

WHITEWATER ONTARIO



Club Event & River Sanctioning Application Requirements

In order for the General Liability and Sport Accident coverage to be in place, the club must be a club in good standing having paid the club base fee, plus the individual member fees in accordance with the current Whitewater Ontario (W/O) member fee schedule for all club members.

The club must complete and submit an Application for Insurance and certified Sanctioning Agreement. The application shall include a list of rivers that the club wishes to paddle throughout the coverage season (April 1st – March 31st). In addition, the name, and applicable details of any paddling event (Festivals, Races, Competitions, etc.) that would not be considered a standard 'river-run', or by nature render adherence to the Whitewater Ontario Safety Policy unfeasible (e.g. Hell or High Water Race paddled without Trip Leader, King of Clubs events being non-standard 'river-run' activities, etc.). Any River / Event listed on the W/O "pre-approved" sanctioning list need not be listed. Information for each individual river shall include the following information:

- River Name & Section
- River / Rapid Classifications
- River Level / Flow ranges (Including any information regarding flow conditions that may change a rivers classification. E.g. does the river, or any rapid significantly change in difficulty/consequence at certain flow conditions)
- Location of gauge(s) where available (Online or Physical Gauge)
- Reference material for River description/classification (e.g. Guide Book, Website, etc.) where applicable.

Note: Whitewater Ontario is not able to sanction any Class-5 or higher River/Rapid. Any river considered Class-5 or higher as a whole shall not be included. Additionally, for any river which contains a Class-5 or higher rapid, the rapid shall be identified and listed "Unsanctioned"

The Event Sanctioning Application shall also include a listing of Trip Leaders approved by the club. Information for each Trip Leader shall include the following information:

- Name, Address, Phone #, E-mail

- Applicable paddling experience (Years paddling, 'river class' comfortable paddling, etc.)
- Applicable certifications, if any (First Aid, Swift water Rescue, CKC Leader/Instructor, etc.)
- River/Rapid Trip Lead Classification
 - Generic river/rapid classification for which the Trip Leader is comfortable, and able
And / Or
 - Specific river/rapid names for which the Trip Leader is comfortable, and able (any river/rapid that a Trip Leader is comfortable, and able to lead a trip on, which is above their generic Trip Leader Classification should be listed here. River Level/Flow restrictions can also be included here)

e.g.: River/Rapid Trip Lead Classification: Class 3, & Ottawa River Main Channel below 4 per the gauge

Each Trip Leader shall sign and date the attached "Trip Leaders Roles & Responsibilities" confirming that they have read, and understand the requirements, and shall be kept on file by the associated club.

Ideally applications for coverage should be provided prior to commencement of paddling season and allow 30 days for W/O review.

Once received, the W/O sanction committee will review the list of proposed activities and confirm or adjust the list of activities. The list should be as comprehensive as possible, however if additional events are added by the club during the year, these can be added by notifying the W/O office and ensuring compliance with safety procedures.

The club must sign a Sanctioning Agreement, which is to be approved by W/O, which will include the list of approved activities and recognized qualified instructors/trip leaders and certify that the club will exercise safety and due diligence in conducting the events and will follow the W/O Safety & Risk Management Policy. In addition, by signing the Sanction Agreement the club certifies that the listed Trip Leaders possess the knowledge, skills, & abilities required to lead river trips on their designated Class / River listings, and fulfill the requirements of the "Trip Leaders Roles and Responsibilities".

At minimum, all sanctioned activities must be conducted in the presence of appropriately qualified and certified coaches, instructors or trip leaders. The absence of supervision (unless specifically stated) or adherence to the W/O Safety & Risk Management Policy at any event will nullify that event from being a sanctioned activity and W/O will not support the club in any claim arising from said event.

Any trip paddled on a river listed on the clubs W/O approved Event Sanctioning Agreement, or pre-approved sanctioning list, led by an approved Trip Leader and adhering to the W/O Safety & Risk Management Policy, shall be considered sanctioned by W/O. Additionally any listed Paddling Event on the clubs W/O approved Event Sanctioning Agreement shall also be considered sanctioned by W/O. Any Whitewater Ontario members, who are not members of a given club, may join on the clubs Sanctioned Trip or Event, and be covered under the W/O insurance.

Whitewater Ontario Safety & Risk Management Policy

Purpose

This policy applies to Whitewater Ontario (“W/O”) members and clubs conducting on-water activities. It is intended to alert event organizers and participants of important safety practices to minimize and manage the risk of accidents.

The procedures outlined in Part 1 must be followed at all W/O sanctioned events/trips and all W/O sanctioned club events/trips (“Event/Trip”). Failure to follow the procedures could result in the insurance company rejecting a coverage claim.

The procedures outlined in Part 2 are recommended for W/O sanctioned events/trips and should be applied as appropriate according to the judgment of Event/Trip Leaders (“Leaders”).

Mandatory Safety Practices

1. When in a kayak/canoe while on open water, every paddler must:
 - a. Wear a lifejacket or personal floatation device (PFD).
 - b. While on moving water, wear a helmet.
 - c. Carry a sound signaling device (whistle).
 - d. Have equipment that is safe, appropriate for the paddler and the current weather & water conditions.

Items a. & c. are required according to Transport Canada, Safe Boating Guide – TP 511E (2011), “Minimum Safety Requirements”

2. Trip Leaders, or a designate in the group, must:
 - a. Carry a safety throw rope, and be competent in its use;
 - b. Have a first aid kit on the river or in an accessible location on shore (within a vehicle located at the put-in/take-out is acceptable)

These requirements listed under Section 1 & 2 are not deemed mandatory for Paddling/Rolling training activities undertaken in a Pool, whereby Certified Lifeguards are present. Unless the activities undertaken present an increased level of risk/injury, e.g. Kayak Polo, for which the appropriate level of PPE shall be assessed by the Trip Leader.

3. River trips shall adhere to the following guidelines
 - a. River trips shall be conducted with no less than 3 paddlers (non-W/O members may count towards this number)
 - b. The ratio of participants to Trip Leaders shall not exceed 8:1 (non-W/O members shall not count towards this number)
4. River trips in areas considered to be isolated or remote (> 1 hr required to contact Emergency Services)
 - a. Remote river trips shall be conducted with no less than 4 paddlers (non-W/O members may count towards this number)
 - b. A first-aid kit must be carried on the river by a Trip Leader or designate

- c. Ensure a responsible individual not on the river trip is aware of the trip details, expected return or contact time, and necessary response in the event of non-contact
5. Trip Leaders shall adhere to the requirements laid out in the “Trip Leaders Roles and Responsibilities”
6. Rivers / Rapids shall be free and clear of any known Ice-Shelves, Strainers, or any other abnormal/adverse hazards which present a direct hazard to paddlers to be considered Sanctioned.
7. Rivers / Rapids which are considered to be Class 5 or higher cannot be sanctioned by W/O.

Recommended Safety Practices

1. It is recommended that all paddlers:
 - a. Be able to swim with a life jacket and be familiar with safe practices when swimming in rapids (e.g. feet first, do not attempt to stand due to risk of entrapment or river obstacles).
 - b. Have flotation devices in their boat.
 - c. Bring an appropriate means of re-hydration while on the river.
2. It is recommended that Trip Leaders, or designates in the group:
 - a. Wear a safety boat harness tow system when running a river.
 - b. Have at least one Leader or participant experienced in First Aid and Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR).
 - c. Have at least one Leader or participant experienced in swift water rescue techniques.
3. It is strongly recommended that a Trip Leader, or designate in the group, while paddling in a Remote or Isolated location (> 1 hr required to contact Emergency Services):
 - a. Carry a Pin-Kit (Z-Drag) and be competent in its use.
 - b. Carry a Spare Paddle.
 - c. Carry a Survival Kit for a potential long-term (Overnight) stay in the wild.
 - d. Carry a satellite SOS beacon.

Trip Leaders Roles and Responsibilities

It is required that approved Trip Leaders, for any River Trip on which they are present which would fall within their Classification/River competency, adhere to the following:

1. Trip Leaders may, at any time before the departure of a river trip, refuse to fulfil the role of Trip Leader.
2. Ensure the Mandatory Requirements of the W/O Safety & Risk Management Policy have been met. If, for any reason the Mandatory Requirements cannot be met, the Trip Leader shall inform the group that the trip cannot be considered Sanctioned by W/O.
3. Be familiar with current Water Levels & Conditions; be aware of any rapids which require mandatory portage, or Class 5 rapids. An experienced “river guide” may be utilized to fulfil this requirement.
4. Utilize common river-running safety practices (Head Counts, Sweeper Boat, Safety Boats/Ropes, etc.).
5. Have a contingency plan for emergencies that includes knowing the locations of River Access Points & egress routes, and the location of applicable safety/emergency equipment. Ensure at least one other designate is also aware of this information in the event that the Trip Leader becomes incapacitated.
6. Have the required knowledge/skill to recognize features that present significant risk (retentive holes, ice shelves, strainers, etc.); and identify appropriate safety measures to employ to guard the hazard.
7. Have the required knowledge/skill to “Read a Line” through a rapid at their approved river classification competency, and demonstrate the line to paddlers in the group.
8. Trip leaders shall, at any time before the departure of a river trip, inform & revoke an individual’s W/O sanctioning if they feel the individuals’ equipment is not safe for the current weather / water conditions.
9. Trip Leaders shall, at any time, recommend an individual not to attempt/participate in some or all of a Trip or Event if they feel it would present significant risk to the individual, or other members of the group. This recommendation may include retracting the Trip Leaders endorsement of Sanctioning for the particular individual.
10. Ensure that trip participants are aware:
 - a. That each individual is ultimately responsible for the safety & suitability of his/her own equipment.
 - b. That each individual is ultimately responsible for his/her own personal safety & well-being.
 - c. The ultimate decision to participate (Paddle vs Portage, etc.) lies with the individual, Trip Leaders may only provide suggestions.