

# STAND-UP PADDLEBOARD SAFETY

A stand-up paddleboard (SUP) is subject to federal and state boating laws.

You are responsible for knowing the legal requirements and navigation rules — such as right-of-way and necessary equipment.

## Federal and Washington state laws require you to carry the following:

- Life jackets** — One for every person on board. U.S. Coast Guard-approved. The right size and type and in good condition.
  - Belt pouch-type inflatables must be worn to meet legal requirements.
  - Inflatable life jackets, including belt pouch-types, are not approved for children 15 years old and younger.
  - Children 12 years old and younger must always wear their life jacket while on board.
- A sounding device** — Horn, whistle or bell.
- White all-around navigation light** — For use during low visibility such as heavy rain, fog or dusk and dawn.

*According to safety experts, these laws are minimal and do not maximize the chance of survival in an accident, such as falling overboard into cold water.*



Boating Program

Sun Lakes-Dry Falls State Park



# The State Parks Boating Program recommends the following to help maximize your safety:

**Get educated.** Learn emergency procedures and the “Navigation Rules of the Road.” If you don’t know these rules, you should NOT be out on the water.

**File a float plan.** Before going out, even for a brief time, always tell someone the names of everyone going, the route, what time you’re going and returning, and what to do if you don’t return when expected.

**Wear a leash.** A variety of leashes are available — coiled, hybrid, straight, quick release, etc. The right one depends on the waterway, so research before you go.

**Carry a communication device on your body.**

A cell phone (in a waterproof bag), VHF marine radio (while on coastal waters) and personal locator beacon are recommended.

**Avoid alcohol and drugs.** Operating a SUP while under the influence of alcohol, drugs or marijuana, is not only unsafe, it’s illegal.

**Check and understand the weather.** Wind and waves can lead to falling overboard. Check warnings, weather conditions, wind and wave forecasts, tides and currents or river flows.

**Mark it!** The U.S. Coast Guard urges you to label your SUP with your name and phone number. This information can help guide a search, prevent a false alarm or aid in the return of your SUP.

**Learn more by visiting**  
**[PaddleSafeWa.org](https://PaddleSafeWa.org)**

