



Beachers' News

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SUMMER 2006

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NEW FIRE CODE AMENDMENT MAKES SMOKE ALARMS MANDATORY

In December 2005, Ontario's Community Safety and Correctional Services Minister, Monte Kwinter announced a Fire Code amendment requiring smoke alarms on every level of Ontario homes. The Fire Marshall of Ontario recommended the new rules noting "In about 50 percent of fatal, preventable home fires, there was no smoke alarm warning. It is critical to have working smoke alarms on every level to give occupants the precious seconds they need to escape a fire."

With this amendment, the Fire Code now requires homes to have working smoke alarms on every level, and outside all sleeping areas. It covers single family, semi-detached and town homes, and includes cottages.

Municipal fire departments across Ontario have been informed of the amended regulation and will be enforcing the new ruling. For home/cottage owners, tenants, and individual landlords, non-compliance with the Fire Code smoke alarm requirements can result in a ticket for \$235, or a fine of up to \$25,000.

Smoke Alarm Safety Tips

The OFM recommends the following:

- If anyone in the household sleeps with the bedroom door closed, install an alarm inside the bedroom.
- Batteries should never be removed from smoke alarms. If nuisance alarms are a problem, try moving the alarm to another location, or purchase an alarm with a "hush feature" that temporarily silences the alarm.
- Smoke alarms must be replaced every 10 years, or sooner.
- Smoke alarms should be tested once a month, and the batteries replaced every year.
- Everyone in the household should know what to do if the smoke alarm sounds. Develop a home fire escape plan, and practice it with the entire family.

Relative to the above subject, we extend our sincere appreciation to Fire Chief, Bruce Fenton, for creating and supplying the enclosed brochure. We also extend our sincere thanks to Police Chief Dan Rivett for the information his office provided, per the enclosed. Both pieces of material are informative, and we encourage all members to review the material with their respective family.

NOVEMBER 2006 MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

As we "went to press" the draft proposal for Mail-In Voting procedures, relative to this year's municipal elections, was being prepared for presentation to current council. Upon receipt of the approved procedure we will forward a copy to all members. In the interim, we encourage all members to inform themselves of the qualifications, and experience of each candidate, and to vote accordingly as a resident/property owner/tax payer with an investment in Saugeen Shores.

Port Elgin & Saugeen Township Beachers Organization



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ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

WHERE: AT THE PLEX (Rotary Hall)
WHEN: Saturday August 5, 2006
TIME: 10:00 am till 12:00 pm

Guest speakers will be providing us with information relative to community programs, issues and future developments

Guest speakers so far are:

Mike Smith: Deputy Mayor
Bob Clarence: Chair of Parks and Trails Committee
Kathy McCarrel & William Palmer, P.Eng. & Tony Clark: Wind Turbine Farm

BRUCE TELECOM POLICY RE PRE-WIRING OF RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS BY PRIVATE CONTRACTORS

In a letter dated January 2006, Mr. Hans O. Nilsson, President and C.E.O., Bruce Telecom, outlined the company's policy regarding the installation of telephone wiring. We encourage you to investigate before committing.

Excerpts from the letter are as follows:

"Bruce Telecom continues to own and be responsible for the telephone wiring inside customer premises including the installation, addition, repairs and maintenance of this wire.

This means that only Bruce Telecom service technicians are currently authorized to conduct any installations, additions, repairs or maintenance on customers' inside telephone wiring. Any work conducted by someone other than a Bruce Telecom employee should not be undertaken as it may disrupt telephone service or the integrity of our network and may require further repairs by Bruce Telecom at a charge to the customer.

If the inside telephone wiring is done by someone other than a Bruce Telecom service technician, Bruce Telecom has the right to refuse to connect the wiring to its network if the inside wiring does not meet Bruce Telecom specifications. This will result in additional cost to the customer.

It is also more expensive for customers to have service activated in a premise not pre-wired by Bruce Telecom as service charges will be higher than if Bruce Telecom did the pre-wire.

As part of the building pre-wire, a single wire is required to the exterior of the building at the hydro stack. The wire is required to terminate telephone service at the Bruce Telecom interface point.

When doing any building that includes telephone wiring please contact Bruce Telecom prior to the drywall being installed so that a service technician can pre-wire the house. We require a minimum of one week's notice to book an appointment for the pre-wire.

Please call 519-368-2000 and press 1 for Customer Service to book your pre-wire or if you have any questions about Bruce Telecom and its services."

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PROPERTY TAX ASSESSMENTS

Minister of Finance, Greg Sorbara, announced June 29/06 that property tax reassessments by the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC) would be cancelled for the next two years to allow for the implementation of the Ombudsman's recommendations to Ontario's property assessment system.

Your Beachers' Organization has been supportive of WRAFT (Waterfront Ratepayers After Fair Taxation) and CAPTR (The Ontario-wide Coalition After Property Tax Reform), and their lobbying efforts with the Provincial Government re the flawed system of MPAC's Current Value Assessment property taxation with its many inequities.

As a result of many letters to MPP's, and appeals to the Ontario Ombudsman from property owners the government has put a 2-year hold on further assessments. The Ombudman released a scathing report relative to the current system.

"By canceling the next two reassessments, we are giving MPAC the time it needs to consult on, and implement important changes to the system," Sorbara said. "We want to ensure that the changes will result in an improved and strong functioning system that is fair to all Ontarians."

We thank our members for their efforts and letters contributing to this decision. A special thank you is extended to Glenn Reist. Glenn is a member of the Beachers' Board of Directors, and has diligently maintained a line of communication with WRAFT.

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MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

Over 300 of your neighbors throughout Port Elgin, and the former Township of Saugeen, proudly display our membership plaque. The membership is represented by a Board of Volunteer Directors. Through the efforts of the Board, the Membership has been effective in bringing forth positive changes to many serious issues raised throughout 2005-06, particularly with reference to the new Saugeen Shores Official Plan.

Other issues raised by residents of the community include beach and dune conservation, traffic control, septic tanks, bike and hiking trails, future usage of the current right-of-ways, proposed locations for wind turbines and trailer camps, and zoning by-law changes, as recommended by Council. The issue list will grow, as the community grows. Many issues addressed by Council are brought forward during a time frame considered to be the "off season" for many residents and members. In your absence the Beachers' Organization attempts to keep you informed by email, and quarterly newsletters. We also invite you to visit our web site at www.beachers.org.

The Membership firmly believes it is absolutely necessary to maintain positive, constructive dialogue with the elected Council Members of Saugeen Shores. Changes to the community are being implemented, and these changes affect all residents. We invite input from our current Members, and wish to grow the representation of our residents. We encourage you to maintain your membership, and to encourage your non-member neighbors to participate in the process by becoming a member of the Beachers' Organization. An annual membership fee of \$45.00 provides you with a voice in the process, and assists in financing any action plan required to address issues which may affect our resident members. Your efforts to grow the voice of our membership will be beneficial and appreciated.

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WHAT IS Bill 209?

Excerpts from remarks made by David Zimmer, MPP, Willowdale, to the Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills on Bill 209: The Highway Traffic Amendment Act – Suspending Ontario Driver's Licenses for Drinking and Boating, September 2005.

In short, Bill 209 is aimed at saving lives.

As a society, we now understand the message that driving a car while impaired is dangerous. But there is another alcohol related issue, which has, for far too long, been ignored. Every boating season, there are serious accidents involving boating and alcohol. Lives are lost needlessly due to impaired boaters. Many boaters do not understand that the effect of sun and wind, combined with the use of alcohol, seriously distorts judgment and, dulls the reflexes. We need to change the culture that believes drinking and boating is acceptable.

What will the bill do?

The premise of this bill is based on the belief that there should not be a distinction between an impaired driver of an automobile, and an impaired operator of a powered vessel. When an individual chooses to drink and drive ANY VEHICLE they become a weapon and, they put their safety at risk, as well as the safety of others. Bill 209, if passed, will amend the Highway Traffic Act. The penalties that apply to individuals convicted of impaired driving of an automobile, will also apply to boaters who drive powered vessels while impaired.

This bill is about giving law enforcement authorities the tools to effectively address the problem, and if passed, will result in the following:

- Suspend the driver's license of individuals convicted of an alcohol related offence, while operating a vessel
- Give enforcement authorities the ability to enact 12-hour suspensions.
- The Registrar of Motor Vehicles will be able to enact an immediate 90-day suspension of a driver's licence.

WINTER PATROL

As previously advised, the Beachers' Organization hired a winter patrol person, Gary Scammel, to do periodic spot checks of our members' properties from Thanksgiving to Victoria Day. He reported directly to cottage owners if there was any snow damage or vandalism. With regret, we have decided that after Victoria Day 2006, the organization will no longer provide winter patrol, for the following reasons:

- An organization that provides such a service should have comprehensive liability insurance, which is very costly. In order to purchase this insurance the organization would have to raise membership fees considerably.
- Many of our members have hired their own service, or person, to watch over their property, and there are now many such services in Port Elgin.
- Other members use their properties year round, and feel they don't need the patrol.

In light of the above, we have decided that a large membership fee increase for this purpose could not be justified.