

Paddlesports America

Canoeists and kayakers are boaters also. Now, there is a course available to address the unique needs of this audience. ***Paddlesports America*** is an exciting safety course designed to attract the novice paddle enthusiasts. This four-hour course presents five chapters of safety information.

Topics include

- Know Your Paddlecraft - parts of a canoe and kayak; understanding paddlecraft characteristics such as basic types, hull shapes hull materials, lengths and widths and weights; selecting your paddle for both canoe and kayak.
- Before You Get Underway - knowing your paddlecraft's capacity and how to file a float plan; transporting your paddlecraft; conducting a pre-departure check; dressing for a safe trip; loading gear in a canoe or kayak; storing paddle craft; the responsibilities when paddling with others.
- Operating Your Boat Safely - how to enter and exit a canoe or kayak safely; securing the paddlecraft and sharing the waterways with others; the U. S. Aids to Navigation System (ATONS); learning about local hazards on waterways.
- The Legal Requirements of Boating -vessel registration, hull identification numbers and who may operate a paddlecraft; unlawful operation of paddlecraft; Homeland Security restrictions; policies on alcohol and drugs. Life jackets; navigation lights; sound-producing devices and visual distress signals; protection of environment and what to do if in a boating accident. State specific information may be added at the end of this chapter.
- Boating emergencies... What to Do - minimizing the risk of drowning, capsizing, swamping or falling overboard; emergency techniques; how to deal with cold water immersion and hypothermia; understanding heat related illness; dehydration; handling weather emergencies.