

# *Safe Sailing Conditions*

## Purpose

Our intention at Footloose Sailing Association is to provide a safe and enjoyable environment in which people of all abilities may enjoy sailing activities.

We count on participants to arrive prepared to sail in a variety of conditions, including proper clothing, food, water, sun block and other necessities.

We count on those participants to understand and respect their own limitations as well as those of the organization.

Footloose strives to provide an experience that leads everyone involved a long and fruitful career in boating. This policy outlines how and when decisions are made and by whom regarding environmental conditions in which we offer programming.

## Description

All decisions regarding Safe Sailing Conditions will come from the Skipper Coordinator on site at the event. Skippers will receive input from their own observations as well as those from participants, volunteers, and available independent resources as well. The Skipper Coordinator's decision is final.

Individual skippers are responsible for their passengers at all times regardless of environmental conditions, and must exercise excellent judgment in care taking. They may return to the dock at any time.

Furthermore, we rely on their judgment to ensure that participants are properly prepared for sailing in any and all conditions that they may encounter.

Sailing conditions are divided by zone as described below in which we rely on environmental observations to draw conclusions about the safety of our participants in our vessels.

The Safety Zone is established off the Leschi Marina as 1,000 yards to the East, the end of the shoreline park to the North and the condominiums at the South end of the South Leschi Marina.

## Other

In light wind conditions skippers are requested to stay near Leschi so as to be able to make it back to the dock at the end of the sailing session (usually ~2 hours). This maintains the flow of the event in getting the next sailing session out from the dock on time.

Footloose sailing areas are published on the Footloose website and available from the Event Commodore at events.

Skippers will remain in radio contact with the Dock Radio Operator for instructions on suitable sailing locations per environmental conditions, when to enter and exit the marina, and other important information regarding the event.

In all sailing conditions the skipper must gauge his/her abilities and experience against the conditions on the water and on the boat. The safety and comfort of the passengers is the responsibility of the skipper as well as the consideration of the boat and sailing equipment.

Skippers ignoring or not taking the all the above seriously and not following the rules as laid out or the Skipper Coordinator will be asked to step down as a Footloose Skipper.

### **FSA Safe Sailing Conditions Policy Notes:**

Key points during the discussion –

- Decision partly lies with skipper and his/her ability
- Equipment condition is considered in the policy: engine, rigging, bilge, etc
- Of highest priority is our passenger's safety and comfort
- What is our ability to recover people and/or vessels in various states, including at the dock getting people out of a boat safely
- Degree of disability, and the individual's ability to know their own limit
- Decision making tree
- Do we sail together or determine a graded scale of conditions for participants and skippers
- Who has the final say
- It's clear that the onus is on the participant to come prepared and we should improve our broadcast of our suggested equipment and preparations – i.e. if a participant is not prepared, we wouldn't consider them someone who understands the stakes of sailing in inclement conditions
- This policy should include mention of safe sailing areas i.e. acceptable zones to sail depending on the conditions e.g. no trips to Bill's in 2 knots...☺

Conclusions:

- We offer to sail together provided we have participants and skippers who are able to sail in the given conditions.
- We will use a graded scale of conditions to guide self-determination.
- We will make an effort to come prepared with independent weather forecasts as well as use our local knowledge to determine suitable sailing conditions
- We are NOT responsible to show everyone everything about sailing. We have an overriding expectation that our participants come prepared so as to capitalize on our events and their own learning opportunities. We will work hard to communicate best practices in preparation and boating safety.

<b>Zone</b>	<b>Conditions: Description</b>	<b>FSA Action</b>
Between bridges 520 – I-90, Meydenbauer Bay to the East	Green: Wind waves calm, less than 1 foot, indicating acceptable winds of 0 – 9 knots – no white caps. Skies are clear and the temperature is likewise acceptable provided participants are properly clothed.	Skippers are briefed on conditions, sailing zones, and time limits for trips.
Safety Zone	Yellow: Wind waves over 1 foot with intermittent white caps, indicating 10+ knots. Indication of more inclement weather approaching. Risk of participants getting wet from waves and/or rain.	Skippers contacted by radio regarding conditions. They will survey participants for comfort and preparedness on whether to continue or return to shore. They will move to the upwind area of the Safety Zone.
Leschi Marina Dock	Red: Wind waves 2 feet or more with consistent white caps, indicating wind strengths in excess of 18 knots.	The skipper coordinator will recall all vessels, and will evaluate those participants and skippers interested in continuing sailing for preparedness before allowing boats to leave the dock.