

**Flatwater Stand-Up Paddleboard Instructor Training Syllabus**

***Risk Assessment and Session Planning Updates***

Additional content:

1. **Risk assessment**. In risk assessment when discussing location choice include **Reservoirs** as a specific location type.
2. **Risk assessment**, when identifying hazards in locations and the associated risks include the following to include those specific to **Reservoirs**:

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| **Risk** | **Control** |
| **Mud and Silt** on reservoir sides and bottom, can be an entrapment hazard.  Board fins can be stuck in the bottom and cause the paddler to fall. | Avoid Launching and recovering near Mud and silt, assess areas of mud and silt bottom where in depth and avoid. |
| **Debris** - There may be submerged branches, plants or other hazards that can trap or entangle you. | Risk assess your route for debris, including seeking local/agency knowledge. Avoid areas of debris.  Use of a Waist mounted quick release is recommended. |
| **Structures and entry and exit** - Dams, walls and other manmade structures around the bank side can be steep and slippery causing you to fall into the reservoir and hampering your exit. There may also be concealed or hard objects beneath the surface | Use suitable and agreed entry and exit points and avoid using reservoir structures for access and egress. |
| **Temperature** – due to lack of flow, reservoirs can be colder below the surface layer than other bodies of water. | Ensure all group members are briefed for effects of cold-water immersion and are dressed appropriate to the temperature of the water. |
| **Spillways, Overflows** - Dams have spillways where water is sometimes released to fall to the downstream river, or where a full reservoir overflows. These can be similar to low head dams and can pose significant risk to Paddlers.  Overflows can be barrier or constructed as a circular hole into which water enters on all sides. | Learn where these are located on the reservoir and avoid with a large safety margin. |
| **Towers and intakes** - The tower is normally close to the dam and contains the pipes that take water off for use, whether that’s to be processed for drinking or for hydro-electric power. There might be a single pipe, or several taking water from different depths. | Learn where these are located on the reservoir and avoid with a large safety margin. |
| **Floating Barriers and buoy lines** – A line of long or round Buoys marking the water boundary or signalling and area off limits to water users, usually found near dams or intakes | Learn where these are located on the reservoir and avoid with a large safety margin. |
| **Algae(Blue Green Algae)** - A green layer on the water is a bacterial organism known as blue-green algae, and it can produce toxins known to kill animals and pets. In humans, it can cause severe illnesses and skin irritation. (Prevalent in Northern Ireland Currently) | If Green algae is encountered avoid and do not touch.  Find out where it is common and avoid SUP at those bodies of water. |

For more extensive safety information please check the [Canoeing Ireland website](https://www.canoe.ie/safety-on-the-water/).