



## **2009 HEAD OF THE SCHUYLKILL REGATTA** **SAFETY RULES FOR COACHES AND ROWERS**

The Head of the Schuylkill Regatta® is one of the largest rowing events worldwide, annually attracting more than 5,000 rowers and many spectators. With these large numbers care must be taken to address the risk of injury to regatta participants. These rules set forth procedures to follow in the event of injuries on land, as well as on-the-water emergencies arising from equipment failure, collision, or water immersion.

**“Simple” On-Land Emergencies:** For minor incidents, cuts, abrasions, insect bites and the like that do not require expert medical attention, there are first-aid kits available at Regatta Headquarters at the Angels launching site, with the dockmasters at the Angels, at the information booth close to the Sedgeley Club at the top end of Boathouse Row, and during registration sessions at Lloyd Hall at the opposite end, closest to the Art Museum and Center City Philadelphia.

**On-Land Emergencies Requiring Medical Attention:** Contact any regatta volunteer, dockmaster, referee or marshal if you, or any member of your crew needs medical attention, or if you observe an incident that might require professional medical response. We have an extensive communications network that can quickly summon help wherever it is needed. All reports of emergencies will be routed to an on-site central command post of the Philadelphia Fire Department. The command post will dispatch an appropriate response team for the situation, ranging from individual EMT’s on bikes, to one or more of our fully equipped and staffed mobile EMS units, deployed at the Canoe Club, Angels and Boathouse Row on Saturday, and at the first two locations on Sunday. The command post can also summon off-site assistance or reinforcements if necessary.

**On-the-water emergencies** entail the added risk element of immersion. In addition to the obvious risk of collision-related trauma and accidental drowning, there is the often-underappreciated risk of hypothermia. We particularly draw your attention to this because in late October, the water in the Schuylkill River has already begun to cool significantly. Hypothermia is the lowering of core body

temperature to dangerous levels and can occur rapidly in the setting of water immersion. No one who has been immersed can be presumed to be “all right.” In addition to the effects of hypothermia on the heart, circulation, and body metabolism, central nervous system function is altered, often in subtle ways, and an immersed or recently immersed individual’s judgment and ability to assess his/her own condition accurately may be seriously impaired.

Accordingly, it is of paramount importance that all Regatta participants – rowers, coaches, and others – yield absolutely to the authority and direction of official Regatta personnel in matters of traffic, safety, and rescue. Basic rules for participants are posted below.

**Safety rules applicable to all participants include the following:**

1. Race participants are strictly forbidden to return to any aspect of regatta participation following immersion in the water, until they have been removed from the water by regatta personnel, rewarmed, medically evaluated by our on-site EMT’s and released according to the Regatta Safety Plan Guidelines, which include the requirement to sign an attestation form.
2. Rowing to the start line, no boat shall cross the racecourse at any point unless expressly instructed to do so by a Regatta official. After racing, no boats shall cross the course except if they embarked from the Canoe Club and are returning to that location. The crossing point for these boats is above Peter’s Island, but no boat may cross until expressly told to do so by the regatta officials stationed at that location.
3. It is the responsibility of the coaches/supervisory personnel of the participating organizations to know the whereabouts of the organization’s participating members and equipment at all times.
4. In the event that any crew becomes separated from its equipment (shells, oars, sculls, etc.), that equipment will be retrieved by Regatta personnel and deposited at a designated dock or other location for recovery by the organization to which it belongs. Equipment will be recovered by Regatta personnel only. Under no circumstances is any participant to attempt to recover equipment from the water.

5. Again, regatta participants will yield to the absolute authority of official Regatta personnel in all matters of traffic, safety, and rescue.

Refusal by any Regatta participant to cooperate with and abide by these safety rules will result in:

- a. His/her exclusion from this Head of the Schuylkill Regatta and the possibility of exclusion from all future Head of the Schuylkill events;
- b. Possible disqualification of the organization he/she represents from this Head of the Schuylkill Regatta and the possibility of further exclusion of that organization from all future Head of the Schuylkill events;
- c. An automatic waiver of the rower and the organization he/she represents of any and all claims for damages of any type against the Head of the Schuylkill Regatta, its sponsors, the Fairmount Park Commission and the City of Philadelphia.

October 4, 2008