How to Stay Safe

Wear your PFD

Remember, it floats, you don't! In New York, it is the law that you must wear your PFD on a boat under 21 feet in length from November 1- May 1.

Know Before You Go

Check the weather forecast and the water temperature before going out. Be prepared for sudden changes.

Wear the Proper Clothing

Dress for the water temperature, not the

air temperature. Consider a fleece-lined wetsuit or a full dry-suit. Layers that would keep us warm on land are



useless on the water, unless worn inside a completely waterproof shell.

Carry Safety Gear

Consider carrying a bailer or water pump, a VHF radio, spare dry clothes and a boat horn. Attach a whistle to your PFD.

File a Float Plan



Let someone know where you are going and when you plan to return.

Be Aware

Watch for changes in water and weather conditions. Know your limits.

For additional information on safe boating, please visit:



www.wearitnewyork.com

www.AmericanCanoe.org	www.cgaux.org
www.coldwaterbootcamp.com	www.nasbla.org
www.safeboatingcouncil.org	www.usps.org
www.uscgboating.org	

www.ussartf.org/survival_sea.htm

References: "Survival in Cold Waters" by Dr. C.J. Brooks:

http://www.tc.gc.ca/marinesafety/TP/Tp13822/menu. htm



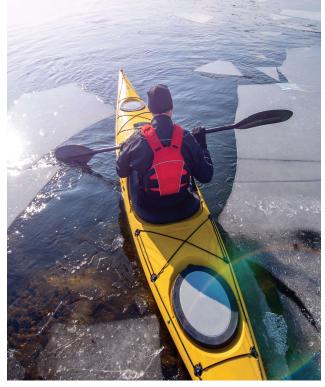
Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

Marine Services Bureau 625 Broadway, Albany NY 12207

Cold-Water

Boating

Tips for off-season boating and surviving cold-water immersion







Did you Know?



Cold water (less than 68°F) cools the **body** *4 times faster* than air at the same temperature. Swimming or movement while

in the water can double that rate of heat loss.

What Can Happen During Cold Water Immersion?

Cold Shock

- **Powerful gasping** and water inhalation that can cause drowning or unconsciousness in minutes
- **Cardiac Arrest** exposure of the head and neck to cold water causes a sudden spike in heart rate and blood pressure
- *Hyperventilation* uncontrolled rapid breathing that may cause unconsciousness.

Swimming Failure

Hands, arms and legs become numb and useless within a few minutes of coldwater immersion. You are unable to swim, climb out of the water, or even hold on to a floating object. *Without a PFD, you can drown quickly in cold water.*

Hypothermia

Hypothermia develops when your core body temperature drops below 95° F. It is a *life-threatening condition*



Symptoms & Treatment of Hypothermia

Mild Hypothermia

Victim is: shivering but coherent You should: Get victim into dry clothes; give warm, sweet drinks (no alcohol or caffeine)

Moderate Hypothermia

Victim is: rational or irrational and losing coordination. Shivering may stop or slow.

You should: *GENTLY* lay victim on their back; Do not move arms or legs as cold blood suddenly moving from extremities to the core can cause cardiac arrest; do not give food or drinks; remove wet clothes and apply dry cover to victim. *Call for help immediately!*

Severe Hypothermia

Victim is: semi-conscious, unconscious, or may resist help. Shivering may stop. You should: follow the same steps as for moderate hypothermia.

Victim Appears Dead

If there is little or no breathing or pulse, handle victim as above. Check for a pulse or breathing for 2 minutes. **If any trace is detected, do not give CPR** or it can cause cardiac arrest. If pulse and breathing are totally absent, CPR should be started. Get medical help immediately!

What to do if you are immersed in cold water

- Try to get back in or on your boat immediately
- If you are alone and floating in the water, fold your arms and cross your

legs in the Heat Escape Lessening Posture (H.E.L.P) until help arrives.



Remember that lots of movement will cause you to lose body heat faster.

• If 2 or more people are in the water, put your arms around one another, stay

still and close together in the Huddle Position to hold in body heat.



Huddle Position

Only swim if safety is close by!