

Emerald Tidings / Island Review – May 19, 2004 Print Edition

Town To Implement New RED FLAG Warning System for Dangerous Surf Conditions

The Town of Emerald Isle will be implementing a new RED FLAG warning system on the beach strand beginning Memorial Day weekend. This system will enable the Town to better warn our residents and visitors about dangerous surf conditions that may exist, and is another attempt by the Town to enhance the safety of our residents and visitors.

The Emerald Isle Beach Patrol (which operates under the Emerald Isle Fire Department) will monitor surf conditions daily, and will post the RED FLAGS if dangerous surf conditions exist. RED FLAGS will be posted on public beach walkovers at approximately ¼ -mile intervals when dangerous surf conditions exist, and will also be posted on selected private beach walkovers. If the beach has been posted with RED FLAGS, it is recommended that adult swimmers not go out further than knee-deep water, and children should not be allowed into the surf at any time. The RED FLAGS will remain in place until the dangerous surf conditions subside, and will then be removed by Emerald Isle Beach Patrol and / or Fire Department personnel.

The Town's goal is for everyone to have a safe and enjoyable visit to our beautiful beaches, and the new RED FLAG warning system is one way to further that goal. Residents and visitors should note that the ocean is often a potentially dangerous environment, and should remain alert and observant for any potential dangers when swimming and playing in the ocean at any time.

The Emerald Isle Beach Patrol will be on duty throughout the summer, and residents and visitors are encouraged to stop the Beach Patrol personnel to ask about surf conditions, RED FLAG warnings, or other local information.

Emerald Isle's Nourished Beach is Looking Great! Come See for Yourself!

A year has now passed since the Eastern Phase Beach Nourishment Project was completed along 6 miles of beach between the Indian Beach town line and Pinta Street, and the beach is looking better than ever!

Immediately after nourishment, there were concerns expressed by some about shell fragments and the slightly darker color of the material, however, these concerns should largely be forgotten this year. Over the past year, the wind and waves have naturally sorted out the shell material, and the sunlight has helped to lighten the color of the nourishment material, leaving a wide and beautiful sandy beach along the entire 6 miles nourished in January – March 2003. The Town also recently completed hot-spot re-nourishment of 2 miles of the original 6 miles in March 2004 with material from the Beaufort Inlet navigation channel. The quality of this material is excellent, and this additional material makes the appearance and texture of the already-improved beach in these areas even better! In addition, the Town's independent research of the environmental impacts of the Eastern Phase Beach Nourishment Project indicates that the beach organisms impacted by the nourishment project are making a timely recovery, and that any impacts were / are short-lived.

Don't take our word for it though! Come on down and check out the beach for yourself! We think you'll agree that Emerald Isle's nourished beaches are looking great!

Town to Seek Additional Storm Water Management Grants

The Board of Commissioners approved two grant applications for storm water management initiatives at its April meeting.

The Town will submit a \$750,000 grant application for FEMA and NC Division of Emergency Management funding for the construction of the next 3 pumps planned for the overall Coast Guard Road Flood Water Project, which tentatively consists of 8 pumps installed at strategic locations in neighborhoods along the Coast Guard Road corridor. (As reported

previously, the Town is currently in the design phase for the installation of 3 new pumps at Fawn Drive, Deer Horn Drive, and Conch Court, and construction is expected to begin within the next 60 days. General Town revenues will fund this project.) The new grant request is for Federal and State funding made available as a result of Hurricane Isabel, and the Town hopes to receive notification about a grant award by mid-2005. These grant funds would be used to install new pumps in the Lands End and Island Circle areas.

The Town will also submit a \$32,000 grant request to the NC Clean Water Management Trust Fund to study the potential removal of 5 existing ocean storm water outfalls located on the beach strand in the vicinity of Bogue Inlet Pier. If approved, grant funds will be used to hire an engineering consultant to identify cost-effective alternatives to redirect this storm water runoff to a more environmentally-friendly location nearby. Based on the results of the study, the Town may seek additional grant funds in the future to construct the most feasible alternative. The Town is fortunate that these are the only ocean storm water outfalls in the Town limits, and eventual removal of these outfalls would completely eliminate permanent storm water discharges to the Town's ocean beaches.

More Sidewalks On The Way

Prison labor from the Newport Correctional Center will be installing additional sidewalks in Emerald Isle in mid / late June. The additional sidewalk will connect with the recently completed segment near the Eagles store on the north side of NC 58, and will run approximately 1,000 linear feet west toward the intersection of Mangrove Drive near the CVS store and K&V Plaza.

The Newport Correctional Center's prison concrete crew is available to the Town for 2-week increments, and this project will be the Town's first opportunity to utilize this free labor to expand our sidewalk system. The Town hopes to schedule the Newport prison labor crew for additional work over the next year to eventually extend the NC 58 sidewalk west to the Coast Guard Road intersection.

Proper Preparation of Yard Debris

The Town's new yard debris collection service, initiated in October 2003, is working very well thus far, and the Town is pleased to offer this valuable service every Monday of each month. Judging by the dramatic increase in the number of collection points each week, the service is very popular among our residents and property owners. Town employees collected yard debris from nearly 700 collection points during the month of April, which is significantly higher than any other month on record!

In order for us to serve you as efficiently and effectively as possible, we ask that you adhere to the guidelines below. Your cooperation will result in quicker service, more attractive neighborhoods, and lower costs for the Town!

- Yard debris piles should be placed at the roadside, and the property owner must contact Town Hall at 354-3424 or yardwaste@emeraldisle-nc.org to schedule a pick-up. Failure to schedule a pickup will result in the yard debris piles remaining in your neighborhood for a longer period of time, and will negatively impact the appearance of your neighborhood.
- Limbs should be cut to maximum 8 ft. lengths. There is no limit on the diameter of limbs.
- Yard debris piles should be located away from overhead power lines if at all possible. It is much easier and safer for our employees to maneuver the truck's mechanical arm where there are no power lines present.

- Yard debris piles should also be located away from mailboxes, fences, live trees, and other potential obstructions if at all possible. This will reduce the potential for damage to these items and the truck, and will also enable our employees to be more efficient.
- Loose yard waste must be bagged or containerized. It is not cost-effective to pick up piles of loose yard waste, and this also does not leave the area neat and clean after pickup.

Save Our Summers – North Carolina Movement Seeks Later School Start Date

Save Our Summers – North Carolina, a volunteer coalition of parents, grandparents, education professionals, and others is actively lobbying the Governor and General Assembly to enact legislation this year that would require NC public schools to begin the annual school year no earlier than August 25.

Over the past several years, the prime vacation season has ended earlier and earlier due to earlier school start dates, and this has a tremendous economic impact on Emerald Isle, Carteret County, and the entire State, as most if not all of the month of August is eliminated for family vacations. Approximately 92% of North Carolina school systems now begin the year between July 30 and August 12, and this results in a direct reduction in local tourism during the month of August. Additionally, the earlier school start dates make it increasingly difficult for local businesses to retain sufficient summer help to finish out the limited summer season.

This is an important issue for Emerald Isle, and also for many parents of school-age children who are seeking quality family vacation time. The Emerald Isle Board of Commissioners adopted a resolution supporting this effort at its February 2004 meeting, and encourages any interested persons to get involved in this effort.

To learn more about Save Our Summers – North Carolina, and also to sign an on-line petition, visit their website at www.saveoursummers.com.