

# **CKC PRIVATE BOAT REMOVAL AND INDIVIDUAL PADDLING STATEMENT**

Within the context of the current COVID-19 health pandemic, Canoe Kayak Canada (CKC) recognizes that club and Provincial/Territorial Organizations (PTSO) facilities across Canada may be subject to different access restrictions depending on the directives issued by the relevant local government.

CKC also recognizes that, as the weather warms in the coming weeks and governments in different jurisdictions across Canada modify physical distancing and self-isolation requirements, individuals within the Canadian paddling community may be permitted to get on the water.

Recently, CKC has received a number of questions regarding whether individuals can paddle independently, on their own or in a physically distanced manner with others, outside of club/PTSO activities, from private docks, or whether they can retrieve their boats and other equipment that is currently stored inside of club facilities.

CKC understands that everyone wants to get back on the water as soon as possible – many of us at CKC are, literally, in the same boat.

In this regard, CKC issues the following notice that it asks all members in the Canadian paddling community to respect:

## **a) Club access**

CKC has no control over club and PTSO facility (“club”) access, which is governed by local governments and public health authorities (either municipal or provincial, depending on the nature of the facility). As such, CKC asks that all paddlers respect facility access restrictions as issued by local governmental and public health authorities.

CKC also recommends that, if individuals are permitted by local governmental authorities to retrieve equipment currently inside a club, they only access personal equipment and that club equipment (boats, paddles) remain inside the club facility until access restrictions are lifted.

CKC’s concern is that, if a club lets any individual take club equipment for personal use outside of club activities, liability and insurance issues may be triggered. As such, in order to err on the side of caution, CKC recommends that club equipment remain inside clubs for the duration of the access restriction periods.

## **b) Paddling activities**

Any individual that chooses to paddle from a private dock or access point not closed due to public health restrictions, outside of club activities, does so at their own risk.

While CKC does not recommend that individuals paddle on their own for safety reasons, CKC's position is that, if individuals choose to paddle independently, and potentially on their own, they should respect CKC's Code of Safety, particularly as it relates to cold water paddling.

Should individuals choose to paddle independently, including on their own, they must do so with the understanding that the directives of local governmental authorities may not allow for safety boats to be on the water with them, which increases safety risks, especially in the sprint discipline, where self-rescue is challenging, and even more so in cold water conditions.

Further, if individuals choose to paddle independently, CKC's position is that the directives of local government and public health authorities as they relate to the number of individuals that are permitted to form a group – while respecting physical distancing requirements – as well as any other sanitary measures that have been put in place, must be followed.

CKC's position is also that clubs, PTSOs and coaches must ensure that their members and athletes are informed that paddling activities undertaken independently from club facilities, activities or programming, until restrictions are lifted or modified by governmental or public health authorities, are not associated with the club, or coach. Again, as noted above, CKC's concern as it relates to this subject is the potential for liability or insurance issues.

CKC recognizes that all paddlers want to get back on the water and resume normal activities and that being prohibited from doing so is difficult. However, CKC's main concerns are that our members stay safe and healthy so that they are able to return to the water as soon as the circumstances permit.

CKC thanks all members of the Canadian paddling community for their continued understanding and their efforts in this challenging time.