

FOR RELEASE #06-079
April 5, 2006

SAFER COMMUNITIES AND NEIGHBOURHOODS LEGISLATION INTRODUCED

WHITEHORSE - The Government of Yukon introduced Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods legislation in the Yukon Legislative Assembly today. This legislation will provide the Government of Yukon with a new method to deal with certain illegal activities that create an unsafe environment in Yukon communities.

“The public has been asking their government for more tools to respond to the problems of unsafe activities in their neighborhoods and I am pleased to say this legislation moves us significantly forward in our goal of safer communities for all Yukoners,” Justice Minister John Edzerza said.

The development of Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods legislation was identified as an action item in the 2005 draft Yukon Substance Abuse Action Plan. The legislation also responds to the motion passed unanimously by the Yukon Legislature in Nov. 2005 calling for the establishment of this legislation.

The Yukon government is introducing this legislation following consultation with Yukoners including members of the public, First Nations, community associations, municipal governments and other partner agencies. The proposed Act was well received at these consultations.

This legislation is triggered when a confidential complaint is received from a member of the community concerning a property that is being used for certain illegal activities. These activities include producing, selling or using illegal drugs; prostitution; solvent abuse and/or the unlawful sale and consumption of alcohol. Following an investigation, the government will have a number of options to consider. These options range in formality from the landlord working co-operatively with the investigator to stop the illegal activity to applying to the Supreme Court for a community safety order.

The successful implementation and administration of this legislation is dependent upon inter-agency collaboration. If necessary, evictions will be carried out, but in the context of all the social services available to Yukon residents. The government will work with partner agencies to consider the needs of women and children affected by the eviction and to coordinate appropriate services.

This legislation specifically targets the activities on a property and not individuals. The RCMP will continue to deal with individuals through their enforcement activities.

“The Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods legislation helps fulfill one of the government’s commitments to protect the family and create safer communities. Yukoners will experience safer, more peaceful and less disruptive neighbourhoods,” Edzerza added.

Information about this legislation is available on the Department of Justice website at www.justice.gov.yk.ca.

-30-

Contact:
Peter Carr
Cabinet Communications
(867) 667-8688
peter.carr@gov.yk.ca

Dan Cable
Communications, Justice
(867) 667-3508
dan.cable@gov.yk.ca