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New Paddler Guidelines

New paddlers can be unsure of their skill levels, capabilities, and reactions in various conditions. The best way for new paddlers to determine their level is to take courses, participate in practise sessions, and get out and paddle! Not everyone wants to roll, or play in 2 metre waves, but even getting out on sunny days for a fun paddle requires some basic knowledge of kayaking.

Basic needs for participation in a PIKA paddle:

- ! Ability to do a wet exit. This can be obtained by taking an introductory course, PIKA pool session, practise session at Hicks Lake, or the spring practise sessions.
- ! Assisted or self re-entry. Again, this can be done in a course, pool session, etc.
- ! Basic paddling skills - the ability to paddle forwards, backwards, and do simple turns with or without a rudder.
- ! Canadian Coast Guard minimum equipment for a kayak 6 metres or less:
 - o Transport Canada approved PFD - and wear it!
 - o 15 metre buoyant heaving line (throw bag)
 - o Bailer or pump
 - o Whistle
 - o Paddle (the regulations say you need one!)
- ! A kayak! It needs to be watertight and in good repair, with deck lines.
- ! Sprayskirt - to keep the waves and rain out.
- ! Re-boarding device (a paddle float). The Coast Guard regulations don't require one, but it sure helps to get back into your boat.
- ! Clothing for the conditions - most of the time that will mean at least a wetsuit (and spare clothes for after).
- ! Pack snacks, lunch and some liquids suitable for the weather.

When you sign up for a paddle, the Facilitator will need some details for the float plan:

- ✓ Your name
- ✓ Years experience
- ✓ Boat brand and colour
- ✓ Any medical issues we need to be aware of
- ✓ Your cell number, and emergency contact name and phone number
- ✓ Vehicle make, model, colour and plate number

No drop-in's, we need you to sign up at least 2 days ahead of the paddle.

We want paddlers to enjoy themselves, and having some training under your belt goes a long way to understanding your skill level, and ability under moderate conditions. Improving your paddle strokes and bracing skills make for a better, safer paddle.

Some local sources for good instruction:

- ! www.kayakcourses.ca
- ! <http://www.kayak.bc.ca/kayaking-courses/>
- ! www.westerncanoekayak.com/
- ! www.deepcovekayak.com/
- ! www.ecomarine.com/

Also check out <http://www.tc.gc.ca/eng/marinesafety/tp-tp14726-menu-1098.htm> at the Transport Canada website. Come to a meeting and get a free copy!

Please read the PIKA Welcome Letter for more important information and ideas.