

Water Safety Activity: Harbour Master, May I?

FOCUS: Safe Boating and Fishing

Outcome: To reinforce general safe boating principles.

Activity:

The participant asks “Harbour Master, may I?” and the “Harbour Master” (activity leader) asks them a question off of the Activity Leader’ Key. If the participant answers correctly, they move forward a little bit, and for every wrong answer they go back to the beginning of the line (or stay where they are). The first one to the finish line wins.

Activity Leader’ Key: Harbor Master, may I?:

- Do you have your boating license?
- Are your parents bringing alcohol?
- How did you check the weather? (coast guard, T.V., internet, radio)
- Did you check your equipment and boat?
- Do you have a Lifejacket?
- Are you wearing your lifejacket properly?
- Who did you give your trip plan to? (a responsible person)
- Are you going alone?
- Do you have all of the equipment you need?
- How many lifejackets are you bringing? (one for everyone in the boat and one extra)
- Are you going near a swimming area?
- Do you have navigation lights?
- What hazards are you going to look for? (buoys, markers, weather, other boaters)
- What is the speed limit close to shore?
- Are you going to stay low while in your boat?
- Name two signaling devices. (flares, whistle, fog horn, flashlight)

Resources Activity Key References BOAT Study Guide and Canadian Lifesaving Manual

Safe Fishing and Boating Tips:

- Get trained to operate your boat. If you drive a boat with a motor, you need to get carded! Boat operators need to know safe boating practices including the “rules of the road”, safety equipment requirements and safe operating skills. A Pleasure Craft Operator (PCO) card is the necessary proof of competence. Take the BOAT (Boat Operator Accredited Training™).

- Don't drink and drive...your boat or personal water craft. The same rules for drinking and driving your car apply to your boat.
- Know before you go! Check the weather and create a simple safety checklist. Avoid storm conditions and get off the water if you spot a storm coming – one third of dead boaters did not. Create simple safety checklist which includes checking the weather, checking safety equipment, your route and water conditions, tools and fuel, and boat condition. Tell someone where you are going and when to expect you back.
- Follow the rules of the road. Be courteous to others using the waterways and obey all boating rules. Be watchful of swimmers and other boaters, and always have a spotter for water skiers and tube riders.
- Choose It. Use It. Wear your lifejacket and insist that everyone in your boat use one. Wearing a lifejacket while boating is a Water Smart® choice that can help protect against hypothermia and help the boater rescue him/herself during an incident. Falling out of a boat into cold water will trigger gasping, uncontrolled breathing causing you to breathe water. It may be the last breath you ever take. Put on a lifejacket and you will be prepared to survive. The lifejacket will help you hold your head out of the water and support you while waiting for help.
- Drive your boat responsibly. Most boating fatalities involve power boats. Keep low to avoid capsizing or falling overboard. Look before you act, stay low, drive at moderate speeds, don't overload your boat, be aware of changing weather conditions and drive with extreme caution and proper lights after dark. Capsizing, swamping or falling overboard were involved in three quarters of fatal boating incidents.

Boating Checklist:

- Before Leaving:
 - Take a boating safety course
 - Check the weather conditions
 - Check water conditions
 - Plan your route
 - Complete a float plan
 - Tell someone where you are going and what time you plan to be back. Give this person a copy of your float plan
- Equipment to Bring:
 - First aid kit
 - Buoyant heaving line
 - Bailing bucket (should be attached to boat)

- Oars or paddles (even in a motorized boat)
- Whistle
- Flashlight
- Lifejacket for each person to put on before getting into the boat.
- Throw rope
- Fire extinguisher (if boat is motorized)
- Extra fuel (if boat is motorized)
- Fresh drinking water
- Warm clothing
- Compass

Optional Items

- Small water-proof bag to carry items that you do not want to get wet.
- SPOT GPS locator or other means of emergency communications