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Officials Urge Caution To Kayakers, Others Out On Water

PITTSBURGH (KDKA) -- All the rain we've been having has caused the current in the rivers to become very strong.

Two women recently drowned near the Dashields Dam, and Thursday night, there were reports that a kayak went over the dam. It turned out to be a false alarm.



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the water this weekend.

experts and anyone convinced water safety awareness along our

the turbulence at those structures, hugely dangerous, especially to someone who is new to paddling," Army Corps Colonel John Lloyd said.

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The danger he describes took the lives of two local women paddling in kayaks along the Ohio River last month. Helene Brandy and Brittany Evans were swept over the Dashields Lock and Dam in Edgeworth and drowned.

"To someone who is in the middle of the river that is new to kayaking or paddling could quickly become overwhelmed, and next thing you know, we have a tragedy as we saw last month," Lloyd said.

Local fire officials say there have been nearly 30 drownings at the dam over the past 50 years. There are a significant number of warning buoys above the dam. Still, experts say people miss them and suggest we all must do better.

"It starts with the individual, knowing the rivers, wearing their life jackets, taking a safe boating class," Jeff Hark with the Army Corps said. "If that individual, that most vulnerable person in a kayak or a canoe, knows about the rivers, then they can do a lot to reduce their risk."

The hope awareness, education and maybe even a paddling lesson can make a big difference.



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