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# West Side Rowing Club Safety Manual

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Approved February 14, 2023

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**I. INTRODUCTION**

**A. The Purpose of this Manual**

Traffic on the Black Rock Canal and Buffalo River ranges from multi-ton, 750-foot freighters to single rowers in featherweight racing shells. The small size and low profile of rowing shells makes them difficult to see and avoid, and consequently more vulnerable than some of our larger counterparts. Moreover, the river winds around hairpin turns and includes very few straight stretches, which complicates navigation for all users.

This Safety Manual (“the SaM”) promotes safe, recreational use of the Black Rock Canal and Buffalo River and establishes rules and guidelines for the operations of WSRC, WSRC Member Organizations, and those Member Organizations’ Participants and Guests. The SaM serves three important functions. First, it outlines critical procedures to help us safely conduct rowing operations, use equipment, and identify potential hazards on the water. Second, it helps us coordinate activities among our multiple Member Organizations. Our boathouses are very busy, and the action of one group can easily affect another. The SaM encourages everyone to operate in a predictable and coordinated manner to maximize rowing experiences. Third, the SaM educates us on avoiding property loss due to negligence or ignorance.

**B. Scope and Applicability**

Compliance with the SaM is mandatory for anyone—Member Organizations, Participants, and Guest Rowers of either—using any portion of WSRC Facilities, or who uses or stores equipment at WSRC Facilities. Abiding by the SaM is required regardless of whether that equipment is owned by WSRC, a Member Organization or an individual Participant. Only Member Organizations and Participants in good standing according to the WSRC Bylaws, or approved Guest Rowers of either, may use equipment stored at WSRC Facilities.

**C. How to Use the SaM**

Section II highlights important landmarks and areas Participant should know to safely navigate, including Passing Zones, Blind Turns, and Minimum Wake Zones.

Section III examines all things operational, including coordinating the use of WSRC Facilities, supervision of rowers, communications with river-users, and limitations on rowing.

Sections IV, V, and VI discuss hazards on the river, emergency procedures, and the filing of incident reports, respectively.

Sections VII and VIII discuss the associated privileges of Safety Certification Levels Participants can attain and use of launches, respectively.

Section IX discusses alcohol at WSRC Facilities.

Section X discusses how changes and exceptions to the SaM are made, the SaM’s relationship to a Member Organization’s own rules, and the enforcement process for SaM violations, including disciplinary proceedings.

Sections XI and XII list definitions and abbreviations used throughout the SaM.

**II. LANDMARKS AND IMPORTANT AREAS: BLACK ROCK CANAL AND BUFFALO RIVER**

**A. River Landmarks**

**1. Black Rock Channel – Peace Bridge and Club Docking Area**



**USING THE WEST SIDE DOCKS**

A.) When leaving West Side docks (3) proceed north. If your intention is to proceed south, you must carefully proceed north and then cross the channel to the green buoy (2). Once safely across and between the buoy (2) and the break wall (8) you may proceed south watching for southbound boats coming down the course.

B.) If you are headed south and wish to dock at the West Side docks (3) you shall stop between the green buoy (2) and the break wall (8). Wait until the course is clear of traffic, then you may cross the course to dock at the West Side docks (3).

C.) If continuing to row south past the club, on the course, do not proceed between the green buoy (2) and the break wall (8), if there are boats waiting to dock.

D.) Should your shell be leaving the Frank Lloyd Wright Fontana Boathouse Docks (5), you shall proceed north along the city side of the channel. If it is your intent to head south from the Frank Lloyd Wright Fontana Boathouse docks (5), you must proceed north along the city side, carefully checking for shells leaving the West Side docks, stop and carefully proceed across the course to the green buoy (2) and then turn south. If you are heading north from the Frank Lloyd Wright Fontan Boathouse docks, proceed north carefully watching for boats leaving the West Side docks.

E.) If docking at the Frank Lloyd Wright Fontana docks and proceeding north from the direction of the gap, your shell should be positioned between the red buoy (7) and the city side shore, to align with the dock.

F.) If your shell is proceeding south, your shell should proceed through the finish line (4), stay on the river side of the channel until you pass the red buoy (7) on your port side, then cross carefully behind the red buoy (7) and proceed toward the Frank Lloyd Wright Fontana dock.

- (1) Peace Bridge
- (2) Green Buoy docking preparation area
- (3) West Side Rowing Club docks
- (4) Finish line
- (5) Frank Lloyd Wright Fontana Boathouse Dock
- (6) West Side boathouse
- (7) Red Buoy
- (8) Break wall

**2. Black Rock Channel, Racecourse, and Peace Bridge**



A.) Maintain ten (10) feet from the break wall (2) and your shell.

B.) If traveling north on the city side, stay off the course if not traveling at a steady pace or doing pieces.

C.) If traveling south on the river side of the Channel, once again, stay off the course (closer to the break wall (2) and off the course if you are drilling or not traveling at a steady pace.

- (1) Site of the old club
- (2) Break wall
- (3) Peace Bridge



**3. Black Rock Channel, West Ferry Street Bridge Area**



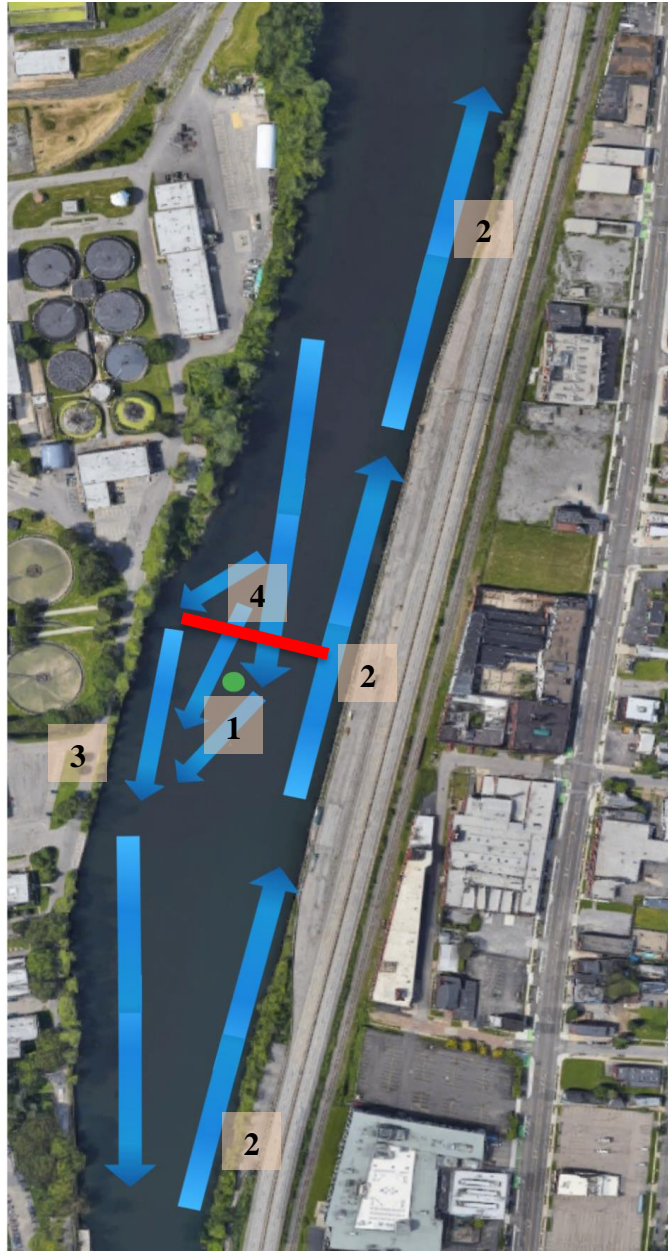
A.) The RED boxed area is a no stop, no turn zone, between the green buoy to the North and the site of the old club.

B.) There is a bridge abutment (3) on the right-hand side of the West Ferry Street bridge as you travel north. No rowing shells should pass between the abutment (3) and the thruway wall (5).

C.) Never row under the West Ferry Street bridge while it is being raised or lowered.

- (1) West Ferry Street Bridge
- (2) Starting Line (1500)
- (3) Bridge abutment
- (4) Broderick Park
- (5) Thruway Wall

**4. Black Rock Channel Area Immediately North of Ferry Street Bridge**

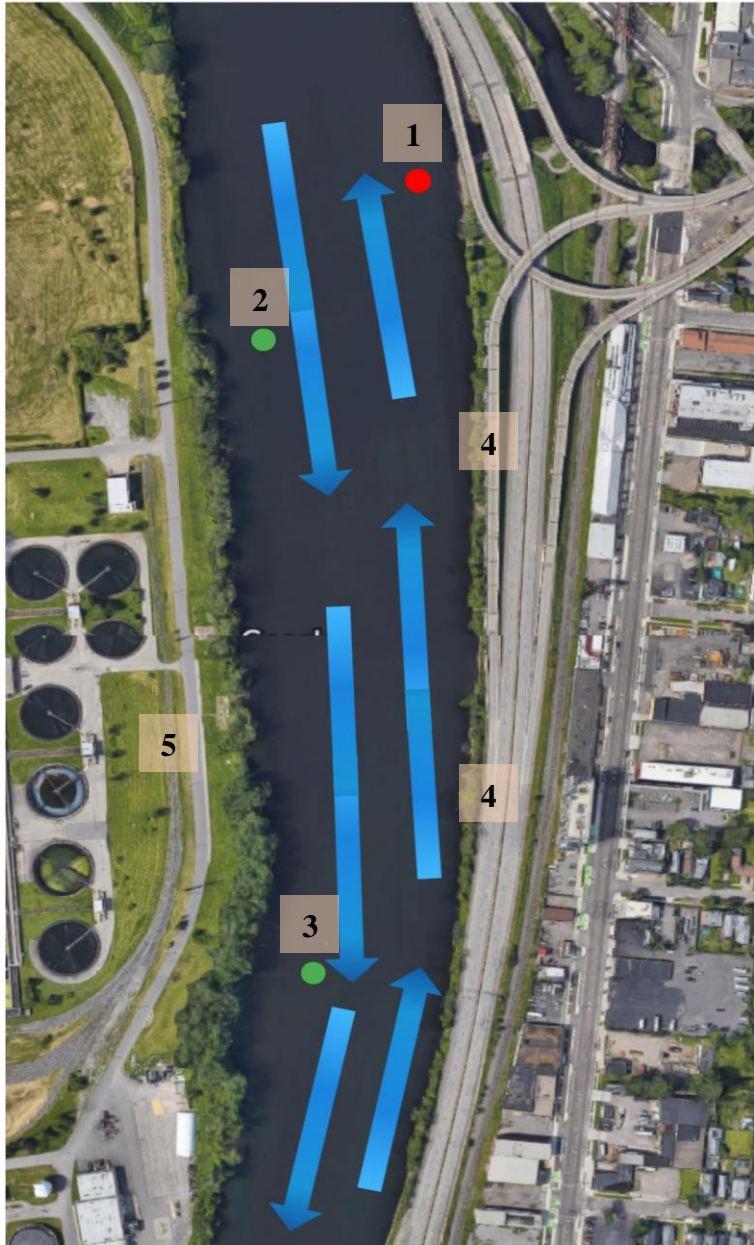


A.) Shells traveling towards West Ferry Street Bridge that wish to stay above the course should pass the green buoy heading south and spin. No shells should stop or turn in the area between green buoy (1) and the West Ferry Street Bridge, located just south of this picture.

B.) If you are preparing to do pieces on the course or need to stop, do so to the right of the green buoy (1) and Unity Island.

- (1) Green Buoy, approximate start of 2000 meter race
- (2) Thruway Wall
- (3) Sewage Treatment Plant
- (4) Start of the 2000-meter course

5. Black Rock Channel – Unity Island, Sewage Treatment Plant Area

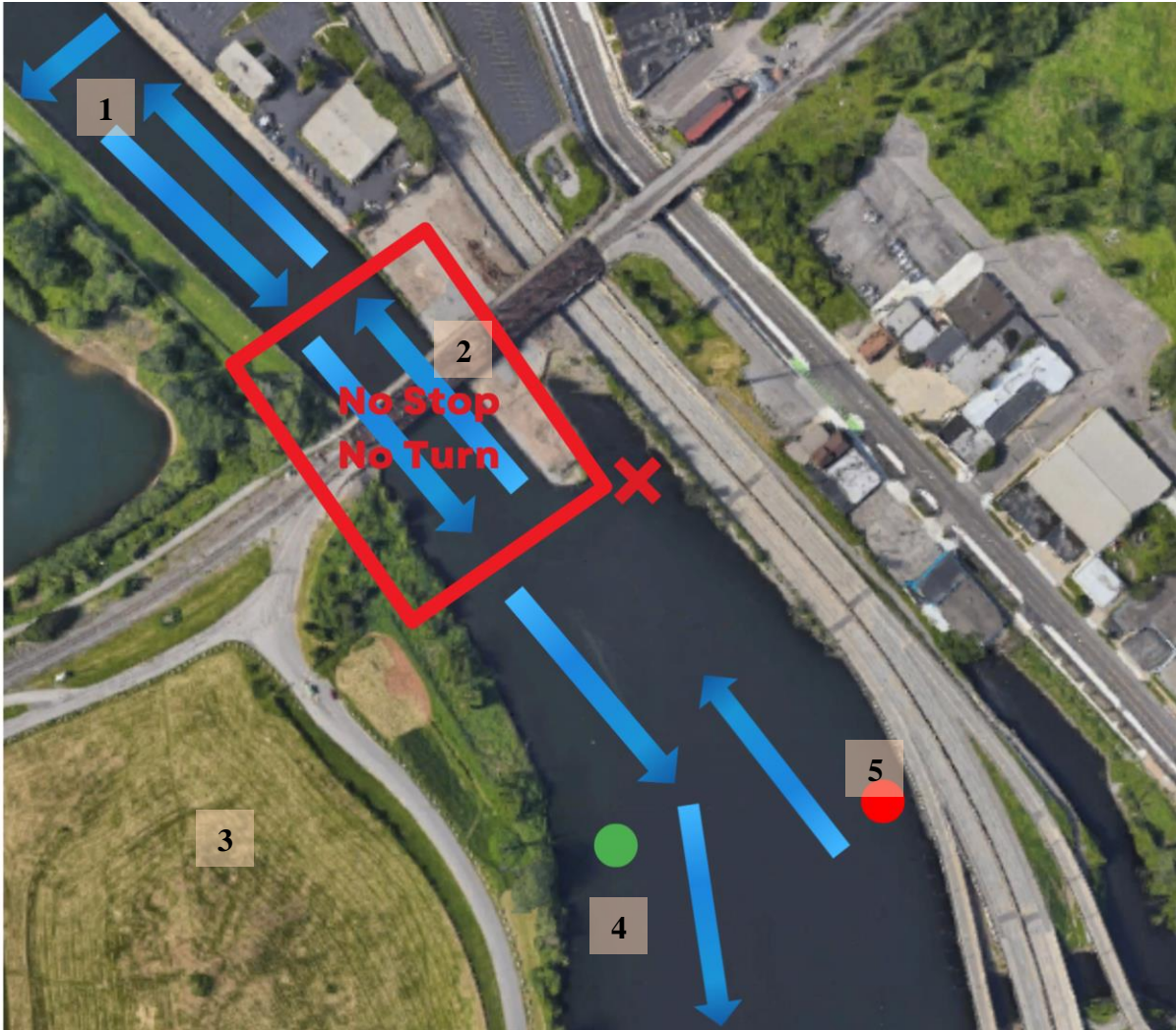


A.) If you are not doing pieces or moving at a steady pace, there is space to stop or do static drills between the thruway wall (4) and the red buoy (1).

B.) Continue to remain at least ten feet from shore if you are to the river side of the green buoys (2) and (3).

- (1) Red Buoy
- (2) Green Buoy
- (3) Green Buoy
- (4) NYS Thruway wall
- (5) Sewage Treatment Plant

**6. Black Rock Channel and Lock Area**



A.) You may not enter or leave the lock while the international train bridge (2) is swinging-approach with caution. If the International train bridge is moving, look for oncoming pleasure or barge traffic.

B.) You may row between Unity Island and the line of the Green Buoys (4) to the Ferry Street Bridge. Give the shoreline of Unity Island (3) at least ten feet of clearance as there is a sand bar and underwater obstructions.

C.) When approaching the northern most Red Buoy (5), do not go to the city side of the buoy. Debris (logs, tires, etc.) is typically trapped in that area. Please note, the buoy is normally placed further from the thruway wall.

- (1) Lock
- (2) International Railroad Bridge
- (3) Unity Island Park
- (4) Northern most Green Buoy
- (5) Northern most Red Buoy

**7. Black Rock Channel – Buffalo Yacht Club and Lasalle Park Area**



A.) When proceeding south on this portion of the channel, you must avoid the area marked as (5). This area (where the yacht club keeps their dinghies) is very shallow and you will run aground.

B.) When coming north from the gap, never cut between the Red Buoy (4) and yacht club docks.

C.) When traveling in either direction, proceed with caution when LTR's dinghies are on the water.

- (1) Buffalo State Property
- (2) Buffalo Yacht Club
- (3) Ward Pumping Station
- (4) Red Buoy (Buffalo Yacht Club docks)
- (5) Shallow area (Red dotted line denotes shallow water to the left)
- (6) Break Wall

**8. Yacht Club to the Gap**



A.) This area provides plenty of room for slow moving shells and shells that are drilling to stay out of the main channel. There is room between the row of Green Buoys (3), and the break wall, as well as on the other (city) side of the channel between the line of red buoys (4), and the wall on the LaSalle Park side of the Channel. Please note, these lines of buoys (3) and (4) were not shown in the photograph and have been placed on the photograph by the West Side Rowing Club, therefore, the positioning of said buoys are approximate.

- (1) LaSalle Park
- (2) Wood Pumping Station
- (3) Green Buoy
- (4) Red Buoy
- (5) Break Wall
- (6) Shallow Area
- (7) Gap
- (8) LaSalle Park Wal

### III. ROWING OPERATIONS

#### B. Participation Minimum Requirements

##### 1. Waiver Forms

All users of WSRC Facilities or equipment, including Guest Rowers, must sign a waiver prior to use. Similarly, users of privately-owned equipment used or stored at WSRC Facilities must sign a waiver prior to use or storage. All users engaging in any on-water rowing activities must also affirm in writing the ability to tread water for five minutes, don a PFD while in the water, and swim 50 yards while wearing the PFD.

##### 2. Swim-Testing Juniors

###### a. Juniors are Require to be Swim-Tested Before On-Water Practice

A Member Organization operating a program with Juniors must complete a swim test of its rowers and coxswains before the Juniors begin on-water practice each year. Proof of completion of the test must be submitted to the Safety Chair prior to engaging in any rowing activities. The swim test is set forth in Appendix A.

###### b. Requirements for Junior LTR's

Juniors who have not swim-tested under Section III.A.2.a above are permitted to participate in an LTR session, provided the following:

1. LTR events are conducted in 8's only;
2. Each 8 must have no more than four LTR rowers;
3. LTR rowers must only be seated in seats 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7;
4. Experienced rowers (more than one full year rowing) must fill seats 1 and 8;
5. An experienced coxswain (more than one full year coxing) must be used;
6. For LTR coxswains, the coxswain must be in a shell with only experienced rowers. An LTR coxswain must not cox a shell with any LTR rowers in it;
7. All LTR rowers must wear PFDs at all times while in the shell;
8. The launch-to-shell ratio must be at least 1:1;
9. Coaches must have all regularly required safety gear as well as cellphones; and
10. Cold Water Rules are not in effect, nor is the wind speed greater than 15 mph.

Parents or legal guardians of Junior LTR rowers and coxswains must sign a waiver which, in addition to all of the usual WSRC/USRA waiver language (except the language stating that the Junior has actually demonstrated an ability to meet WSRC minimum swimming ability requirements) states an acknowledgement and an understanding by the parent or legal guardian that, if the Junior participates in any rowing activities at WSRC beyond the one-date LTR session, the Junior will have to fulfill the WSRC swim test requirement.

### 3. Guest Rowers

A Guest Rower may row once with a Member Organization or Participant if the Guest Rower is an experienced rower and is sponsored by an SQL or higher. Aside from shells, oars, and slings, Guest Rowers must not handle WSRC equipment unless there is an emergency.

#### a. Requirements Before a Guest Rower Can Begin Rowing Activities

Like WSRC Participants, before a Guest Rower may begin rowing activities, the Sponsor must ensure that the Guest Rower completes a waiver. The Guest Rower must receive the SQL-0 Basic Safety Briefing from an SQL or higher.

#### b. When a Guest Rower May Be Considered an SQL-0

A Guest Rower in a Small Boat is normally treated as an SQL-0. The Guest Rower may not row unless accompanied by a launch or a sponsoring SQL or higher in the same or an accompanying Small Boat.

#### c. When a Guest Rower May Be Considered an SQL

A Guest Rower in a Small Boat may be treated as an SQL provided that an SQL or higher has judged the Guest Rower's experience level to warrant such treatment. The Guest Rower may then row in a Small Boat as an experienced rower.

With respect to 8's, 4's and 4x's, a Guest Rower may be regarded as either an SQL or SQL-0 (to determine the experience level of the shell), depending on the judgment of the most senior SQL (or higher) in the shell.

### C. Boat Sign-Out/In Procedure

All shells must be signed out in the log before launch and signed in after recovery. Procedures may be adopted for simplifying this process for Member Organizations with multiple boats at set practice times. *See Appendix B for **WSRC Large Program Procedures**.*

Our sign-out/in procedures serve multiple purposes. First, they quickly let us determine what boats are on the water—a particular concern when time is of the essence, e.g. sudden dock closure for inclement weather. Second, our procedures let us determine when no one is at the boathouse and it should be locked up. The number of cars in the parking lot can give a false impression that Participants are at the boathouse; many Participants leave their cars on the premises while away at regattas. Third, our sign-in procedures help us organize equipment between and within Member Organizations.

### D. Personal Flotation Devices

Coxswains are recommended to wear a PFD (required during cold water rules) when in a rowing shell—regardless of whether the shell is Independent or accompanied by a coaching launch.

Shells and oars are not PFD's, but they are designed to provide flotation in an emergency.



**E. Communications: Radio, Whistle and Horn, and Visual**

**1. Marine Band Radio**

a. General Use and Exceptions

Marine band radio is the primary means of communication between the vessels, bridges, harbors, marinas, and rescue services on the Black Rock Canal, Buffalo River, and internationally. Every launch, Independent Shell, and Small Boat not accompanied by a launch (with two exceptions, below) must carry and use a marine band radio and some type of noise-making device, e.g. a whistle.

Exception 1: Any combination of four or fewer Small Boats may use a single radio carried by one of the shells if they stay in visible sight of each other.

Exception 2: A Certified Independent Sculler with at least five years of active sculling experience on the canal/river may scull without a radio when using his/her own shell.

Exceptions 1 and 2 above do not apply in a situation involving Juniors. A Coach supervising Juniors must have a radio regardless of the type of shell the Juniors are in, or whether the Coach is in a launch or accompanying shell.

b. Channels

When on the water, the radio must be used to monitor Channel 16 (the hailing and emergency channel). Further channels and uses include:

Channel	Use
8	Commercial vessels
12	All rowing-related traffic and rowing advisory calls
13	Commercial vessels and bridges
16	Establishing communication with non-rowing party. Calls must be as brief as possible to avoid blocking emergency calls. This channel is not for extended two-way communications. Extended communications must be carried out by asking the party to switch channels.
68	WSRC Member Organizations and Participants

c. When to Make Calls

An advisory radio call (Channel 12) must be made when approaching Blind Turns in the river. Not every Coach or Crew needs to make an advisory call at a Blind Turn, however crews must be aware of the other rowing traffic and only make necessary calls. For example, if a Coach or Crew is following another that has just made a call, and there has been no response, another call is not necessary.

d. Call Content

Advisory calls must be brief and include the following information:

- Number and Identity (e.g. Four West Side Rowing shells);

- Location specified by a river landmark (e.g. at LaSalle Park);
- Intention (e.g. headed north to the Fontana Boathouse);

When approaching a Blind Turn, for example in the Buffalo River: “Two West Side Rowing shells crossing the Gap heading into the Buffalo River towards Buffalo Skyway”.

As an example of a hailing radio call: “American Courage, American Courage, this is West Side Rowing Club, over.” “West Side Rowing Club, this is American Courage, switch to channel 8.” Both switch to Channel 8 and continue the call.

**2. Whistle and Horn Communications**

Important whistle or horn blasts mean:

Sound	Meaning
1 long, 1 short blast	From a vessel, request to open bridge, From a bridge, bridge is about to raise
2 short blasts	Vessel is continuing on course—give way
3 short blasts	Vessel backing up
5 or more short blasts	Danger, or bridge is about to lower

**3. Visual Communication**

Signals from the coaching launch mean the following:

Motion	Meaning
Megaphone, oar, or arm vertically in the air	Weigh enough
Megaphone, oar, or arm vertically and waving from side to side	Turn around
Megaphone, oar, or arm vertically and pumping it straight up and down	Return to dock

To show distress from a shell, wave shirt overhead or raise one oar vertically in the air.

**F. Dock and Launch Procedures**

**1. Before Launch – Confirm Launch Equipment**

If a Crew requires a launch, that launch must be in the water with the engine running in case a rescue operation must be performed. Additionally, the Coach must confirm that the launch has the required safety equipment and an adequate fuel supply.

**2. Launch and Recovery – Be Quick and Courteous**

Crews shall expedite launching and recovery to free the dock for the next crew. There is to be no coaching or talks with crews on the dock. When necessary, have crews tie in on the water and have the athletes take their shoes with them in the shell. Launch and recovery are carried out at both the Frank Lloyd Wright Fontana Boathouse and West Side dock. Please review the below procedures are how to launch and recover from both docks:

- Coaches must check canal traffic both North & South of the docks (WSRC and FBH docks) before clearing crews to launch.

- After launching, youth crews may not proceed past the Peace Bridge or south past the Buffalo State College Field center until the launch has left the dock.
- When approaching the West Side docks for landing, crews must begin their approach from the River Side of the canal at the Green Buoy. When the course is clear, crews may cross the canal and approach the docks. Under no circumstance should crews make a hairpin turn at the point to the dock.
- When approaching the Fontana docks for landing crews must approach from the south with their bows pointing North towards the Peace Bridge. Crews should approach single file from the shore side of the Red Buoy. Unless an emergency arises, a crew should never land facing south. Landing south will cause you to go into the oncoming traffic lane.

### **3. Rowing on the Canal**

Canal traffic patterns (Practice):

- All boats shall keep to the right of center at all times.
- When crews row multiple shells wide, all boats must always remain to the right of center.
- Shells must proceed single file in their respective directions when going under the Ferry St. Lift Bridge.
- There is always a NO WAKE zone between the west side docks and foot of Porter Ave.

Canal Traffic Patterns (Regatta Days):

- Time Trial Heats: All crews proceed single file along the City Side wall past the Ferry St. Lift Bridge.
- A race marshal will line crews up according to bow numbers and send them into the starting chute.
- Crews will race down the course lanes 3 and 4. After crossing the finish line, crews must continue rowing past the Buffalo State Field Center, turn around past the “red buoy”, towards the city, and land at the Fontana Boathouse.

Sprint Finals (Regatta Days):

- When clear, all crews will cross the Black Rock Canal and proceed single file up the River Side of the canal past the Ferry St. Lift Bridge. Crews should not go past the 2,000-meter mark which is on the north side of the Ferry St. Lift Bridge. A race marshal will line crews up according to event and lane number. Crews will race down the court in lanes 1-4. All lanes are between the Green Buoy and Cotter’s Point which can be seen just past the Peace Bridge. After crossing the finish line, crews must continue rowing past the Buffalo State Field Center, turn around past the “red buoy”, towards the city , and land at the Fontana Boathouse.

#### **4. Vessel Passing While Crews are on the Dock**

When freighter or barge traffic is approaching, recovering Crews have the right-of-way over launching Crews. If a freighter is passing while shells are on the Frank Lloyd Wright Fontana Boathouse dock, no more than two Participants per shell may stay on the dock to secure the shells. All other Participants must leave the dock. Participants on the dock securing shells must remain standing and ready to reach safety should the freighter lose control or drift too close to the dock.

##### **G. An 8 Rowing with Only 6 Participants**

An 8 with fewer than eight (but no fewer than 6) rowers may row as long as it is accompanied by a coaching launch. The bow and stern pairs of the 8 must be filled.

##### **H. Rowing Without an Accompanying Coaching Launch**

Every shell must be accompanied by a coaching launch on the water unless the shell is an Independent Shell, Small Boat being coached from the dock, Junior rowing with a certified masters Parent/Guardian rower and member of the club, or Certified Junior Sculler.

#### **1. Independent Shells**

Independent Shells must row with full crews. Except for the limited exceptions in Section III.D.1, all Independent Shells must carry and use a marine band radio and some type of noise-making device, e.g., a whistle. One person is also required to carry a cell phone in case of an emergency.

##### **a. Large Boats**

For an 8, 4, or 4x to row as an Independent Shell, more than half of the Participants must be SQL or higher (i.e. SQL, CQL-Trainee, CQL, or Senior CQL). Additionally, before going on the water, one of the Safety-Certified Participants must be designated as in charge of the shell.

##### *i. Independent 8's*

At least five Participants must be SQL or higher, and one of those five must be the coxswain or in stern pair.

##### *ii. Independent 4's*

At least three Participants must be SQL or higher. If the shell is stern-coxed, one of the three must be the coxswain or in stern pair. For a bow-coxed shell, one of the three must be the coxswain or in bow pair.

##### *iii. Independent 4x's*

In a quad, at least three Participants must be SQL or higher, and one of the three must be in bow seat. Bow seat must wear a rear-view mirror.

b. Small Boats

i. *Independent 1x's*

For a single scull, the Participant must be an SQL or higher, and have been evaluated and certified by an authorized Member Organization pursuant to Section III.G.1.c.

ii. *Independent 2x*

For an independent double, at least one of the Participants must be SQL or higher, and evaluated and certified by an authorized Member Organization pursuant to Section III.G.1.c.

iii. *Independent 2-*

For an independent un-coxed pair, *both* of the Participants must be SQL or higher, and evaluated and certified by an authorized Member Organization pursuant to Section III.G.1.c.

c. Member Organization Program for Certifying Independent Small Boats

A Member Organization that wishes to certify its Participants to row in Independent Small Boats must submit to the Safety Committee a written procedure for evaluating rower competence. The Safety Committee will evaluate, supplement, and revise the submitted procedure, and may then grant the Member Organization permission to certify its rowers to row in Independent Small Boats.

**2. Coaching Small Boats from the WSRC or FLW Fontana Dock**

Small Boats may be supervised by a Coach on the dock, provided that a launch is immediately available at the dock in case rescue is needed. In addition, the Participants must remain in sight of the Coach on the dock.

**3. A Junior Rowing with a Parent/Guardian**

A Junior may row in a 1x or 2x if the Junior is accompanied on the water by his or her parent or legal guardian in the same boat, or in another 1x or 2x. The parent or legal guardian must be a member of the club in good standing. If two unrelated Juniors are in a 2x, a parent or legal guardian of each Junior must be on the water with them. No more than one Junior shall row pursuant to this provision.

**4. A Junior as a Certified Junior Sculler**

A Certified Junior Sculler is permitted to row without an accompanying launch during the period from June 1 through the date of the Head of the Charles. The following requirements relating to supervision; age, and experience, training; and necessary equipment apply:

a. Supervision

The parent/legal guardian of the Junior must come to the boathouse and be briefed on the Member Organization's Certified Junior Sculling program and sign a program-specific waiver.

The Junior must be accompanied in a shell rowed by a CQL (or higher) Certified Independent Sculler over the age of 21. The CQL may supervise no more than two Juniors at one time—either two Juniors in a 2x, or two Juniors, each in 1x's.

b. Age, Experience, and Training

The Junior must be at least 16 and be recommended to be a Certified Junior Sculler by the head Coach of the Junior's Member Organization. The Junior must be a proficient, experienced sculler, i.e. no novices. (S)he must also pass a rowing-specific test based on the SaM and an on-water sculling certification test prescribed by the Safety Committee. The on-water test must be administered by a Senior CQL who is also an Independent Sculler but who does not belong to the same Member Organization as the Junior.

c. Equipment

If in a 1x, or bow seat of a 2x, the Junior must wear a mirror. Each Junior must also carry a PFD in the shell. If in a 2x, two PFD's must be present. Both Coach and Junior must carry radios and noise-making devices, and the Junior must be instructed on their use.

**I. Supervision of Juniors**

**1. Coach or Designated Adult Required**

Member Organizations with Juniors must provide a Coach or a designated adult to always supervise Junior rowers while at WSRC Facilities. The designated adult must:

1. Hold CPR certification;
2. Hold any additional certifications required by his/her Member Organization, e.g. NYSPHSAA Coaching Certification, VIRTUS Certification, finger-printing; and
3. Be identified to the President of the club before beginning supervision.

Member Organizations may share a Coach or designated adult if that person is identified in advance to the Safety Committee. Note: An 18-year-old athlete cannot provide supervision to minor athletes or teammates.

**2. Storage of Juniors' Belongings**

WSRC provides storage facilities for Juniors to store normally anticipated belongings (e.g., bookbags, gym bags). Belongings must only be stored in the boathouse in those designated areas (i.e., 2<sup>nd</sup> floor restrooms). The Coach or designated adult supervising the Juniors must ensure that the Juniors do not store belongings in an area which impedes traffic or emergency escape routes.

**J. Dock Closure and Limitations on Rowing**

**1. Unsafe Conditions**

The Safety Chair or President may close the dock at any time due to unsafe conditions. In such an event, an email will be sent out and/or a radio call will be made and all boats currently on the water must immediately return to the dock.

## **2. Dangerous Current or wind**

After unusually heavy rain, snow thaw, or wind the river current can be very fast. Fast currents often also include large amounts of debris being discharged, increasing the dangers of rowing during that time. During high winds, coaches must use extreme caution when on the water. Independent shells and coached boats should not pass the red buoy beyond the Fank Lloyd Wright Fontana Boathouse. Independent shells or coached boats should only row through the gap in the break wall if the water is flat.

There is no rowing when the wind is too strong. If there are white caps on the canal, the docks will be closed to all launching unless the President or VP of Rowing is on site to observe the conditions and make a ruling, excluding coastal rowing boats. These provisions do not apply to coastal rowing boats.

## **3. Fog Conditions**

There is no rowing when the Peace Bridge is not visible from the “Doc Schaab” Boathouse. On foggy days, the Peace Bridge North must remain visible as well as the green elevated channel harbor (South) must remain visible before crews can launch. If fog moves in while on the water, move slowly to the closest wall and row single file to the closest dock. In situations of poor visibility, a sound-making device must be used by the coach and/or coxswain to advise other boats of your location. When in fog use the following:

1. Shells and motorboats actively rowing: one long blast every two minutes.
2. Shells and motorboats stopped; two long blasts every two minutes.

## **4. Night Operations**

Shells on the water for any length of time at Night must take extra precautions. Even when properly lit, shells and launches are closer to the water and smaller than most vessels. Consequently, they may not be visible or readily recognized during non-daylight hours. To help with visibility, shells are required to attach certain lights to their shells at Night:

1. Bow lights - All boats must mount a red (visible from port side) and green (visible from starboard side) light on their bows. Bow lights must conform to the requirements of the New York Administrative Code and the Rules of Inland Navigation (e.g., strobing lights are not permitted).
2. Stern lights - All boats must mount a white light on their sterns. Launches must position and elevate the stern light to be visible from all angles.

Bow and stern lights must be visible for 1,000 meters. The Safety Committee may require testing of lights to determine whether the 1,000-meter visibility requirement is met.

Note: Independent and coached boats are recommended to row closer to the middle of the canal on their respective side when there is limited or no sunlight. Shells are recommended to avoid rowing between the buoys and the river wall above Ferry Street due to increased debris and seaweed during varying parts of the seasons.

**5. Thunderstorms**

Rowing when there is lightning or thunder in the area is extremely dangerous. Because of this, the following rules apply:

1. Crews are not permitted to go on the water when lightning or thunder is present.
2. Crews must wait 30 minutes after the last audible thunder or visible thunder before launching.

Shells caught in a thunderstorm should seek shelter from the lightning under a bridge until the storm has passed if unable to make it back to the dock and off the water. If you are caught on the water during a thunderstorm, move all boats (shells and launches) to the City Side of the canal and row continuously to the closest boathouse dock. In the instance that crews are still on the West Side campus, athletes and coaches should seek shelter and should not wait for 30 minutes to pass on the dock.

**6. Rowing in Cold Waters**

Because of the dangers of hypothermia from cold water, rowing is restricted during periods when the water temperature is too cold. Heat loss is 25 times faster in water than in air. Therefore, a Participant who falls out of a shell or off a launch into cold water can quickly become hypothermic. If unable to get out of the water, the Participant should get on top of the boat. The lower the water temperature, the more quickly the loss of the ability to move:

Water Temperature	Time to Incapacity
50 °F	20 minutes
40 °F	10 minutes
33 °F	4 minutes

For purposes of the SaM, water temperature is determined based upon a consistent reading in the canal taken at the Frank Lloyd Wright Fontana docks at a depth of two feet.

a. Rowing from December 1 through April 30

From December 1 through April 30 heightened safety requirements under the Cold-Water Rules are applicable due to the danger of rowing in cold water. Participants who wish to row under the regular safety rules instead of the Cold-Water Rules may apply for special permission subject to the approval of the President, VP of Rowing, and Safety Chair.

Under the Cold-Water Rules:

1. All shells must be accompanied by a launch.
2. Launches must have a working cell phone and radio for emergencies;
3. Shells and their launches must maintain *audible* and *visible* contact; and
4. The number of shells a launch may accompany is reduced. The allowed number depends on the water temperature and whether the shells contain Juniors or Collegiates, or adults:



<b>Shell/Launch Ratios for <u>Juniors &amp; Collegiates</u></b>		
	Water Temperature is > 40°	Water Temperature ≤ 40°
CQL-Trainee	One (Any Small or Large Boat)	One Large Boat
CQL	Two (Any combo of Small or Large Boats)	One Small Boat or Two Large Boats

<b>Shell/Launch Ratios for <u>Adults</u></b>		
	Water Temperature is > 40°	Water Temperature ≤ 40°
CQL-Trainee	One 8 or Any combo of two shells smaller than 8's	One Large Boat
CQL	Two 8's or Any combo of three shells smaller than 8's	One Small Boat or Two Large Boats

a. Rowing from April 30 through November 30

Between April 30 through November 30, the Cold-Water Rules are not in effect, and there are no specific restrictions for any Participant due to water temperature unless the President, VP of Rowing or Safety Chair declare otherwise. Water temperature will be taken at least biweekly during this period, or more often if, in the opinion of the Safety Chair, conditions warrant.

**III. HAZARDS ON THE RIVER**

**A. Hazards – From Other Vessels**

Some danger is present with all vessels, even small ones. Crews should remember that a vessel may take an unexpected course due to hazards such as debris, wind, etc.

**1. Vessels that Can Be Passed Safely**

Some larger vessels can be passed safely on the river when Crews are not at or cannot get to a Passing Zone. These vessels include:

- Dredge-tug-barges dredging the canal or river. While dredges, both moving and stationary, can usually be safely passed, Crews approaching a dredge should

always be aware of dredge tug prop wash, the dredge bucket swing, and dredge tubes, which are submerged at the surface of the water.

- Tugboats, alone or moving a barge.
- Large and small tour boats like the Miss Buffalo and Grand Lady
- Recreational motorboats and sail boats.
- Paddled boats, such as row boats, canoes, and kayaks.

Crews can row past these vessels where the river is relatively straight and wide enough to pass safely. If there is no room to pass, Crews should park to the side so the vessel can pass.

## 2. Vessels that Can Not Be Passed Safely and Require Shells to Park in a Passing Zone

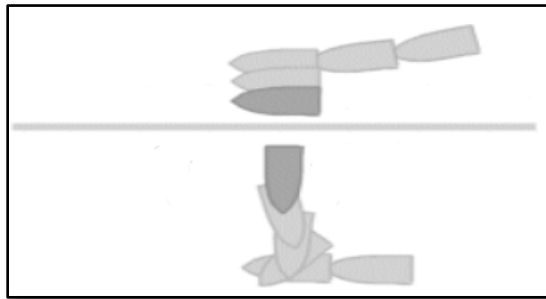
Some vessels on the Buffalo River are so large as to not be able to be passed safely. Shells must seek the safety of a Passing Zone for these vessels to pass. Such vessels include:

- Freighters
- Large tug-barge combinations.

## 3. Dangers From Being Near Large Vessels

### a. Bow Thrusters, Propellers, and Maneuvering Large Vessels

The larger the vessel, the more difficult and complicated the task of navigating the Buffalo River. Large vessels require a large impulse to change their momentum. This impulse generates a lot of prop wash when the vessel maneuvers. Freighters have bow and stern thrusters to push the boat sideways in order to execute turns or correct for wind and current. Tugboats propel barges in a similar manner. When turning, thrusters and propellers generally thrust toward the outside of the turn to control the direction of the turn. Wind forces push the vessel downwind; therefore, thrusters generate prop wash on the downwind side to correct. The figure below depicts two types of possible maneuvers using bow and stern thrusters:



### b. Tug-Freighter Combination v. Freighters Alone

Tugboat-freighter combinations are more hazardous for rowers than freighters maneuvering with thrusters. Tugboats are less efficient at turning freighters than ship bow/stern thrusters. Tugboat prop wash moves more water to change freighter momentum than thrusters. And tugs maneuver to control the towline between themselves with the freighter.

#### **4. Displacement Drift**

As a vessel moves forward, the water ahead of it is displaced to the rear. Freighters and tug-barge combinations displace a significant amount of water on the narrow Buffalo River. As a large vessel passes, the resulting displacement current moves the shell in the opposite direction of the large vessel. The current that is created can be strong enough to pull the shell upstream, if the vessel is going downstream. Displacement drift is compounded when there is wind in the same direction as the drift. A powerful current can be created when there is wind in the same direction as the river current and the large vessel is headed upstream. All three forces (wind, displacement drift, and movement upstream) combine to move the shell downstream at a fast pace. Shells must anticipate displacement drift when positioning themselves for large vessels to pass and should remain vigilant in case they must adjust their positions.

#### **5. Passing Docked Freighters**

Any freighter that is securely docked, and consequently inactive, can be passed so long as there is sufficient room for passage. Mooring lines extending to the bulkhead or across the river, or a conveyor unloading cargo from the hold indicate a freighter's inactivity. Conversely, smoke from the stack, a conveyor unloading from the freighter's hold showing a change in direction, or water turbulence indicate engine activity.

When signs of activity are spotted, the Coach or designated Safety-Certified Participant for an Independent Shell should break off any pressure piece, approach slowly, hail the vessel over the radio, ask the vessel to switch to channel 8 or 13, and ask if it is safe to pass. If the vessel does not respond, the shell should not proceed and should instead reverse direction.

#### **6. Special Areas Where Vessels May Pose a Hazard**

In specific areas, large vessels may turn around or pass each other. These areas are:

1. Buffalo River areas to be added here at a later date; list below:
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Additionally, at sharp turns, the stern and bow of freighters pass close to the bulkhead on the outside of the turn. The central hull passes close to the bulkhead on the inside of the turn.

#### **7. Managing Wakes**

Even small vessels produce wake. When encountering a larger wake, the Crew should take it broadside to avoid having parts of the shell unsupported in the water when the waves pass. Take the wake from the side, then stop and feather the oars to increase stability.

**B. Hazards – From Things Other than Vessels**

River debris is greatest after heavy rains or snow thaw. Debris is particularly dangerous when it lodges on the river bottom: what appears to be a floating object is, in fact, solidly fixed. Debris accumulates when current flow is disrupted. Disruption occurs:

- Where currents meet, e.g., where a stream/overflow pipe flows into a river;
- At bridge and bulkhead projections;
- At river bends; and
- When the wind blows opposite the current.

River current and wind make control of a shell (as well as other vessels) difficult. Shells are particularly affected when they are stationary (e.g., in a Passing Zone).

**IV. EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

**A. Emergency Assistance**

For critical emergencies, a Crew should hail the Coast Guard on Channel 16, declare an emergency, and request immediate assistance. If no response, the Crew should request help from a freighter (Channel 8) or a bridge (Channel 13). If the situation is not critical, standard radio hailing procedures should be used and/or call 911 on your cell phone. Note: Anytime a call is made to the USCG or 911, immediately upon arrival back to the dock, the President must be notified.

**B. Person Overboard**

**1. Launch Action**

The Coach should approach the swimmer, stop the launch, and either turn the engine off or put it in neutral. If possible, the swimmer may return to the shell. If many rowers are in the water, the Coach should distribute PFDs as required, rescue the rowers, and shuttle them to the nearest shore. The Coach should avoid overloading the launch. If necessary, the Coach may instruct the rowers in the water to hold onto the side of the launch and proceed slowly to shore.

**2. Shell Action**

The Crew must weigh enough. In an 8 or 4, the stern rower opposite the side of the swimmer must remove his/her oar from the oarlock and slide it to the swimmer. The swimmer must then lie across the oar, remaining close to the shell. Another rower may, if necessary, enter the water to assist the swimmer. If there is no launch immediately available, the swimmer can climb back into the shell or be escorted or towed to shore. If the swimmer cannot get into the shell, (s)he should hang onto a rigger or the gunwale or lay on top of the stern section and be towed to shore or to a bulkhead ladder.

**1. Participant Action**

**a. Do Not Leave a Floating Shell**

A Participant should never leave a floating boat, regardless of swimming ability. Even if a swamped boat is within possible swimming distance from the shore, the Participant should not strike out for shore. Instead, the Participant should swim the boat to shore.

b. To Climb Back into the Shell – When Rower Remain in the Shell (Usually Sweeps):

1. All rowers remaining in the shell must set the boat with their oars.
2. The oar of the swimmer should be held out of the way by an adjacent rower.
3. The swimmer should re-enter the shell from the side opposite his/her oar to help balance the shell.
4. The swimmer should grasp only the gunwales, not the shell skin or the riggers.
5. Rowers may lean away a little from the side on which the person in the water is attempting to get in.
6. The swimmer should use his/her hands to first transfer weight to the gunwales. As (s)he comes aboard, the body, legs, and feet can transfer weight to the gunwales.
7. The swimmer should kick his/her legs to propel his/her body over the shell while keeping the body low.
8. When the swimmer's body is across the shell, (s)he should twist to sit in the shell, bringing the legs aboard.

c. When All Rowers are Out of the Shell (Usually Small Boats):

1. If the shell is hull-side up, the Crew should turn the shell back over, being careful not to get hit by the oars.
2. One rower at a time should board the shell, beginning with the stern-most rower and proceeding toward bow. The other rowers should divide up, half on each side of the shell, and hold the shell stable by the gunwales.
3. The re-entering swimmer should first position the oars by holding both oars together over the center of and perpendicular to the shell with the hand closest to the stern.
4. The swimmer should try to lay flat on the water surface facing the shell while holding the shell by the gunwale with his hand closest to the bow, grasping the gunwale opposite the side (s)he is on. The swimmer should avoid pushing down on the gunwale on the side closest to him/her.
5. While continuing to hold the oars with the stern-most hand, the swimmer should kick the feet and drive the body toward the shell. As the body comes over the shell, the swimmer should stay low over the shell, keeping the center of gravity low, and then transferring body weight to the center of the shell.
6. When the boat is balanced with the swimmer's body across the shell, the swimmer should bring the bow-most leg across the shell behind him and straddle the shell. Then the swimmer should position his/her rear on the seat or seat platform. Once the shell is balanced, legs on either side of the shell, the legs should be pulled up and into the shell.
7. The swimmer should take one oar with each hand, steadying the shell with the oars.

8. The next swimmer should repeat the steps above while the rower in the shell steadies the shell with feathered oars.

**C. Swamped, Broken, or Sinking Shell**

A shell is swamped when the interior water reaches the gunwales. The Crew must exit. If they remain in the shell, the flotation chambers at the ends of the shells, combined with the weight in the middle, may cause the shell to break. The Crew must take the following actions:

1. Unload by pairs, beginning with the middle pairs of the shell.
2. The coxswain must exit with the pair nearest him/her.
3. If able and rescue is not imminent, the Crew should swim the shell to shore or to a bulkhead ladder and get out of the water. The shell should be kept upright, with the oars trailing in the oarlocks.
4. If conditions do not permit swimming the shell to shore, the Crew must maximize survival time by doing the following:
  - a. Remove the oars and placing them parallel to the shell, preventing them from drifting away;
  - b. Move to the ends of the shell, half of the rowers on each side;
  - c. Invert the shell, hull side up. The hull traps air under it and will form a stable platform;
  - d. Lay partly on top of the hull; and
  - e. Hold onto the arms of the rowers across the hull.

**D. Lifting a Swamped Shell out of the Water**

Getting a swamped shell out of the water is made more difficult by the weight of the water. The Crew should:

1. Bail out all the possible water to avoid lifting unnecessary weight;
2. Drain the bow and stern compartments if they have filled with water;
3. Enlist additional people to help lift the boat.;
4. Lift the gunwale closet to the dock, and roll the shell away from the dock to pour the water out as you lift the shell; and
5. Keep the shell away from the dock edge when lifting.

**E. Capsized by a Freighter Thruster**

If a shell is capsized or ends up in the water from a freighter thruster, the situation could be critical. The Crew should stay calm and take the following actions:

1. Take a deep breath and hold it;
2. Stay in contact with the surface of the water;

3. Hang onto anything – shell, oar, other boat, bulkhead – to keep from going underwater; and
4. Stay away from the freighter to avoid getting sucked into the thruster or forced to the bottom of the river by the thruster.

## V. INCIDENT REPORTS

### A. Purpose

An incident report is a form designed to provide an account after an unwanted event occurs, such as a collision between two shells. The report preserves the exact event details while they are fresh in the minds of those involved. That information is useful in determining, for example, culpability for the incident. More broadly, incident reports guide us in creating safe processes to prevent future incidents. An example incident report is included at Appendix C.

### B. When to File an Incident Report

An incident report must be filed whenever any of the following occurs:

1. Physical injury;
2. Significant (i.e., greater than a lost skeg) damage to equipment;
3. A Participant goes in the water;
4. An emergency signal sounds in a Crew's area (5 horn blasts or radio emergency call);
5. A freighter or barge must stop or suddenly change course to avoid a Crew;
6. An oar or shell touches a commercial vessel or pleasure boat navigating the river;
7. A Crew loses control due to wash from a bow thruster or propeller; or
8. A radio confrontation (or in some other way) occurs with other river users.

### C. Procedure for Completing an Incident Report

Blank incident reports are available outside of the repair bay and on the WSRC website. The Safety Chair or President must be notified of the incident by telephone or email within 24 hours. Completed incident reports should be placed inside the mailbox outside of the repair bay before leaving the boathouse or transmitted electronically to the Safety Chair or President as soon as possible. If a governmental authority requires the completion of an accident report, a copy of that report should be sent to the Safety Chair or President as soon as possible.

### D. Safe Sport Policy

In accordance with USRowing rules, on January 1, 2015, WSRC adopted the Safe Sport program, which is available on WSRC's website.

**VI. SAFETY CERTIFICATIONS**

**A. Privileges and Responsibilities**

WSRC has adopted a series of Safety Certification levels providing a Participant with increased privileges and autonomy at WSRC Facilities. Associated privileges include the ability to row unsupervised, supervise other rowers, and independently access WSRC Facilities. Each level requires a Participant to have additional knowledge and experience. Safety-Certified Participants must requalify in a manner and at a time required by the Safety Committee.

All Safety-Certified Participants are the primary enforcers of the rules embodied in the SaM and other applicable rules and laws. A Safety-Certified Participant who has been found to have violated these rules, or to have failed to enforce or request Safety Committee action to enforce these rules after observing others violating them, may have his/her Safety Certification suspended or revoked in accordance with Section X.F.

An Applicant seeking a Safety Certification other than the SQL-0 Basic Safety Briefing must be recommended to such status. In recommending an Applicant, a Participant affirms, based upon personal knowledge and observation, that the Applicant seeking certification has the experience, maturity, judgment, and knowledge necessary to hold that Safety Certification level.

**B. Certification Levels**

There are two Safety Qualification Levels, in ascending order of advancement: SQL-0 and SQL. There are two Coach Qualification Levels, in ascending order of advancement: CQL-Trainee and CQL.

**1. SQL-0 and SQL Levels**

a. Attaining SQL-0 Status

Everyone, including Guest Rowers, who participates in rowing activities, must receive a Basic Safety Briefing. After receiving that briefing, Participants and Guests are deemed SQL-0's.

b. Attaining SQL Status

To be considered for SQL status, an Applicant must:

1. Be SQL-0 qualified (received the SQL-0 Basic Safety Briefing);
2. Be other than a Junior;
3. Pass the on-water Safety Test administered by the Safety Committee;
4. Demonstrate proficiency to an approved Safety Committee member on the water in a shell. Sweep rowers and single sculler must normally row 50 supervised rows before being considered for SQL status; and
5. Be recommended to SQL status by a Member Organization Head Coach, a CQL-Trainee, CQL, or a Safety Committee member.



c. Privileges of the SQL-0 and SQL Statuses

The chart below shows the differences in associated privileges between the SQL-0 and SQL levels:

SQL-0 v. SQL Privileges		
Privilege	SQL-0	SQL
Handle WSRC and Member Org. rowing equipment while supervised	✓	✓
Row while supervised by a qualified Coach in a launch	✓	✓
Row in a Small Boat with a qualified companion shell	✓	✓
Row in a qualified Independent Shell	✓	✓
Handle WSRC and Member Org. rowing equipment unsupervised		✓
Row unsupervised		✓
Supervise SQL-0's during ground operations		✓
Supervise one SQL-0 from the same or another Small Boat		✓
Supervise two SQL-0's in a 2/2x from another Small Boat		✓
Supervise one Large Boat from the same Large Boat		✓
Independently access WSRC Facilities		✓
Sponsor and administer the Basic Safety Briefing to Guest Rowers		✓

**2. CQL-Trainee and CQL**

a. Attaining CQL-Trainee Status

CQL-Trainee is the first level of Coaching certification for an Applicant. To be considered for CQL-Trainee status, an Applicant must do all of the following:

1. Pass the written Safety Test administered by the Safety Committee;
2. Pass the on-water Coaching Test;
3. Submit to the Safety Committee written evidence of:
  - a. Current CPR certification.
  - b. Attendance of a launch operations briefing conducted by an authorized Safety Committee member.
  - c. Successful completion of the New York Department of Natural Resources boater safety class, if the Applicant was born on or after January 1, 1982.<sup>1</sup>
4. Be recommended to the status by a Member Organization head Coach or a Safety Committee member; and
5. Have demonstrated to a Senior CQL:

<sup>1</sup> An Applicant born on or after January 1, 1982 who does not have a Safe Boater certification may not legally operate a launch with a motor more powerful than 9.9 horsepower. If the Applicant was born before January 1, 1982, it is recommended, but not mandatory, that the Applicant complete the class.

- a. Experience assembling and managing a crew in a Passing Zone without the assistance of another Coach during a freighter passing;
  - b. Demonstrate a good record launch operation, and river operations, including keeping the Applicant's crew on the proper side of the river and avoiding collisions with other vessels; and
  - c. Effective communication with and instruction to the Applicant's crew, especially maneuvering and docking procedures.
- b. Attaining CQL Status

To be considered for CQL status, an Applicant must:

1. Be recommended by a Member Organization head Coach or a Safety Committee member; and
2. Have demonstrated coaching experience to a CQL and to the satisfaction of the Safety Committee. The CQL must have observed the Applicant as a CQL-Trainee.

WSRC also recommends that an Applicant serve as a CQL-Trainee for 100 hours on the Black Rock Canal, or until coaching proficiency has been determined by the head Coach or CQL of the Applicant's Member Organization as specified above.

c. Attaining Senior CQL Status

To be considered for Senior CQL status, an Applicant must:

1. Be recommended by a Member Organization head Coach or a Safety Committee member;
2. Have demonstrated coaching experiencing to the Member Organization head Coach or Senior CQL, under whose supervisions the Applicant has been coaching as a CQL, to the satisfaction of the Safety Committee; and
3. Have demonstrated a history of good judgment with respect to:
  - a. Inclement weather operations;
  - b. Cold Water Rules;
  - c. Supervision of multiple boats; and
  - d. Interactions with other vessels on the river.

WSRC also recommends that an Applicant serve as a CQL for 200 hours, or until coaching proficiency has been determined by the head Coach or Senior CQL of the Applicant's Member Organization as specified above.

A Senior CQL should have a history of:

1. Managing multiple shells during a freighter passing;
2. Identifying and assembling multiple crews in a Passing Zone without the assistance of other coaches;

3. Demonstrating proficiency with radio calls, launch operations, and river operations;
4. Keeping crews on the proper side of the river;
5. Communicating instructions effectively to the Applicant’s crews, especially maneuvering and docking instructions;
6. Devising a workout plan for multiple crews, communicating the plan to the Coaches and rowers, and overseeing the successful operation of the workout plan such that all rowers and Coaches operate in a safe manner with respect to themselves and others on the river; and
7. Training and helping others learn the safety rules to operate in a safe manner.

a. Privileges of the CQL-Trainee, CQL, and Senior CQL Statuses

Participants attaining CQL-Trainee, CQL, and Senior CQL Statuses have all of the privileges associated with the SQL-0 and SQL statuses. *See* chart in Section VII.B.1. The chart below shows the *additional* privileges for each of the Coaching level certifications when Cold Water Rules (Section III.I.5) are not in effect:

CQL-Trainee, CQL, and Senior CQL Privileges			
Privilege	CQL-Trainee	CQL	Senior CQL
Operate a coaching launch:	✓	✓	✓
Supervise/coach from <i>a coaching launch</i> :	One 8, One 4, or Two Small Boats	Two 8’s, Three 4’s, Two 8’s and One 4, or Three Small Boats	3 Large or Small Boats (any combo)

b. Coaching Collaboration

When multiple Coaches from a Member Organization(s) are on the water at the same time as part of a coordinated practice, a Senior CQL may allow a CQL-Trainee to temporarily “move up” a level to CQL provided that:

1. The Head Coaches of all Member Organizations involved approve;
2. Cold Water Rules are not in affect;
3. There are no dangerous conditions (e.g. bad weather, unusually strong current, unusually heavy commercial traffic);
4. There is at least one Senior CQL on the water who has advised the Safety Chair of the temporary move-up within 24 hours in advance of each practice in which the move-up occurs; and
5. There is a clear plan for coordination in which all Coaches are aware of the planned location of all other Coaches throughout the workout, one or more Coaches is

assigned to work with the CQL-Trainee Coach with the temporary status, and those Coaches stay in relatively close proximity and regular communication.

## **VII. USE OF LAUNCHES**

### **A. Capacities**

The size of the launch dictates how many people can safely be aboard. Notwithstanding a rescue operation, launches must not be overloaded beyond their maximum capacities. WSRC owns two types of launches that are available for Member Organization use:

- Small, 14' launch: 2 maximum person capacity (including coach)
- Large, 16' launch: 3 maximum capacity (including coach)

Wakeless launches used at other facilities, spring break trips, or regattas have the following capacity:

- Small wakeless launch: 3-person maximum capacity (including coach)
- Large wakeless launch: 4-person maximum capacity (including coach)

### **B. Required Safety Equipment**

WSRC equips all launches with required safety equipment, which includes:

- Marine radio
- Megaphone
- Bailer
- Paddle
- Water-resistant orange safety box containing flashlight, tool kit, electrical tape, horn, space blankets, fire extinguisher, and first aid kit
- Two or three “emergency” PFD containers containing at least 16 PFD’s and one throw rope with float, for emergency use only

Before operating a launch, the Coach should confirm that the launch has all such required equipment.

### **C. Operation**

#### **1. Before Departing in a Launch**

Before leaving the dock, the Coach must:

1. Check to ensure that the required safety equipment is in the launch.
2. Don and continuously wear a PFD while in the launch.
3. Ensure that all launch passengers don and continuously wear PFD’s while in the launch.
4. Attach the engine-kill lanyard to clothing so that the launch stops if the Coach falls in the water.

## **2. Driving a Launch**

### **a. Stay with the Shell**

When a shell requires accompaniment by a launch, both must stay within hailing distance of each other. No coach is permitted to be more than 500 meters away from their crew. The shell must not row, or be out of sight of the launch, unless: (a) appropriate measures have been taken to ensure that the river is clear and that the shell has, in the Coach's judgment, the knowledge and experience to recover an ejected rower, or (2) the launch is responding to an emergency.

### **b. Positioning with Respect to Shells**

The Coach should position the launch to check the river ahead for debris and other traffic. The best position for a launch is abeam (perpendicular to) and in some cases ahead of the lead shell and on the outside of river turns, provided the launch is not waking trailing shells.

### **c. Minimize Launch Wake**

Wake is a byproduct of moving boats and can damage docked pleasure boats by thrusting them against their moorings. It can also rock, swamp, or capsize other shells. Wake is difficult for crews to row through, even after a boat has passed because it reflects between the bulkheads for several minutes. Coaches should minimize launch wake at all times. When approaching or passing other rowing shells, Coaches must reduce speed and proceed at minimum wake.

## **VIII. ALCOHOL AT WSRC FACILITIES**

### **A. General Prohibition**

Alcoholic beverages are strictly prohibited at WSRC Facilities unless the WSRC Board of Directors or President has granted prior approval for it at a special event.

Alcohol must not be consumed by any Participant prior to going on the water. Once alcohol is consumed, whether at WSRC Facilities or elsewhere, the Participant must remain on land for the remainder of the day.

### **B. Special Events**

When alcohol is served as part of a special event under this section, either WSRC acting through the President, or the Member Organization(s) sponsoring the event, must assume responsibility as the "Supervising Organization" of the event. The Supervising Organization must actively promote the responsible use of alcohol and ensure the following:

#### **1. Before the Event**

The Supervising Organization must notify the Safety Chair, the President of the Supervising Organization, and the President of WSRC of the intention to serve alcohol at least one week in advance of the event.

If permits are required, the Supervising Organization must provide copies of those permits, along with a copy of the Board of Directors' resolution approving alcohol for the event, to the Safety Chair, President of the Supervising Organization, and the President of WSRC along with that notice.

## 2. At the Special Event

The Supervising Organization must designate a point-person who will refrain from drinking alcohol. Alcohol must not be served to any person who appears intoxicated either to the point-person or to any person involved in the dispensing of alcohol at the event. Persons whom the point-person determines are intoxicated must not be permitted to enter WSRC Facilities, or, if already present, to remain at WSRC Facilities.

Non-alcoholic beverages must be made available.

Alcohol must not be served at a junior event.

Persons under the age of 21 years must not serve or consume alcohol. Proof of age via government-issued photographic ID must be required for anyone serving or consuming alcohol prior to service or consumption.

## IX. SAM ENFORCEMENT

### A. WSRC Expectations Regarding Personal Conduct

All users of WSRC Facilities and WSRC or privately-owned equipment are expected to treat the premises, equipment, and other users in a responsible and considerate manner. Participants behaving in an unsafe manner will be removed from and not allowed to return to WSRC Facilities. WSRC does not accept responsibility for any consequence arising from anyone acting in disregard of the SaM. Sponsors are responsible for the conduct of Guest Rowers.

Certain conduct is permanently prohibited without exception at WSRC facilities:

1. Use or removal of WSRC, a Member Organization, or a Participant's equipment or property without prior permission;
2. Smoking;
3. Firearms;
4. Excessive noise, foul language, and discourteous behavior; and
5. Running inside the boathouses, on the docks, and in the area where shells are transported to/from the boathouses.

### B. Temporary Exceptions and Permanent Changes

Temporary exceptions are permitted with the prior written consent of the President, VP of Rowing, or Safety Chair.

The President and Safety Chair monitor and maintain the SaM. Permanent changes to SaM must be approved by the WSRC Board of Directors.

### C. Rules Enacted by a Member Organization

Member Organizations may adopt safety rules for their own programs, including rules that are more (but not less) stringent than WSRC's safety rules. In the event of a conflict between a Member Organization's adopted rules and WSRC's rules, WSRC's rules prevail.

**D. Other Applicable Rules and Laws**

Anyone utilizing WSRC Facilities is expected to follow all applicable federal, state, and local laws, ordinances, regulations, and rules. WSRC does not assume responsibility for those not obeying the law.

Safety-Certified Participants must know and obey the Rules of Inland Navigation enacted by the U.S. Coast Guard<sup>2</sup>, the laws governing the operation of boats enacted by the New York General Assembly<sup>3</sup>, and the regulations promulgated by the New York Department of Natural Resources.<sup>4</sup>

**E. Chain of Authority**

The chain of authority in carrying out the policies and procedures described in the SaM is, in descending order of authority:

1. WSRC Board of Directors
2. President
3. Safety Chair
4. VP of Rowing
5. Member Organization Coaches and Safety-Certified Members, in descending order of authority as set out in the SaM (i.e., CQL to SQL).

Between two or more Participants having the same level of authority, the Participant who has been qualified the longest is the more senior in the chain of authority.

**F. Violations, Discipline, and Appeals**

The Safety Committee deals with breaches of the SaM. Failure to comply with the SaM or other applicable rules or laws may result in partial or complete loss of participation privileges for an entire Member Organization or a Participant. Violations may also result in the restriction or suspension of use of WSRC Facilities or equipment, or of privately owned equipment used or stored at WSRC Facilities. Fees, dues, assessments, or the like may or may not be refunded.

**1. Penalties Lasting a Week or Less**

For any breach of the SaM, the Safety Chair, with the agreement of the President and VP of Rowing, may suspend participation privileges of any Member Organization or Participant, or suspend a Participant's Safety-Certification for a period of no longer than (but inclusive of) seven days. Written notice of the suspension must be given to the offending Member Organization or Participant through its head Coach, president, or chair, as appropriate, as promptly as possible. The suspension takes effect when the notice is officially sent. The notice should include: the offender's name, date and approximate time of offense, approximate geographic location of

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<sup>2</sup> [www.navcen.uscg.gov/?pageName=navrulesContent](http://www.navcen.uscg.gov/?pageName=navrulesContent)

<sup>3</sup> [www.codes.newyork.gov/orc/1547](http://www.codes.newyork.gov/orc/1547).

[www.codes.ny.gov/oac/1501%3A47-1](http://www.codes.ny.gov/oac/1501%3A47-1)

[www.watercraft.nydnr.gov/registration](http://www.watercraft.nydnr.gov/registration)

offense, the nature of the offense, and the applicable section(s) of the SaM or law that were violated.

## **2. Penalties Lasting Longer than a Week**

If the Safety Chair, President, and VP of Rowing determine that a penalty greater than a one-week suspension, or some sanction other than a suspension of privileges is appropriate, then written notice of the infraction must be served on the offending Member Organizations' head Coach, president, or chair, as appropriate, and then Participant(s) involved.

The notice of infraction must include the SaM standard violated, the penalty imposed, and the start date/time and end date/time of the penalty. The notice of infraction must also inform the offender of the option to appeal to the Safety Committee within 72 hours from receipt of the infraction if the offender disagrees with the statement of infraction or the proposed penalty. No penalty under this section is effective until after the expiration of the 72-hour appeal period, or until after the final resolution of a timely filed appeal.

## **3. Appeals**

Written notice of appeal under Section X.F.2 must be filed with the Safety Chair within 72 hours after the notice of infraction has been served upon the offender. If an appeal is filed, the Safety Committee must meet and hear the matter within 72 hours after receipt of the appeal. Notice of the meeting must be given to the offender, so (s)he may attend and be heard at that meeting.

The Safety Committee must then provide to the WSRC Board of Directors a written decision containing its findings, decision, and reasoning as soon as a verdict is reached. If no Director objects, the decision becomes final within five business days from the time the decision was transmitted to the Board. If a Director objects, the decision must be reviewed at the next meeting of the WSRC Board of Directors or its Executive Committee, at which time it must be approved, modified, or rejected. Thereafter, the decision is final.



**X. DEFINITIONS**

As used throughout the SaM:

1. **Applicant** means a Participant applying for Safety Certification;
2. **Blind Turn** means any turns where it is difficult to see boat traffic in and around the turn;
3. **Coach** means a person who holds CQL-Trainee or CQL Safety Certification;
4. **Cold Water Rules** mean the additional safety rules that are in effect from December 1 through April 30;
5. **Collegiate Rower** means a person enrolled in a Member Organization college or university participating in that Member Organization's rowing program;
6. **Competitive Straight Stretch** means any of the sections of the canal or rive where multiple boats may compete abreast of one another;
7. **Crew** means the rowers and coxswain in a given shell;
8. **WSRC Facilities** means all real property owned by WSRC, including the grounds all buildings, and docks;
9. **Guest Rower** means a person who temporarily participates with but does not belong to a Member Organization;
10. **Independent Shell** means rowing without accompaniment by a coaching launch;
11. **Junior** means a Participant younger than 18 years old or who is currently enrolled in high school;
12. **May** means an action is permissive;
13. **Member Organization** means the constituent organizations that are considered members of the corporation under the Bylaws;
14. **Must** means an action is mandatory;
15. **Night** means the hours after sunset and before sunrise;
16. **Participant** means an individual member of a Member Organization, including Coaches, coxswains, and rowers;
17. **Passing Zone** means any areas on the canal or river where shells may seek refuge while a freighter or other large vessel passes;
18. **Proctor** means a Participant administering a Safety Certification exam;
19. **Safety-Certified or Safety Certification** means SQL or CQL certification;
20. **Safety Committee** means the Safety Chair, the President, and those other members appointed by the WSRC Board of Directors and/or its Chairman, as provided by the WSRC Bylaws and the Safety Committee By-Laws;
21. **Sculling** means rowing with an oar for each hand;
22. **Small Boat** means a shell of two or fewer rowers;

23. **Sponsor** means a Participant host for a Guest Rower; and
24. **Sweeps** means rowing with one oar.

**XI. ABBREVIATIONS**

1. **1x** means a single scull;
2. **2x** means a double;
3. **2** means a pair;
4. **4x** means a quad;
5. **4** means a four-man shell;
6. **8** means an eight-man shell;
7. **CQL** means Coach Qualification Level;
8. **LTR** means Learn-to-Row;
9. **LTS** means Learn-to-Scull;
10. **PFD** means Personal Flotation Device;
11. **SQL** means Safety Qualification Level.

**APPENDIX A**

**West Side Rowing Club Swim Test Form**

All Participants in scholastic, Junior, or Collegiate rowing programs utilizing WSRC Facilities must be able to pass the following swim test and have a certified lifeguard or American Red Cross Water Safety Instructor attest to completion of this test by signing the form below.

The swimming test is comprised of the following:

- 50 yard continuous swim, using any stroke;
- 5 minute continuous tread water; and
- Put on a life jacket and secure it while treading water.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, certify that  
\_\_\_\_\_ has completed the  
above swimming requirements in the order listed above. This test of swimming ability was  
given at \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_, 201\_\_.

Signature of Person who Administered Test: \_\_\_\_\_

Member Organization/ Affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete this form and return it to the West Side Rowing Club

**Having met the above swim test requirement, I give my child permission to participate on the water with the West Side Rowing Club and its Member Organizations and not wear a personal flotation device.**

Parent/Legal Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX B

### West Side Rowing Club Large Program Sign-in/Sign-Out Procedure

The following procedures were adopted on January 26, 2023 by the WSRC Safety Committee pursuant to SaM Section III.B to streamline the sign-in/sign-out procedure for large organizations with regularly scheduled practices. These procedures are an acceptable alternative to the current procedures. Programs may elect to continue using the current procedures, which are: all shells, both sweep and sculls, must sign out in the log before launching and sign in upon recovery.

The large program procedures are as follows:

#### **Advance Work: Once per Season**

The head Coach of a Member Organization with regularly schedule practices shall submit a document outlining the key information for his/her practices. This shall include:

1. Day of the week
2. Normal time in and normal time off the water
3. Number of rowers
4. Number of boats
5. Contact information for the head Coach and assistant Coaches and who is in charge for each day, if it is known in advance. If not known in advance, Coaches should be listed in order of responsibility (e.g. head Coach, full-time assistant Coaches, part-time assistant Coaches, school rep).

The Safety Committee will consolidate this information and post it next to the sign-in/sign-out log.

#### **Daily Work**

When attending a normally scheduled practice, the Coach in charge for that day shall enter the following information in the log book:

1. Date
2. Member Organization and program name
3. Boat = NSP
4. Actual time on the water
5. Actual time off the water

For practices outside of those that are normally scheduled, the Coach will be required to fill out all information in the logbook (that is, follow the regular procedure). The Coach may put one entry for all boats if all boats will leave and return at the same time.



APPENDIX C

**WEST SIDE ROWING CLUB INCIDENT REPORT**

- Incident reports must be filled out immediately after an incident occurs and submitted to the President or Safety Director electronically at **president@wsrc.org** or in the mailbox outside the repair bay within 24 hours.
- Please contact the Coast Guard at (716) 843-9527 for any on-water emergency rescues or assistance.
- For all other emergencies, please contact Kirk Lang at (716) 449-5225.

*Contact Information of Person Making Report:*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Report: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Program Affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_

*Incident Details*

Date of Incident: \_\_\_\_\_ Time of Incident (AM/PM): \_\_\_\_\_  
 Lighting Conditions:  Light  Twilight  Dark  
 Weather Condition:  Rain  Wind

*Check closest landmark(s) or facility:*

<input type="checkbox"/> FLW Fontana Boathouse	<input type="checkbox"/> Peace Bridge	<input type="checkbox"/> Canalside – Buffalo River
<input type="checkbox"/> Doc Schaab Boathouse	<input type="checkbox"/> Buffalo Yacht Club	<input type="checkbox"/> Outer Harbor
<input type="checkbox"/> Locks/International RR Bridge	<input type="checkbox"/> RCW Centennial Park	<input type="checkbox"/> BSRA Boathouse
<input type="checkbox"/> West Ferry Street Bridge	<input type="checkbox"/> Break wall Gap/Marina	<input type="checkbox"/> Dock, Grounds, or Parking Lot

*Shell(s):*

Name of Shell(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
 Shell(s) Involved:  8  4  4x (Quad)  2 (Pair)  2x (Double)  1x (Single)  
 Coxed:  No  Yes  
 Bow/Stern Lights Used:  No  Yes  Not required at time  
**Damage to Rowing Equipment:**  No  Yes, and described below in Narrative Section

*WSRC Crew(s) Involved:*

- |                                                   |                                         |                                          |                                           |
|---------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> City Honors              | <input type="checkbox"/> Nardin Academy | <input type="checkbox"/> Buffalo State   | <input type="checkbox"/> GOW              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Canisius College         | <input type="checkbox"/> Nichols School | <input type="checkbox"/> D’Youville      | <input type="checkbox"/> Mount St. Mary’s |
| <input type="checkbox"/> St. Josephs’s Collegiate | <input type="checkbox"/> WSRC Juniors   | <input type="checkbox"/> Private Sculler | <input type="checkbox"/> Guest Rower      |

Crew Experience Level:  Novice  2-3 years  4-5 years  > 6 years

**Injuries:**  No  Yes, and described below in Narrative Section

*Launch(es) Involved:*

Coaches involved: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Location of Nearest Launch at Time of Incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Safety Equipment Available:  Large PFD Box  Small Orange Safety Box  Lights

Radio Being Used:  No  Yes  Not required

**Radio Confrontation or Otherwise:**  No  Yes, and described below in Narrative Section

