

Coeur d'Alene Rowing Association Emergency Conditions Procedures

Please review and keep for your reference

1. Under no circumstances should a rower in the water leave his/her shell. Even if a swamped boat is within a swim able distance from the shore, the rower should swim the boat to the shore. So do not leave your floatation even if you consider yourself a strong swimmer.
2. Should someone give the command "weight enough! Hold water," don't ask questions, just respond immediately by stopping all forward body movement. Square the blades in the water and bring the boat to a halt.
3. Use these distress signals to communicate to other boats: wave the arms or a shirt above your head or raise one oar in the air.
4. Man overboard - Immediate command "weight enough! Hold water!" If the safety launch can get to the victim first, allow the launch to rescue the victim. If the launch is not in the immediate vicinity, back the shell to the victim and have him/her hang onto the shell until the launch arrives. Another rower may have to enter the water to assist if the victim is injured.
5. Rower injured - Immediate command "weight enough! Hold water!" Signal launch if first aid is needed.
6. Shell damaged but afloat and not taking on water - Immediate command "way enough! Hold water!" Make adjustments or signal launch for assistance.
7. Shell swamped - Immediate command "weight enough! Hold water!" A shell is swamped when the interior water reached the gunwales. If rowers stay in the boat, the floatation ends may cause the boat to break apart.
 - a. Coxswain directs rowers to untie, and by seat number rowers should carefully, but quickly, slip overboard.
 - b. If the boat is taking on excessive water, signal the launch and unload rowers by pairs - starting in the middle of the boat - as soon as possible in order to avoid damage to the boat. Pairs should form "buddies" and keep watch of each other. The cox should buddy with the stern pair.
 - c. If rescue is not imminent, take the following steps: 1) Remove oars and place them parallel to the shell. All persons should move to the two ends of the shell. It is dangerous to roll a shell near riggers. 2) Then roll the boat to form a more stable floatation platform so rowers can either lie on top of the hull or buddies can hold onto each other across the hull. 3) Remember that body heat loss occurs 25 times faster in the water. Do not attempt to roll the boat if rescue is on the way.
 - d. A launch can shuttle rowers to the nearest shore. Be careful not to overload the launch.
 - e. When the boat has been brought to the shore, remove the oars. If the ends of the shell have filled with water, they must be drained before the boat can be removed from the water. Remove the shell carefully to avoid injury or damage. A boat full of water is very heavy, so try bailing first, then roll the boat slowly and remove it from the water.
8. Singles should be rowed with a buddy boat or launch. The rescue boat will stabilize the re-entry. Entering the shell directly from the water may cause splashboard damage. Swim the boat to shore, lying in the stern, using the shell as a paddleboard. In very cold weather you can abandon your shells and lie on the stern deck of your buddy's boat to be taken to shore. The loss of muscle control can occur very quickly and dramatically in cold water. The stern deck rescue may be your only option.
9. Shell capsized - Immediate command "untie!" This rarely happens except in small boats. Be sure that all rowers and cox are accounted for. Stay with the boat until assistance arrives.
10. Shell broken and sinking - Immediate command "unite!" Get out of the boat and follow the same procedures as for a swamped shell. Do not leave the floating boat. Swim boat to shore if launch is not immediate.
11. Another boat in distress - If a distress signal is seen and insufficient assistance is near that craft, maneuver your shell to the distressed shell. Assist in any way that does not jeopardize the lives in your shell.
12. Shells should stay within hailing distance of their safety launch. The launch has been outfitted to provide assistance to rowers and/or their shell in the event that it is needed. Most frequently, the toolbox and coach's expertise is available for small equipment adjustments or breakdowns, which allow the shell to continue rowing after a short stop. If more serious needs arise, the launch and expert are there for rapid transportation.