



PADDLE CRAFT VESSEL SAFETY CHECK (VSC)

To be completed by a U.S. Coast Guard approved Vessel Examiner.

Date of VSC: _____

Decal Awarded:

Yes No

Sections 1, 2 and 3 must be completed

I. Owner / Operator Information	II. Paddle Craft Information
Name: _____	Registration No. _____ HIN: _____
Attended Safe Boating Class: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Make & Model: _____
Attended Related Skills Class: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Kayak <input type="checkbox"/> Canoe <input type="checkbox"/> Row Boat <input type="checkbox"/> Paddleboard <input type="checkbox"/>
Location of VSC- County: _____ State: _____	Scull <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____
Replaced decal was: Check a selection below	Color: Deck _____ Hull _____
Last Year <input type="checkbox"/> Outdated <input type="checkbox"/> First Time <input type="checkbox"/>	Length (in feet): <12 <input type="checkbox"/> 12-16 <input type="checkbox"/> >16 <input type="checkbox"/>
	Water craft used in: Protected <input type="checkbox"/> Open <input type="checkbox"/> Swift <input type="checkbox"/>

III. Safety Check Requirements	Y	N	N/A	V. Other Recommendations	Y	N	N/A
Sound signal (whistle, horn, etc)				Dressed for immersion / helmet			
Life jacket(s)				Personal ID on operator			
Overall Vessel Condition: as applies				Float plan with someone on shore			
a. Hull & deck sound				Adequate food and water / Sun Protection			
b. Hatch covers (good condition/secure)				Assess the risk / good awareness			
c. Deck lines & Bungee Cords				High visibility clothing, gear, etc.			
d. Hardware secure (in working order)				Appropriate emergency kit (might include first-aid kit, knife, repair kit, etc.)			
e. Bulkheads/Airbags/Flotation				Appropriate self-rescue system / skills			
f. Paddle / Oars (serviceable)				Contact information affixed to craft			
Navigation Lights; White lights				Accident Reporting – Owner Responsible			
Visual Distress Signals (VDS)				Anchor lights (if applicable)			
State and/or Local Requirements							
IV. Open Water Recommendations				Vessel Examiner Comments			
Pump or bailer							
Spray skirt							
Spare paddle / oars							
Compass / GPS / navigation chart							
Tow / boat recovery system							
Marine radio (VHF) / cell phone / PLB							

I certify that I have checked this craft and find it meets the above requirements at the time of this Vessel Safety Check. I am a qualified Vessel Examiner of the: CGAUX _____ USPS _____ State of _____

VE(print name): _____ Examiner Number _____

Signature: _____ Telephone Number _____

Additional Comments: *This is not an official boarding for law enforcement purposes. It is **recommended** that you correct any deficiencies noted. This checklist is furnished for your information. There is no assumption of liability of any kind for advice given or opinions expressed in connection to this examination. By accepting the Vessel Safety Check (VSC) decal you are pledging to maintain your craft and equipment to the standard of safety exhibited during this examination. Please remove the decal if the craft is sold or no longer meets these requirements.*

I am consenting to this Vessel safety check of my Paddle Craft with full knowledge that it is provided to me as a public service on a volunteer basis without cost and I understand and agree that my receipt of a Vessel Safety check shall not constitute or be construed as a warranty or guarantee as to either the qualification, knowledge, or skills of the operator; the seaworthiness of the vessel; or the serviceability or adequacy of any equipment on board.

Owner - Operator Signature: _____ Date: _____

I. Owner / Operator Information	Details
Assess the risk	Be realistic about what can go wrong and be prepared.
In depth understanding of many factors impacting the voyage being undertaken.	Water temp, weather, waves, current, visibility, navigation skills, craft design limitations, physical conditioning, skill level, other craft on the water, local geography. Know and abide by the rules of the road.
III. Safety Check Requirements	
Sound signal (whistle, horn, etc)	Ideally attached to your life jacket.
Life jacket (adjusted to wearer & USCG approved)	9 out of 10 boaters that drown are not wearing a life jacket. Make sure you have a life jacket that is sized and fitted for you.
Overall vessel conditions: *as applies	Leaky hulls, lines or fittings in disrepair, leaky bulkheads – are all reasons for VSC failure.
* Hull & deck sound	Even a small leak could impact the stability of the vessel
*Hatch covers in good condition and secure	Submerge in controlled conditions and check hatch for water.
*Deck lines and bungee cords in good condition and secure	If you capsize, hold on to your paddle and craft as they can potentially blow or surf away faster than you can swim after it.
*Hardware secure and in working order	A malfunctioning rudder, skeg, etc. can be a significant liability.
*Bulkheads / air bags / emergency flotation in good working order	Many craft without flotation become unusable or sink completely when flooded. Flotation makes self or assisted rescues much easier. Unsecured flotation can be lost.
*Paddle / oars serviceable	No visible cracks or fractures along the blade and shaft
Navigation Lights (sunset to sunrise)	If operating between sunset and sunrise, or in restricted visibility, 1 white light (flashlight acceptable).
Visual Distress Signals (VDS) (sunset to sunrise) Applicable only to vessels operating on waters defined as coastal.	If operating between sunset and sunrise a VDS suitable for night use must be carried. Either 1 electric light (with S.O.S.) or 3 combination day/night flares. Expired signals do not meet the requirement and are unreliable if used.
IV. Open Water Recommendations	
Pump or bailer	Recommended to remove excess water from inside vessel.
Spray skirt – Waterproof barrier worn to create a seal with the cockpit coaming	Make sure the grab loop is on the outside and that the operator knows how to exit the boat while wearing the spray skirt.
Spare paddle / oars	Make sure you have one available if needed.
Compass / GPS / navigation charts	Know how to use them & test in the conditions you expect to need them.
Tow / boat recovery system	Have a plan if you need help getting home? Practice these skills.
Marine radio (VHF) / cell phone / PLB	Know how to use & test them in the conditions you expect to need them.
V. Other Recommendations	
Always dress for an unexpected capsize, a helmet is necessary where upsets are likely	Cold water kills: cold shock - 1 minute, swimming failure -10 minutes, hypothermia - 1 hour. Resulting in unconsciousness/ death Always wear your lifejacket.
Personal ID on operator	Driver's license, credit card and medical ID is excellent.
Float plan with someone on shore	Route, duration, craft description, bail out options, etc.
Appropriate food and water Never Boat Under the Influence	Be prepared, you are completely dependent on the operator for mobility. Keep yourself well fueled.
Appropriate emergency kit (might include first-aid kit, knife, fire starter, boat repair, etc.)	When putting your kit together, bear in mind the type of activities you'll be doing and the conditions you'll expect to encounter.
Sun protection (sunglasses / hat)	Don't forget your eyes and skin.
High visibility clothing, gear, etc.	Retroflective , brightly colored, luminescent, etc.
Appropriate self rescue system / skills	Have a plan if you find yourself out of your boat. Practice self and assisted rescue techniques.
Contact information affixed to craft	Your name and phone number is sufficient.
Anchor Lights – if applicable (sunset to sunrise)	Not required unless anchoring in or near a narrow channel, fairway, anchorage, or where other vessels normally navigate, or in restricted visibility – 1 all around white light, or an electric torch or flashlight.