



Safety Alert - Flow over Weirs

Flow around weirs, sluices, etc., is complex; it can change dramatically from day to day as the flow rate changes. Keep away from weirs, sluices and anything else that a rower could be drawn into.

Upstream of the weir the surface flow rate increases the closer you get to the weir due to all the flow being forced to the surface. If you get too close, then it can be impossible to escape.

The flow downstream is really dangerous. This is shown in a video that has been posted on the British Rowing website here [Stay Away from Weirs and Sluices - British Rowing](#). There is additional information on this page.

The video shows the effect of the recirculating flow downstream of the weir and demonstrates, with models, how the flow would keep pushing a person under the water. It also demonstrates the effect of the tow-back zone and the way this makes it difficult for a person to move away from the weir.



If you see someone in trouble in the water, the Environment Agency's advice is:

1. **Call** 999
2. **Tell** them to float on their back
3. **Throw** them something that floats.

If you have access to a throw line, then use it. If there is a life ring or other item of public rescue equipment in the vicinity, then get it and use it.

Keep well away from weirs, they are dangerous.

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