

Safe D Tuesday: Taking Storybook Land Canal Boats into the green zone

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By Lauren Salisbury

There's something different about Aurora as the brightly colored vessel floats through the gentle waters of the Storybook Land Canal Boats attraction. While retaining its classic charm, the French-style boat's changes become apparent as it glides past King Triton's underwater castle to greet Disneyland Guests – Aurora has received an ergonomic update.

The craft is the first boat at the veteran attraction to receive a safety redesign. A project team including members from Safety & Health Programs, Walt Disney Imagineering and the Attractions area is working to add ergonomic design features to all 15 boats in the fleet.



The French-style Aurora boat at the Storybook Land Canal Boats attraction has received several ergonomic changes.

During the popular attraction, Cast Members sit in the low-slung boats atop decorative motor housings while narrating a journey through miniature landscapes inspired by classic Disney films.

On Aurora, the motor housing has been redesigned for comfort, replacing the hard, sloped surface with a flat, padded seat cushion. Sitting in a forward position allows for improved stability and posture, and also lets Cast Members face Guests.

"[This seat] adds to the show because we sit lower and are able to give a more personal delivery," said Leola Whitney, Attractions operator. "It's great to have a more comfortable way to face Guests."

Sitting in a lower position also keeps Cast Members in their green zone, with easier access to the operation controls, microphone and fire extinguisher. Cast Members no longer have to leave the green zone while the boat navigates tight areas such as the belly of Monstro the whale.

"You don't have to duck your head to fit through these spaces anymore," said David Viveros, Attractions operator.



All boats will be modified so Cast Members can sit more comfortably.

Aurora also was fitted with an extra bench as a place for Cast Members to stand or rest their feet.

"This gives Cast Members adequate space for foot support while seated and provides ample space to get in and out of the boat," said Joannette Lima, who works as an ergonomist with Safety & Health Programs at Disneyland Resort.

To prevent water from accumulating, raised wooden planks were added to the floor of the boat.

During the project, the team will redesign all 15 boats one by one. The crafts were created in three classic canal boat styles – French, English and Dutch. Currently, the team is working on a model for a redesign of the English-style boats. Cinderella, a French boat like Aurora, is set for its maiden voyage Sept. 26.

"This is an enormous improvement," Joannette said. "We've had exceptional acceptance from the Cast."

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