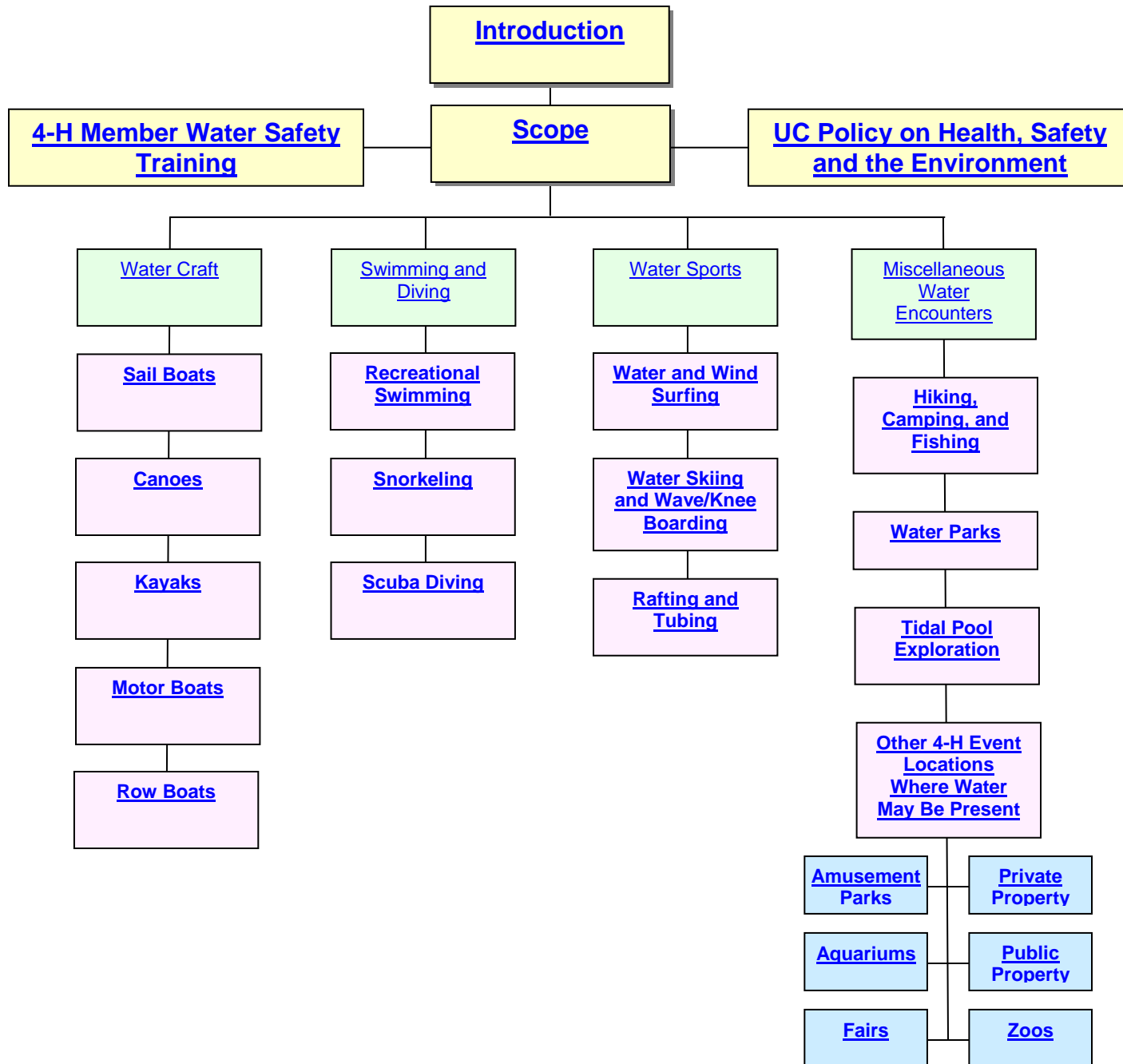


4-H YDP WATER SAFETY GUIDELINE



4-H Water Safety Guidelines



prepared by
University of California, Agriculture & Natural Resources
Environmental Health & Safety
<http://safety.ucanr.org>

and California State 4-H Youth Development Program
<http://www.ca4h.org>

July 2007



4-H WATER SAFETY GUIDELINES

Prepared by ANR Environmental Health & Safety
in cooperation with the
California State 4-H Youth Development Program



TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION	3
II. UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA POLICY ON HEALTH, SAFETY AND THE ENVIRONMENT	3
III. SCOPE	3
IV. ADDRESSING WATER SAFETY AS PART OF 4-H TRAINING.....	4
V. WATER CRAFT	4
A. Canoes.....	4
B. Sail Boats.....	6
C. Motorboats.....	7
D. Kayaks	9
E. Row Boats.....	11
VI. SWIMMING AND DIVING	12
A. Recreational Swimming.....	13
1. Swimming Pools and Spas	13
2. Natural Bodies of Water.....	14
B. Snorkeling	15
C. Scuba Diving.....	16
VII. WATER SPORTS.....	17
A. Water and Wind Surfing.....	17
B. Water Skiing and Wave/Knee Boarding.....	19
C. Rafting and Tubing	21
VIII. MISCELLANEOUS WATER ENCOUNTERS	22
A. Hiking, Camping, and Fishing.....	22
1. Hiking	22
2. Camping.....	24
3. Fishing.....	25
B. Water Parks	26
C. Tidal Pool Exploration.....	27



4-H WATER SAFETY GUIDELINES

Prepared by ANR Environmental Health & Safety
in cooperation with the
California State 4-H Youth Development Program



D.	Other 4-H Event Locations Where Water May Be Present	28
1.	Private Property	28
2.	Public Property	28
3.	Aquariums	29
4.	Zoos	29
5.	Fairs	30
6.	Amusement Parks.....	30

ATTACHMENTS

[Attachment A](#) – 4-H YDP Water Safety Guideline

[Attachment B](#) – U.S. Coast Guard Float Plan Form



4-H WATER SAFETY GUIDELINES

Prepared by ANR Environmental Health & Safety
in cooperation with the
California State 4-H Youth Development Program



I. INTRODUCTION

The University of California 4-H Youth Development Program (YDP) organizes and coordinates a variety of programs, projects, and events that involve about 20,000 adult volunteers and more than 100,000 youth aged five through 19 years of age. Many of these programs, projects, and events incorporate activities that take place on, in, or near water. Information given in these guidelines has been developed for use by 4-H staff and volunteers and is intended to provide initial guidance for implementing practices and procedures to reduce the risk of sustaining water-related injuries or illnesses while participating in 4-H sponsored programs, projects, and events.

The Agriculture & Natural Resources (ANR) Environmental Health & Safety (EH&S) Office exists to support all ANR programs, including 4-H YDP, in conducting their activities in a safe, healthy, and environmentally responsible manner. ANR EH&S staff are available to assist 4-H YDP staff and volunteers to interpret the material in these guidelines and to develop specific health and safety information, assess potential hazards, and conduct training. Contact information (i.e address, telephone numbers, email) for ANR EH&S staff is available on the EH&S website at: <http://safety.ucanr.org/>.

II. UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA POLICY ON HEALTH, SAFETY, AND THE ENVIRONMENT

The University of California (UC) Policy on Management of Health, Safety and the Environment, dated October 28, 2005, indicates UC is committed to achieving excellence in providing healthy and safe work environments that ensure the protection of students, faculty, staff, visitors, the public, property, and the environment. Furthermore, the policy states that "Protecting faculty, staff, students, visitors, the public and the environment is a priority whenever activities are planned and performed." The policy also establishes a strategy whereby damage is preempted by designing activities and controls to reduce or eliminate accidents, injuries, and exposures. Accordingly, these guidelines have been developed to complement and be in accordance with the goals of the UC Policy on Management of Health, Safety and the Environment.

III. SCOPE

These Administrative Guidelines provide descriptions of the types of natural hazards and conditions that are likely to be encountered and precautions to take when 4-H YDP water-related activities take place, including the use of water craft, swimming and recreational diving, water sports, and being nearby or encountering streams, rivers, ponds, lakes, reservoirs, canals, aqueducts, irrigation ditches, livestock watering troughs, and backyard pools, hot tubs, fountains, and fish or ornamental ponds. In addition, this document provides information and references that can be used by 4-H



4-H WATER SAFETY GUIDELINES

Prepared by ANR Environmental Health & Safety
in cooperation with the
California State 4-H Youth Development Program



YDP staff and volunteers to train members on awareness of hazards and actions that may reduce the risk of injury or illness due to activities occurring on, in, or near water.

IV. ADDRESSING WATER SAFETY AS PART OF 4-H MEMBER TRAINING

The planning process for 4-H activities occurring on, in, or near water should incorporate evaluations of potential risks for members to sustain injuries or illnesses. Once potential risks have been identified, appropriate safety training or controls to mitigate potential risks should be developed and implemented for 4-H members. Staff and volunteers may develop 4-H member safety training by deriving brief outlines or lesson plans that describe the types of topics to be covered and information to be presented.

Safety training may be incorporated into other educational instruction associated with a 4-H activity and may be accomplished through verbal instruction, instructor demonstrations, review of written or electronic materials, and/or viewing commercially prepared video recordings. In certain instances, a member may not be allowed to participate in an activity or utilize equipment or tools until they have demonstrated their understanding of associated hazards and procedures or achieved a necessary level of proficiency.

Staff and volunteers should document water-safety training of 4-H members by completing a Safety Meeting/Training form or equivalent record of training. Copies of the Safety Meeting/Training form are available at the volunteer's Cooperative Extension (CE) Office or online at the 4-H website: <http://www.ca4h.org/> and EH&S website: <http://safety.ucanr.org/4h>.

A variety of topics for water-safety training and specific guidance for potential hazards associated with 4-H YDP activities occurring on, in or around water are given in Sections V. through VIII. that follow in this document.

V. WATER CRAFT

A. Canoes

1. Prior to use, inspect the canoe for cracks, holes, broken seats, leaks, and other types of damage or disrepair. If the canoe fails your inspection, inform your group leader, parent, or guardian and remove it from use.
2. California regulations require all canoes to have one Coast Guard approved Personal Flotation Device (PFD) or life preserver for each person aboard. Therefore, always put on a properly fitted and approved PFD or life preserver before boarding a canoe.



4-H WATER SAFETY GUIDELINES

Prepared by ANR Environmental Health & Safety
in cooperation with the
California State 4-H Youth Development Program



3. It is recommended that anyone boarding a canoe be capable of swimming.
4. Inexperienced canoeists should not take a canoe out until they have undergone canoe training from an appropriately experienced instructor.
5. A good safety practice is to complete a Float Plan and give it to someone stationed onshore so they will know where you are going to canoe, who is going on the canoe trip, and when you are expected to return or complete the canoe route. See [Attachment B](#) for the U.S. Coast Guard Float Plan form.
6. When possible, be aware of the canoe route and anticipated water conditions, including stretches of white water, strong or swift currents, flooded or low water, or obstructed water where tree limbs, rocks, bridges, reefs, pilings, piers, docks, jetties, or other objects are potential collision hazards.
7. Know the carrying capacity and stability limitations of the canoe you intend to use. Always carry a spare paddle.
8. Wear personal protective equipment appropriate to the canoeing weather conditions: jackets or windbreakers during cool weather and light clothing, sunscreen, sun glasses, and a hat during warm weather.
9. Bring and consume an adequate amount of drinking water for the weather conditions.
10. Be aware that many water bodies in California receive and carry runoff from snow packs at high elevation. As a result, there is a hypothermia hazard if you go overboard into these cold waters.
11. Learn how to balance the canoe and prevent it from capsizing. Sit on the canoe seats or canoe bottom in the center of the craft.
12. When moving into, within, or out of a canoe, avoid sudden or jerky motions, bend your knees and crouch low, hold both sides of the canoe for balance, and walk along the craft's centerline. Do not stand up and walk in a canoe.
13. Distribute people and gear evenly throughout the canoe such that the canoe is trimmed correctly and the bow and stern draw equal amounts of water.
14. Always avoid or portage your canoe around dangerous water conditions (e.g. rapids) that are beyond your skill level and obstacles such as low-head dams that create hazardous boils or backrollers at the base of the dam.
15. When possible, paddle the canoe bow directly into waves.
16. Wear protective head gear when canoeing rapids or stretches of water with frequent boulders or rock outcrops.
17. Maintain a safe distance from water intake or outlet structures and



4-H WATER SAFETY GUIDELINES

Prepared by ANR Environmental Health & Safety
in cooperation with the
California State 4-H Youth Development Program



spillways.

18. Do not panic if your canoe capsizes. Stay with the canoe and move the canoe to a shoreline. Once you are in shallow water, you can turn the canoe over to dump out the water and climb back in.
19. Avoid canoeing on open expanses of water during thunderstorms and when winds are creating choppy waves. If weather conditions deteriorate, head for the shoreline.
20. Always follow all laws and regulations for waterways and water bodies.
21. If you are injured while canoeing, notify your project leader, parent, or guardian. Seek medical attention if the injury is serious.
22. If you notice that a member of your canoeing group is missing, immediately notify your project leader, parent, or guardian.

B. Sail Boats

1. Prior to use, inspect the sail boat and gear for hull cracks and fractures, delamination of fiberglass surfaces, frayed ropes and lines, tears and punctures in sails, and other types of damage or disrepair. If the sail boat or gear fails your inspection, inform your group leader, parent, or guardian and remove the sail boat and gear from use.
2. California regulations require all sail boats to have one Coast Guard approved Personal Flotation Device (PFD) or life preserver for each person aboard. Therefore, always put on a properly fitted and approved PFD or life preserver before boarding a sail boat.
3. It is recommended that anyone boarding a sail boat be capable of swimming.
4. Inexperienced sailors should not take a sail boat out until they have undergone sailing training from an appropriately experienced instructor.
5. A good safety practice is to complete a Float Plan and give it to someone stationed onshore so they will know where you are going to sail, who is going on the sail trip, and when you are expected to return or complete the sailing route. See [Attachment B](#) for the U.S. Coast Guard Float Plan form.
6. When possible, be aware of the sailing route and anticipated water conditions, including areas of strong or swift currents, shallow water, or obstructed water where bridges, rocks, reefs, pilings, piers, docks, jetties, or other objects are potential collision hazards.
7. Due to the height (30 feet or more) of a sail boat mast, overhead power lines are a serious hazard that must be recognized whether the vessel is on land (being launched) or in the water. Always maintain a safe clearance distance (10 feet or more) between the sail boat mast and rigging and overhead power lines.



4-H WATER SAFETY GUIDELINES

Prepared by ANR Environmental Health & Safety
in cooperation with the
California State 4-H Youth Development Program



8. Know the carrying capacity and stability limitations of the sail boat you intend to use.
 9. Bring and consume an adequate amount of drinking water for the weather conditions.
 10. Be aware that many water bodies in California receive and carry runoff from snow packs at high elevation. As a result, there is a hypothermia hazard if you unintentionally go overboard into these cold waters.
 11. Wear personal protective equipment appropriate to the sailing weather conditions: jackets or windbreakers during cool weather and light clothing, sunscreen, sun glasses, and a hat during warm weather. Wear slip resistant deck shoes.
 12. When boarding or unboarding a sail boat, make sure the craft is close enough to the dock to step onto or off the craft. Do not jump between a dock and boat.
 13. Once the sail boat is underway, carefully move around the vessel by holding onto grab rails or shrouds while walking in a slight crouch with knees bent and weight low.
 14. Be aware that frayed or broken stainless steel cable rigging can be very sharp and readily cut unprotected hands and fingers.
 15. When the boat is under sail, pay particular attention when the craft is jibbing or changing tacks downwind. During this maneuver, the boom may swing across the boat with substantial force causing impact injuries or knocking sailors overboard.
 16. It is advisable for sailors to wear harnesses connected to jacklines when sailing in rough seas.
 17. Maintain a safe distance from water intake or outlet structures and spillways.
 18. Do not panic if your sail boat capsizes. Stay with the sail boat.
 19. Avoid sailing during thunderstorms and when wind conditions are creating unsafe waves. If weather conditions deteriorate sufficiently, head for a safe harbor or the shoreline.
 20. Always follow all laws and regulations for waterways and water bodies.
 21. If you are injured while sailing, notify your project leader, parent, or guardian. Seek medical attention if the injury is serious.
 22. If you notice that a member of your sailing group is missing, immediately notify your project leader, parent, or guardian.
- C. Motorboats
1. California regulations state that a person must be at least 16 years to solely operate a motorboat with an engine greater than 15 horsepower. Furthermore, persons 12-15 years may operate a motorboat with an



4-H WATER SAFETY GUIDELINES

Prepared by ANR Environmental Health & Safety
in cooperation with the
California State 4-H Youth Development Program



- engine greater than 15 horsepower if supervised by a person at least 18 years of age.
2. Inspect the motorboat, including engine, fuel lines, fuel tank, and engine compartment bilge for damage, disrepair, and fuel leaks or vapors prior to use. If the motorboat fails your inspection, inform your group leader, parent, or guardian and remove the motorboat from use.
 3. California regulations require all motorboats to have one Coast Guard approved Personal Flotation Device (PFD) or life preserver for each person aboard. Therefore, always put on a properly fitted and approved PFD or life preserver before boarding a motorboat.
 4. California regulations require a fire extinguisher on vessels with inboard motors, and it is a good safety practice to have a fire extinguisher onboard any motorboat.
 5. It is recommended that anyone boarding a motorboat be capable of swimming.
 6. Inexperienced boaters should not take a motorboat out until they have undergone training from an appropriately experienced instructor.
 7. A good safety practice is to complete a Float Plan and give it to someone stationed onshore so they will know where you are going boating, who is going on the boat trip, and when you are expected to return or complete the boating route. See [Attachment B](#) for the U.S. Coast Guard Float Plan form.
 8. When possible, be aware of the boating route and anticipated water conditions, including areas of strong or swift currents, shallow water, or obstructed water where bridges, rocks, reefs, pilings, piers, docks, jetties, or other objects are potential collision hazards.
 9. Know the carrying capacity and stability limitations of the motorboat you intend to use. Spread the boat load evenly and secure gear to prevent shifting.
 10. Bring and consume an adequate amount of drinking water for the weather conditions.
 11. Be aware that many water bodies in California receive and carry runoff from snow packs at high elevation. As a result, there is a hypothermia hazard if you unintentionally go overboard into these cold waters.
 12. Wear personal protective equipment appropriate to the boating weather conditions: jackets or windbreakers during cool weather and light clothing, sunscreen, sun glasses, and a hat during warm weather. Wear slip resistant deck shoes.
 13. Never start a motorboat engine if fuel vapors are present or there is a fuel leak or loose electrical connection.
 14. Extinguish all open flames and turn off any equipment that could cause a spark before fueling a boat. Always take portable fuel tanks from the



4-H WATER SAFETY GUIDELINES

Prepared by ANR Environmental Health & Safety
in cooperation with the
California State 4-H Youth Development Program



boat and fill them on the dock or elsewhere outside the boat. Wipe up spilled fuel with a rag before starting the engine. Dispose of the fuel-soaked rag properly.

15. The maximum speed for a motorboat is five miles per hour when within 100 feet of a swimmer or 200 feet of a swimming beach or float, diving platform or life line, passenger landing being used, or landing where boats are tied up.
16. When boarding or unboarding a motorboat, make sure the craft is close enough to the dock to step onto or off the craft. Do not jump between a dock and boat.
17. Stay seated once the motorboat is underway. If you must move, then carefully move around the vessel while holding onto grab rails or gunwales.
18. Keep your hands and feet inside the boat when the vessel is moving.
19. Maintain a safe distance from water intake or outlet structures and spillways.
20. Do not panic if your motorboat capsizes. Stay with the motorboat.
21. Avoid boating during thunderstorms and when wind conditions are creating unsafe waves. If weather conditions deteriorate sufficiently, head for a safe harbor or the shoreline.
22. Always follow all laws, regulations, and posted speed limits or other instructions for waterways and water bodies.
23. If you are injured while motorboating, notify your project leader, parent, or guardian. Seek medical attention if the injury is serious.
24. If you notice that a member of your boating group is missing, immediately notify your project leader, parent, or guardian.

D. Kayaks

1. Inspect the kayak for damage or disrepair prior to use, including the water tightness of the hull and compartments. If the kayak fails your inspection, inform your group leader, parent, or guardian and remove it from use.
2. California regulations require all kayaks to have one Coast Guard approved Personal Flotation Device (PFD) or life preserver for each person aboard. Therefore, always put on a properly fitted and approved PFD or life preserver before boarding a kayak.
3. It is recommended that anyone boarding a kayak be capable of swimming and performing an "Eskimo Roll."
4. Inexperienced kayakers should not take a kayak out until they have undergone kayak training from an appropriately experienced instructor.
5. A good safety practice is to complete a Float Plan and give it to someone stationed onshore so they will know where you are going to kayak, who is going on the kayak trip, and when you are expected to



4-H WATER SAFETY GUIDELINES

Prepared by ANR Environmental Health & Safety
in cooperation with the
California State 4-H Youth Development Program



- return or complete the kayak route. See [Attachment B](#) for the U.S. Coast Guard Float Plan form.
6. When possible, be aware of the kayak route and anticipated water conditions, including stretches of white water, strong or swift currents, flooded or low water, or obstructed water where tree limbs, rocks, bridges, reefs, pilings, piers, docks, jetties, or other objects are potential collision hazards.
 7. Know the carrying capacity and stability limitations of the kayak you intend to use. Always carry a spare paddle.
 8. Wear personal protective equipment appropriate to the kayaking weather conditions: jackets or windbreakers during cool weather and light clothing, sunscreen, sun glasses, and a hat during warm weather.
 9. Bring and consume an adequate amount of drinking water for the weather conditions.
 10. Be aware that many water bodies in California receive and carry runoff from snow packs at high elevation. As a result, there is a hypothermia hazard if you go overboard into these cold waters.
 11. Learn how to balance the kayak and prevent it from capsizing.
 12. Kayaks may capsize, so practice how to get back into your kayak without assistance.
 13. Distribute gear evenly throughout the kayak such that the kayak is trimmed correctly and the bow and stern draw equal amounts of water.
 14. Always avoid or portage your kayak around dangerous water conditions (e.g. rapids) that are beyond your skill level and obstacles such as low-head dams that create hazardous boils or backrollers at the base of the dam.
 15. When possible, paddle the kayak bow directly into waves.
 16. Wear protective head gear when kayaking rapids or stretches of water with frequent boulders or rock outcrops.
 17. Maintain a safe distance from water intake or outlet structures and spillways.
 18. Pay particular attention to the course(s) being taken by other water craft. Kayaks ride low in the water and are difficult to spot so you must take action to keep out of the way of other water craft.
 19. Avoid kayaking on open expanses of water during thunderstorms and when there are strong winds. If weather conditions deteriorate, head for the shoreline.
 20. Always follow all laws and regulations for waterways and water bodies.
 21. If you are injured while kayaking, notify your project leader, parent, or guardian. Seek medical attention if the injury is serious.



4-H WATER SAFETY GUIDELINES

Prepared by ANR Environmental Health & Safety
in cooperation with the
California State 4-H Youth Development Program



-
22. If you notice that a member of your kayaking group is missing, immediately notify your project leader, parent, or guardian.
- E. Row Boats
1. Prior to use, inspect the row boat for damage and disrepair, including punctures or tears in the fabric of an inflatable boat. If the boat fails your inspection, inform your group leader, parent, or guardian and remove the row boat from use.
 2. California regulations require all row boats to have one Coast Guard approved Personal Flotation Device (PFD) or life preserver for each person aboard. Therefore, always put on a properly fitted and approved PFD or life preserver before boarding a row boat.
 3. It is recommended that anyone boarding a row boat be capable of swimming.
 4. Inexperienced boaters should not take a row boat out until they have undergone training from an appropriately experienced instructor.
 5. A good safety practice is to complete a Float Plan and give it to someone stationed onshore so they will know where you are going boating, who is going on the boat trip, and when you are expected to return or complete the boating route. See [Attachment B](#) for the U.S. Coast Guard Float Plan form.
 6. When possible, be aware of the boating route and anticipated water conditions, including areas of strong or swift currents, shallow water, or obstructed water where bridges, rocks, reefs, pilings, piers, docks, jetties, or other objects are potential collision hazards.
 7. Know the carrying capacity and stability limitations of the row boat you intend to use. Spread the boat load evenly and secure gear to prevent shifting.
 8. Bring and consume an adequate amount of drinking water for the weather conditions.
 9. Be aware that many water bodies in California receive and carry runoff from snow packs at high elevation. As a result, there is a hypothermia hazard if you unintentionally go overboard into these cold waters.
 10. Wear personal protective equipment appropriate to the boating weather conditions: jackets or windbreakers during cool weather and light clothing, sunscreen, sun glasses, and a hat during warm weather. Wear slip resistant shoes.
 11. When boarding or unboarding a row boat, make sure the craft is close enough to the dock to step onto or off the craft. Do not jump between a dock and boat.
 12. Stay seated once the row boat is underway. If you must move, then carefully move around the vessel while holding onto



4-H WATER SAFETY GUIDELINES

*Prepared by ANR Environmental Health & Safety
in cooperation with the
California State 4-H Youth Development Program*



- handholds or gunwales.
13. Keep your hands and feet inside the boat when the vessel is moving.
 14. Maintain a safe distance from water intake or outlet structures and spillways.
 15. Do not panic if your row boat capsizes. Stay with the row boat.
 16. When possible, row the boat bow directly into waves.
 17. Wear protective head gear when rowing in rapids or stretches of water with frequent boulders or rock outcrops.
 18. Avoid boating during thunderstorms and when wind conditions are creating unsafe waves. If weather conditions deteriorate sufficiently, head for a safe harbor or the shoreline.
 19. After docking the row boat, bring the oars into the boat.
 20. Always follow all laws and regulations for waterways and water bodies.
 21. If you are injured while boating, notify your project leader, parent, or guardian. Seek medical attention if the injury is serious.
 22. If you notice that a member of your row boat group is missing, immediately notify your project leader, parent, or guardian.

VI. Swimming and Diving

4-H Policy requires at least one certified lifeguard be present at any activity that involves swimming. Additional lifeguards shall be present, in a ratio of one lifeguard for every 25 4-H swimming participants, at any 4-H managed swimming venues such as those at 4-H camp or a private pool. Lifeguards at public pools and beaches are provided at sufficient ratios.

The recommended chaperone ratio is two (2) supervising adult volunteers be for ten (10) or less swimmers and an additional adult supervisor for every five swimmers exceeding the initial total of ten (10).

If a certified lifeguard is not provided at the swimming activity location, then it is the event organizer's responsibility to arrange the services of a certified lifeguard for the duration of the swimming activity. The certified lifeguard may be an adult volunteer or teen 4-H member that has completed the requirements of a training program sanctioned by the American Red Cross or American Lifeguard Association. Note: Public swimming pools usually have one or more certified lifeguards on duty during public swimming hours.



4-H WATER SAFETY GUIDELINES

Prepared by ANR Environmental Health & Safety
in cooperation with the
California State 4-H Youth Development Program



A. Recreational Swimming

1. Swimming Pools and Spas

- a. Pools and spas are required to be enclosed by fencing with self-closing and –latching gates.
- b. Lifesaving equipment such as a life preserver and pole should be located poolside. A telephone should also be nearby to call emergency responders.
- c. Ground fault interrupters are required for receptacles nearby pools and spas.
- d. Always completely remove the pool cover and pool cleaning equipment before allowing swimmers in the pool.
- e. Carefully regulate the spa water temperature to be less than 104 °f.
- f. Children must be continually watched by an adult when they are in or around a pool or spa. The supervising adult must concentrate on watching the children and not be distracted by other activities such as reading or conversing on a cell phone.
- g. Small children and children that are not able to swim should wear a personal flotation device (PFD) or life jacket when nearby a pool or spa.
- h. Knowing how to swim is the best preventative drowning measure for people that use or are in the vicinity of pools and spas.
- i. Inexperienced swimmers should keep to shallow water where they can stand with their chest and head above the water surface.
- j. Keep glass or other breakable items from nearby the pool or spa.
- k. A good safety practice is to enter the water feet first. Only dive head first into the water in areas that are posted for diving.
- l. Always check for obstructions before diving into a pool and wait for other swimmers to move out of the way before jumping into the water.
- m. Do not swim near diving boards and slides.
- n. Never run or participate in horseplay while poolside.
- o. Exit the pool or spa if a thunder or lighting storm approaches.
- p. Obey all posted signs and lifeguard instructions when at a public pool.
- q. Always follow the label instructions for pool and spa chemical use. Wash your hands after using pool or spa chemicals.
- r. Do not drain chemically charged pool or spa water into a storm drain or surface water body.
- s. Never use electrically powered equipment or tools in close proximity to a pool or spa.
- t. Always drain kiddie or wading pools when not being used.
- u. If you are injured while swimming, notify your project leader, parent, or guardian. Seek medical attention if the injury is serious.



4-H WATER SAFETY GUIDELINES

Prepared by ANR Environmental Health & Safety
in cooperation with the
California State 4-H Youth Development Program



-
- v. If you notice that a member of your swimming pool group is missing, immediately notify the lifeguard, your project leader, parent, or guardian.
2. Natural Bodies of Water
 - a. Knowing how to swim is the best preventative drowning measure for people that use or are in the vicinity natural bodies of water.
 - b. Only swim in areas that are under the supervision of a lifeguard.
 - c. Children must be continually watched by an adult when they are in or around natural bodies of water.
 - d. Small children and children that are not able to swim should wear a personal flotation device (PFD) or life jacket when wading or nearby a natural body of water.
 - e. Never swim alone. Swim with a partner or as part of a group.
 - f. When possible, be aware of the water conditions that may be encountered. In particular, avoid areas of swift currents and rapids, rip tides, deep water, sudden drop-offs, large waves, and obstructions such as rocks, tree limbs, aquatic plants, docks, platforms, piers, jetties, pilings, dams, spillways, and intake and outlet structures.
 - g. Do not swim in areas of commercial vessel, motorboat, sailing, rowing, wind surfing, and/or jet-ski traffic.
 - h. Always swim within your capabilities and endurance. Be aware when you are starting to become too cold, tired, or distant from the shore and begin taking action to retrace your swimming route or reach a nearby shoreline.
 - i. Stop swimming and seek shelter if a thunder or lightning storm approaches or at the first sign of bad weather or rough water conditions.
 - j. A good safety practice is to enter the water feet first. Only dive head first into the water in areas that are posted for diving.
 - k. Always check the water depth and for obstructions before diving into a natural body of water.
 - l. Wait for other swimmers to move out of the way before jumping into the water from a dock or platform.
 - m. Never swim beneath a dock or platform.
 - n. Diving from ledges or rock outcrops is not recommended because it is a very risky practice that can result in serious injury or death.
 - o. Do not attempt to swim against a rip or other current. Instead, escape the rip or other current by swimming across it and then gradually swimming at an angle to the shore.
 - p. Be cautious during periods of heavy surf. Large waves can lift you and throw you into the sand causing injuries.



4-H WATER SAFETY GUIDELINES

*Prepared by ANR Environmental Health & Safety
in cooperation with the
California State 4-H Youth Development Program*



- q. Do not swim in natural bodies of water that are in flood stage.
- r. Pay attention to the presence of wildlife in the natural body of water. In particular, avoid jellyfish, sea urchins, sharks, eels, sting rays, and other potentially hazardous marine animals.
- s. Wear sneakers or other footwear to protect your feet when wading along rocky shores or examining tidal pools.
- t. Obey all posted signs and lifeguard instructions when at a natural body of water.
- u. If you are injured while swimming, notify your project leader, parent, or guardian. Seek medical attention if the injury is serious.
- v. If you notice that a member of your swimming group is missing, immediately notify the lifeguard, your project leader, parent, or guardian.

B. Snorkeling

1. Prior to snorkeling, inspect your snorkel, diving mask, and fins to assure they will function properly. If any of your snorkeling equipment fails the inspection, inform your group leader, parent, or guardian and remove it from use.
2. It is recommended that first time snorkelers receive snorkeling training from an appropriately experienced instructor.
3. Snorkelers should possess relatively proficient swimming skills.
4. Never snorkel alone. Always snorkel with a partner or as part of a group.
5. It is necessary for snorkelers to learn how to clear their snorkel and mask and equalize pressure in their ears.
6. When possible, be aware of the water conditions that may be encountered. In particular, avoid areas of swift currents and rapids, rip tides, large waves, and obstructions such as rocks, tree limbs, aquatic plants, docks, platforms, piers, jetties, pilings, dams, spillways, and intake and outlet structures.
7. Do not snorkel in areas of commercial vessel, motorboat, sailing, rowing, wind surfing, and/or jet-ski traffic.
8. Always snorkel within your capabilities and endurance. Be aware when you are starting to become too cold, tired, or distant from the shore and begin taking action to retrace your snorkeling route or reach a nearby shoreline.
9. Stop snorkeling if a thunder or lightning storm approaches or at the first sign of bad weather or rough water conditions.
10. Pay attention to the presence of wildlife while snorkeling. In particular, avoid jellyfish, sea urchins, sharks, eels, sting rays, and other potentially hazardous marine animals.
11. A good safety practice is to use a personal flotation device when snorkeling.



4-H WATER SAFETY GUIDELINES

*Prepared by ANR Environmental Health & Safety
in cooperation with the
California State 4-H Youth Development Program*



12. Be cautious when snorkeling near coral reefs. The coral can be very sharp and cut inattentive snorkelers that bump into or brush against a reef.
13. Wear a wet suit when snorkeling in cold water.
14. If you are injured while snorkeling, notify your project leader, parent, or guardian. Seek medical attention if the injury is serious.
15. If you notice that a member of your snorkeling group is missing, immediately notify your project leader, parent, guardian, or lifeguard, if present.

C. Scuba Diving

1. All 4-H members must pass a certification course given by a qualified instructor before engaging in scuba diving.
2. A scuba diving certification card is required to fill air tanks, rent scuba equipment, and book commercial diving trips.
3. Prior to scuba diving, inspect your diving mask, fins, air tank and valve, regulator, pressure gauges, waterproof watch, wrist computer, and buoyancy compensator device (BCD) for damage and to assure they will function properly. If any of your scuba diving equipment fails the inspection, inform your group leader, parent, or guardian and remove it from use.
4. Scuba divers should possess relatively proficient swimming skills.
5. Never scuba dive alone. Always scuba dive with a partner or as part of a group.
6. Know your scuba diving limitations and never dive beyond your certification level.
7. Restrict your scuba diving to areas where you are qualified to go. For example, never scuba dive in underwater caves unless you have been specially trained for that diving environment.
8. When scuba diving with a group, always follow instructions given by the dive master.
9. When possible, be aware of the water conditions that may be encountered. In particular, avoid areas of swift currents and rapids, rip tides, large waves, and obstructions such as rocks, tree limbs, aquatic plants, docks, platforms, piers, jetties, pilings, dams, spillways, and intake and outlet structures.
10. Generate a dive plan that describes the route, time, and depth of the dive, local tides and currents, dive equipment and objectives, potential unusual conditions or hazards, emergency responses, and dive participants. Follow your dive plan.
11. Always use a diving signal buoy to alert others to your subsurface presence.



4-H WATER SAFETY GUIDELINES

Prepared by ANR Environmental Health & Safety
in cooperation with the
California State 4-H Youth Development Program



12. Avoid scuba diving in areas of commercial vessel, motorboat, sailing, rowing, wind surfing, and/or jet-ski traffic.
13. Always scuba dive within your capabilities and endurance.
14. Be vigilant about your remaining air supply and start your ascent to the surface with an adequate reserve air supply.
15. Carefully monitor your scuba diving depth and time underwater to assure you have an adequate air supply to perform an ascent with the appropriate number and duration of safety stops.
16. Do not hold your breath while ascending. Breathe normally.
17. It is a prudent safety practice to carry a diving knife in case you (or others) become entangled underwater and need to cut yourself (or others) free.
18. Stop scuba diving if a thunder or lightning storm approaches or at the first sign of bad weather or rough water conditions. Seek shelter on the shore.
19. Pay attention to the presence of wildlife while scuba diving. In particular, avoid jellyfish, sea urchins, sharks, eels, sting rays, and other potentially hazardous marine animals.
20. Be cautious when scuba diving near coral reefs. The coral can be very sharp and cut inattentive divers that bump into or brush against a reef.
21. Wear a wet suit when scuba diving in cold water.
22. If you experience pain after a dive, promptly seek medical attention.
23. If you are injured while scuba diving, notify your project leader, parent, or guardian. Seek medical attention if the injury is serious.
24. If you notice that a member of your scuba diving group is missing, immediately notify your project leader, parent, guardian, or lifeguard, if present.
25. Wait to fly after scuba diving. For a single dive, wait 12 hours to fly. For multiple dives or dives over multiple days, wait 18 hours to fly.

VII. WATER SPORTS

- A. Water and Wind Surfing
 1. Prior to water surfing, inspect your surfboard and leash for any damage and to assure they will function properly. Likewise, before wind surfing inspect your surfboard, sail, mast, and rigging, If any of your surfing gear fails the inspection, inform your group leader, parent, or guardian and remove it from use.
 2. Never wind surf without wearing a personal flotation device.
 3. It is recommended that first time surfers receive surfing training from an appropriately experienced instructor.
 4. Surfers should possess proficient swimming skills and be capable of controlling and steering the surfboard while paddling in rough water.



4-H WATER SAFETY GUIDELINES

*Prepared by ANR Environmental Health & Safety
in cooperation with the
California State 4-H Youth Development Program*



5. Never surf alone. Always water surf with a partner or as part of a group and where a lifeguard is present.
6. Always surf within your capabilities and endurance. Be aware when you are starting to become too cold or tired and begin action to return to shore.
7. Maintain awareness of the water conditions that may be encountered. In particular, avoid areas of rip tides, large waves, and obstructions such as rocks, reefs, aquatic plants, docks, platforms, piers, pilings, buoy markers, jetties, and other structures.
8. Avoid surfing in areas of commercial vessel, motorboat, sailing, rowing, and/or jet-ski traffic.
9. Practice good skin protection from ultraviolet radiation. Always wear lip balm and sunscreen when at the beach.
10. A good safety practice is to enter the water feet first. If you fall head first off your surfboard, extend your arm in front of you to protect your head and neck from a shallow seafloor or underwater obstruction.
11. When returning to the surface after falling off your surfboard, extend your arm in front of you to protect your head and neck from hitting your surfboard.
12. Do not attempt to swim against a rip or other current. Instead, escape the rip or other current by swimming across it and then gradually swimming at an angle to the shore.
13. Always observe beach safety flags for water conditions and obey lifeguard instructions. Do not surf in areas designated for swimmers.
14. Keep aware of surfers that are around you. Always maintain a safe distance from other surfers.
15. Surfing protocol encompasses the tradition whereby the person closest to the wave break has priority over others for surfing the wave.
16. Practice courtesy and good sportsmanship by relinquishing your position on a wave or potential position on a wave to surfers that have previously established a wave traverse that may intersect yours.
17. Be aware of changing surf conditions, particularly of increasing wind speeds and building waves that are beyond your capabilities.
18. Pay attention to the presence of wildlife while surfing. In particular, avoid jellyfish, sea urchins, sharks, eels, sting rays, and other potentially hazardous marine animals.
19. Wear a wet suit when surfing in cold water.
20. Stop surfing if a thunder or lightning storm approaches or at the first sign of bad weather or rough water conditions. Seek shelter on the shore.
21. If you are injured while surfing, notify your project leader, parent, or guardian. Seek medical attention if the injury is serious.
22. If you notice that a member of your surfing group is missing, immediately notify your project leader, parent, or guardian.



4-H WATER SAFETY GUIDELINES

Prepared by ANR Environmental Health & Safety
in cooperation with the
California State 4-H Youth Development Program



B. Water Skiing and Wake/Knee Boarding

1. Prior to water skiing or wake boarding, inspect your water skis and ski/foot bindings, or wake/knee board and tow fittings, bar, and rope for any damage and to assure they will function properly. If any of your skiing or boarding gear fail the inspection, inform your group leader, parent, or guardian and remove it from use.
2. California regulations require the following for water skiing and wake/knee boarding:
 - a. Any person being towed by a boat must wear an approved Personal Flotation Device (PFD).
 - b. Two persons must be onboard the tow boat with one person being the boat operator while the other person observes the individual(s) being towed. In addition, the person doing the observing must be 12 years or older.
 - c. Water skiing and wake/knee boarding are prohibited during the time period from sunset to sunrise.
 - d. A ski flag must be displayed to alert others when a water skier or skiing equipment is in the water.
 - e. It is prohibited to operate a boat, towline, or other equipment controlling the water skier or wake/knee boarder so as to cause a collision between the skier/boarder and an object or other person.
 - f. When motorboats are providing the tow, operators must follow requirements for speed limits, operator age limitations, and use of PDFs (see Sections V.C.1., V.C.3., and V.C.13. above).
3. It is recommended that first time water skiers and wave/knee boarders receive skiing or boarding training from an appropriately experienced instructor.
4. Water skiers and wave/knee boarders should possess relatively proficient swimming skills.
5. A good safety practice is to complete a Float Plan and give it to someone stationed onshore so they will know where you are going water skiing or wave/knee boarding, who is going water skiing or wave/knee boarding, and when you are expected to return. See [Attachment B](#) for the U.S. Coast Guard Float Plan form.
6. When possible, be aware of the water skiing or wave/knee boarding area and anticipated water conditions, including areas of strong or swift currents, shallow or rough water, or obstructed water where bridges, rocks, reefs, pilings, piers, docks, jetties, buoy markers, or other objects are potential collision hazards.
7. The U.S. Coast Guard recommends that water skiing areas be at least 200 feet wide and 2,000–3,000 feet long with minimum water depths of five to six feet. Wave/knee boarding areas should be similarly sized.



4-H WATER SAFETY GUIDELINES

Prepared by ANR Environmental Health & Safety
in cooperation with the
California State 4-H Youth Development Program



8. Avoid water skiing or wave/knee boarding in areas of commercial vessel, motorboat, sailing, rowing, and/or jet-ski traffic. Do not water ski or wave/knee board in close proximity to swimming areas such as beaches and floating docks.
9. Water skiers, observers, and boat operators need to discuss and agree upon a set of hand signals to relay safety and other information.
10. The boat engine should be shut off before any water skiers or wave/knee boarders enter the water. If available, use the swim platform for water entry.
11. Once the water skier or wave/knee boarder has attached their ski/skis or board, then the tow rope should be thrown to them. Thereafter, the boat should be slowly moved from the water skier or wave/knee boarder until the tow rope slack has been taken up.
12. When the water skier or wave/knee boarder has a firm grasp of the tow rope handle and is ready, they give the hand signal to the boat operator for the boat to accelerate.
13. Recreational water skiing or wave/knee boarding typically occurs at speeds of 18–25 miles per hour.
14. When water skiing or wave/knee boarding, be careful of cross-wakes from other water craft.
15. If you begin to fall, try to relax and glide smoothly into the water. Falling forward over your water ski tips is dangerous and should be avoided, if possible.
16. If you need to stop quickly, let go of the tow rope and sit back on your water skis or wave/knee board while placing both your hands out and into the water to help stop your momentum.
17. Once you have fallen and are in the water, lift one ski or the wave/knee board out of the water to alert the tow boat and other nearby water craft of your location.
18. Tow boats should promptly return to fallen water skiers or wave/knee boarders.
19. Always approach fallen water skiers and wave/knee boarders on the operator's side of the tow boat and at a no-wake speed. Stop the engine when close to the fallen water skier or wave/knee boarder and allow them to swim to pick up the tow rope or return to the boat.
20. Avoid water skiing or wave/knee boarding during thunderstorms and when wind conditions are creating unsafe waves. If weather conditions deteriorate sufficiently, head for a safe harbor or the shoreline.
21. Wear a wet suit when water skiing or wave/knee boarding in cold water.
22. Always follow all laws and regulations for waterways and water bodies.



4-H WATER SAFETY GUIDELINES

Prepared by ANR Environmental Health & Safety
in cooperation with the
California State 4-H Youth Development Program



23. If you are injured while water skiing or wave/knee boarding, notify your project leader, parent, or guardian. Seek medical attention if the injury is serious.
 24. If you notice that a member of your water skiing or wave/knee boarding group is missing, immediately notify your project leader, parent, or guardian.
- C. Rafting and Tubing
1. Prior to use, inspect the raft or tube for damage and disrepair, including punctures or tears in the fabric of inflatable craft. If the raft or tube fails your inspection, inform your group leader, parent, or guardian and remove the craft from use.
 2. It is a good safety practice for each person aboard a raft or tube to wear a properly fitted Coast Guard approved Personal Flotation Device (PFD) or life preserver.
 3. It is recommended that anyone boarding a raft or tube be capable of swimming.
 4. Inexperienced rafters or tubers should not take a raft or tube out until they have undergone training from an appropriately experienced instructor.
 5. A good safety practice is to complete a Float Plan and give it to someone stationed onshore so they will know where you are going rafting or tubing, who is going rafting or tubing, and when you are expected to return or complete the rafting or tubing route. See [Attachment B](#) for the U.S. Coast Guard Float Plan form.
 6. When possible, be aware of the rafting or tubing route and anticipated water conditions, including areas of strong or swift currents, shallow or rapidly rising water, or obstructed water where bridges, rocks, reefs, pilings, piers, docks, jetties, or other objects are potential collision hazards.
 7. When rafting in areas of whitewater or swiftwater, obtain the services of a certified river rafting guide.
 8. Know the carrying capacity and stability limitations of the raft or tube you intend to use. Spread the raft or tube load evenly and secure gear to prevent shifting or loss overboard.
 9. Pay attention to the leader's instructions and follow their directions promptly when part of a rafting crew.
 10. Be aware that many water bodies in California receive and carry runoff from snow packs at high elevation. As a result, there is a hypothermia hazard if you unintentionally go overboard into these cold waters.



4-H WATER SAFETY GUIDELINES

*Prepared by ANR Environmental Health & Safety
in cooperation with the
California State 4-H Youth Development Program*



11. Wear personal protective equipment appropriate to the rafting or tubing weather conditions: jackets or windbreakers during cool weather and light clothing, sunscreen, sun glasses, and a hat during warm weather. Wear slip resistant shoes.
12. Bring and consume an adequate amount of drinking water for the weather conditions.
13. Wear protective head gear when rafting or tubing rapids or stretches of water with frequent boulders or rock outcrops.
14. When boarding or unboarding a raft or tube, make sure the craft is close enough to step onto or off the craft. Be aware that stepping from a shoreline onto a raft or into a tube is often a slippery proposition.
15. Stay seated once the raft or tube is underway. If you must move, then carefully move around the craft while holding onto handholds or gunwales.
16. Keep your feet inside the raft or tube when the vessel is moving.
17. Maintain a safe distance from water intake or outlet structures and spillways.
18. Always avoid or portage your raft or tube around dangerous water conditions (e.g. rapids) that are beyond your skill level and obstacles such as low-head dams that create hazardous boils or backrollers at the base of the dam.
19. Do not panic if your raft or tube capsizes. When possible, stay with the raft or tube. Otherwise, head for the shoreline by the safest route.
20. Tying rafts or tubes together is a dangerous practice because it creates a cumbersome craft that steers poorly.
21. Wear a wet suit when rafting or tubing in cold water.
22. Avoid rafting or tubing during thunderstorms and when wind conditions are creating unsafe waves. If weather conditions deteriorate sufficiently, head for a safe harbor or the shoreline.
23. If you are injured while rafting or tubing, notify your project leader, parent, or guardian. Seek medical attention if the injury is serious.
24. If you notice that a member of your rafting or tubing group is missing, immediately notify your project leader, parent, or guardian.

VIII. MISCELLANEOUS WATER ENCOUNTERS

A. Hiking, Camping, and Fishing

1. Hiking

- a. Hiking frequently takes place adjacent to and/or requires crossing bodies of water such as lakes, ponds, reservoirs, lagoons, marshes, bays, streams, rivers, canals, irrigation ditches, and the ocean.



4-H WATER SAFETY GUIDELINES

Prepared by ANR Environmental Health & Safety
in cooperation with the
California State 4-H Youth Development Program



- b. Be aware that wet ground and surfaces adjacent to bodies of water are slippery and should be carefully traversed to prevent falls.
- c. Bodies of water attract insects and other forms of wildlife that may pose biting or stinging hazards to hikers. Accordingly, use an insect repellent to protect yourself from insects and allow plenty of room for other forms of wildlife, such as snakes, to escape from you.
- d. If a stream, irrigation ditch, or other waterway is to be crossed, use a walking stick or branch to probe bottom conditions and water depth in front of you.
- e. Always wear shoes when crossing or entering water bodies.
- f. Do not jump from the bank into a stream, irrigation ditch, or other waterway. Slowly enter the water as you feel for the bottom and determine water depth.
- g. It is a good safety practice to rope yourself off to others, located on the bank, when attempting to cross an unfamiliar or vigorously flowing stream, irrigation ditch, or other waterway
- h. Never attempt to cross a stream, irrigation ditch, or waterway that has an overly swift current or appears to be dangerously deep. Find another, safer crossing spot.
- i. Crossing an ice/snow covered stream, irrigation ditch, or other waterway is very dangerous due to the potential for open water or thin ice. Alternatively, it is a much safer practice to find another crossing with solid footing.
- j. Anticipate slippery conditions when using a rock pathway or log/scrap wood bridge to cross a waterway.
- k. Be aware that many waterways in California receive and carry runoff from snow packs at high elevation. As a result, there is a hypothermia hazard if you enter or unintentionally fall into these cold waters.
- l. Never drink untreated water from any water body. Carry an adequate supply of potable drinking water.
- m. If your socks and shoes get wet when crossing a waterway, it is a good practice to remove your shoes and socks and dry them as best as possible. Then put on a clean, dry pair of socks followed by your shoes.
- n. Be aware of local tide cycles when hiking along beaches or adjacent to other marine environments such as estuaries or lagoons.
- o. Always pay special attention to young hikers, non-swimmers, and poor swimmers when hiking nearby water bodies. Be prepared to provide them immediate assistance if they slip or fall into the water.



4-H WATER SAFETY GUIDELINES

Prepared by ANR Environmental Health & Safety
in cooperation with the
California State 4-H Youth Development Program



-
- p. Avoid being caught in the open near a water body during thunderstorms. If a thunderstorm approaches, head inland or away from the body of water and seek shelter.
 - q. If you are injured while hiking, notify your project leader, parent, or guardian. Seek medical attention if the injury is serious.
 - r. If you notice that a member of your hiking group is missing, immediately notify your project leader, parent, or guardian.
2. Camping
- a. Camping frequently takes place adjacent to bodies of water such as lakes, ponds, reservoirs, lagoons, marshes, bays, streams, rivers, canals, irrigation ditches, and the ocean.
 - b. All campers should know when organized water activities are scheduled, what personal protective equipment is required, and all rules overseeing the activity. Safety precautions for organized water activities are discussed in detail in Sections V through VII in this document.
 - c. Camping area water hazards should be clearly identified to all campers. In particular, campers should be notified of waterways with swift currents and water bodies with steep banks and deep water drop offs.
 - d. Access to water hazards may be controlled by posting signs warning of camping area water hazards or cordoning them off with caution tape.
 - e. It is a good safety practice to restrict access to docks that are not being used or under the supervision of an adult.
 - f. Campers that are young, non-swimmers, and poor swimmers should be particularly warned of water hazards and instructed about buffer zone boundaries around these hazards.
 - g. Young campers should be continually watched by an adult when they are nearby any body of water.
 - h. Be aware that wet ground and surfaces adjacent to bodies of water are slippery and should be carefully traversed to prevent falls.
 - i. Bodies of water attract insects and other forms of wildlife that may pose biting or stinging hazards to campers. Accordingly, use an insect repellent to protect yourself from insects and allow plenty of room for other forms of wildlife, such as snakes, to escape from you.
 - j. Be aware that many waterways in California receive and carry runoff from snow packs at high elevation. As a result, there is a hypothermia hazard if you enter or unintentionally fall into these cold waters.



4-H WATER SAFETY GUIDELINES

Prepared by ANR Environmental Health & Safety
in cooperation with the
California State 4-H Youth Development Program



-
- k. Never drink untreated water from any water body. Carry an adequate supply of potable drinking water.
 - l. Be aware of local tide cycles when camping on beaches or adjacent to other marine environments such as estuaries or lagoons.
 - m. Avoid being caught in the open near a water body during thunderstorms. If a thunderstorm approaches, head inland or away from the body of water and seek shelter.
 - n. If you are injured while camping, notify your project leader, parent, or guardian. Seek medical attention if the injury is serious.
 - o. If you notice that a member of your camping group is missing, immediately notify your project leader, parent, or guardian.
3. Fishing
- a. Fishing may take place on or adjacent to bodies of water such as lakes, ponds, reservoirs, lagoons, marshes, bays, streams, rivers, canals, irrigation ditches, and the ocean.
 - b. When fishing from canoes, motorboats, or row boats, follow the water craft safety precautions given in Sections V.A., V.C., and V.E. of this document.
 - c. When fishing from the shore, be aware that wet ground and surfaces adjacent to bodies of water are slippery and should be carefully traversed to prevent falls.
 - d. When fishing from a steep bank, maintain a safe distance back from bank edge.
 - e. When fishing from a dock or pier, be conscious of slippery, wet surfaces and keep behind guard rails.
 - f. When surf fishing, pay attention to local tide cycles and changes in wave height and intensity due to wind or other weather conditions.
 - g. When fishing while wading, always wear a personal flotation device (PFD) or life preserver.
 - h. When fishing while wading, determine bottom conditions and the presence of drop offs or holes by slowly and carefully shuffling your feet or probing with a stick or branch in front of you.
 - i. Do not wade into water deeper than your hips to fish.
 - j. Wear personal protective equipment when fishing, such as shoes, sunglasses or other eye protection, sunscreen, and a hat.
 - k. Fishing persons that are young, non-swimmers, and poor swimmers should always wear a PFD or life preserver when near a water body.
 - l. Before venturing onto a frozen body of water to ice fish, determine whether there is an adequate thickness of ice (at least four inches) to support you. Also, learn the locations of outfalls, tributaries,



4-H WATER SAFETY GUIDELINES

*Prepared by ANR Environmental Health & Safety
in cooperation with the
California State 4-H Youth Development Program*



springs, or areas of fast moving water that may cause abnormally thin ice of less than four inches thickness.

- m. Never drink untreated water from any water body. Carry and consume an adequate supply of potable drinking water.
- n. Bodies of water attract insects and other forms of wildlife that may pose biting or stinging hazards to fishermen. Accordingly, use an insect repellent to protect yourself from insects and allow plenty of room for other forms of wildlife, such as snakes, to escape from you.
- o. Be aware that many waterways in California receive and carry runoff from snow packs at high elevation. As a result, there is a hypothermia hazard if you enter or unintentionally fall into these cold waters.
- p. Avoid being caught in the open near a water body during thunderstorms. If a thunderstorm approaches, head inland or away from the body of water and seek shelter.
- q. If you are injured while fishing, notify your project leader, parent, or guardian. Seek medical attention if the injury is serious.
- r. If you notice that a member of your fishing group is missing, immediately notify your project leader, parent, or guardian.

B. Water Parks

- 1. Water park attendees that are young, non-swimmers, and poor swimmers should always acquire and use a water park personal flotation device (PFD) or life preserver.
- 2. Always read and obey all posted water park rules.
- 3. Always follow lifeguard instructions and directives.
- 4. Practice good skin protection from ultraviolet radiation. Always wear lip balm and sunscreen when at a water park.
- 5. Never run on slippery, wet pool decks.
- 6. Do not engage in horseplay.
- 7. Make sure you meet the height and weight requirements for the water slide or flume you intend to ride.
- 8. Do not wear glasses or jewelry on water park slide and flumes.
- 9. Read, understand, and follow the directions for how to sit or lie on water slides or flumes.
- 10. Ride water slides and flumes on your back with your feet first.
- 11. Keep your hands and feet inside the slide when riding it.
- 12. After landing at the end of the slide or flume, promptly exit the plunge pool.
- 13. Never drink pool water. Consume an adequate amount of potable drinking water.
- 14. Young water park attendees should be continually watched by an adult.



4-H WATER SAFETY GUIDELINES

Prepared by ANR Environmental Health & Safety
in cooperation with the
California State 4-H Youth Development Program



15. If a thunderstorm approaches, follow water park instructions to exit the water and seek shelter.
16. If you are injured at a water park, notify your project leader, parent, or guardian. Seek medical attention if the injury is serious.
17. If you notice that a member of your water park group is missing, immediately notify your project leader, parent, or guardian.

C. Tidal Pool Exploration

1. Tidal pool explorers that are young, non-swimmers, and poor swimmers should always wear a personal flotation device (PFD) or life preserver.
2. Wear personal protective equipment appropriate to tidal pool weather conditions: jackets or windbreakers during cool weather and light clothing, sunscreen, sun glasses, and a hat during warm weather. Wear slip resistant shoes or rubber boots.
3. Remain on the beach access trail or path when walking to the tidal pool. Step carefully when hiking on a steep trail or path to the beach.
4. When exploring tidal pools, pay attention to local tide cycles and changes in wave height and intensity due to wind or other weather conditions. Do not get stranded at the tidal pool by an incoming tide.
5. Tidal pool rocks can be slippery so be cautious and step carefully to prevent falls. Avoid stepping on tidal pool plants and animals.
6. Always listen to and follow the volunteer leader's instructions about tidal pools and tidal pool plants and animals. Do not touch plants and animals unless the volunteer leader has given permission.
7. After examining a tidal pool inhabitant, return it to the place where it was found. Collecting from tidal pools is generally prohibited. If you turn over a rock, carefully replace it.
8. Stay with your tidal pool exploration group and volunteer leader. Do not wander off on your own.
9. Be alert and face toward incoming waves when exploring the tidal pool. Identify an adult who is the official wave watcher, though all participants should be constantly aware of the waves and tidal surge. Caution learned early will remain for a life time.
10. Read and obey any posted beach signs.
11. Avoid rockfalls and slope failures by staying back from beach cliffs and steep bluffs.
12. Stop exploring the tidal pool if a thunder or lightning storm approaches or at the first sign of bad weather or rough water conditions. Seek shelter on the shore.
13. If you are injured while exploring tidal pools, notify your volunteer leader, parent, or guardian. Seek medical attention if the injury is serious.
14. If you notice that a member of your tidal pool exploration group is missing, immediately notify your project leader, parent, or guardian.



4-H WATER SAFETY GUIDELINES

Prepared by ANR Environmental Health & Safety
in cooperation with the
California State 4-H Youth Development Program



D. Other 4-H Event Locations Where Water May Be Present

1. Private Property

- a. A variety of water bodies may be present at 4-H events that take place on private property, including streams, rivers, ponds, lakes, reservoirs, canals, aqueducts, irrigation ditches, livestock watering troughs, and backyard pools, hot tubs, fountains, and fish or ornamental ponds.
- b. At the beginning of the 4-H event, the organizer(s) should inform guests about the types of water hazards on the private property and whether any of the water hazards are controlled to prevent access.
- c. Young, non-swimming, and poor swimming 4-H event attendees should be specifically instructed about how close they can approach water hazards.
- d. When water hazards are present at 4-H events on private property, young attendees should be continually watched by one or more adults.
- e. Gates to pools, spas, and docks should be secured to prevent unsupervised attendee access to these areas.
- f. Never use any private property water craft unless given permission by the 4-H project leader and property owner.
- g. If a thunderstorm approaches, follow instructions to exit the area and seek shelter.
- h. If you are injured while attending a 4-H event on private property, notify your project leader, parent, or guardian. Seek medical attention if the injury is serious.
- i. If you notice that a member of your group is missing, immediately notify your project leader, parent, or guardian.

2. Public Property

- a. A variety of water bodies may be present at 4-H events that take place on public property, including streams, rivers, ponds, lakes, reservoirs, canals, aqueducts, irrigation ditches, livestock watering troughs, swimming pools, fountains, and ornamental ponds.
- b. At the beginning of the 4-H event, the organizer(s) should inform guests about the types of water hazards on the public property and whether any of the water hazards are controlled to prevent access.
- c. Young, non-swimming, and poor swimming 4-H event attendees should be specifically instructed about how close they can approach water hazards.



4-H WATER SAFETY GUIDELINES

*Prepared by ANR Environmental Health & Safety
in cooperation with the
California State 4-H Youth Development Program*



-
- d. When water hazards are present at 4-H events on public property, young attendees should be continually watched by one or more adults.
 - e. Gates to pools and docks should be secured to prevent unsupervised attendee access to these areas.
 - f. Never use any water craft unless given permission by the 4-H project leader.
 - g. If a thunderstorm approaches, follow instructions to exit the area and seek shelter.
 - h. If you are injured while attending a 4-H event on public property, notify your project leader, parent, or guardian. Seek medical attention if the injury is serious.
 - i. If you notice that a member of your group is missing, immediately notify your project leader, parent, or guardian.
3. Aquariums
- a. Several types of water bodies may be present at aquariums, including fountains, ornamental ponds, and animal feeding and touching pools.
 - b. Always read and obey all posted aquarium rules, especially for animal feeding and touching pools.
 - c. Never run on slippery, wet aquarium surfaces.
 - d. Do not engage in horseplay.
 - e. At the beginning of the 4-H aquarium visit, the project leader should inform members about the types of water hazards at the aquarium and to remain behind all guard rails.
 - f. When nearby aquarium water hazards, young 4-H attendees should be continually watched by one or more adults.
 - g. If a thunderstorm approaches, follow aquarium instructions to exit the area and seek shelter.
 - h. If you are injured at an aquarium, notify your project leader, parent, or guardian. Seek medical attention if the injury is serious.
 - i. If you notice that a member of your aquarium group is missing, immediately notify your project leader, parent, or guardian.
4. Zoos
- a. Several types of water bodies may be present at zoos, including fountains, ornamental ponds, and moats.
 - b. Always read and obey all posted zoo rules, especially for animal feeding and touching.
 - c. Never run on slippery, wet zoo surfaces.
 - d. Do not engage in horseplay.



4-H WATER SAFETY GUIDELINES

Prepared by ANR Environmental Health & Safety
in cooperation with the
California State 4-H Youth Development Program



-
- e. At the beginning of the 4-H zoo visit, the project leader should inform members about the types of water hazards at the zoo and to remain behind all guard rails.
 - f. When nearby zoo water hazards, young 4-H attendees should be continually watched by one or more adults.
 - g. If a thunderstorm approaches, follow zoo instructions to exit the area and seek shelter.
 - h. If you are injured at an zoo, notify your project leader, parent, or guardian. Seek medical attention if the injury is serious.
 - i. If you notice that a member of your zoo group is missing, immediately notify your project leader, parent, or guardian.
5. Fairs
- a. Several types of water bodies may be present at fairs, including fountains, ornamental ponds, and livestock watering troughs.
 - b. Always read and obey all posted fair rules, especially for animal feeding and touching.
 - c. Never run on slippery, wet surfaces.
 - d. Do not engage in horseplay.
 - e. At the beginning of the 4-H fair visit, the project leader should inform members about the types of water hazards at the fair and explain which areas are off limits.
 - f. When nearby fair water hazards, young 4-H members should be continually watched by one or more adults.
 - g. If a thunderstorm approaches, follow fair instructions to exit the area and seek shelter.
 - h. If you are injured at a fair, notify your project leader, parent, or guardian. Seek medical attention if the injury is serious.
 - i. If you notice that a member of your fair group is missing, immediately notify your project leader, parent, or guardian.
6. Amusement Parks
- a. Several types of water bodies may be present at amusement parks, including fountains and ornamental ponds.
 - b. Always read and obey all posted amusement park rules.
 - c. Never run on slippery, wet amusement park surfaces.
 - d. Do not engage in horseplay.
 - e. At the beginning of the 4-H amusement park visit, the project leader should inform members about the types of water hazards at the amusement park and to remain behind all guard rails.
 - f. When nearby amusement park water hazards, young 4-H members should be continually watched by one or more adults.



4-H WATER SAFETY GUIDELINES

*Prepared by ANR Environmental Health & Safety
in cooperation with the
California State 4-H Youth Development Program*



-
- g. If a thunderstorm approaches, follow amusement park instructions to exit the area and seek shelter.
 - h. If you are injured at an amusement park, notify your project leader, parent, or guardian. Seek medical attention if the injury is serious.
 - i. If you notice that a member of your amusement park group is missing, immediately notify your project leader, parent, or guardian.

Float Plan

Complete this form before going boating and leave it with a reliable person who can be depended upon to notify the Coast Guard or other rescue organization, should you not return as scheduled.

Do not file this plan with the Coast Guard. Remember to contact your friend in case of delay and when you return.

1. Person Reporting Overdue

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

2. Description of Boat

Name _____

Registration/Documentation No. _____ Length _____

Make _____ Type _____

Hull Color _____ Trim Color _____

Fuel Capacity _____ Engine Type _____ No. of Engines _____

Distinguishing Features _____

3. Operator of Boat

Name _____

Age _____

Health _____ Phone _____

Address _____

Operator's Experience _____

4. Survival Equipment (Check as Appropriate)

___ PFDs Flares Mirror

Smoke Signals Flashlight Food

Paddles Water Anchor

Raft or Dinghy EPIRB

Others

5. Marine Radio: Yes No

Type _____ Freqs. _____

Digital Selective Calling (DSC) Yes No

6. Trip Expectations

Depart from _____

Departure Date _____ Time _____

Going to _____

Arrival Date _____ Time _____

If operator has not arrived/returned by:

Date _____ Time _____

call the Coast Guard or Local authority at the following number:

7. Vehicle Description

License No. _____ Make _____

Model _____ Color _____

Where is vehicle parked? _____

8. Persons on Board

Name Age Phone Medical Conditions

9. Additional Information

