



## 1. ALWAYS wear your properly fitted, Coast Guard Approved Personal Flotation Device (PFD)



- ACA

**WEAR IT!**

83%

Drownings involving people not wearing life jacket

2/3

Victims considered to be good swimmers

- Coast Guard, 2017

## 2. Follow the Rules of the Road



- All vessels **STAY CLEAR** of freighters, barges, and dredging operations
- **Paddlers** must **STAY CLEAR** of and defer to power driven craft
- **Paddlers** should **STAY OUT** of the middle of the channel
- **Paddlers** should only cross a channel in a straight line or 90 degree angle
- **Small power craft DEFER** to larger power craft, or less maneuverable craft
- **Small power craft** should use the middle of the channel
- **All craft DEFER** to sailboats under SAIL



## 3. Boating, paddling, and drinking do not mix

## 4. Be a good steward of the water



Clean, drain, and dry your vessel before entering a new body of water to prevent the spread of invasive species.

[StopAquaticHitchhikers.org](http://StopAquaticHitchhikers.org)

## 5. Dress for the weather and be aware of potential changing weather conditions

**AVOID**



**LIGHTNING  
HEAVY WIND  
COLD**

**USE**



**360° WHITE  
LIGHT AT NIGHT  
& WHISTLE**

## 6. File a Float Plan

Let a close contact know:

**WHO'S PADDLING**

**ETA OF LAUNCH**

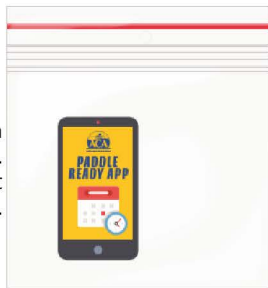
**WHAT TO DO IF  
DELAYED RETURN**

**Download a float plan:** [floatplancentral.cgaux.org](http://floatplancentral.cgaux.org)

**Watch a YouTube Video:** Safer Paddling Series, Episode 5: Plan Your Trip

Bring a charged phone in a protective bag for emergencies.

**DO NOT** take selfies or get distracted.



- ACA

Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper wants you to practice water safety so that everyone can enjoy this water season in Western New York.

Visit [bnwaterkeeper.org/safety](http://bnwaterkeeper.org/safety).