

RCW 79A.60.430 Vessels carrying passengers for hire on whitewater rivers—Safety requirements. (1) While carrying passengers for hire on whitewater rivers in this state, the licensed whitewater river outfitter shall comply with the following requirements at the beginning of every trip:

(a) If using inflatable vessels, use only vessels with three or more separate air chambers;

(b) Ensure that all passengers are wearing a securely fastened United States coast guard-approved type V personal flotation device of the proper size, and that all guides are wearing a securely fastened United States coast guard-approved type III or type V personal flotation device;

(c) Ensure that a spare United States coast guard-approved type III or type V personal flotation device in good repair is accessible to all vessels on each trip;

(d) Ensure that each vessel has on it a bagged throwable line with a floating line and bag;

(e) Ensure that each vessel has accessible an adequate first aid kit;

(f) Ensure that each vessel has a spare propelling device;

(g) Ensure that a repair kit and air pump are accessible to inflatable vessel;

(h) Ensure that equipment to prevent and treat hypothermia is accessible to all vessels on a trip; and

(i) Ensure that each vessel is operated by a guide who has complied with the requirements of subsection (2) of this section.

(2) No person may act as a guide unless the individual is at least eighteen years of age and has:

(a) Successfully completed a lifesaving training course meeting standards adopted by the commission;

(b) Completed a program of guide training on whitewater rivers, conducted by a guide instructor, which program must run for a minimum of fifty hours on a whitewater river and must include at least the following elements:

(i) Equipment preparation and boat rigging;

(ii) Reading river characteristics including currents, eddies, rapids, and hazards;

(iii) Methods of scouting and running rapids;

(iv) River rescue techniques, including emergency procedures and equipment recovery; and

(v) Communications with clients, including paddling and safety instruction; and

(c) Completed at least one trip on an entire section of whitewater river before carrying passengers for hire in a vessel on any such section of whitewater river.

(3) A guide instructor must have traveled at least one thousand five hundred river miles, seven hundred fifty of which must have been while acting as a guide.

(4) Any person conducting guide training on whitewater rivers shall, upon request of a guide trainee, issue proof of completion to the guide completing the required training program. [1997 c 391 s 4; 1993 c 244 s 30; 1986 c 217 s 6. Formerly RCW 88.12.245, 88.12.280, and 91.14.050.]

Effective date—1997 c 391 ss 2, 4, 5, 7, and 8: See note following RCW 79A.60.410.

Intent—1993 c 244: See note following RCW 79A.60.010.