
News Release

ENVIRONMENT CANADA IMPROVES THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF BOATERS AND SAILORS IN THE LAKE OF THE WOODS

KENORA (Ontario) -- June 27, 2000 -- Environment Canada will deploy a new weather buoy today in the Lake of the Woods, one of the busiest lakes in Ontario for recreational boating, in an effort to improve the health and safety of Ontario's boaters and sailors.

During the boating season between May and October, the buoy will gather data on the weather and water, including air pressure, air and water temperature, wind speed and direction, and wave periods and height.

The data will be transmitted hourly to the marine weather office in Thunder Bay via the Geostationary Environmental Satellite System where forecasters will use the additional information to improve the boating forecast for Lake of the Woods. This will help to increase the safety for the thousands of boaters and cottagers who use the lake.

Environment Canada has placed five other such Watchkeeper buoys in Ontario lakes - Lake Nipissing south-west of North Bay; Lake Simcoe; Lake St. Clair; the eastern basin of the North Channel between Manitoulin Island and the mainland; and southern Lake Huron west of Bayfield.

The buoys were designed and built in Canada with funding from the Search and Rescue Secretariat of the Department of National Defence. Each buoy weighs 540 kilogrammes, measures 1.75 metres across and stands 4.5 metres high. The buoys are lighter and smaller than the buoys anchored in the Great Lakes. Their smaller size and lighter weight means Canadian Coast Guard is able to use smaller vessels to lift them into and out of the water so they can be anchored in lakes other than the Great Lakes.

The new weather buoys are part of Environment Canada's Great Lakes Buoy Program. At present, the department has two, 12-metre wide buoys in Lake Ontario, five buoys which are three metres wide (two in Lake Erie, two in Georgian Bay and one in Lake Superior). The buoys supply data on the weather and water which is used with other information to produce accurate and timely marine weather forecasts for the recreational boating community.

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For more information on the buoys and Environment Canada please visit our Internet websites:
<http://www.on.ec.gc.ca/or-home.html> or <http://www.ec.gc.ca>.

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