

WKCC Safety Weekend Course Descriptions

The following is a list of the sessions that Safety Weekend offers along with the discrete skills that will be taught. Becoming proficient at these skills will provide you with a solid understanding of the major risks associated with swift water fun. In each class there is a focus on how to avoid risks as well as what to do when you inevitably encounter them.

Important Safety Issues: This course is an overview of what types of risks and dangers swift water players are likely to encounter. In this session there is a focus on data, which helps to illuminate the types of risks encountered on the river as well as how often these risks are likely to manifest into dangerous situations.

Throw bag skills, Throw bag rescues: All boaters should carry throw bags. Throw bags offer one of the first and most effective lines of defense when assisting a swimming boating partner. In this class you will learn how to effectively pack and stow the throw bag as well as how to accurately throw it to your boating partners. The throw bag rescue session is designed to teach strategies, to pluck a stranded boater out of the water.

Swift water swimming: As all old river salts will say, “We are all between swims.” In the swift water swimming session, boaters learn how to safely navigate whitewater once they are actually in it.

Knots and simple anchors: The understanding of knots and anchors is a critical code/language associated with swift water play and safety. This session will instruct boaters on correct knot technique and give them ample opportunity to practice tying knots and setting anchors.

Swift water crossing: Ankle or foot entrapment in the riverbed is one of the two most hazardous aspects of swift water play. Given the frequency of this occurrence, learning how to safely cross a river with a group of safety minded partners is a critical step in creating a tool kit with the discrete skills needed to play it safely.

Strainer drill: The number one risk associated with river fun is wood or strainers in the water. As you learn about the risks and physics associated with encountering wood in the river, you will have the chance to safely encounter an actual strainer and experience the truly unbelievable power of the river.

Reach and Recovery: Sometimes when your boater partner is in need of assistance, a throw rope alone will not offer enough support to ensure a successful rescue. Through discussion and demonstration, you will learn creative ways to deal with unexpected situations.

Mechanical Advantage-Zdrag: This is a class on applied physics. Boaters will learn how to use mechanical advantage in rescue situations. This class is extremely practical.

If boaters practice these skills they will learn how to rescue people and gear that have been pinned down by river forces.

Boat based rescues: In this session you learn what risks and advantages are associated with attempting to assist a person while you are still in your boat. Techniques will be taught which will show you when and how to assist someone without exiting your boat.

Putting it all together, Rescue team structure: This is where we have fun! You and you will get to use your decision making, communication, and teamwork abilities as you use what you have learned to 'rescue' boaters in realistic river scenarios. Everyone gets to participate!