



February 19, 2013

KAYAKs, CANOEs, & INFLATABLE RAFTs/BOATs

(Rowed, paddled, or poled non-motorized vessels)

Equipment (Required and Otherwise)

ITEM	VA	NC
<u>REQUIRED</u>		
Vessel Registration	N/R	Exempt ¹⁶
Life Preservers (PFDs)	Req'd ¹	Req'd ^{17, 18, 19, 22}
Type IV PFD	Exempt ²	Exempt ²⁰
PFDs for Children Under 13	RED ^{3, 4}	RED ^{21, 19,}
Sound Signals	RED ⁵	RED ²³
Navigation Lights	RED ⁶	RED ²⁴
Visual Distress Signals	RED ^{7, 8}	RED ^{25, 26}
<u>SUPPLEMENTAL</u>		
CD “signaling mirror” device	SUG	SUG
Photo ID	SUG	SUG
Tow rope (12')	SUG	SUG
Collapsible Oar	SUG	SUG

Legend:

- Req'd **Required** unconditionally
- N/R **Not Required**
- Exempt **Exempted** from compliance
- SUG **Suggested supplemental** items
- RED** **Review Expanded Details** (Review footnotes & below-listed website(s)):

www.dgif.virginia.gov/fishing/regulations/2013-fishing-regulations.pdf
www.ncwildlife.org/Portals/0/Boating/documents/VOG.pdf
www.uscgboating.org/fedreqs/default.html

VIRGINIA

(Footnotes for rowed, paddled, or poled non-motorized vessels)

Reference: Virginia Watercraft Owner's Guide ("VWOG") [Published 2013]

Website: www.dgif.virginia.gov/fishing/regulations/2013-fishing-regulations.pdf

Reference: USCG booklet "Federal Requirements" by USCG Office of Boating Safety (2012)

Website: www.uscgboating.org/fedreqs/default.html

1. There must be one wearable (Type I, II, III, or V) USCG-approved, readily accessible, **life preserver** of the appropriate size for each person on a vessel. Each must also be in good and serviceable condition. Type V life jackets need to be worn according to the manufacturer's label to meet requirements. On inflatable life jackets, all mechanisms (air chamber, inflation mechanism and cartridge, oral inflation tubes, inflation status indicators) should be checked before each trip (VWOG p.55-56, Required...).

2. The regulation to carry a USCG-approved **Type IV** throwable does not apply to non-motorized canoes and kayaks of 16 feet or greater (VWOG p.55-56, Required..., In addition...).

3. **Federal Life Jacket Rule for Children:** No person may operate a recreational vessel on federal waters with any child under age 13 on the vessel unless each child is wearing an appropriate USCG-approved life jacket or else is either below deck or in an enclosed cabin. On Virginia waters, this rule (though not enforced by Virginia's Conservation Police) is enforced by the U.S. Coast Guard and applies on waters (Lake Gaston, etc.) over which the USCG has enforcement jurisdiction (VWOG p.56, Federal...).

4. **Inflatable PFDs** are not approved for persons under 16 years of age nor are they permissible for whitewater activities (VWOG p.56, A Special Note...).

5. Regulations do not specifically require vessels less than 39.4 feet (i.e. <40') in length to carry a whistle, horn, or bell. However, Navigation Rules require sound signals to be made under certain circumstances. Therefore, having some means of making an efficient **sound signal** capable of a 4-second blast which is audible for 1 mile is required. A whistle or air horn is acceptable if your vessel is not equipped with a horn. (VWOG p.57, Sound...).

6. A vessel under oars [and sailboats less than 7 meters (23 feet) in length] may display **navigation lights** prescribed for a sailing vessel, but if they do not, they shall have ready at hand an electric torch or lighted lantern shining a white light which shall be exhibited in sufficient time to prevent collision (VWOG p.59, FIG. 8; also Inland..., para. 3).

7. All vessels used on coastal waters, the Great Lakes, territorial seas, and those waters connected directly to them, up to a point where a body of water is less than two nautical miles wide, must be equipped with USCG-approved **visual distress signals**. Vessels operating on the high seas and which are owned in the United States must be equipped with USCG-approved visual distress signals (Reference: "Visual Distress Signals" on p.17 in the USCG's "**Federal Requirements**" booklet).

Manually propelled boats (rowboats, canoes, kayaks, etc.) are not required to carry daytime visual distress signals on coastal waters but are required to carry night visual distress signals when operated on coastal waters at night (VWOG p.57, Visual...).

Prudent operators of manually propelled boats should always consider carrying some type of daytime visual distress-signaling device when operating on coastal waters despite not being required to do so.

8. Visual distress signals (VDS) are not required on **non-coastal waters** which are at and above the first point upstream from the Atlantic Ocean where waters narrow to less than 2 nautical miles in width.

Virginia's "coastal waters" inside the COLREG/Inland demarcation lines are defined in detail by the Virginia *Watercraft Owner's Guide* (VWOG p.58, The following points...; Reference also: COLREGS DEMARCATION LINES in the book of *Navigation Rules*).

Prudent operators of manually propelled boats should consider carrying VDS devices even on "non-coastal" waters. (Reference: "Visual..." on p.17 in the USCG's "*Federal Requirements*" booklet).

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NORTH CAROLINA

(Footnotes for rowed, paddled, or poled non-motorized vessels)

Reference: North Carolina Vessel Operator's Guide ("NCVOG") [up to date through January 1, 2010]

Website: www.ncwildlife.org/Portals/0/Boating/documents/VOG.pdf

Reference: USCG booklet "Federal Requirements" by USCG Office of Boating Safety (2012)

Website: www.uscgboating.org/fedreqs/default.html

16. **Certificate of Vessel Number** (per NC General Statutes, Chapter 75A, Article 1):

§ 75A-7. Exemption from numbering requirements.

(a) A vessel shall not be required to be numbered under this Chapter if it is:

(7) A vessel with no means of propulsion other than drifting or manual paddling, poling, or rowing.

17. All recreational vessels [in particular although not specified, vessels under sixteen (16) feet in length which includes most kayaks and canoes] must have one Type I, II, or III **PFD** of a suitable size for each person aboard... (NCVOG p.6, Personal..., Recreational..., para. 1).

All recreational vessels sixteen (16) feet in length and over must have one Type I, II, or III **PFD** of suitable size for each person aboard... and, in addition, one throwable Type IV PFD (NCVOG p.6, Personal..., Recreational..., para. 2).

18. NOTE: For Paragraph "11" above, note that **Type V PFDs** are not specified by the NCVOG. A Type V PFD is a restricted device that must be USCG-approved and is acceptable only when the wearer is engaged in the activity for which the device is intended. The manufacturers label will show the activities for which the PFD is authorized and the label will list all other restrictions (NCVOG p.7, Types..., Type V).

19. **Inflatable PFDs** are not approved for persons under 16 years of age. *Restricting inflatable PFDs to those 16 years of age or older is not addressed in the NCVOG publication. However, it is specifically addressed on p.10 under "Inflatable Life Jackets" in the USCG's "Federal Requirements" booklet.*

20. Canoes and kayaks 16 feet in length and over are exempted from the requirements for carriage of the additional **Type IV PFD** (NCVOG p.6, Personal..., Recreational..., para. 1, 1st bullet).

21. **Life Jacket Rule for Children:** No person may operate a recreational vessel unless each child under 13 years old on board is wearing an appropriate USCG-approved PFD unless:

(a) each child not wearing such a PFD is below decks or in an enclosed cabin, or

(b) the vessel is not underway (vessels that are anchored or that are tied to shore (or that are aground) are not underway

(NCVOG p.6, Personal..., Recreational..., entire para. 3).

22. It is recommended that inflatable PFDs not be used by persons engaged in **whitewater activities**. While no prohibition against their use is expressly attributed to the U.S. Coast Guard or the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission, some states (such as Virginia) specifically disallow their use in whitewater boating activity. This may reflect their possible lack of comparable robustness versus inherently buoyant PFDs and/or hybrid PFDs.

23. Vessels less than 39.4 feet (i.e. <40') in length, while not required to have a horn or whistles and bells, shall be provided with some means of making an efficient **sound signal** (NCVOG p.9, Sound...).

24. A vessel under oars [and sailboats less than 7 meters (23 feet) in length] may display those **navigation lights** prescribed for a sailing vessel, but if they do not, they shall have ready at hand an electric torch or lighted lantern shining a white light which shall be exhibited in sufficient time to prevent collision (NCVOG p.11, Exceptions..., para.1).

25. This topic "**Visual Distress Signals**" is not addressed in the North Carolina *Vessel Operator's Guide*. Alternatively, reference "Visual Distress Signals" on p.17 in the USCG's "**Federal Requirements**" booklet).

All vessels used on coastal waters, the Great Lakes, territorial seas, and those waters connected directly to them, up to a point where a body of water is less than two miles wide, must be equipped with USCG-approved visual distress signals. Vessels operating on the high seas and which are owned in the United States must be equipped with USCG-approved visual distress signals.

On the waters defined above, manually propelled vessels are not required to carry daytime visual distress signals (VDS) but must carry night signals when operating between sunset and sunrise (Reference: "Visual Distress Signals" on p.17 in the USCG's "**Federal Requirements**" booklet).

Prudent operators of manually propelled vessels should consider carrying some type of daytime VDS when on coastal waters despite not being required to do so.

26. Visual distress signals (VDS) are not required on **non-coastal waters** which is the first point upstream from the Atlantic Ocean where waters narrow to less than 2 nautical miles in width

Prudent operators of manually propelled vessels should consider carrying VDS devices even on non-coastal waters.