

Warwick Valley High School Crew Club



**Keep for
Reference**

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Safety Policy

I. Charter

The Warwick Crew Safety Committee was established, under the direction of the East Arm Rowing Club (EARC), in order to provide the scholastic Crew Team of Warwick Valley High School with a safety policy and procedure. The committee will do this by supporting existing EARC policy, as well as by providing additional guidelines specific to junior (scholastic) rowers. These guidelines are based on recommendations of US Rowing, the ARA Water Safety Code, US Coastguard regulations, as well as a compilation of safety recommendations from established rowing organizations.

II. Implementation of Safety Rules and Sanctions

Membership in the Warwick Valley High School Crew Team (WVHSCT) is open to those students in grades 9 through 12 who maintain academic and behavioral eligibility according to school team policy. Each member must abide by EARC regulations for scholastic rowers. In addition, it is the responsibility of each member of the WVHSCT to make him/herself familiar with the guidelines contained herein and to actively work to follow and enforce them. Each WVHSCT member is to recognize that his /her individual safety effort affects the team's performance. Each team member is to receive a copy of the Safety Policy, and is expected to sign a statement that he/she and a parent/guardian have read and understand the policy. Furthermore, it is emphasized that all Coaches and instructional staff shall review with their crew members proper safety procedures and ways to handle emergency situations detailed in the Safety Handbook. All incidents evidencing blatant disregard of the rules should be referred to the Safety Committee for resolution in accordance with the following procedures:

- A. Referrals may be made by Coaches, instructors, or team members.
- B. Referrals should be in writing and should describe the incident in detail.
- C. The Safety Committee will notify the alleged offender, review any additional information from involved parties as needed, and recommend action, if any, to be taken.
- D. Coaches, parents, and instructors must recognize that consistent application of these guidelines is necessary and that inconsistent application undermines the safety of the program.

After completing a review of a referral, the Safety Committee may make recommendations for sanctions as follows:

1. Restriction of privileges, e.g., limitations on use of facility/equipment
2. Suspension of privileges
3. Denial of entry to sponsored regattas
4. Revocation of membership, without compensation

III. General Safety Guidelines for All Members

- A. Each member must present evidence of general fitness, adequate vision, and adequate hearing, certified by a physician, as the result of a physical examination. Written parental permission is necessary for any member to carry prescription medication during club activities.

- B. Prior to any on-water activity, each member must pass a swim test, to be administered by a Red Cross or YMCA Certified Lifeguard or swim instructor. Test parameters are to be set by the Warwick Crew Safety Committee, in conjunction with EARC, and are subject to modification. (A member who has not passed a swim test may participate in off-water activities until such time as he/she is able to pass a swim test.)
- C. Each rower must wear a U.S. Coast Guard approved Personal Flotation Device (PFD) while engaged in on-water practice, and may wear such PFD during regattas if not specifically prohibited. Each cox must wear a U.S. Coast Guard approved PFD while engaged in any on-water activity, including during regattas.
- D. Each member is responsible for dressing appropriately for weather conditions, for bringing his/her own hydrating fluid during warm weather, and for taking precautionary medications with him/her on the water (e.g., asthma inhalers).
- E. Each member must complete any safety instructional activity deemed mandatory by either the Safety Committee or Coach, which shall include, but is not limited to viewing the USRA safety video, participation in coxing clinic, and participation in boating safety clinics. Individual attendance will be kept, and lack of participation will affect eligibility for on-water activity. Each member must be a member of US Rowing or other governing rowing body as dictated by the Warwick Crew Booster Club Board of Directors and/or Warwick Valley School District.
- F. Possession or use of alcohol or illegal drugs by any member is grounds for revocation of team membership.
- G. No member is allowed in the EARC boathouse without adult supervision, nor is any member allowed on the water unless accompanied by a Coach in a launch. (See Section VI, I, "Coach Responsibilities.")
- H. Unauthorized swimming off the dock or boats, or reckless behavior or horseplay is prohibited.
- I. Intentional disregard for any safety rule or procedure is grounds for referral and sanction, as deemed appropriate by either the Coach or Safety Committee.

IV. Responsibilities of Safety Officer

The Warwick Valley High School Crew Team shall appoint a Safety Officer, whose duty it will be to understand and communicate safety policy to team members. Duties of the Safety Officer include:

- To work in conjunction with other Safety Committee members, Coach and other instructional staff to provide continuing rowing and water safety educational programs to team members.
- To make each member aware of the location of EARC safety rules, emergency phone numbers, visual water safety aids, and safety and first aid equipment located within the boathouse.
- To draw up and display a plan of the local waterway, drawing attention to the applicable navigation rules and any local interpretation requirements to accommodate particular hazards. Instructions shall be included on any variation in normal procedures necessary to combat climatic conditions which may arise locally.
- To make each member aware of daily rowing logbook procedure and accident log procedure. (See Section V, E, F, "Boathouse Safety")
- To ascertain, in conjunction with the Coach, that all rowing equipment used by Warwick Crew members is maintained in good order, according to EARC certification, and safe for use. All equipment not fit for use shall be clearly marked "UNSAFE – DO NOT USE."

- To determine, in conjunction with the EARC personnel, if weather conditions are such that rowing is inadvisable. The Safety Officer shall have and exercise the authority to demand the suspension of boating activity should he/she believe the conditions unsafe for any reason.

V. Boathouse Safety

A. There shall be prominently displayed in the EARC boathouse the following:

- A list of vital telephone numbers relating to safety including Emergency Services, Fire, Police, ambulance, doctors, local hospital, offshore or lake rescue services, local lake police. (This shall be referred to as “Emergency Call List.”)
- Visual aids on water safety and life saving and resuscitation procedures
- A plan of the local waterway, identifying lake traffic patterns and lake hazards
- A list of on-water Right-of-Way rules
- A list of personnel, approved by the Warwick Valley School District, EARC, and the Warwick Crew Team Head Coach, who may serve as alternate/additional Coach(es) and supervisory personnel

B. Safety and First Aid equipment shall be readily available in the EARC boathouse, to include the following:

- First Aid Box (to be fully stocked, contents listed and replaced, according to EARC policy)
- Thermal/exposure blankets
- Life buoys and rescue lines/throw-bags
- Life jackets/PFDs

C. All gasoline and other flammable are to be stored in an area other than the boathouse.

D. No smoking is permitted on EARC grounds or during rowing activities.

E. All shells and launches taken out of the boathouse, whether for practice or for a regatta, are to be signed out in the logbook prior to going on the water. For coxed boats during team practice, coxswains are responsible for completing the log. For launches and regattas, the Coach is responsible for completing the log. The log should include the boat name, names of coxswain and rowers, time out, and expected time back. Upon return, complete the actual time in, comments and all equipment problems encountered. If warranted, place an “OUT OF SERVICE” marker on the boat and make a detailed entry in the log.

F. An accident log is to be maintained and available for inspection at all times, giving time, place and nature of accident, injuries/damages sustained and names and addresses of witnesses. All cases of accident involving injury shall be submitted in writing to EARC, the Warwick Crew Team Safety Officer/Committee, the Warwick Crew Booster Club and the Warwick Valley High School Building Principal. The Coach is responsible for log maintenance and notification correspondence.

G. Determination shall be made by the EARC personnel, in conjunction with the Warwick Crew Club Safety Officer if weather conditions are such that rowing is inadvisable or limited to within the east arm of the lake, within view of the safety launch. The Safety Officer and/or Coach shall have and exercise the authority to demand the suspension of boating activity should he/she believe the conditions unsafe for any reason. As part of determining whether on-water activity will take place, the Coach shall obtain a current weather forecast to determine whether severe weather is predicted. Crews may not launch if any of the following conditions exist or are seriously threatening:

- The sum of air temperature plus water temperature does not equal 100 degrees
- Fast current, high winds, lightning, fog, thunder, or large or heavy amounts of debris

- Ice formed on the water
- Visibility less than 100m
- Dusk or darkness
- Sleet, snow

H. The Safety Officer and/or Coach shall ascertain that all rowing equipment used by Warwick Crew Team members is maintained in good order and safe, according to EARC certification.

VI. Coach Responsibilities

A. The Coach shall ensure that, prior to participation in Crew Team activity on or off the water, a team member has:

- provided evidence of good physical health, as directed in Section III, “General Guidelines”
- provided all necessary completed and signed EARC and Warwick Crew Team paperwork
- adhered to swim test policy, as directed in Section III, “General Guidelines”
- is eligible for team participation, according to Warwick High School behavioral and academic eligibility standards.

B. The Coach shall have the following qualifications:

- be an adult, over the age of 18, approved by the Warwick Valley School district and EARC
- be certified by the Amateur Rowing Association (ARA) or US Rowing Association (USRA), OR
- be qualified in rowing by training or experience, and have 2 or more years of coaching experience
- have viewed the USRA safety video
- have basic knowledge of first aid. It is desirable that a Coach be first responder and first aid certified.
- be knowledgeable of and able to implement emergency rowing rescue procedure

C. In the event that the Coach is unavailable, he/she may designate a responsible adult, over the age of 18, to directly supervise on-water club activity in his/her absence. This individual must meet the same requirements as indicated in Section IV, B, and be knowledgeable about and enforce basic sports and Warwick Crew Team and EARC rowing safety policy. A list of such approved Coach-designees shall be posted in the EARC boathouse.

D. The Coach must have available, for each rower/cox, the following information:

- name and date of birth
- address and phone number
- emergency contact information (name, address, phone number)
- consent for emergency treatment

E. The Coach shall ensure that each cox has Level 1 Cox certification from EARC, is familiar with safety precautions, and exercises good seamanship (e.g. turning in sandy or rough water).

F. The Coach is responsible for daily log and accident log entries as specified in Section V, E and V, F “Boathouse Safety.”

G. All scholastic rowing crews must be accompanied on the water by a safety launch. A Coach sitting in the cox’s seat does not constitute a safety launch.

The following regulations apply to the safety launch:

- Launch personnel are to be limited to the Coach and anyone designated by the Coach to assist him/her, which may include EARC club and /or Warwick Crew Booster Club members or alternate rowers or coxes, and the situation warrants.
- Coaches and other launch personnel must wear a PFD at all times.
- Crews launching may not leave sight of the boathouse dock until accompanied by safety launch and must return to the boathouse if launch proves inoperable.
- Launch must remain within 1500m of any crew boat. If, however, on-water activity is limited due to weather or other hazard, the launch shall remain within 700m of any crew boat.
- Launch operator must have an uninterrupted 360-degree view at all times.
- Each Launch must be equipped with the following safety items:
 - adequate gasoline
 - a bailer
 - a sound signaling warning device (megaphone or horn)
 - a throwable cushion with throwbag
 - life buoys and thermal exposure blankets
 - 2 paddles, tools, flares, waterproof flashlight with extra batteries
 - a basic First Aid kit
 - a sharp knife in carrying sheath
 - anchor and line
 - simple handholds fixed to the side of the launch to give help t one being rescued and provide self-help should the driver fall overboard
 - ladder
 - cell phone or other 2-way communication device
 - tools necessary to make simple repairs
 - laminated paperwork containing Emergency Call Guide, rowing commands, and operating safety procedure (OSP)
 - emergency PFDs
 - any additional equipment mandated by the US Coast Guard or Greenwood Lake Police authority

H. When crews are rowing away from their home water, the Coach shall ascertain the local code of practice and, at regattas, any special traffic rules to be observed, and ensure crews fully understand them.

VII. Cox Responsibilities

- A. Each cox is subject to general regulation, as outlined in Section III “General Guidelines.”
- B. Each cox is responsible for dressing suitably for weather conditions, and is required to wear a PFD during on-water activity, as outlined in Section III, C “General Safety Guidelines.”
- C. Each cox is responsible for making log book entries, as outlined in Section V “Boathouse Safety.”
- D. Each cox is required to know how to row.
- E. Each cox must complete the EARC cox training clinic and receive EARC Cox Certification prior to coxing a boat.
- F. In bow coxed boats, each cox is responsible for making sure the cox box is charged and functional. A bow coxed boat may not be launched without a working cox box.

- G. Each cox is responsible to ascertain the general readiness of his/her crew prior to launch, which shall include ascertaining that each rower is dressed suitably for the weather, that each rower has checked his/her equipment, that each rower is using safe equipment, and that each rower is correctly wearing a PFD.
- H. Each cox is responsible to ensure that the following safety items are on board his/her shell prior to launch, and secured in a waterproof bag in a manner so as not to be lost if the shell capsizes:
- flashlight, or other visual distress signal
 - whistle
 - bailer
 - laminated list of safe landing points
- I. Each cox is responsible for following the traffic pattern at all times, and for being aware of, and avoiding other traffic, who may not be following the traffic pattern.
- J. Each cox must realize that his/her primary job is to safely guide the boat by steering the boat and commanding the crew. As such, he/she must be aware that both his/her demonstration of leadership and ability to remain calm are necessary and paramount to safety.

VIII. Rower Responsibilities

- A. Each rower is subject to general regulations as outlined in Section III “General Guidelines,” including participation in all mandated safety clinics.
- B. Each rower is responsible for dressing suitably for weather conditions, and is required to wear a PFD during on-water activity, as outlined in Section III, C “General Safety Guidelines.”
- C. Each rower must recognize that the cox is in command of the boat at all times, and should be given complete attention and respect.
- D. Any rower who sees a hazard (weather or other) that he/she believes the cox does not see, must notify the cox immediately.
- E. If any rower feels a cox’s command will place either the crew or equipment in a harmful position, that rower has the responsibility to bring his/her concerns to the cox’s immediate attention.
- F. Rowers should all work together to achieve the desired end, as determined and directed by the cox.
- G. Each rower is responsible for checking his/her equipment prior to and after rowing, and reporting damage immediately to the Coach.

(9/10/15)