

# Clansy Goes Camping



# Safe Boating

## *Your Personal Safety*

Sure, anything can happen at any time but make the extra effort and consider your circumstances... Manage your own safety. Here are five simple things that you can do:

- (1) **Buckle Up.** Wear and buckle up your life jacket.
- (2) **Drive Sober.** If you are drinking at all, then don't get behind the wheel.
- (3) **Look First.** Pay attention and look before you act.
- (4) **Wear the Gear.** Wear the appropriate gear for your boating adventure.
- (5) **Get Trained.** Take an accredited boating safety course.

## *Before Setting Out*

- Make and file a "Trip Plan." A trip plan is a voyage itinerary that includes travel route, estimated time of return and basic details of the vessel. File your trip plan with a responsible person before you head out. Ensure that the responsible person with your trip plan knows what to do in the event that you do not return when scheduled.

## *Inspecting Your Vessel*

- Better a few minutes delay onshore or at the dock than hours of delay in an uncomfortable or dangerous situation. Before heading out, make sure your vessel is in good working order and properly equipped.
- Create a pre-departure checklist. Your checklist should include weather information, local hazards or boating restrictions, maps and charts, personal flotation devices of appropriate size for every person on board, a safety equipment checklist, enough fuel for the trip including a reserve, and a reminder to file your trip plan.
- Inspect your vessel. Visually inspect the hull for cracks or other damage. Check the engine operation. Verify that the steering is operating properly. Check all fluid levels and condition, including the batteries. Inspect all hoses, clamps and belts.

## *Have Fun*

Planning your boating adventure and following safe boating techniques will help you to have a safe and fun time on the water.

# Camping Safety

## *In Tents*

- Buy only flame resistant tents.
- Clear at least a one meter area around your tent site.
- Keep lanterns and open flames outside of your tent.
- Extinguish all fires as well as turn off lanterns and stoves before retiring.

## *In Recreation Vehicles*

- Use only electric or battery lights in RVs.
- Clean and maintain appliances, gas connections and fume vents.
- Place portable heaters away from combustibles.
- Keep a fire extinguisher near the exit.
- Install a battery operated smoke detector and carbon monoxide detector.

## *With Camp Fires*

- A burning permit may be required to build a campfire. Check with your local enforcement agency before going camping.
- Locate your campfire a safe distance from tents, trees or buildings.
- Clear away grass and needles within a 3 meter diameter of your fire pit.
- Have water, a shovel and sand near the fire pit.
- Don't wear loose clothing around the campfire. If your clothes catch fire: ***Stop, Drop and Roll***
- Supervise children closely around a campfire.
- Be sure the campfire is out before you leave. Add water, stir till cold.

## *General Hiking and Camping Safety*

- Before setting out, leave a copy of your itinerary with a responsible person.
- If you have any medical conditions, ensure that you have an extra supply of your medication. You may be out camping or hiking longer than you planned.
- It is safest to hike or camp with at least one or more people.
- Keep first aid supplies accessible at all times, even on short hikes.
- Dress in layered clothing. The inner layer should be a breathable material that pulls moisture away from the skin.
- Protect yourself against animals. Never feed animals and keep all food and garbage secure.

## *What To Pack*

These items listed are only some of the basic equipment needed for every camping or hiking trip. Other items will be necessary depending on what type of trip you plan to have. What you take will depend on where you are going and how long you plan to be away, but any backpack should include the following:

- Map of the area
- Compass
- Flashlight with extra batteries and bulbs
- Extra food
- Extra clothing, including rain gear
- First aid kit
- Sunscreen and sunglasses
- Pocketknife
- Matches in a waterproof container
- Candle or fire starter
- Adequate supply of drinking water
- Insect repellents
- Prescription medications for ongoing medical conditions
- Signaling device such as a whistle or pocket mirror

Clumsy walked towards the dock in his new waders. Perfect he thought, perfect. The sun was shining, there wasn't a cloud in the sky and there was a light breeze blowing. Just enough to keep the mosquitoes away.





**Sparky is going to miss all the fun, he thought. He should have postponed his meetings until next week. Clumsy untied the boat from the dock and jumped in. He had lots of camping gear piled in and there was barely enough room for him to sit.**

He stood up and yanked on the pull cord of the engine. "Whooaaaaaaa!" he yelled, as he nearly fell overboard. That reminded him. He wasn't wearing his life jacket. "Oh no, where is it?" he cried out loud.



The boat was drifting further and further from the dock. He looked for a paddle but could not see one among all the camping gear. "Oh no" he cried, "where are my paddles?"



He looked up and down the dock for someone he could yell out to. He could see no one. Further and further he drifted from the dock. "What a mess I have gotten myself into this time" he said. "If only I would just learn to slow down and think about things first."





Clumsy tried to start the engine again. This time he sat on the seat. He pulled and pulled on the cord. It was no use. The motor would not start. Now he wished he had made sure that the motor would start before he pushed away from the dock.



Clumsy looked again for a paddle. He moved some gear but could not see one. He remembered putting them in his truck. I bet, thought Clumsy, that the paddles are still in my truck with my life jacket.





**Clumsy was getting scared. There was a stronger breeze now. He was drifting behind an island. No one would be able to see him. How would he be able to get the attention of someone for help?**

Clumsy grabbed his fishing rod and cast out. I might as well fish, he thought, I can't go anywhere. Then an idea struck him. "Heh heh!" he laughed out loud, "I'm pretty smart. What if I cast my line towards the island and snag a rock? Then I can pull myself into shore and wait on the island to be rescued."



Clumsy cast towards the island as hard as he could but it was not far enough. He reeled in and cast again. This time the lure landed on the shoreline and snagged on a rock. Perfect, he thought, as he pulled and the boat moved slowly towards the shore.



As the boat reached the shore, Clumsy jumped out. It was the first time his new waders had been in the water. He was glad now he had bought them. He tied the rope to a tree so the boat would not drift and turned to walk to the far side of the island.



Just then a bird swooped down from nowhere it seemed and he ducked quickly. "Holy smokes, that is one mean little birdie." Then he remembered that this was an Arctic Tern. The bird probably had a nest on the island and was scared that Clumsy was going to disturb it. "It's ok little birdie" yelled Clumsy , "I won't touch your nest."



When Clumsy reached the other side of the island he could see the dock. There was someone standing there. Clumsy yelled as loud as he could "HEELLP, I am stuck on this island. Call the Fire Department, those guys will help me." "OOOKK" yelled the voice.







**Clumsy sat and waited. The little bird was still flying close by keeping a watchful eye on Clumsy's every move.**

Clumsy stood up and waved his arms at the boat as it came closer. He could tell that it was the fire department boat. Up front was Lieutenant Chucker and running the engine was Fireman Bill.



**"What happened?" yelled Fireman Bill as he shut off the engine. "I was going camping and fishing" yelled Clumsy, "and my engine would not start. I drifted over here and luckily I made it to this island. Can you guys tow me and my boat back to the dock?"**

**"Sure" said Lieutenant Chucker, "where is your boat?" "It's on the other side of the island" said Clumsy. "I'll meet you over there."**



Fireman Bill tied a tow rope to Clumsy's boat. "Hey Clumsy" yelled Lieutenant Chucker, "where is your life jacket?" Clumsy looked at his feet and mumbled, "I was hoping you wouldn't ask. I left it in my truck with the paddles."



"You should never go boating without a lifejacket" scolded Lieutenant Chucker. "Here you go" said Lieutenant Chucker as he handed Clumsy a life jacket. "Put it on and we will tow you back."

At the dock Fireman Bill tied Clumsy's boat and helped Clumsy to the dock. "Whew!" said Clumsy, "that was a close one. I really didn't feel like spending the night with that crazy little Arctic Tern." "You could have been a lot worse off" said Lieutenant Chucker.



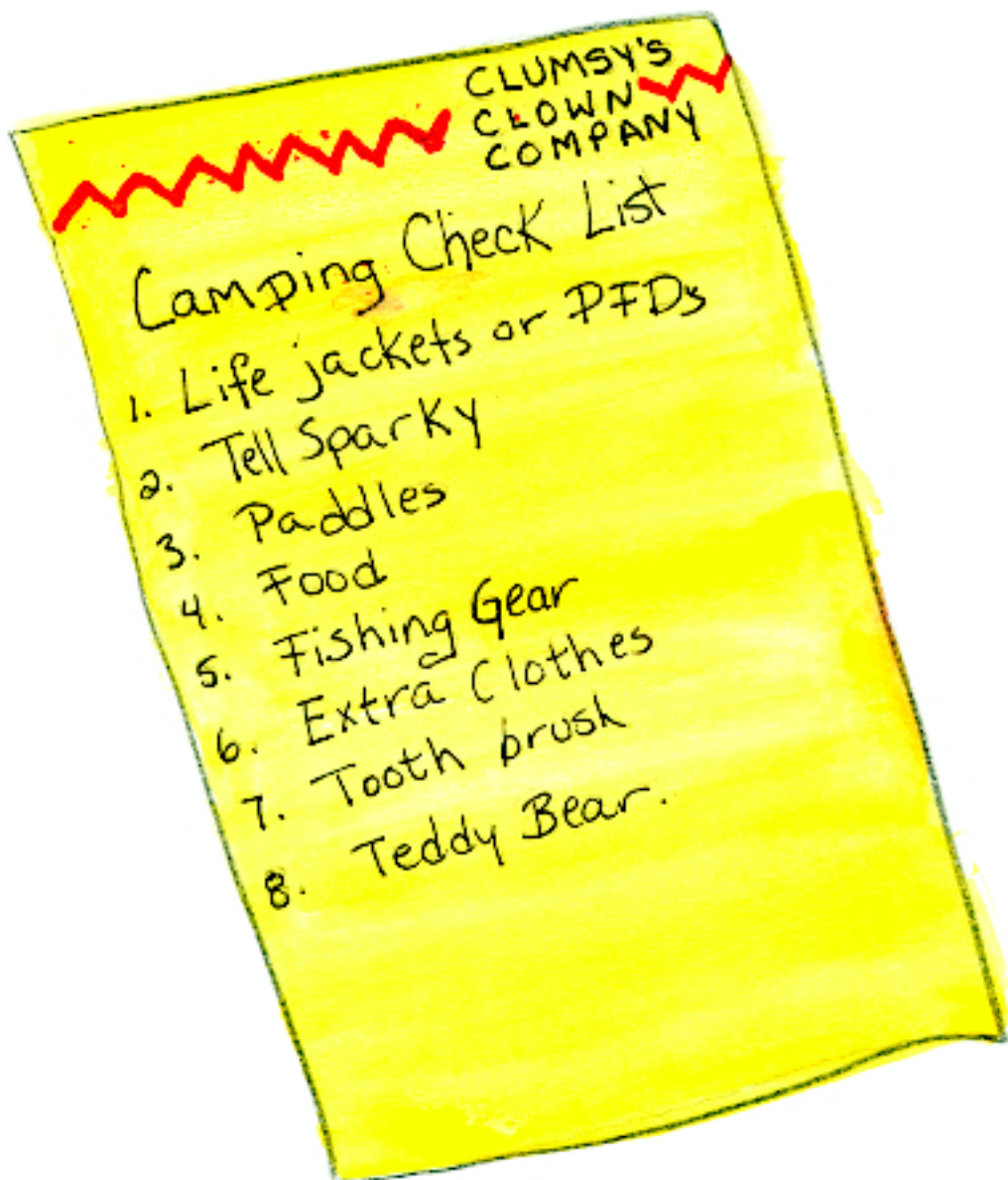
**"Tell me, Clumsy" said Lieutenant Chucker, "did you tell anyone where you were going?" "Well" said Clumsy, "I told Sparky yesterday that I was going fishing today but I did not say where." "Well" said Lieutenant Chucker, "there are some things you should do before you go camping or fishing. You should always tell someone where you are going and what time you expect to be back."**



**"You should always make sure you have all the right equipment too. Your lifejacket and paddles are no good to you if you forget them in the back of your truck. And always make sure to have your engine serviced."**



"You are right" said Clumsy, "I need to slow down a little and think about what I am doing. Thank you, fellas! You saved me again. I think I will start this trip all over again. First I am going to make sure my engine is working properly. Then I am going to think and make a checklist of everything I need for my trip. This time I am not going to forget a single thing."







**"Please promise me you won't tell anyone that you saw me without my makeup on" said Clumsy, as Lieutenant Chucker and Fireman Bill were driving away. "Your secret is safe with us" said Lieutenant Chucker, and he waved back at Clumsy.**

## *Your Safety in Black Bear Country*

### **Bears and People**

Bears are not pets. Bears are wild animals that demand your respect. Prevent bear problems and "problem bears" by acting responsibly. Never approach or feed bears, handle food and garbage properly and stay alert. Behaving responsibly in bear country will help to protect you and the bears.

### **Bears and People**

For many people, seeing a bear is a highlight of a visit to the woods. With your cooperation, bears and people can co-exist. It is only when people fail to act responsibly in bear country that dangerous human-bear encounters occur. When in bear country follow the recommendations summarized here to avoid dangerous interactions with bears. Doing so could protect both you and the bears.

### **Tips for Hiking Safely**

Hike in a group and make loud noises, whistle, talk, sing or carry a noise-maker such as bells or a can containing stones. Most bears will leave if they are aware of your presence. Use extra caution when traveling near rushing water or into the wind. The rushing water may mask your noisemaker and traveling into the wind will prevent the bear from getting your scent and being aware of your presence. Stay in the open as much as possible. Keep children close at hand on trails. Use caution when near natural bear foods. In the spring be extra cautious near water sources, where the bears will be eating the fresh plant growth. In the fall time be cautious near berry crops. Always be careful near any easy fish sources. Stay away from dead animals. A dead animal is a concentrated food source and bears will aggressively defend it. You may be able to detect an animal carcass by smell or by the sight of ravens or gulls circling overhead. Always report the presence of dead animals when in a park. Watch for bear signs. Tracks, fresh diggings and droppings can be an indication that a bear is in the area. Leave your dog at home. A dog often infuriates a bear and may bring on an attack. Your pet may come running back to you with the bear in pursuit! If you insist on bringing your pet, keep it on a leash at all times.

### **Bear Resistant Containers**

Research and document studies have shown that these specially designed containers have reduced the number of human/bear incidents. Proper food storage though is still necessary when in bear country.

### **Chemical Bear Repellents**

Chemical Bear Repellents or Bear Spray contains capsicum, a derivative of cayenne pepper, which when delivered to an animal's face causes irritation of the eyes and mucus membranes. However, because of wind and other circumstances of an attack, the spray cannot be considered an absolute guarantee of safety. Despite the limitation, reports have credited the spray with saving lives. If you choose to carry spray, learn how to use it properly before going out into the woods.

## If You Encounter a Bear

Despite taking all the precautions in the woods, you may still encounter a bear. Keep calm. The best way to keep calm is to be prepared, know how you will respond if you encounter a bear. Make a wide detour or retreat from the area. Leaving the area is the safest thing to do. If you cannot make a detour or retreat, wait until the bear moves from your path, always leave the animal an escape route. Do not run. A bear can run up to 45 kph. You cannot outrun a bear and running may trigger a chase response, resulting in an attack. Slowly back away from the bear, facing it and talking in a soft voice.

## The Bear May Approach

Bears may approach to get a better look at you or rear up on its hind legs and wave its nose in the air trying to obtain your scent. Continue backing away slowly and talking in a soft voice. Dropping a pack or object may help to distract the bear. However, do not drop anything that contains food, as it will teach the bear that it can obtain food from humans. Watch for aggressive behaviour. This includes snapping its jaws together, making a "whoofing" sound or keeping its head down with ears laid back. This may lead to an attack. Body language telegraphs a bear's intentions. Teeth popping can be a warning, but if a bear advances with its eyes locked on you, watch out! The majority of attacks come when a bear is surprised, particularly if it is a female with cubs. A bear may also be aggressive if it is protecting a food source. The bear may bluff its way out of what it perceives as a threatening situation by charging and then veering away at the last second. Back away speaking softly, never run.

## If an Attack Occurs

Playing dead is not normally appropriate with black bears. Only play dead for a black bear if it is obviously feeling threatened and is trying to protect itself or its cubs. Otherwise, try to escape to a secure place such as a car or building. Climbing a tree may be effective, but remember the bear may climb up the tree after you. If the bear does not break off the charge, you should act aggressively by yelling and waving your arms to distract and intimidate the bear. If this fails, try to fight back using any object available. Strike at the bear's nose. Bear spray may be effective.

## Camping

**Put away food and garbage.** Bears are strongly attracted to food and garbage and their odors. Put food into your vehicle anytime you leave your campsite, not just at night. When backcountry camping, cache food away from your tent. Use bear-resistant food storage facilities or suspend food between two trees a minimum of four meters off the ground and one meter from tree trunks. Bear-proof food containers are an option for areas where you cannot cache your food in trees.

**Pack out all garbage.** Do not bury it. Bears can easily locate it and dig it up, becoming a danger to the next group of hikers. If you burn food scraps or garbage be sure to use a hot fire and pack out any unburned portions.

**Dispose of waste water** in designated areas or pit toilets where available; where not, dispose in a well drained area down-slope from your campsite and not near lake or stream edges.

**Avoid smelly foods.** Do not cook or eat in or near your tent or tent trailer. The lingering odors of food are an invitation to bears. Do not get food odors on your clothing or sleeping bag. It is better to sleep in different clothing than those worn while cooking. Freeze-dried foods are best. Keep tent pads clean and free of food and garbage. Use a flashlight at night. Bears may be active at night and the use of a flashlight may warn them away.

**Avoid smelly cosmetics.** Bears may be attracted to perfumes, hair sprays, soaps, toothpastes, shaving cream and cosmetics. Select an appropriate campsite.

**Use designated sites when they are available.** In random camping areas pick a spot away from animal and walking trails and the sounds of rushing water. Camp near large sparsely branched trees that you can climb, should it become necessary. Camp in open areas. Do not camp in an area where people have left garbage in the past.

**Watch for bear signs.**

If you spot fresh bear signs then choose another area to camp in.

#### **Black Bear Characteristics:**

Black Bear (*Ursus americanus* Pallas). Colour: varies from pure black to cinnamon or blond. Most are black with brownish muzzle; often with a white patch below throat or across chest. Height: about 90 cm (30 in) at the shoulder. Length: about 1.5 m (3.5 ft). Weight: adults range from 50 kg to more than 270 kg (110 lbs to 590 lbs). Females are generally smaller than males.

#### **Distinguishing Characteristics:**

Smallest member of the North American bear family. Usually has a straight facial profile and tapered nose with long nostrils. Feet are flat soled with short curved claws. Black bears prefer forested areas though they adapt readily to areas occupied by humans.

### **Threats to Black Bears**

#### **Human Ignorance**

Habituation of bears to human foods and garbage has resulted in the destruction of numerous black bears. Proper food storage, garbage containment, collection and land-filling operations will reduce the likelihood of habituation.

## Remember

- ALL bears are dangerous!
- Do not approach or feed a bear.
- You are responsible for your safety and the safety of others.
- Keep children nearby and in sight.
- Bears may be found anywhere, even in developed areas. Always be alert.
- Learn about bears. Anticipate and avoid encounters. Know what to do if you encounter a bear.
- Odors attract bears. Reduce sources of odor from yourself, your tent and your campsite. This includes food, dishes, utensils, etc. as well as soaps, toiletries and cosmetics.
- The smell of fish strongly attracts bears. When preparing your catch, use a fish cleaning station or dispose of remains.
- Coolers are NOT bear-proof! Store food so that bears cannot smell or reach it - in the trunk of your vehicle or in a bear-proof facility.
- Place all garbage in bear-proof containers provided, or if you are in the backcountry, seal it in plastic bags and pack it out.
- Do not get too close when photographing bears. Use a telephoto lens.
- It is better not to travel with dogs. Dogs can antagonize bears and create an incident where none existed. Never leave pets unattended and treat pet food as people food.
- Stay away from dead animals. Bears may attack to defend such food. Report all carcasses.





**WRITTEN BY: CLEM ST. CROIX  
ILLUSTRATED BY: VALERIE MCPHEE**

**FIRST EDITION MADE POSSIBLE WITH  
CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THE FOLLOWING:**



Northwest  
Territories Municipal and Community Affairs



**City of Yellowknife**  
Yellowknife Fire Division

**PRINTED IN THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES, CANADA**