



# COVID-19: SAFE BOATING FOR CANADIANS TO REDUCE THE BURDEN ON EMERGENCY RESPONDERS



## DO YOU PLAN TO USE YOUR BOAT, CANOE, KAYAK, PADDLE BOARD OR ANOTHER KIND OF PLEASURE CRAFT?

Staying home saves lives; but if you are going to travel on the water, be prepared. Check any provincial, territorial, local and regional health measures regarding social gatherings, physical distancing, or non-essential services to ensure boating is allowed locally.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, emergency responders are working at full capacity to ensure the safety and health of Canadians. To reduce pressure on emergency services, including search and rescue services, the following measures are strongly recommended for pleasure craft operators and everyone on board:

- **Wear a lifejacket or Personal Flotation Device (PFD):**
  - Lifejackets/PFDs are required by law to be on board for each person on all types of pleasure craft.
  - Wear them at all times when on deck or in the cockpit.
  - Make sure they are of the proper size, and properly buckled up.
    - » Most recreational boaters who die on the water each year in Canada are not wearing personal flotation devices, or are not wearing them properly.

- **Ensure your pleasure craft is in good working order and properly equipped before heading out on the water.**
  - Verify all your safety equipment before departure.
  - Verify that your engine(s), bilge pumps and other systems are in good working order.
  - Make sure you have enough fuel for the voyage, with a safety reserve.
    - » More than 50% of calls for assistance from recreational boaters are because of mechanical failure, including running out of fuel.
- **Limit the length of your trips as much as possible, departing and returning to the same location and avoiding stops along the way.**
- **Keep a safe distance to shore at all times.**
- **Avoid using your pleasure craft during bad weather and extreme temperatures.**
- **Limit using your pleasure craft to daylight hours.**

Pleasure craft operators and everyone on board are asked to avoid any unnecessary contact with others during their trip.

As always, boaters are directed to operate at safe speeds. Don't cruise while drinking alcohol or using cannabis.

For more information on COVID-19:  
[Canada.ca/COVID19](https://Canada.ca/COVID19)

