



RIVER WATCH & LAKE WATCH PROGRAMS

Every year our local major rivers and lakes experience an ever increasing volume of boating enthusiasts who take advantage of the weather and water only the Okanagan can offer. Ranging from sailing to power boating virtually every type of water craft can be found somewhere, but associated to the increasing volume of river and lake users, we also have a proportionate increase in individuals who do not go about their river and lake activities in a safe manner.

The unfortunate aspect of many reported incidents to the police surrounding unsafe boating practices is that the information received is not adequate enough for them to investigate. Due to the significant size of the Shuswap River, Mabel, Kalamalka and Okanagan Lakes and limited resources available to the Enderby, Lumby and Vernon RCMP regular routine patrols and enforcement are not possible.

As a result of concerns raised by many boating enthusiasts we are in the process of establishing the "Lake Watch" and "River Watch" programs for the 2010 summer season where lake and river users will also act as eyes and ears for the police and Conservation Officer Service and report incidents should they be observed.

There is a strict reporting criteria and protocol to follow and, if warranted, these types of occurrences will be reported to the police for follow-up investigation. The objective is to encourage those who follow the rules while enjoying safe boating to be part of the solution when observing those who do not follow the same rules. The program is not designed to be punitive but to be proactive by assisting the education of all boaters to do so in a safe and responsible manner.

Education is the key to this program and the enforcement of existing legislation governing safe boating would be used only as a last resort in the most flagrant of circumstances. The intention is to create the safest possible environment for all who use our rivers and lakes whether they be experienced or beginners.

RIVER WATCH & LAKE WATCH PROTOCOL

1. Upon observation of a reportable offence complete the reporting form with as much information as available.
2. You can submit a report form by accessing the online form through the City of Vernon, District of Coldstream or the City of Enderby municipal web sites (Available June 2010). Forms can also be faxed or delivered to the Regional and Rural Programs Coordinators, City of Vernon Community Policing Office
ATTN: Kathryn Birnie/Warren Smith (250) 260-5866.
3. Upon review of the form it will be determined if the information provided will support the generation of an investigative file.
4. If an investigative file is indicated the reporting form will be provided to the appropriate detachment (Vernon, Enderby or Lumby) for processing and assignment to an RCMP or Conservation officer.
5. If an investigative file cannot be created the information will be retained for a period of time allowing the opportunity for additional information to be collected.
6. Should an investigative file lead to a prosecution the person submitting the initial report **must** be prepared to give evidence in court.



INCIDENT REPORTING FORM

Incident Date: _____ Incident Time: _____ am / pm

Incident Location: _____

Observed Incident: _____

Vessel/Vehicle Description:

Registered Owner/Operator (if known): _____

Vessel License No. / Vehicle License No.: _____ Make: _____

(Example 13K1234 or BC1234)

Colour/s: _____ Length: _____ Breadth: _____

Propulsion: (circle one) Outboard Inboard Jet Sailing Other: _____

Number of People Onboard: _____

Operator Details:

M/F	Age	Weight	Hair	Height
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Operators Clothing: _____

Other Descriptors: _____

MANDATORY FIELDS

If this matter proceeds to court, are you prepared to give evidence? (circle one) YES / NO

Name: _____ Address: _____

Phone: _____ Signature: _____

Fax to: City of Vernon Community Policing Office (250) 260-5866

Attn: (Shuswap River) Kathryn Birnie
(Kalamalka Lake) Warren Smith

Email: kbirnie@vernon.ca
Email: wsmith@vernon.ca

Phone: (250) 550-7844
Phone: (250) 550-7843