

Megunticook Rowing – Camden, Maine
Safety Guidelines
Ver. 1 June 2024-05-23

SAFETY POLICY

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Preface and Introduction

Rowing is inherently risky. This safety policy is not intended to cover, nor could it cover, every situation that might occur which may present a safety hazard to you or others you row with. As with any policy, all conceivable situations cannot be anticipated. The guidelines below merely outline rowing safety recommendations and requirements for participants with Megunticook Rowing.

Each person is responsible for his or her own safety, and rowing is ALWAYS at one's own risk. Neither Megunticook Rowing nor its Board of Directors can completely assure the safety of individual rowers. Megunticook Rowing assumes no responsibility, either express or implied, for the personal safety or welfare of participants. Although rower safety is the primary concern of the club, your rowing safety cannot be guaranteed without the application of common sense. Each rower must use good judgment in assessing his or her own ability in combination with the weather and water conditions and the effects they can have on boat stability and plan accordingly. Ultimately, you are responsible for your own safety.

The purpose of this document is to emphasize common safety standards that apply to Megunticook Rowing, its members, and its equipment. These guidelines and rules are made to teach and guide participants and their guests as they take responsibility for their own safety.

Safe behavior, good manners and sportsmanship are always expected on the water, at the dock, and in and around the boat storage area. Unsafe or inappropriate behavior may result in a participant being expelled from Megunticook Rowing and its programs without refund and refused further participation in Megunticook Rowing

ASSUMPTION OF RISK - Safety is the number one priority at Megunticook Rowing and all participants have a responsibility to be aware of the safety requirements. All rowers and coxswains agree to sign the Megunticook Rowing Waiver (in iCrew).

Basic Safety Guidelines

PARTICIPANT QUALIFICATIONS

- ❖ Pay membership and /or program fees.
- ❖ Become a US Rowing Basic Member (renewable annually) and sign the on-line waiver annually.
- ❖ If there are any questions about health, fitness, or medical status, obtain medical clearance to participate
- ❖ All youth (under 18) participating in Megunticook Rowing programs must complete a swim test under the supervision of a lifeguard. Results will be documented in iCrew
 - The test must include:
 - Swimming at least 50 meters wearing light clothing
 - Treading water for at least five minutes
 - Putting on a life jacket while in the water
 - In lieu of the swim test, participants may furnish evidence of passing supervised testing that has demonstrated swimming ability such as:
 - SCUBA certification
 - Red Cross swimming certification
 - Documentation of having passed a swim test at another rowing club ** or a supervised swimming facility **

Adults must sign/acknowledge the swim test certification document found in each participants iCrew member profile

SAFESPORT

Web Link: <https://uscenterforsafesport.org/>

Who needs training?

Any adult Any adult individual having a directive or authority role with Youth Participants is required to be Safesport certified. Additionally any adult participant having more than five interactions with youth rowers during Megunticook Rowing programs over the course of a year must complete Safesport training.

Why do you need training?

The U.S. Center for SafeSport was created under the law, Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Abuse and SafeSport Authorization Act of 2017. The Center provides education and requirements consistent with the law, and this training is part of those requirements. The training is required by the U.S. Center for SafeSport, the USOPC and USRowing.

Non-USRowing members (volunteers, launch drivers) need not be USRowing members but must complete the appropriate training module noted for their role.

Web Link: <https://membership.usrowing.org/individual/safesport>

Annual refresher training is required.

SAFETY PREREQUISITES

Prior to water sessions all rowers, coxswains, coaches, launch drivers, and administrators will have current safety prerequisites.

1. Rowers and Coxswains

- ❖ Junior members must watch the USRowing safety video with a coach present. Masters rowers may attest to watching - Junior rowers unable to attend the video or review the safety plan viewing must watch the video and pass a safety test administered by a coach.
- ❖ Junior rowers will review SafetyPlan with a coach present. Masters rowers may attest to reviewing.
- ❖ Pass swim test if a junior rower or attest to being able to pass the swim test, if a masters rower. The swim test requirements are here : [Megunticook Rowing Swim Test Form.pdf](#)
- ❖ We recommended a physical;
- ❖ Be a USRowing member;
- ❖ Complete SafeSport training;
- ❖ Complete Megunticook Rowing registration;
- ❖ Junior rowers must sign the Code of Conduct
- ❖ Skill test (if applicable);
- ❖ Understand and speak the English language.

2. Coaches

- ❖ Watch and discuss the USRowing safety video;
- ❖ Review Safety Plan with coaches;
- ❖ Be a USRowing member;
- ❖ Must have current First Aid/CPR/AED certification at a minimum
- ❖ Must be current in their SafeSport Certification;
- ❖ Be working towards USRowing Level 2 certification in a timely manner;
- ❖ Completed background check;
- ❖ BoatUS Safety certification (Maine);
- ❖ Continued education;
- ❖ Understand and speak the English language;
- ❖ Know the traffic pattern map and Megunticook lake hazards. The map will be posted in a prominent location.

3. Launch Drivers

- ❖ Must watch the USRowing Safety Video;
- ❖ Be a USRowing member
- ❖ Must be current in their SafeSport certification;
- ❖ Pass the Megunticook Rowing Launch Driver test or present a current captain's license;
- ❖ BoatUS Safety certification or present a current captain's license;
- ❖ Must have current First Aid/CPR/AED certification, at a minimum
- ❖ Understand and speak the English language;
- ❖ h. Be familiar local and federal regulations concerning all boating and safety requirements
 - Local: <https://www.maine.gov/ifw/docs/maine-boating-laws.pdf>
 - Federal: <https://www.uscgboating.org/regulations/federal-laws.php>
- ❖ Know the traffic pattern map and Megunticook Lake hazards. The map will be posted in a prominent location.

4. Administrators/Board Members

- ❖ Be a USRowing member
- ❖ Must be current in their Safesport certification;
- ❖ Understand and speak the english language;
- ❖ Signed conflict of interest.

SAFETY EQUIPMENT

Rowing shells are advised to have life jackets aboard unless:

- Attended by a safety launch carrying an approved PFD or life jacket of appropriate size for each member of the crew for each rowing shell being attended, or
- Competing or training for competition.

All SAFETY LAUNCHES will carry:

- Radio
- Cell Phone
- Tool Kit (see list)
- Kippy Liddle Bag - which includes
 - 13 PFDs
 - First aid kit (see list)
 - Emergency paddle
- Working Running lights (within 15 mins of sunset/rise)
- Enough gas
- Megaphone and noise maker/whistle (in bird house near oars)
- Bailer
- Type IV throwable PFD
- Fire extinguishers (ABC)
- Anchor with rope
- Extra bow tow line
- Foldable rescue ladder

COLD WATER RULES

Cold Water Rules will be posted and in effect any time the water temperature is below 50F and the air temperature is below 50 F. Application and lifting of Cold Water Rules will be at the discretion of the Head Coach and/or Board President.

Under cold water rules:

- All rowing practices ARE ALWAYS supervised by at least one safety boat;
- All rowers must have a safety boat on the water within 500 ft (150 meters) without exception.;All club crews must sign out and in, in the Log Book and use the Hull FOB Board before leaving the boatyard.
- 4 oars on the water/boat

LAUNCHING AND LANDING PROCEDURES

Boatyard Access.

Upon arrival, check for any out of place equipment. Check the Hull FOB board & determine if you're not the 1st person arriving. If a FOB is OTW,, confirm with the Log Book that someone is out rowing. Look to see if any boats are missing. The last person leaving the boatyard should be sure the Hull FOB board is accurate.

Early in the morning. Be very quiet. Sound travels well and far over water. Our neighbors have very good ears and the Town Authorities on Speed Dial. No Megaphone use, speak clearly without raising a tone or voice unless it is a SAFETY ISSUE.

Before Launching:

- ❖ Check the repair log to make sure you are not taking out a shell that has damage or needs to be repaired before being used;
- ❖ Anyone rowing a Club 1x or 2x must move it to and from the water with 2 or more individuals. Check the shell, oars, and hardware before taking oars down to the boat ramp or moving the shell to the water. Each person is 100% responsible for the whole boat and 100% accountable for their own oar, rigging, foot stretchers, seat, and slide. Check to make sure that all equipment is working properly before leaving the dock. If you aren't sure, ASK!
- ❖ All boats on the water, including those participating in coached sessions, should sign in/ out using the log book and by moving the fob for that boat into the on the water position.

Check the following:

- ❖ That nuts on the rigging are tight, that the position of your foot stretchers and the smoothness of your slide are acceptable.
- ❖ That the forward end of the slide is blunt and will not gouge your calves. That the persons in front and behind you have sufficient room for their complete stroke.
- ❖ That the heel ties on your foot stretcher/ shoes are attached with no more than 3" of slack, and in good condition.
- ❖ That your quick release pull cord between shoes is in place and in good condition.
- ❖ That your seat fits your body.
- ❖ That the bowball is affixed securely
- ❖ That your oar handle is properly sized. That your oarlock height is proper.
- ❖ That your clothing cannot become tangled in your seat or oar handle.
- ❖ That you have proper safety devices on board your rowing shell.
- ❖ Rowers are encouraged to take a boat out of the racks and put it hull down in slings before going down to the ramp. Each rower can then adjust foot stretchers and make sure all bolts are snug and everything appears to be in working order.
- ❖ That you have a safety/coaching launch or Captain if required
- ❖ When handling boats and oars, members must be aware of the length of the boats and oars and avoid striking people and objects.
- ❖ Yell to alert anyone who is approaching to make sure they see you and the equipment.
- ❖ Cox boxes and any other electronics should be tested and confirmed to be in good working order before embarking on a row.

Launching:

- Please wear shoes or foot protection so as to avoid foot damage or slipping
- Crews and coxswains should remain vigilant and aware of any obstacles that might impede progress to or from the dock (riggers on boats on racks, objects on the ground)

All crew members are required to help carry boats to and from the water

Launching Procedure

1. Take oars down to the water before carrying the boat down. (this actually depends on launch sequence; sometimes we bring boats down first and send some crew to get oars, while others stay with the boat) Please treat the oars with care. Oars are fragile if mishandled. Oars and sculls should be taken down to the water immediately before taking the boat down
2. Do not leave unattended blades where they will be in the way of other boats trying to launch. (Never leave a boat unattended)
3. Finally, carry the rowing shell from the equipment storage area to the water.
4. Courtesy calls for rowers to clear the launching area from the dock as quickly as possible. Be considerate of others, and PLAN to get the boat in the water and launched quickly. If you discover breakage or missing equipment, take your boat out of the water, and put it in slings.
5. Once the shell is in the water, immediately obtain oars.
6. If getting oars after the boat is in the water, at least one member of a crew should hold the boat while others collect oars.
7. Make sure all oars are in their oarlocks, oarlocks are closed and locked, oars are extended so the collars are in contact with the oarlocks, blades are flat on the water, and people are holding onto oar handles before anyone gets in the boat.
8. You may step ONLY on the foot plate or track deck. Never step on the tracks or let your feet touch the hull.

Never, ever rest a boat hull down on the ground. Ever. Really. Never.

Landing, returning to the dock and boatyard

Getting out of the boat:

1. The coxswain should be the first person out of the boat and then should coordinate exiting of the rowers.
2. Oars should not be pulled in until all rowers have exited the boat.

Putting a boat away:

1. Wipe the boat down with a clean towel, clean the tracks. Make sure the oars' sleeves and collars are clean
2. Visually inspect the boat for signs of damage or wear which need repair. If you find any damage (regardless of who caused it or if it's just built-up wear and tear) write a note on the Repair Log, post to iCrew, Slack, and text the equipment manager
3. Secure the hull with straps and secure the oars to the oar rack. Remember not to cinch the straps down so that they are snug, but not overly tight. Putting too much tension on straps can crush a hull or deck.
4. Report any incidents, collisions, new hazards, or dangerous encounters you may have had in the Log Book, and post on Slack and iCrew. Please also log any negative or problematic interactions with the public in the same places.

Risk and Hazard Guidelines: ROWING ON THE LAKE

Become familiar with the Lake. It's large and there are scary rocks near the surface. Some are noted with buoys, some are not. When water levels are down, they are closer to you and unmarked.

See the Lake Map: [link](#)

Non coached/unsupervised shells (all persons both club and private shells)

- All rowers rowing without a coach must pass the Skill Evaluation;
 - Evaluation Description ** conducted by coaches
 - Skill Evaluation Worksheet ** conducted by coaches, noted in iCrew profiles
- Sign the Megunticook Rowing assumption of risk form; Assumption of Risk
- One person should carry a cell phone.
- One crew member must be familiar with the lake
- One crew member must be familiar with emergency landing areas and able to direct an emergency landing
- Sign in and out of the Log Book and Hull FOB Board
- Use the buddy system, if at all possible;

Sunrise and Sunset:

ONLY Coached competitive rowers and crews may row in:

- the morning before sunrise; in the evening after sunset;
- Shells must have appropriate lights.

Navigating the Lake:

PASSAGE THRU THE NARROWS –  MR map of lake_6-24-24.pdf

Megunticook Lake is minimally buoyed to mark hazards (rocks & such), however a number of shallow areas are marked, as is the primary passage dividing the East lake and West lake areas. This Red & Green buoyed 'cut' is south of Fang Island and North of Barrett's Cove. It is narrow with width sufficient for ONLY 1 hull - of any kind - at a time.

Other Watercraft:

Rowers are not the only users of the Lake. Please be aware of swimmers, kayaks, paddleboards; our boats are likely faster. Powerboats may not see you: Wear hi-visibility clothing whenever possible. In the event an approaching power boat is bringing a wake to you, steer so as to be parallel to the wake. oar blades down, ride it out.

Please also log any negative or problematic interactions with the public in the log book, icrew and post on Slack. Note what occurred: Time, location, hull type, activity. Do not engage with the boat driver on or off the water. Notify a coach or the Lake Warden, Justin Twitchell twitchell@knoxcountymaine.gov

If your boat swamps, flips, or capsizes

1. **STAY WITH THE BOAT**
2. If you're in a team boat, take a headcount.
3. Signal nearby people for help (yell, wave both arms) if there are injuries or if you or others are in having difficulties (or, if there are significant injuries or danger call 911)
4. If the water is cold, climb on the hull and straddle it as best you can, lying on your stomach. Then paddle it to shore. ("Straddle and paddle.")
5. If it's warm water, you can either straddle and paddle or, staying with the boat, swim it to shore
6. Once you get to the shore, empty the water from the boat and you're off!
7. **Did we mention how important it is to stay with the boat?**

Small Boat Capsize:

- Your buddy's boat or the launch can help stabilize you for the re-entry in the event you capsize.
- A buddy can call for emergency assistance if needed.
- Use best effort to re-enter shell;
- If you cannot re-enter the boat, swim the boat to shore, lying on the stern, using the shell as a paddleboard. Or, you can abandon your shell and lie on the stern deck of your buddy's boat to be taken to shore. The loss of muscle control can occur very quickly and dramatically in cold water. The stern deck rescue may be your only option. USRowing recommends that all unaccompanied shells carry Coast Guard-approved PFDs.


If caught unexpectedly in hazardous conditions:

- Row back to the dock if possible
- If you can't make it back to the dock, row to the shore and make your way back to the launch area. You can pull the boat up on the shore to secure it, but your safety takes priority over the equipment always

If someone is in the water and needs help:

- The best options are to
 - reach for them from the shore or from a boat or
 - throw them a buoy with a line, or a floating object.
- Be cautious if you decide to row to someone who is in distress/drowning. They may grab your oar or the boat, resulting in you flipping.
- Swimming out to someone can be very dangerous and can result in a double drowning. Do not try it unless you are a trained lifeguard.
- Ask permission before rendering assistance or providing first aid. For first aid, provide care only within the limits of formal training you have completed.

IF THERE IS AN EMERGENCY CALL 911

The following areas have been identified as the best Safe Emergency Landing zones, and should be used if possible during an emergency situation. Please refer to the map to see the exact locations 

- This house is in the far bay, at the end where there is a small floating sauna
Cameron Lewis house, 27 Fishing rock Road, Lincolnville. There is a dock on the right as you face the house that can be used for emergency landings.
- On the stretch before Bishopswood we have permission to land at Micki Colqhoun's house at 835 Hope Road, Camden. I can mark that on a map when we have one. Her house is a hike up from the water. She is speaking with a neighbor with a more accessible dock to see if he will let us land there.
- Duncan Matlack's house at 669 Hope Rd. in Camden. His driveway is easily accessible from the dock. If he is home, Duncan is a ski patroller trained in Emergency First Response, so may be helpful with the 911 call.
- Rt 52 Boat Launch,
- 105 Boat Launch (Bog Bridge)
- Barrett's Cove Beach.

After Calling 991 follow up by calling one of these numbers

- ❖ **John F Romain:** (978) 460-2100
- ❖ **Eric Buck:** (773) 320-3574
- ❖ **Meg Webb:** (207) 832-1612

Required Information needed (SAILLER call)

- **S:** sex
- **A:** age
- **I:** injury/incident - how many injured, brief description of what happened, what is the injury? Is it traumatic? Major bleeding? Allergic reaction? Breathing?
- **L:** level of consciousness - conscious? How alert are they?
- **L:** location - GPS/geographic location
- **E:** equipment needed (stuff) -, if you know. Do you need an ambulance?
- **R:** resources needed (people) - if you know. Do you need advanced or basic help?

Emergency Plan

In event of an emergency, role expectations will be defined as:

- **Coxswains:** the primary leader until the coach boat arrives. In case of submersion the coxswain will ensure all rowers remain with and hold onto the shell until rescue efforts are assumed by the coach or race officials;
- **Designated leader:** the back-up leader, bow seat, acts in the coxswain's stead in the event of their injury or incapacitation;
- **Pair partner accountability - each pair has direct responsibility for their partner.** The coxswain is part of the closest pair;
- **All rowers:** know expectations before getting on the water, and [in the event of an emergency] remain with the shell [holding on to the shell], remain calm, focused on the guidance from the coach, coxswain or designated leader.
- **Be safe**

Remember (HHELP)

- **H**ang on to the boat! - do not leave the boat.
- **H**eadcount
- **E**valuate Injuries
- **L**isten for direction
- **P**lease stay calm

GENERAL SAFETY RULES

When rowing outside of a coached session, all rowers, coaches and administration agree to:

- Sign the log book prior to departure and upon return
- Use the Hull FOB Board. This is a valuable visual aid. It's use is required
- All rowers agree to follow best practices to the best of their ability.

Rower Best Practices:

- All rowers agree to follow the traffic pattern
- MAP OF MEGUNTICOOK LAKE ROWING AREAS
- Use utmost caution in regard to weather and unsafe rowing conditions;
- Timely communication about any issue that arises;
- File an incident report if necessary;
- Follow all posted signs;
- Attend a safety meeting prior to rowing;
- Familiarize themselves with the Megunticook Rowing Safety education materials
- Be diligent about any hazards - which include but are not limited to submerged rocks/logs, other rowing shells, fishermen, buoys, etc.
- Behave sensibly while on or around the water.
- Pass the swim test or sign our swim waiver.
- The Club enforces a zero-tolerance policy concerning the possession or use of illegal substances & alcohol in the boathouse, sexual harassment and bullying.
- Only use equipment which they are experienced enough to use.
- Wear sensible fitness training clothes, with sufficient layers, especially in cold weather.
- Listen and adhere to instructions given by the coxswain and/or coach.
- Clean both inside and outside of shell including the slides and seats regularly.
- New rowers will either join an appropriate class or pass the skills test.
- Report any damage to equipment or boat maintenance ASAP.
- Junior rowers can start rowing the year they turn 12.
- Under no circumstances are junior athletes allowed to go down to the waters edge/dock without a coach present;

Any non adherence may result in revoked privileges.

Off the water : Barrett's Cove Parking, Picnic and Boatyard

Accidents can occur in the boatyard, on slippery docks and ramps, and in the parking lot. Think safety first in everything you do. Keep in mind the following recommendations:

- **Parking lot** - Barrett's Cove is a public beach and thus can be in high use. Use the utmost caution in the parking lot. Adhere to speed limits and traffic patterns;
- **Situational awareness** - constantly be aware of your surroundings. Keep an eye out for strange/suspicious activity or persons, inclement weather, physical hazards, etc. If possible, avoid being alone in the woods in the dark. Recommended always have a buddy;
- **If hiking Maiden's Cliff as an alternative** to rowing due to conditions be sure that the lead and last hiker is a coach. All athletes are to pay attention to the coach's guidance and stay within a safe distance of the coach;
- **Swimming** - there will be NO swimming unless directed by the coach. If participants choose to swim pre/post practice this will be at their own risk and NOT off the Megunticook Rowing dock;
- **Drop off and pick up** - Coaches are responsible for athletes between practice start and finish. Coaches will arrive 15' prior to practice and stay 15' post practice for afternoon practice. Morning practice coaches will be present between stated times. Prior to the start of practice and post-practice time it is the parents responsibility to ensure athlete safety;