EMERALD TIDINGS- July 2020

Emerald Isle’s Beach Warning Flag System

The Town of Emerald Isle flies large format Beach Warning flags between April 1 and September 30. Flags are displayed at the Western Ocean Regional Access (WORA), the Eastern Ocean Regional Access (EORA), on each Town beach vehicle as it patrols the beach strand, Fire Station 1, Fire Station 2, at the base of the Emerald Isle Bridge on NC 58, and at a series of 25 large poles located along the ocean front.

Please look for these warning flags on our beaches and know what they mean, so that you can avoid hazards and have a safe and enjoyable beach experience in Emerald Isle.

**YELLOW FLAGS** indicate moderate hazards, and that the public should use caution in the ocean. In Emerald Isle, even the calmest of days on the beach can pose an inherent risk when entering the ocean and the public is always advised to use caution.

**RED FLAGS** indicate dangerous rip current activity is expected and rip currents are likely to be stronger and more frequent. It is recommended that you stay out of the water.

**DOUBLE RED FLAGS** indicate the ocean is closed for swimming and you can be fined or arrested for entering the water.
**PURPLE FLAGS** indicate an abundance of potentially hazardous marine life in the vicinity, including Portuguese man-o-war, jellyfish, and other creatures. The town will fly these flags as needed in specific locations, however, the use of PURPLE FLAGS is relatively rare.

For greater details on beach safety, please take a moment and read the Water Safety FAQs: [https://www.emeraldisle-nc.org/Data/Sites/1/media/pdfs/emerald-isle-water-safety-faqs.pdf](https://www.emeraldisle-nc.org/Data/Sites/1/media/pdfs/emerald-isle-water-safety-faqs.pdf)

**Beach Nourishment- Dune Planting Continues**

In cooperation with the Carteret County Shore Protection Office and our fellow Bogue Banks municipalities, the Emerald Isle portion of beach nourishment and planting is now complete.

Coastal Transplants made great progress in Emerald Isle during the month of June 2020. The mechanical planter and hand planting team completed all work along the dune crest (top) on Monday June 22, 2020.
If you wish to install sand fencing, you must follow these sand fencing GUIDELINES and contact our Local Permit Officer beforehand. You can reach Josh Edmondson at jedmondson@emeraldisle-nc.org or 252-354-3424.

To learn more about the project, please visit http://www.carteretcountync.gov/301/Beach-News or contact Gregory Rudolph (Rudi) at the Shore Protection Office by dialing (252) 222-5835 or via email at grudolph@carteretcountync.gov.

Sarah G. Williams joins Emerald Isle as Town Clerk

Rhonda Ferebee is slated to retire September 2020, capping a decorated tenure of 20-years service as Human Resouces Specialist/Town Clerk. Following an extensive search, including nearly 100 applicants, Sarah G. Williams has been hired to serve as the next Human Resouces Specialist/ Town Clerk for the Town of Emerald Isle.

A Swansboro native, Sarah has a master’s degree in public administration from the University of North Carolina at Wilmington with a concentration in environmental policy and management. She has spent the last 9 years working for the Town of Pine Knoll Shores. Sarah is a long-time volunteer with the N.C. Coastal Federation, a NC Certified Municipal Clerk, and a graduate of the UNC School of Government’s Municipal and County Administration program.
Outside of work, Sarah enjoys spending time with her two dogs Andy and Eloise at the beach, East Carolina University (her alma mater) football games in the fall, and reading a good book. She looks forward to joining the Emerald Isle team on July 20, 2020.

**GFOA Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting**

For the sixth time in as many years, the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA) has awarded the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting to the Town of Emerald Isle for its comprehensive annual financial report (CAFR) for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2019. The CAFR has been judged by an impartial panel to meet the high standards of the program, which includes demonstrating a constructive “spirit of full disclosure” to clearly communicate its financial story and motivate potential users and user groups to read the CAFR.

“We are thrilled to receive the GFOA Certificate of Achievement for the sixth consecutive year. The most recent award exemplifies the commitment by the Town Board and staff for transparency,” stated Matt Zapp, Town Manager. “Finance Director Laura Rotchford (CPA) is a true professional and does an exception job for the town. We are fortunate to have her leading the charge related to Emerald Isle’s finances.”
The Certificate of Achievement is the highest form of recognition in the area of governmental accounting and financial reporting, and its attainment represents a significant accomplishment by the Town of Emerald Isle and its management.

Sea Turtle Patrol: In Full Swing

Submitted by Valerie Rohrig

The Emerald Isle Sea Turtle Patrol season is already in full swing! As of this writing, we already have 7 nests in Emerald Isle. Although our volunteers started walking each morning, looking for turtle tracks beginning May 1st, we didn’t get our first nest until the evening of May 29th. Nest 1 was followed very quickly by the discovery of Nest 2 on May 30th.

The COVID-19 virus has affected several aspects of our program this year. As an organization, we are carefully following the safety rules put forth by various state leaders. We weren’t able to meet and train new volunteers this year. Feel free to follow our website: eiseaturtlepatrol.org and Facebook page (if you haven’t already joined our Facebook page, you can do that on the website too) for updates throughout the 2020 summer turtle season. An additional change will be that our volunteers will be wearing masks at our nests and trying to practice social distancing as well. We ask your cooperation in protecting our volunteers if you luck upon a turtle event.

Tuesdays Are For Turtles is a new children’s book written by one of our Zone 11 walkers, Thomas P. Gill (Tom to us). It is a fun book that follows Tom and his granddaughter on their regular walking day of, you
guessed it, Tuesday. You can pick up a copy of Tom’s book at area bookstores, specifically Emerald Isle Books & Toys or on Amazon.

Congratulations to the Emerald Isle Sea Turtle Crawl Team/Alzheimer The Longest Day. This annual fundraiser began in 2015. To date, the local team has raised over $50,000.00!!! This year, rather than do the walking relay on the beach, members participated thru virtual activities on June 20th. As a salute to this special day, around sunrise, Nest 7 was found that morning.

As always, please leave nothing behind on the sand but your footprints.

Private Fireworks: What is legal in North Carolina?

The July 4th holiday is fast approaching! This is a time for celebration and fun. What better way to celebrate "Independence Day" than setting off some fireworks, which can be enjoyable, if you remember to obey the law.

The Emerald Isle Police Department is asking for your help in making sure everyone has a safe, and enjoyable 4th of July holiday. Hot, dry and humid conditions make fireworks especially dangerous this time of year.

Certain types of fireworks are illegal to possess or use in North Carolina. These include: firecrackers, ground spinners, bottle rockets, Roman candles, and aerial fireworks. A simple rule of thumb is if it spins, explodes, or flies into the air; it is illegal.
In general, sparklers, fountains and novelty fireworks items that do not explode or are not intended to spin or to leave the ground and fly through the air, are permitted for use in North Carolina. Fireworks that are legal include: Snake and glow worms, Smoke bombs (devices consisting of a tube or sphere that produce white or colored smoke), trick noisemakers including party poppers, string poppers and snappers and wire sparklers.

Please remember that the use of any fireworks can be dangerous. Sparklers are the leading cause of burn injuries for children resulting in emergency room visits every year, so never allow children to use fireworks without adult supervision. If you have questions about whether your fireworks are legal for North Carolina, please call us at 252-354-2021.

Contractors Working System Maintenance, Available for Storms

Submitted by Lisa Galizia, Communications Director
Carteret-Craven Electric Co-op (CCEC) has two contracting companies – Lee Electric and C-Phase – working on its distribution system to complete maintenance work and upgrades identified after Hurricane Florence, including areas in Emerald Isle.

After the storm, CCEC evaluated what materials held up well and which was were susceptible to failure. We used AMI (smart meter) data to identify vulnerable areas on the system and map out a preventive maintenance plan.

“A lot of the work is being done by contract crews, so our field teams can continue with day-to-day service orders and work orders,” said CCEC Vice-president of Engineering and Operations Will Pittman.

In addition to helping upgrade our distribution system, contractors will be here to help in the event of any significant weather events.
“Having contractors on board will also help us get an early jump on power restoration after any major storm. We have also added four new service technician assistants. That puts a second person in each service truck, which increases efficiency and adds personnel for storm response,” said Line Superintendent Michael Barts.

Hurricane Season is here: Be alert, be prepared!

The Town of Emerald Isle encountered major storms in 2018 and 2019. We are all hopeful that the 2020 season will offer a reprieve.

In the event we must evacuate, the Town’s goal is to return residents, property owners, and business owners back to the Island as quickly and safely as possible. The Hurricane Re-Entry Permit Program is a tool that facilitates that goal by (1) maximizing security and (2) providing authorized persons the quickest possible access to their properties.

The cost for a re-entry permit is $25. To purchase new (or additional permits), please call the Emerald Isle Police Department at 252-354-2021. You can also complete the application process online, just follow this link: https://www.emeraldisle-nc.org/residential-application-for-disaster-re-entry-permit

To learn more about the program, please view our Re-Entry Permit Program Guide: https://www.emeraldisle-nc.org/Data/Sites/1/media/pdfs/re-entrypermitspolicy-revisedapril2020.pdf

It is best to make sure you have your permanent permit on hand. Please don't wait until a storm is approaching to secure a re-entry permit, as lines will be long and Town staff is also busy preparing the Town for potential hurricane impacts. Thanks for your cooperation!
Remove and Replace: James Street Public Beach Access

The James Street public beach access replacement project is coming along well. The project is 85% complete. A new concrete sidewalk is installed. A new bike rack is in position and temporary post-n-rope markers run along the Ocean Drive portion of the access.

A complete tear out of the beach access occurred in May. Reconstruction of the wooden walkway is now finished. Be sure to enjoy the newly installed “dual benches”.
The walkway project is part of the overall James Street rehab. The golf cart parking area of James Street (nearest Ocean Drive) is almost complete. Emerald Isle will install a transition section of concrete, between the sidewalk and the new wooden walkway. Then, post and rope will be installed to further separate golf carts and pedestrians.
Thank you to the Emerald Isle public for your genuine patience during this project. COVID-19 and very heavy rains have contributed to delays with multiple Town related construction projects. The final touches to the James Street access are coming soon!

**Islander Drive redevelopment continues**

The public-private-partnership and redevelopment occurring along Islander Drive continues. Local investors (The A-Team) are completing a privately funded mixed-use commercial development at the northwest corner of Louise Ave and Islander Drive. The development will consist of lower level retail sales sites and second floor residential units.
Along the public roadway, reconstruction of Islander Drive is complete. New curbing, parking spaces, sidewalks, roadway and underground electric service are in place. The $750,000 public project includes a combination of grant funding and private investment dollars.
The new roadway portion of the project includes a shift in traffic pattern. The section of roadway connecting Reed Drive and Louise Ave (along Islander) is now one-way. All other roads in the project area maintain a 2-way travel pattern. The one-way road redesign allowed for additional on-street parking spaces, for both vehicles and golf carts.

For further details, please contact Matt Zapp at mzapp@emeraldisle-nc.org.

**WORA construction nears completion.**
Following a grant received by the State of North Carolina, the Western Regional Ocean Access (WORA) parking area and beach access are receiving $100,000(+) in improvements. A new 6’ wide sidewalk now connects Louise Avenue to the wood access boardwalk.
In addition to the new concrete sidewalk, a brand new 8’-wide wooden walkway has been constructed. All of the wooden decking near the bathhouse has been updated and 4 new outdoor showers were relocated on the ocean facing side of the bathhouse.
“The facility updates and new sidewalk construction at the WORA will help visitors make their way safely to the public beach access,” said Matt Zapp, Town Manager. “We truly appreciate the community’s patience, as our team works to complete $100,000 in repairs before the grant deadline of July 1, 2020.”
Construction crews were severely delayed due to the heavy (monsoon-like) rain that fell on Emerald Isle during late May and early June 2020. With the ‘heavy lifting’ now complete, Emerald Isle’s Parks and Recreation is hard at work to complete landscaping and beautification efforts.

Maintain Your Independence: Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over
Statewide ‘Booze It & Lose It’ Campaign Underway

CHERRY POINT – The N.C. Governor’s Highway Safety Program has a new weapon in its arsenal in the war against impaired driving during the Independence Day holiday – window chalk.

“As a show of solidarity during the campaign, which runs today through July 5, drivers are being asked to write the message (hashtag) #KeysFreeNC in window chalk on their vehicles to help encourage fellow North Carolinians to leave the keys behind if they are going to be drinking,” said NCGHSP director Mark Ezzell.
Drunk driving is historically high during the week leading up the Fourth of July, though previous community efforts are making an impact.

Last July 1-7, for instance, North Carolina experienced an 11 percent decrease in fatalities from the year prior.

To help encourage that downward trend, NCGHSP teamed up with Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point to kick-off the annual statewide ‘Operation Firecracker’ ‘Booze It & Lose It’ enhanced enforcement campaign.

As part of the campaign, teams of MCASCP military, law enforcement, firefighters and first responders used roadside message boards to encourage safe, sober driving. More than 500 law enforcement agencies around the state are also increasing their presence this week and sharing these simple messages throughout their communities and online:

- This Drive-Through is to Remind You to Drive Sober this 4th of July.
- Booze It & Lose It. Don’t Drink and Drive.
- App your ride. Don’t Drink and Drive.
- Call a friend. Don’t Drink and Drive.
- Take public transportation. Don’t Drink and Drive.
- Take a cab. Don’t Drink and Drive.
- Show your support #KeysFreeNC

This year, amidst COVID-19, it’s unclear if impaired driving over the holiday weekend will plague our roadways.

But what is clear is that leaders statewide are concerned about the implications impaired driving will have on our state, particularly this upcoming holiday.

The Governor’s Highway Safety Program released a video following today’s kick-off event.

The video includes messages of support from the NCGHSP’s director, Mark Ezzell, as well as Mikel Huber, Base Commander Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point, Craven County Sheriff Chip Hughes and his office, Pastor M. Luther Hill, who serves as the Clinton Chapel AME ZION Church and the chaplain of the New Bern Police Department, and First Lady Kristen Cooper.

For those who have a social media platform, show NCGHSP how you are celebrating safely. Mention @NCGHSP on Facebook and tag @NC_GHSP on Twitter and Instagram with #KeysFreeNC and #NCGHSP to show that you are celebrating safely.

Emerald Isle Fishing Tournament
The second annual Emerald Isle Fishing Tournament returns on Saturday September 19, 2020. Please consider fishing for a cause and help our community support scholarships to local high school grads. For more information about the event, visit the tournament’s official website at: www.emeraldislefishingtournament.com or check us out on Facebook.

Emerald Isle Marathon, Half-Marathon, & 5K Races – Oct. 31, 2020!
Normally held every spring, the 2020 Emerald Isle Marathon was postponed due to COVID-19. The 7th Annual Emerald Isle Marathon, Half-Marathon, & 5K Races will be held on Saturday, October 31, 2020. Find a silver lining and start training now!
Set your personal record on our flat, fast course, and enjoy a beautiful fall weekend at the beach with family and friends! For more information and to register, please visit:  