



## CITY OF KIRKLAND

### Police Department

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[www.kirklandwa.gov](http://www.kirklandwa.gov)

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#### MEMORANDUM

**To:** Kurt Triplett, City Manager

**From:** Eric Olsen, Chief of Police  
Bill Hamilton, Captain  
Marie Stake, Communications Program Manager

**Date:** October 22, 2012

**Subject:** Watercraft Noise Update

#### RECOMMENDATION:

That Council receives an update report regarding the impacts of the new boating noise ordinance.

#### BACKGROUND

Amplified noise from watercraft stereo systems was identified as a growing concern for our shoreline community. Title 14 of the Kirkland Municipal Code addresses many marine related issues, but did not provide a suitable enforcement solution for boat related noise. At Council's direction, staff garnered various stakeholder input and subsequently proposed a two phase response to watercraft related issues. The first phase specifically addressed boat related noise for which Council revised Kirkland Municipal Code ("KMC") Section 11.84A.070, adding watercraft noise to the existing language. Phase I was implemented during the 2012 boating season and Phase II will be addressed in the upcoming months.

#### Phase I- Implementation Update

Although the boating noise ordinance was only implemented this summer, positive impacts have already been observed.

Per the Police Department's request, the King County Marine Unit increased their visibility and interaction with boaters. They advised boaters of the new boating noise ordinance and distributed the Kirkland boating noise ordinance informational "Have Fun, Have Respect" postcard (Attachment 1). Posters regarding the new ordinance were placed at the Kirkland dock. Posters were also distributed to other Lake Washington communities to be posted near their common boat access areas.

Kirkland's boating community originally expressed concerns regarding fears of "over policing." The Police Department has not received any enforcement complaints from boaters and only three boating related noise citations were issued during the 2012 boating season.

Kirkland's Police Department recently solicited post implementation feedback from previously identified Juanita Bay residential stakeholders. The residents were appreciative and noted a significant improvement in unreasonable boat related noise. For example:

- "I have talked to a lot of folks on both sides of the bay. We are excited and incredibly grateful."
- "We never thought the City would listen. We are happy with the response thus far."
- "We credit KPD and their interaction with King County Marine in making this happens."

#### NEXT STEPS

The Public Involvement Plan presented to the Council in April 2012 calls for extended outreach to stakeholders in Phase II. Keeping to the commitment to conduct a comprehensive review to Title 14, the following activities are planned for Phase II.

1. **Internal Review of Title 14:** The Police Department will coordinate an internal review of Title 14 "Waters & Surfacecraft" with the Parks and Community Services Department, City Manager's Office, City Attorney's Office and King County Sheriff's Office. Policy questions needing clarification will be presented to the Council's Public Safety Committee during this review. This review will bring to light issues that stakeholders may have great interest in which will be further explored through an online survey. Potential topics may include speed and anchoring limits and pollution and water quality impacts of boating. (November 2012-January 2013)
2. **Online survey:** The City Manager's Office will coordinate the development of an online survey that will allow interested stakeholders to give input on certain current and proposed provisions of Title 14. The internal review and stakeholder survey will help to develop amendments that will be presented to the Public Safety Committee and then to the full Council. (February-March 2013)
3. **Public Workshop:** The Police Department and City Manager's Office will host an informational meeting to present the draft ordinance (April 2013)
4. **Ongoing public information:** The City Manager's Office will coordinate ongoing public information on the progress and outcomes of Phase II through the website ([www.kirklandwa.gov/watercraftsafety](http://www.kirklandwa.gov/watercraftsafety)) and email (list serv) updates, media relations, and city communications tools.
5. **Title 14 Amendments/Ordinance Adoption:** The goal is to have the Council adopt a final ordinance prior to the 2013 boating season. The targeted timeline is to bring the legislation to the Council at one of the May 2013 meetings for discussion and adoption.

The enforcement philosophy remains one of balance, so that boaters maintain the ability to enjoy themselves, while being respectful of their potential impact on others. The collective feedback and early results to date have been positive. It is critical that that we continue to monitor and adjust our response as needed to continue the positive outcomes.

# HAVE FUN HAVE RESPECT

## Boat noise ordinance now in effect

**T**he Kirkland Police Department and King County Sheriff's Office Marine Unit ask for your cooperation in complying with the new public disturbance regulations that apply to watercraft (Kirkland Municipal Code 11.84A.070). Prohibited noise

includes frequent, repetitive or continuous sounds from a horn or siren; excessive engine noise; and audio sound system noise audible from 300 feet or more. Please be considerate of your boating and land neighbors. [www.kirklandwa.gov/watercraftsafety](http://www.kirklandwa.gov/watercraftsafety)

