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

WEAR IT!

- ACA

Drownings involving people not wearing life jacket

83%

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 midde 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

WATER SAFETY
3. Boating, paddling, and drinking do not mix

4. Be a good steward of the water

![Image of boat with red stop sign]

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

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

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.

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.