
NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

ADVENTURESMART STANDS FOR OUTDOOR SAFETY IN B.C.

NORTH VANCOUVER – “Get Informed and Go Outdoors” is the theme of the AdventureSmart program, launched today by Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General Rich Coleman.

“AdventureSmart is another example of this government’s commitment to public safety,” said Coleman. “We can prevent needless accidents and injury if people educate themselves about the realities of outdoor recreation so they can be safe, while enjoying all that B.C. has to offer.”

Last year in B.C., search and rescue volunteers were called out 955 times to track lost or injured hikers, campers and skiers. The goal of AdventureSmart is to prevent people from getting into trouble by expanding public awareness of outdoor safety whether it’s skiing, rafting, hiking or biking.

“B.C.’s remarkable outdoor environment is not without its risks,” said Mary Thomas, program officer with the National Search and Rescue Secretariat. “AdventureSmart is designed to address those risks and to help reduce the number of calls for search and rescue.”

The provincial government will administer AdventureSmart. The National Search and Rescue Secretariat and the B.C. Search and Rescue Association are providing funding. As well, a number of public and private sector organizations are providing promotional support.

AdventureSmart will encompass a number of outdoor safety programs that already exist and will encourage new ones. Hug-A-Tree and Survive, a program delivered to kids by search and rescue volunteers will be expanded across B.C. under the AdventureSmart banner. Other programs that will benefit include a new YouthSafe initiative to teach outdoor safety guidelines to students K-12, and Avalanche Safety, which targets recreational backcountry hikers and skiers. AdventureSmart youth teams will make presentations at schools, mountain bike races, ski races and other events to deliver the outdoor safety message to teens.

A new website will also help people get safety information before heading outdoors. www.adventuresmart.ca provides information and links to outdoor safety and recreational programs and businesses throughout the province.

“AdventureSmart encourages people to get out there and enjoy themselves,” said Dave Norona, a world class adventurer and ambassador for AdventureSmart. “This arms people with the knowledge they need to explore B.C.’s awesome backcountry, but to do it responsibly.”

Coleman adds that the AdventureSmart message is preparedness and prevention. “As B.C. moves on to the world stage by hosting the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games, we’re asking British Columbians and tourists to take advantage of this life-saving information before they head out of doors to enjoy our province.”

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