



The following are the PFD requirements for all members of Wasabi Paddling Club when paddling in club owned equipment. This document contains three (3) sections;

1. The Policy (Definitions, Policy, FAQ's and recommendations)
2. Appendix A Oregon State Law
3. Appendix B Reference Information

Definitions:

The following definitions apply to this Policy and the Exhibits;

- PFD - PFD means personal flotation device.
- Coast Guard Type - Means the PFD classification as defined in Exhibit B.
- Adjust and fit - Means that for vest style PFD's the wearer knows how to and has adjusted the straps such that the PFD will not come off a) upon impact with the water or b) when being used to help lift someone out of the water.
- As used in this policy inherently buoyant shall mean an approved Coast Guard Type worn as a vest that does not require deployment of a secondary inflation system to achieve maximum design buoyancy.
- As used in this policy hybrid shall mean. A Coast Guard Approved Type PFD worn as a vest that is designed to allow less restrictive movement during sporting activities. Hybrid style PFD's provide a degree of inherent buoyancy but achieve maximum buoyancy by deployment of a secondary inflation system.
- As used in this policy inflatable Belt Style PFD shall mean a Coast Guard Approved Type PFD that is worn around the waist and typically provides no inherent buoyancy. Buoyancy is achieved by activating an inflation system.

Policy:

1. At all times of the year, regardless of water temperature, all participants using Wasabi owned equipment (paddlers, steerspersons, coaches, callers, guests, etc.) shall wear an approved Coast Guard type I, II, III or V PFD. For definitions of each please read the Coast Guard PFD Type descriptions in Exhibit B.¹

¹ For the avoidance of doubt, this policy provision number 1, discontinues the club practice of the suspension of PFD wear requirements by the Board of Directors during warmer water conditions.



2. All non-swimmers will wear an inherently buoyant (not hybrid or not belt type) PFD when paddling on club equipment.
3. All visually impaired paddlers will wear an inherently buoyant or hybrid (not belt type) PFD when paddling on club equipment.
4. All Steerspersons (when steering) will wear an inherently buoyant or hybrid (not belt type) approved PFD.
5. All paddlers using an inherently buoyant or hybrid PFD shall demonstrate to a coach or other designated official that they can properly adjust and “fit” the PFD.
6. All paddlers using an inflatable Belt Style PFD, regardless of type, will demonstrate the ability to inflate the PFD and fit it over their head to a coach or other designated club official.
7. All PFDs shall be worn in accordance with the manufacturers labels and instructions.
8. At race venues this PFD policy is suspended in favor of the prevailing race event PFD policy or requirements.

FAQ's:

Q. Does this policy keep the option for the Board of Directors (should they choose) to suspend the PFD wear requirement when the water temperature is warm enough?

A. No.

Q. Can steerspersons wear an inflatable belt type PFD?

A. No.

Q. Item 6 of the policy specifies demonstration that a paddler can inflate an inflatable PFD. Will the club pay for the cost of the cartridge?

A. No.

The club recommends the following:

Read the attached Exhibits A and B.

Auto inflation pfd's should be avoided as they can deploy when splashed during paddling.



Appendix A - Oregon State Law

- All vessels must carry one U.S. Coast Guard–approved Type I, II, III, or V PFD for each person on board or being towed.
- All PFDs must be in good and serviceable condition and must be readily accessible. The PFDs must be of the proper size for the intended wearer. Sizing for PFDs is based on body weight and chest size.
- In addition to the above requirements, vessels 16 feet in length or longer must have one U.S. Coast Guard–approved Type IV PFD on board and must be immediately accessible.
- A Type V PFD may be carried instead of any required PFD, but not on personal watercraft, and only if the Type V is approved for the activity for which the boat is being used. Most Type Vs must be worn to meet the carriage requirements. (“Personal Watercraft” means a motorboat, less than 16 feet, propelled by machinery which: ... (2) Is designed to be operated by a person sitting, standing or kneeling on, rather than in the conventional manner of sitting or standing inside the vessel.)
- A child 12 years old and younger must **wear** a U.S. Coast Guard–approved PFD at all times while on an open deck or cockpit of a vessel that is underway or when the child is being towed. **Inflatable PFDs are not approved for children.**
- Each person on board a personal watercraft (PWC) must wear a U.S. Coast Guard–approved Type I, II, or III PFD. Inflatable PFDs are not approved for persons on PWCs. (See the definition of PWC above.)
- As of January 1, 2010, all persons boating on sections of a river rated as Class III or higher **MUST wear** a properly fitted, USCG–approved Type I, II, III, or V PFD. In downtown Portland the Willamette is a Class I river. The lower reaches of the Nehalem River are also Class I.
- USCG–approved inflatable PFDs are authorized for use on recreational vessels **only** by persons at least 16 years of age.
- Discolored or torn PFDs should be discarded and replaced.



Exhibit B - PFD Reference Information

- **Type I PFDs** are geared for rough or remote waters where rescue may take a while. Though bulky, they have the most buoyancy and will turn most unconscious people into a face-up position. They are the kind of PFD you'll likely find on commercial vessels. Type I PFDs are available in inherently buoyant, inflatable or hybrid designs.
- **Type II PFDs** are intended for calm inland waters, where fast rescue is likely. They have a very basic design that is less bulky than Type I, and typically less expensive, but they are not as comfortable as Type III. They will turn some unconscious wearers to the face-up position. Type II PFDs come in inherently buoyant, inflatable or hybrid designs.
- **Type III PFDs** are suitable for most paddlers where there is a chance for quick rescue. They offer freedom of movement and comfort for continuous wear. These PFDs are designed so wearers can put themselves in a face-up position, but they may have to tilt their head back to avoid being face down in water. Type III PFDs come in inherently buoyant, inflatable or hybrid designs.
- **Type IV PFDs** are flotation devices that are meant to be thrown to a conscious person who is in trouble and provide backup to a PFD. Examples include life rings and buoyant cushions. Type IV PFDs are not meant to be worn and they are not required for canoes, kayaks or SUPs.
- **Type V PFDs** are considered special-use devices and intended for specific activities. To be acceptable by the USCG, they must be worn at all times and used for the activity specified on the label. Varieties include kayaking, waterskiing, windsurfing, deck suits and hybrid inflatable vests. Type V PFDs come in inflatable or hybrid (inherently buoyant and inflatable) designs.