

Occoquan Boat Club

Emergency Safety Manual

Current location:

**Sandy Run Regional Park
10450 Van Thompson Road
Fairfax Station, VA 22039**

Emergency Information:

- Sandy Run Park Office: 703 690-4392
- Fountainhead Park Office: 703 250-9124
- 911
- AED (Defibrillator) located on the wall outside boathouse #1, between the bay doors
- First Aid kit is located under the sign-in sheet.

Emergency Situations:

Overdue Rower:

If after checking the logbook for estimated time of return you find that a rower is 1 hour or more overdue, you should initiate rescue procedures.

1. Check to see if the rower's boat is in the rack. Perhaps the rower has returned but has not signed in.
2. If the rower's boat is not back, look up and down river from the dock to see if he/she is coming back. Check to see if others have seen the rower recently.

3. If there is no sign of the rower, report the incident:
 - a. FIRST, call Sandy Run Park Office 703 690-4392.
 - b. If there is no answer, call Fountainhead Park Office 703 250-9124. Report the heading information and expected return time from the logbook.
 - c. If you cannot reach a person at either Sandy Run or Fountainhead, call 911 and report the relevant information.

Cardiac Event:

1. Call 911 immediately.
2. Locate the AED (Defibrillator) on the wall outside of boathouse #1, between the bay doors. If the victim is not breathing and does not seem to have a pulse, use the AED. It is designed to be used by a layperson and gives clear instructions as to how to proceed.

*Remember, for **every minute** that a person in cardiac arrest goes without being successfully treated (by defibrillation), the chance of survival decreases by 10 percent.*

Cold Water Emergency: Hypothermia and Cold Shock

Hypothermia is severely low body temperature that can result from even short exposure to cold water.

Hypothermia Symptoms

- Shivering
- Lack of coordination
- Confusion, sluggish thinking, memory loss
- Slurred speech
- Cold, pale skin – extremities may become blue
- Fatigue, lethargy, or apathy

Hypothermia Response

1. Call 911.
2. Get the person out of the water as soon as possible and move to a warmer environment.
3. Remove wet clothing immediately and warm the core body temperature with blankets or warm fluids like hot cider or soup if possible.
4. Check the first aid kit (under the sign in sheet) for chemical hot packs and space blanket. Wrap hot packs in a towel or blanket before applying. Warm the CORE (trunk, abdomen) FIRST— not the extremities (hands, feet). Warming hands and feet first can cause shock.

Hypothermia Prevention

The United States Coast Guard promotes using life vests as a method of protection against hypothermia through the 50/50/50 rule: If someone is in 50 °F (10 °C) water for 50 minutes, he/she has a 50 percent better chance of survival if wearing a life jacket.

Cold Shock is a significant risk when rowing on water colder than 60 degrees Fahrenheit. Cold shock is perhaps the most common cause of death from immersion in very cold water. The rower with a lower percentage of body fat is more susceptible to cold shock.

Cold Shock Symptoms

- Loss of consciousness:
 - Without a PFD that will right the body and keep nose and mouth out of the water or without immediate rescue assistance, the victim can easily drown.
- Possible cardiac arrest from the strain placed on the heart:
 - If the heart cannot tolerate the sudden increase to maximum heart rate and accompanying high blood pressure, it stops. Without immediate assistance, the victim cannot survive.
- Involuntary Gasping Reflex can cause the victim to inhale while underwater:
- Cold water in the lungs or muscle contractions of the windpipe may prevent the victim from breathing when regaining the surface. If the victim has a lung full of cold water, the temperature of the heart plunges and the heart muscles may stop contracting. Wearing a PFD will keep the victim at the surface.

Cold shock Prevention

- Wear protective clothing, including a wet or dry suit.
- Wear a PFD.
- When the water is cold, never row by yourself. If you are a cold shock victim and are rowing alone, you will die.

Heat Related Emergencies: Heat Exhaustion and Heat Stroke

Signs of Heat Exhaustion

- Cool moist, pale, flushed or red skin
- Heavy sweating
- Headache
- Nausea or vomiting
- Dizziness
- Exhaustion
- Body temperature will be near normal

Heat Exhaustion Response

If untreated, Heat Exhaustion can become Heat Stroke.

1. Get the victim to a cool place.
2. Use the hose by the boat washing station to cool the victim.
3. Give half a glass of cool water every 15 minutes. Do not let him/her drink too quickly.
4. Do not give liquids that contain alcohol or caffeine.
5. Remove or loosen tight clothing.
6. Call 911 if the victim refuses water, vomits, or loses consciousness.

Signs of Heat Stroke: A LIFE THREATENING CONDITION

- High body temperature—up to 105 degrees. Death may result if the victim is not cooled quickly.
- Flushed skin with lack of sweating
- Changes in consciousness
- Racing heart rate
- Rapid, shallow breathing
- Headache
- Seizures
- Fainting

Heat Stroke Response

1. Call 911 immediately.
2. Cool the body with water until EMS arrives. The hose by the boat washing station can be used to cool the victim.
3. Give the victim cool water to drink gradually and in small amounts.
4. Keep the victim lying down and continue to cool the body any way you can.
5. Watch for signs of breathing problems.
6. Do not give liquids that contain alcohol or caffeine
7. If the victim refuses water or is vomiting or if there are changes in the level of consciousness, stop intake of fluids.

Prevention of Heat Related Emergencies

- Carry water with you and drink water often—even if you do not feel thirsty.
- Take frequent breaks while exercising.
- Avoid strenuous activity in high heat and humidity.
- Dress for the heat—wear light weight, light colored clothing
- Eat small meals and eat more often. Avoid high-protein foods which increase metabolic heat.
- Be aware of heat cramps, muscular pains and spasms due to heavy exertion. Heat cramps are an early signal that the body is having trouble with the heat.