

Running a chase boat at a sailing event is a big service with some responsibility. As with all boating activities, when acting as a captain the safety of yourself and your crew takes priority. If a situation seems unsafe do not approach it. If that little gut feeling is telling you something like stay clear, then listen to it.

Some things to keep in mind when running the chase boat and beginning to approach those in need of help:

- First, assess the situation at hand; be aware of all those in the immediate vicinity, including anyone involved in the capsized and any other boaters around
 - o Remember the prop on your boat can quickly become the biggest hazard around
- Be alert for other hazards that may be present in the water such as large bits of debris, logs, etc.
- If your main concern is getting people out of the water, then knowing where any hazards are will determine your best approach
- Before you make any attempts to help right a boat or pull folks out of the water, ask if they need help. They may be perfectly capable of righting the boat on their own
- People take priority over a capsized vessel. If people want to board your chase boat shut the engine off to eliminate the hazard the prop presents
 - o Once you have people on board the chase boat, determine if anyone needs any immediate attention (medical), and if so take them to shore right away

If a sailboat capsizes and you're going to aid in getting the boat upright the best approach is from the rear on the side with the mast in the water. From there keep these things in mind:

- o Move into position by taking ahold of the top of the mast, with the bow of the chase boat pointing in the same direction as the bow of the capsized boat
- o Be sure to remember any potential hazards such as loose lines from the capsized boat that could get caught in your prop
- o After securing a hold on the top of the mast determine the wind direction; you'll want to maneuver the capsized boat with its bow into the wind
- o Ask the skipper if his main sheet is un-cleated and clear, then with their direction gently start to lift the mast and sail
- o If the sail is under tension due to having been laying flat on the water, once the tension is broken the capsized boat may begin to right itself quickly, so be aware and ready to avoid the mast as it rises out of the water
- o Wait for the skipper to get back in the right boat before leaving the area

If the sailboat has capsized and:

- Turtled with mast straight down pointing to the bottom of the lake
- Or, capsized in shallow water and the mast is stuck in the bottom of the lake

Then more help will be needed from more experienced sailors that may still be ashore. These situations are unique and not quite as easy to remedy as the above capsized scenario. Check on the skipper and anyone else in the water before going to get help from others.