

LONG DISTANCE PADDLEBOARDING

If you decide to ride a longer distance, want to paddle around headlands or go further offshore, then you should take into account some extra safety points.

- **Wear a lifejacket.** It pays to be safe when heading away from land or paddling in more extreme conditions.
- **Wear a leash.** Your board is the biggest flotation device you have, so stay with it!
- **Communication.** Carry at least one form of waterproof communication with you (for example, a mobile phone in a dry bag or a hand held VHF radio).
- **Avoid** areas with heavy boat traffic (shipping channels), strong currents, and dangerous rocks.
- **Visible.** Wear bright clothing so you stand out to other water users.
- **Rules of the road (at sea).** When out on your paddleboard you are governed by the same rules as other small craft. Go to www.nrc.govt.nz/onthewater to find out more.
- **Safety.** If possible, paddle with another person or in a group. Also, if caught out by deteriorating water or wind conditions adopt the "safe position" on your knees and paddle waka style – this will lower your centre of gravity, provide more stability and reduce wind drag.
- **Check** the weather forecast and tides and try to avoid situations where the wind direction is blowing against the tide, and offshore winds.
- **Always** tell someone where you are going and when you'll be back.

If in doubt, don't go out!

USEFUL LINKS

Boating in Northland – Tide Tables. Northland Regional Council.
www.nrc.govt.nz/onthewater

NZSUP - the society for stand-up paddleboarders in New Zealand
www.nzsup.org.nz

Maritime New Zealand
www.maritimenz.govt.nz



Contact us:

For further information contact
Northland Harbourmaster's office for the Northland Regional Council
0800 002 004 or www.nrc.govt.nz

Facebook:
www.facebook.com/NorthlandRegionalCouncil

Twitter:
www.twitter.com/NRCExpress

MARITIME GUIDELINES

Paddleboarding



Paddleboarding safety guidelines

- > General guidelines
- > Paddleboard surfing
- > Long distance paddleboarding

Putting Northland first



The following is an outline of essential basic safety advice. For your own safety seek advice from instructors and experienced paddleboarders, and ideally take a lesson from a qualified instructor before buying your board or heading out on the water.

Stand-up paddleboarding is fast becoming the new on-the-water sport for all ages. It is good exercise and also fun.

Like any water sport, you need to have an understanding of water and weather conditions and what you can do to maximise your safety so you get the most out of your time paddleboarding.

Stand-up paddleboarding comes in many forms, so we've separated out the guidelines into three sections to help you focus on the safety aspects for your requirements.



GENERAL GUIDELINES

- **Check the weather.** It's vital to know what the weather – particularly the wind – is forecast to do during your paddleboarding session.
- **Check the tides.** If paddling in a coastal environment check the tides so you know what to expect during your session. Remember that the strongest currents are at mid-tide, and an easy launching/landing spot at high tide could mean wading across hundreds of metres of mud at low tide.
- **Avoid offshore winds.** Even light to moderate offshore wind – those that blow you away from the shore – will take you away from the safety of shore quickly. Be a step ahead and choose your paddling site with this in mind.
- **Don't paddle alone.** Like most water sports it's more fun and safe with a friend or in a group (paddle in a pod).
- **Be visible.** Make the most of your height and wear colours that contrast with the environment. Sticking reflective day glow or high visibility tape to your paddle blades is also a good idea.
- **Learning.** Get the basics in calm, flat water. This will help you be a better paddler in the long run. Take a lesson from a professional paddleboard instructor to learn good techniques early.
- **Safety.** Avoid areas where there are lots of other boats, strong currents and dangerous rocks. Keep away from swimmers and ideally, be leashed to your board. Wear a lifejacket or wetsuit to help you if you end up in the water – instructors recommend a belt type lifejacket which gets in the way less when paddling. Don't be afraid to adopt the "safe position" – paddling from a kneeling position – to get back to the shore if you're finding it too hard or unstable, or there is too much wind, to paddle standing up.

PADDLEBOARD SURFING

Surfing is a popular sport in New Zealand and there are many more people and activities heading into the waves these days. Stand-up paddleboarding is just one of them. The tips below may help to ensure you have a fun and safe time without impacting others.

- **Always wear a leash.** This will save a lot of swimming and minimise the dangers of a run-away board.
- **Learn the basics first.** Don't attempt to paddle into a surfing line-up until you are confident on your board and can paddle fast and turn quickly.
- **Understand surfing etiquette.** If you don't already surf, talk to a surfer to find out the rules of the surf break and who has right-of-way in different situations.
- **Paddle down the beach.** Keep out of the pack and away from swimmers – you will enjoy more waves and less stress if you head down the beach and away from the crowds.
- **Don't drop in.** Never paddle onto a wave that somebody else is already riding.
- **Remember,** with a stand-up paddleboard you can catch a lot of waves easily. Be fair and if sharing the surf break behave responsibly and share the waves. You will do the sport a service if you give space to others and are courteous.

