

Responding to COVID-19: Summary of Recommendations

May 23, 2020

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to widespread cessation, across the globe, of most educational, commercial, competitive, and recreational activities. To help the paddlesports community begin resuming activities, we conducted extensive analysis, including involvement from medical, paddlesports, and legal experts. This led to the development of a set of documents/tools, which we are making publicly available. The intent of this work is to help answer two questions: First, is it safe to take a group paddling? Second, what are the best ways to protect myself and the group? This document provides a summary of our major recommendations.

Many additional recommendations and suggestions are available in the materials that we have developed. These materials are referenced below, for those who are interested. **Paddlesports During the Age of COVID-19: Risk Assessment & Risk Management** is a detailed analysis which was used as the basis for formulating the recommendations. The **Additional Materials** below provide detailed recommendations organized into ten areas covering key topics.

Depending upon what level of depth you wish to get into there are, at least, 4 options:

1. This document provides a very high-level summary of the recommendations
2. The appendices provide more detailed recommendations, in specific areas
3. The Executive Summary of the main document provides an overview of the analysis which was the basis for the recommendations
4. The main document provides the detailed analysis

When Should You Consider Following These Recommendations?

This is ultimately up to each paddlesports leader/paddler to decide. Each individual will need to make their own choices as to how to balance potential risks and rewards.

Which Specific Recommendations Should You Consider Following?

This too is ultimately up to each paddlesports leader/paddler to decide. Each individual will need to make their own choices as to how to balance risks and rewards.

Summary of Major Recommendations

1. Follow guidance from key public health entities, for example, the CDC, state, and local health departments.
2. Consider performing a *Health Status Screening*, prior to a paddlesports event, at the commencement of the event, and first thing in the morning for multi-day events.
3. Always attempt to maintain social distancing (currently specified at 6 feet (2 meters), while on land, and on the water.
4. Wash or sanitize hands frequently – especially before and after touching something that someone else may have touched or may touch later.
5. While on land, consider wearing either a surgical type mask, or an improvised mask (such as a neck gaiter) to cover your mouth and nose. In addition, consider wearing eye

protection (regular eyeglasses, regular sunglasses or, even better, wraparound safety glasses).

6. While on the water, consider wearing an improvised mask (e.g., a neck gaiter) to cover your mouth and nose. In addition, consider wearing eye protection (regular eyeglasses, regular sunglasses or, even better, wraparound safety glasses).
7. Plan paddlesports events so they minimize the loss of social distancing to the extent possible. For example, chose a venue where people can spread out sufficiently to maintain social distancing.
8. Plan paddlesports event activities so that they minimize the amount of time participants will be in close proximity to one another. For example, stagger event arrival times and launching times.
9. Run paddlesports events to ensure that social distancing is maintained. For example, avoid allowing situations to develop where boats "stack up", e.g., launch and landing sites, tight eddys, etc.
10. Rescues, especially assisted ones, greatly increase the likelihood of significant loss of social distancing. Accordingly, plan and run events in such a way as to minimize the likelihood of unplanned assisted rescues. For example, if possible, stay close enough to shallow water/shore so that swimmers can walk or swim their boats in. Choosing venues and activities which are well within the skill level of all paddlers will also help to decrease the likelihood of unplanned rescues.

Additional Materials

For additional details, refer to the documents below (click on the title for the hyperlink):

- [Event Planning](#)
- [Event Planning Grid](#)
- [Infection Prevention and Control Interventions](#)
- [Health Screening Tool](#)
- [PPE](#)
- [Risk Assessment](#)
- [Running a Paddlesports Event](#)
- [Risk Management](#)
- [Rescues](#)
- [Contact Tracking Log](#)
- [Paddlesports During the Age of COVID-19: Risk Assessment & Risk Management](#)

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