



PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Updates on safety and water testing for Sandy Beach and Kin Beach on Okanagan Lake

VERNON, B.C. – August 4, 2017 –The City of Vernon and the Okanagan Indian Band (OKIB) have recently completed water testing of Okanagan Lake for side-by-side beaches—Kin Beach and Sandy Beach—in Vernon. Bacteriological testing by both the First Nations Health Authority and Interior Health have returned within acceptable levels, in spite of the presence of a naturally occurring algae bloom. Recreational water users are reminded that the water quality testing does not check for other toxins or chemicals.

The City and OKIB are also warning beach users that the root systems of lakeshore trees have been compromised by flooding, making these trees unstable. Caution should be used near these trees until crews have assessed and taken steps to limit risk to the public.

While the latest water tests returned with acceptable levels of bacteria for both beaches, the City and OKIB governments request that residents and visitors stay off of Sandy Beach until the flood protection measures and other identified potential safety hazards have been removed.

“We want to encourage residents and visitors to enjoy our beaches over the long weekend while being safe and respectful of our neighbours,” said Mayor Akbal Mund.

OKIB’s Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) installed gabion baskets as flood protection measures while the lake was rising and threatening damage to homes and property. Now that the water has receded, the OKIB EOC is assessing the damage to the beach for safety hazards. The warning signs remain posted to deter people from climbing over the flood protection measures until they can be removed.

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About the OKIB:

The Okanagan Indian Band is part of the Okanagan Nation, which is comprised of 8 Indian Bands, including; Lower Similkameen Indian Band, Upper Similkameen Indian Band, Osoyoos Indian Band, Penticton Indian Band, Westbank First Nation, Upper Nicola Indian Band, Colville Confederated Tribes and the Okanagan Indian Band.

The Okanagan Indian Band is located at the head of Okanagan Lake in Vernon, BC, and totals 11,282 hectares. There are currently about 1995 Okanagan Indian Band members.

“Ensuring the future through cultural, social and economic development”

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