



City of Kirkland to Address Watercraft Noise and Safety Issues

April 24, 2012

The City is committed to ensuring public safety in the areas of Lake Washington that are within our jurisdiction. For those who live along our shores, we care that the shorelines, water quality, and wildlife are protected. For those who recreate in our waters, we encourage safe boating, swimming, skiing and other water activities.

The Kirkland Police Department strives to be responsive to community boating complaints but Title 14 was originally adopted in 1960 and does not include a provision for excessive and unreasonable watercraft noise. Many waterfront communities along Lake Washington regulate various boating related concerns including watercraft noise (e.g. engine, loud voices, music). In keeping with Kirkland's public disturbance laws for noise originating from land sources (e.g. vehicles, construction, buildings), the City seeks to update its watercraft regulations to include similar noise provisions. The City Council has asked to have proposed watercraft noise regulations be adopted before the busy summer months begin this year. It anticipated that a code amendment will be presented in June.

The City is hosting an informational meeting on Thursday, May 3, 6:30-8 p.m., Kirkland City Hall, Peter Kirk Room, 123 5th Avenue, Kirkland, WA to hear concerns from residents and boaters about watercraft noise.

In addition to addressing watercraft noise, the City will be working with stakeholders to help the City take a comprehensive look at Title 14, Watercraft Regulations, including ways to address watercraft safety issues.

If you would like to receive email updates about the City's efforts to address watercraft noise and safety, please visit www.kirklandwa.gov (Search: Watercraft Safety). If you have specific questions or suggestions, please contact the Kirkland Police Department information line at 425-587-3516. For boater safety reminders, please see the reverse side.

Boater Safety Reminders from the City of Kirkland

- **Complete the mandatory boater education.** Washington State law requires that operators of motorboats with 15 horsepower or greater take a boater education class and obtain a boater education card. For more information, visit www.parks.wa.gov/boating/boatered/ or call 360-902-8555.
- **Wear a life jacket.** Washington State law requires children ages 12 years and younger to wear a Coast Guard approved lifejacket or vest on vessels less than 19 feet long. Make sure life jackets are in good repair and fit properly.
- **Carry extra safety equipment.** Have extra anchors, flares, electronic equipment to find your way home, and a good bilge pump.
- **Designate a sober driver.** According to the U.S. Coast Guard, alcohol use is the primary contributing factor in fatal recreational boating accidents in the U.S. In Washington, boating under the influence (BUI) of drugs or alcohol or boating recklessly is against the law. Alcohol affects both judgment and reactions, and its effects are more pronounced on the water.
- **Don't overload your boat.** Small open boats under 20 feet have a capacity plate on the stern that tells how much weight and how many people it can hold safely.
- **Be weather wise.** Sudden wind shifts, lightning flashes and choppy water may indicate stormy weather.
- **Watch your moves.** Limit movement and keep weight low to avoid capsizing or falling overboard. Take two trips if necessary to keep the weight in the boat low.
- **Stay with your boat.** In case of capsizing or swamping, you should stay with your boat. Even when filled with water, the boat will provide some flotation and is easier to see by potential rescuers.
- **Dress appropriately.** Dress for the water temperature, not the air temperature. Assess the wind and wave conditions to decide if you are prepared for potential cold-water conditions. Check weather forecasts before leaving home and be aware of changing conditions. And take along extra clothing for children - they get cold faster than adults.
- **Stay in communication.** Bring your cell phone in a waterproof zip lock bag. If you have cell phone service, you can call for help without removing the phone from the bag.

For information on Kirkland's boat launch ramps at Marina Park and Second Avenue South, visit www.kirklandwa.gov and search "Boat Launch."