



Staying safe on the water.

Things you should consider when fly fishing in Manitoba.

If you are taking part in an MFFA outing or fishing with an MFFA mentor these are the things you must consider to ensure a safe experience

Weather:

Be prepared for abrupt changes in weather. Bring clothing that will protect against exposure especially in spring and fall.

Be aware that reflection from the water dramatically increases your exposure to damaging sunlight. Use sun screen, minimum SPF 50, or wear UV approved clothing to cover exposed areas.

If you see lightning in the area, leave the water and take cover immediately. Don't resume fishing until 30 minutes after the threat has passed.

Stay hydrated. Dehydration can reduce ability to make good decisions.

Hook Safety

Take measures to avoid hook injury to you and others when casting. The risk of accidental hook strikes increase when casting in strong cross winds. Always wear eye protection: Sunglasses, prescription or safety glasses.

Always use barbless or crimped hooks. Not only is it the law, a deeply imbedded barbed hook often means a visit to emergency.

Boat safety

Always wear a life jacket. Fly fishing on Manitoba lakes is often done in relatively cold water which will quickly incapacitate even strong swimmers.

Wading Safety

Wear waders suited for the conditions. Neoprene waders are recommended for cold water conditions.

Wear a belt around your waist, outside your chest waders. It will prevent water from rushing in, and it will trap air inside, which can help you float.

If you fall in, roll onto your back and lift up your feet so you can float. Water can add 50 kg or more to your waders making swimming difficult. If you fall in, float out of trouble on your back. Trying to swim on your stomach will quickly exhaust you.

Wear a personal floatation device (PFD).

Red River. Special Conditions.

Extra care is required when fishing at Lockport. The current coming off the falls is strong and changeable. The water is opaque, hiding holes and other hazards such as sunken logs and discarded fishing rigs.

Always wade slowly with feet apart, shuffling sideways. To gauge current strength, multiply your depth in the water by the number of feet a stick travels in one second. A number greater than eight represents a dangerous condition.

Consider using a wading staff for extra support in current and to probe for hidden deep spots.

In unfamiliar water consider using cleats for traction. These can be acquired after market and screwed into your boot.