



YAKIMA COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

ROBERT UDELL, Sheriff

TRAFFIC DIVISION

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*****For Immediate Release*****

Media Release Requirements for Baddle Boards

Date: 7/19/21

Contact: Deputy Scot Swallow

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Incident:

Location:

Date:

Narrative: While doing boat safety inspection yesterday, Sunday the 18th at Bumping Lake, I learned that there was a close call with yet another drowning involving a paddle boarder who was not wearing a personal floatation device (life jacket) and was not tethered to his board. The male had fallen off of his board in the choppy water and the board had drifted away from the individual. The individual was not using the tether which was attached to the board and the individual started to go under. Luckily, someone on a watercraft saw the boarder in distress and was able to rescue the individual. This again shows the importance to all paddle boarders to be wearing/have PFDs with them and to utilize the tethers.

BEFORE YOU GO

Know that kayaks, canoes, and stand-up paddleboards (SUP) are subject to boating laws and regulations. You are urged to boat responsibly to prevent accidents, minimize impacts, and avoid conflicts with other boaters. Following are guidelines to help you prepare before you head out on your paddling adventure.

Get educated

Know the laws and keep yourself and others safe. At a minimum, take a course to increase your knowledge of paddle sport safety, emergency procedures and navigational rules. You can find classes through local clubs and outfitters, city and county parks and recreation departments and online. Understand and follow the U.S. Coast Guard's "Navigation Rules of the Road." If you do not know these rules, you should not be out on the water.



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Free Course:

<https://www.boaterexam.com/paddling/>

Wear a life jacket

State law requires all vessels, including canoes, kayaks, and stand-up paddleboards, to have at least one properly fitted Coast Guard-approved life jacket for each person on board. All children, 12 years of age or younger, are always required to wear life jackets. Modern, comfortable life jackets are tailored specifically for paddle sports. Inflatable life jackets are only allowed for persons 16 years of age or older. No matter your age and skill level, you are encouraged to wear a life jacket every time you go out on the water.

Always wear a leash (SUP)

For stand-up paddleboards, a leash is a necessity. Without a leash, even in a light breeze or small waves or current, a paddleboard can drift out of reach in a matter of seconds. Staying tethered to a paddleboard provides extra flotation and a chance to stay alive in an accident. A variety of leashes are available (coiled, hybrid, straight, quick release) and which one to use depends on the waterway. You need to research which leash is right for you.

Carry essential gear

Carry the essentials for safety, emergency communications and comfort. State law requires paddlers to carry a sound-producing device, such as a whistle – even on a stand-up paddleboard. Professional paddlers recommend carrying a cell phone (in a waterproof bag) and, on coastal waters, a VHF marine radio. In addition to items required by law, you should wear sun protection and bring a headlamp with extra batteries, first aid kit, knife, dry bag and hydrating fluids. Carry a bilge pump and an extra paddle. Other essentials depend on the type of waterway and length of trip and should be researched in advance.