

NWRA WHITEWATER RAFTING SAFETY TALK

Have yourself facing the sun so your group has the sun to their back. Try to have the group in the shade.

INTRODUCTION

Introduce yourself, the river run and thank them for showing up...

ECOLOGY

Help protect this river so your children can enjoy it. Toilets are available at lunch stop.

Go after this talk to avoid the rush.

Don't litter!

Don't disturb the riparian environment or animals. Watch out for a rare appearance of a rattle snake and poison oak. If you don't know what it looks like ...ask!

Don't drink the water in the river.

Does everyone have lunch and water?

Does everyone have a glasses strap?

Keys and Wallets go in an Ammo box.

EQUIPMENT

The rafts take 4 to 6 passengers; they have multiple air chambers for safety. Please keep sand out of the rafts by cleaning your feet before getting in. Your paddle captain will show you how to sit, hold on, etc. once you are in the raft. Your captain may move you around to balance the strength in the paddle raft.

LIFEJACKETS PFD's

Show a PFD, put it on and how to wear it so it won't ride up. Your PFD will remain on when you are in the raft or swimming. When we stop for lunch leave the PFD in the raft.

RULE:

Lifejackets (PFD's) are worn at all times in the raft and swimming from shore...

DRINKING AND DRUGS

I'm sure you can see the need to keep alert for yourself and your crew. Wait until AFTER a hard day of rafting to have a beer. It's okay to have a beer with lunch, but water will keep you hydrated.

GENERAL SAFETY

Wear shoes at all times that won't come off your feet. Foot and ankle injuries are the most common on rivers. Be careful walking around on uneven terrain.

Keep your arms and legs inside the raft at all times.

If you are separated a hand signal to use if you are "okay" is pat the top of your head.

Beware of sunburn, keep lotion on. Do not put lotion on the backs of your legs or above your eyes. Don't forget your glasses strap.

RIVER SAFETY

Your captain will show you how to enter and sit in the raft with both legs inside.

When you swim lay flat on your back and keep your feet up so you can see your toes. Stay upstream of the raft. **DON'T STAND UP!** Fend off rocks with your feet, watch out for your tailbone. Don't get between the raft and a rock. Stay upstream of the raft. Keep your mouth closed and breathe between the waves. Hold on to your paddle. Don't go under brush or grab onto limbs or bushes. When can you stand up? When the water is so shallow that you can no longer swim or there is no current. Show how to assist people getting back into the raft. If the raft turns over (flips) stay with the raft it has a lot of flotation or go to the nearest shore.

Next to a rapid you won't be able to hear anything, if you get separated get out of danger, hitch a ride with the next raft or walk or swim down to your raft if there is no apparent danger. A raft down-stream can not come back up-stream.

PADDLING TECHNIQUES

Explain how to hold the paddle and where to put your hands on the paddle. Go through the 6 commands:

Forward, Backpaddle, Right Turn, Left Turn, Stop and High Side.

Remind them to rotate and use their trunk. The person in the right front usually sets the pace for the group. When they take a stroke you take a stroke. Be careful not to hit anyone with your paddle..

Assure them they look good

WATER FIGHTS

Try to not hit someone in the face. If you are using a bucket be careful not to hit someone in your raft.