



## Safety Requirements and Guidelines

### Required Safety Procedures

1. All paddlers, volunteers, safety personnel, media, event organizers, etc. must read and sign the American Canoe Association and Friends of the Mississippi River (FMR) liability waivers before participating in the Mississippi River Challenge.
2. All paddlers are required to wear properly fitting US Coast Guard approved personal flotation device (PFDs, i.e. lifejacket) during on-water activities for the Mississippi River Challenge.
3. All paddlers shall take part in a safety briefing before departing from the Coon Rapids Dam put-in on Saturday, July 30<sup>th</sup>.
4. Paddlers shall travel between established lead and sweep safety support craft at all times.
5. Any participant that chooses to leave the course (sag) must take out at a designated stopping point, and must immediately notify an FMR staff person.
6. All participants shall be prohibited from consuming any alcohol or illegal drugs immediately before or during the on-water event. Any participant under the influence of alcohol or drugs shall be asked to leave the waterfront area.
7. All participants, volunteers, safety personnel, media, and event organizers shall comply with all local, state, and federal regulations.

### Safety Guidelines

1. Take plenty of water with you and hydrate frequently. There will be plenty of water at each rest stop to refill your water bottles. Paddlers often don't notice that they are thirsty when having fun on the water. But your body loses a lot of moisture, even when wet.
2. Remember to bring and regularly apply sunscreen. Shade is scarce out on the water.
3. Wear shoes or sandals while boating and while in the water. Thousands of people suffer serious cuts on their feet every year by wading barefoot
4. Wear synthetics, like nylon or fleece. Cotton clothing holds water next to the skin, making hypothermia more likely even on a hot day. Water pulls body heat away from a person twenty five times faster than air
5. Standing up in current is dangerous. If you capsize your canoe or kayak, keep your feet up! Use the "safe swim" position—feet pointed downstream, backstroke to shore where there is little current and you can safely stand.
6. Stay clear of exposed tree roots, branches, and other debris (strainers), which allow water to freely pass, but will catch and hold a solid object like a canoe or a swimmer.

