

**AS HAZARDS
ADD UP, RISK
INCREASES!**

HAZARDS AHEAD?



LOW-HEAD DAMS

Also known as "drowning machines," low-head dams are deadly traps of moving water. As the water flows over the dam, it creates a circular pull of water towards the bottom of the dam (called a **hydraulic**). This is what pulls a person back towards the dam, then underwater and repeats the process. Once caught in this drowning machine, it can be impossible to escape. Low-head dams are very difficult to see from upstream. If the dam is marked, you should see a buoy before you would see the dam. Unfortunately not all dams are marked so it's important to be able to recognize a dam from upstream.

If you fall out of your canoe or kayak stay with it. Do not try to swim to shore. Most times, your kayak or canoe will float and provide an area you can hang onto til help arrives. The sudden shock of water can be confusing and a paddler may panic. If you're in the cold water for even a short time, your body temperature can quickly drop to dangerous levels. Make sure you keep your life jacket on! **It keeps you afloat and lowers heat loss.**

BAD WEATHER

Bad weather has a dampening effect on any paddling trip. The wind, rain and rough water that goes with bad weather is a safety hazard to the unsuspecting paddler. The best thing to do is to avoid bad weather by looking for it. **Recognize it early, and head for shore.**



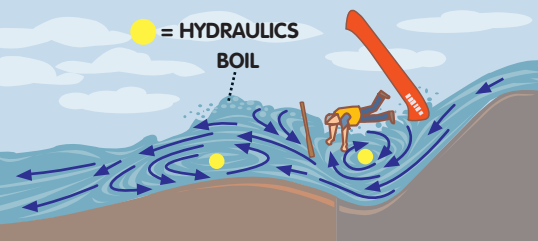
SAFE PADDLING

Remember these safety tips while paddling:

- Don't stand up while in moving water.
- If you fall overboard, stay with the boat.
- Always wear a life jacket while in a boat because you never know when you could end up in the water.
- If you do fall into the water, use the H.E.L.P. (Heat Escape Lessening Posture) position (*below*) to conserve body temperature—water can be a lot colder than you can imagine. In the water, the body loses heat at least 25 times faster than it does in the air.



H.E.L.P.
HEAT ESCAPE
LESSENING POSTURE



Be prepared for the unexpected and know the waters you plan to paddle. Keep away from this and other hazards!