

MAKE THESE YOUR KAYAK CLOTHING MANTRAS – “LIFE INSURANCE PAYMENTS”

1. DRESS FOR WATER TEMPERATURE
2. DRESS TO BE VISIBLE
3. SWIM YOUR GEAR

WATER TEMPERATURE

- An average adult in 50 degree water has a 50/50 chance of surviving a 50 yard swim.
- Your body loses its heat 25 times faster in water than air.
- Most sea kayak drownings result from HYPOTHERMIA (drop in core body temp)
- Dress for the water but keep air temperature in mind

AIR TEMPERATURE

- Warmer weather can cause dangerous HYPERTHERMIA (rise in core body temperature/heatstroke)
- Use clothing for protection from heat and sun.
- HYDRATE! HYDRATE! HYDRATE! – Drink fluids constantly – preferably with electrolytes

VISIBILITY

- Be visible to other boaters, ships, or rescuers (hopefully not, but if necessary.)
- So dress brightly TO BE SEEN BY OTHERS

SWIM YOUR GEAR

- So you know what it feels like and to get comfortable IN THE WATER .
- To identify problems with your gear or clothing BEFORE you are in the water rescuing yourself.

GENERAL CLOTHING TIPS

- You want to be comfortable unless you appreciate the benefits of a hairshirt.
- Avoid anything that might “rub you the wrong way”
- Look for clothing that is forgiving, not restricting
- Test drive new garments on shorter paddles
- If all else fails, try butter, not margarine; Chamois Buttr, Body glide or waterproof anti-chafe products usually sold to distance runners and cyclists
- Don't worry about fashion – remember you will be wearing a neoprene “tutu.” You will look silly to non-paddlers

SUMMER CLOTHING – OBJECTIVES – HIDE FROM SUN, STAY COOL.

- Every body and internal thermostat is different – so consider these guidelines and find what works for you.
- Wear hats or head gear for shade from sun, to keep rain and sun out of your eyes. (Floppy broad brimmed hats, baseball cap, bandanas, sunglasses). Consider ventilation, fit, quick drying materials
- Wear “flexible” clothing (conditions change) – loose lightweight long sleeve shirt, shorts or long pants
- Quick dry – wicking material (Coolmax, Supplex nylon), fabrics with built-in sun/insect protection
- Cotton kills! Unless you like being wet all the time.
- Light weight paddling gloves for sun protection and blister protection of hands.
- Footwear is important to protect our feet; getting your kayak into and out of the water, getting out in places along the way, on stream, river or shallow lake bottoms, and for in-kayak comfort.
- Make sure they STAY ON in water or mud.

SPRING & FALL CLOTHING – OBJECTIVES - WARMTH AS NEEDED , FLEXIBILITY FOR CHANGING CONDITIONS

- Layers are the key .
- Synthetics – NO COTTON (wool is good alternative to synthetics (stays warm when wet)
- Wet suit variations (water temp 60 and up) – full, farmer john, top and bottoms – good insulation – but restrict movement somewhat – go for thinner (triathlete gear instead of scuba)
- Paddle jackets, dry tops,
- Head and hands very important to keep warm.