yet is non-threatening enough to be supported by entry level participants.

Certification

Participants seeking certification shall be required to meet the established performance objectives (PO's). The PO's should focus on knowledge, simple techniques, and practical application of the knowledge and techniques. The course entails a split level of attendance: 1) certification - which requires completion of all the outlined practical and theory requirements, plus completion of the written exam, and 2) certificate of attendance - which provides knowledge to all those in attendance, with no performance requirements (theory or practical).

Who the course is designed for?

Any, or all persons who desire to enhance their knowledge regarding safe river travel. The course is simple enough to be of use to entry-level paddle sports participants, yet goes beyond that level, to provide simple procedures for effecting rescues. The course will address the needs of: whitewater paddlers, paddle sports instructors, club and trip leaders, teachers, camp counselors, school operators, paddling guides, and guiding companies.

Prerequisites

Participants are required to be able to swim as they will be asked to do so in moving water. Participants should also have some basic paddling skills, as there will be boat based drills involving paddling on easy Grade II whitewater.

Equipment

The course will focus on safety and rescue techniques available utilizing: 3-4 carabineers, two prussic or webbing loops, a throw bag, duct tape, and a knife. Some of the techniques assume that the preceding equipment is carried by more than one paddler per group. Tow systems will be covered, in theory and in practice. Each participant shall bring to the course a kayak, canoe or raft suitable for use on class II whitewater. Each participant's personal equipment will include: a helmet, a PFD, a whistle, footwear for working in the water, and thermal protection for working in the water. Rescue equipment will be provided by the instructor at the course to introduce the participants to the important features of rescue equipment.



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Course Curriculum

Topics covered will include:

- Administration/Introduction
- Moving Water Dynamics
- Throw Bags
- Trip Safety & Planning
- Risk, Incidents & Liability
- Wading & Swimming
- Towing
- Safety & Rescue Equipment
- Knots & Anchors
- Force Generation
- Tag & Snag Lines
- Province Specific Topics
- Rescue Scenarios

Course Standards

Course Cost: \$150

Student: Instructor Ratio

Maximum 6:1

Evaluation Criteria

- Each participant is to be checked off as having satisfactorily completed all the performance objectives listed on the practical performance sheet.
- Participants not seeking certification shall have their performances recorded, without evaluation, as per the other participants seeking certification.
- Participants seeking certification shall also be required to complete the written exam.

Certification

The certification entails a 3-year re-certification period. Certification cards are to be issued by the instructor at the conclusion of the course. The two separate levels of certification available are as follows:

- 1) Full Certification - requires satisfactory completion of all the performance objectives, and the accompanying skills on the practical performance checklist.
- 2) Certificate of Attendance - there are no performance requirements for the certificate of attendance.