

Safety/Security – June 2023:

Residents/Owners: Please share with renters and contractors – we all live in this community.

Bottom Line Up Front:

- Beach Safety Notes – many reminders
- Heat Stroke or Heat Exhaustion
- Speed Limits, Pedestrians, etc.
- Dogs, dogs, dogs
- Deck Safety
- CAC – 9-volt batteries; Summer Driving Season; Atlantic Hurricane Season; Move Over

Beach Safety Notes: It is time for our annual beach safety reminders. The beach is a beautiful place to relax and unwind, but dangers lurk. Beware and be aware!

Children: Watch them! They should not be left alone in the surf line with parents 20'+ away or on cellphones. If knocked down and pulled out from shore, you may never find them.

Holes: The recent death of a Virginia Beach teenager should remind us all not to bury individuals in deep holes. The sides can fall in and suffocate a person, even if their head is above the level of the sand. If you (or your children, or your dog) dig a hole – **PLEASE fill it in!** Sprains and broken bones are no way to spend a vacation.

Sunscreen: Please wear it. It is cheaper and less “yucky” than skin cancer.

No Diving: Storms, tides, and winds shift the bottom sand off of Croatan Beach on a daily basis. You can break your neck diving into the water - leading to paralysis or death. We average one permanent injury per year – don't be that one!

Dunes: Please stay off the dunes. Not only does city ordinance forbid it, but the damaged dunes may reveal dangerous metal stakes only upon stepping, falling, or sliding onto one. If you're staying in a beach house, please use the access paths or dune crossover walkway.

Dangers in the Sand: Storms can tear up the beach, access paths, and dunes exposing sharp and rusted remnants of old fence posts, boardwalks, cables, and other debris. Please mark or remove any objects you see and/or notify Virginia Beach 3-1-1 (757-385-5311).

Rip Currents: Usually announced by red flags flying at lifeguard stations, but expect anytime. If pulled out to sea by a rip current, do not try to swim against the current. Rather, swim parallel to the shore until out of the current and then return to safety. Learn to drown-proof and don't enter the water without someone knowing where you are!

Thunder and Lightning: If you hear it or see it, get off the beach. Lightning will strike the highest exposed object. If you're it – adios.

Plastic Kills: please clean the beach, especially your area, when you leave. Plastic bottles and caps, sales tags from chairs, umbrellas, etc., straws, zip ties, and the like can kill marine mammals, sea turtles, fish, and aquatic birds. Please pick it up and throw it away.

Unexploded Ordnance: Military operations have been a daily occurrence in, off of, and above Virginia Beach for centuries. Submarine and anti-submarine actions occurred within sight of our shores during World War II. The question is not “if,” so much as “when and where” unexploded ordnance (UXO) will wash up. Even expended flares can cause serious burns. If you see UXO, **do not touch it.** Keep others away and **call 9-1-1.**

Heat Stroke or Heat Exhaustion: So far, the temperatures haven't been too bad, but when the heat of the summer gets here, knowing the difference between heat stroke and heat exhaustion can save a life. Heat stroke is a medical emergency; it can kill you.

The infographic is split into two vertical columns: orange for Heat Exhaustion and red for Heat Stroke. A central human figure is also split vertically, with the left side orange and the right side red. Various icons (dizziness, sweating, skin temperature, pulse, cramps) are placed on the figure and connected to text labels. At the bottom, treatment steps are listed for each condition. The right side features a large 'CALL 9-1-1' text.

HEAT EXHAUSTION	OR	HEAT STROKE
Faint or dizzy		Throbbing headache
Excessive sweating		No sweating
Cool, pale, clammy skin		Body temperature above 103° Red, hot, dry skin
Nausea or vomiting		Nausea or vomiting
Rapid, weak pulse		Rapid, strong pulse
Muscle cramps		May lose consciousness

HEAT EXHAUSTION TREATMENT:

- Get to a cooler, air conditioned place
- Drink water if fully conscious
- Take a cool shower or use cold compresses

HEAT STROKE TREATMENT:

- Take immediate action to cool the person until help arrives

CALL 9-1-1

Speed Limits, Pedestrians, etc.:

All of Croatan neighborhood is 25 MPH. We have many streets without sidewalks. Please drive kindly. Also, be mindful of the new Croatan Road crosswalk at Christine Drive.

Pacific Avenue between 16th Street and 32nd Street is 25 MPH for the summer season. This zone is variable and could be adjusted further north or south. (A pedestrian was struck and killed at 15th Street and Pacific last year).

General Booth Boulevard is 35 MPH in both directions from about 200 feet south of Croatan Road, north to where it becomes Pacific Avenue. As I write this, motorcycle police are monitoring this stretch and writing beaucoup tickets. I am also working with the city to try to obtain a sign before the Croatan entrance from northbound General Booth that reflect the sharp nature of the turn into Croatan, so that drivers can slow appropriately.

Drivers must stop for pedestrians (including bicyclists) in crosswalks. (Hint: For your own safety activate emergency flashers so vehicles behind you know you're stopped). Electric vehicles don't make much noise – be sure that pedestrians know you're there. When overtaking bicyclists riding in the road, drivers must move over and given them at least three feet lateral separation.

Pedestrians have an obligation to look out for vehicles and not put themselves into a dangerous situation, such as jaywalking or walking out from behind a stopped high-profile vehicle (e.g., SUV, pick-up, truck, bus) without checking the second lane. In a pedestrian/vehicle collision – the pedestrian will always lose.

Bicyclists – helmets are mandatory for riders 14 and younger. Wear reflective or light-colored clothing and shine a light if riding at night. Be proactive to ensure that you are seen.

Scooters – electric scooters (and electric bicycles) are gaining popularity but can be hazardous to riders, pedestrians, and drivers. They're often silent, hard to see, and move at speeds that make it difficult to gauge relative motion. Please operate them responsibly and in accordance with the rules of the road.

Boardwalk vs. Bike Path – pedestrian collisions, near collisions, and injuries occur daily. For your own safety and everyone else's, **walk** on the boardwalk and **bike** on the bike path. You'd think it is obvious, but it isn't. Scooters – you're restricted to the bike path, too.

Dogs, Dogs, Dogs:

Dogs are **not** allowed on Croatan Public Beach between 10:00 AM and 6:00 PM daily – unless certified and appropriately marked service animals, who must then be leashed.

Outside of the above times, dogs may be on Croatan Beach leashed or running loose providing they are under their handler's verbal control.

Dogs are **not** allowed on the resort beach from Rudee Inlet north to 42nd Street at any time, but are allowed on the boardwalk and grass areas to the west between the hours of 6:00 AM and 7:00 PM. They must be leashed.

Handlers must pick up and properly dispose of pet waste. Not only is it the law, but it's neighborly and a sign of responsible dog ownership. Plastic bag dispensers are at



every Croatan Beach access path. Once you've used the bag, discard it in one of the abundant trash barrels.

Try to avoid walking your dog(s) in the heat of the day. On sunny days, pavement (and sand) temperatures can reach 130 – 150 degrees that can burn even calloused paws.

Deck Safety: When is the last time your deck or balcony was inspected for structural integrity? Two decks in Sandbridge collapsed last summer injuring dozens. For more information and resources on deck, balcony, and porch safety, visit www.vbgov.com/decksafety.

Citizen's Advisory Committee (CAC): The monthly CAC meeting was conducted on May 10. Following items of interest were discussed.

9-volt battery fire hazard: A fire prevention video addressed a homeowner's storage of "spent" 9-volt batteries in a paper bag with other to-be-recycled items, including metal in the form of steel wool. The metal touched both battery terminals sparking a fire that destroyed his home. The recommended safe storage for 9-volt batteries is to keep them in their original packaging. The video also recommended placing electrical tape across the terminals ensuring that both sides and tops are covered prior to disposal.

Summer Driving Season: As tourists populate our roads, expect that many will be distracted looking for addresses, road signs, navigation apps on their phones, or just checking out the "eye candy." Don't assume that a turn signal will result in a turn or even a turn in the direction of the signal. Be on the lookout for unsignaled turns or turns from the wrong lane. Expect delays responding to traffic light changes – especially turning arrows. Be on the lookout for those crossing the street – especially on Pacific Avenue – mid-block or against the light, despite an increased number of crosswalks or oncoming traffic. Bottom line: be patient and drive defensively. It's summer, you're at the beach – chill out!

Atlantic Hurricane Season Begins June 1: Take the time to review your Hurricane Preparedness Kit, visit [Know Your Zone | VDEM \(vaemergency.gov\)](http://www.vdem.gov/knownyourzone) to identify your evacuation zone (all of Croatan is in either zone A, B, or C), "favorite" the National Weather Center out of Wakefield, Virginia at <https://forecast.weather.gov>, and subscribe to **VBAAlert** ([More About VBAAlert :: VBgov.com - City of Virginia Beach](http://www.vbgov.com/vbaalert)) for weather warnings and guidance. Free **VBAAlert** subscriptions must be renewed semiannually.

Move Over Law Expands: The Virginia State "Move Over" Law will expand on July 1 to include the requirement to slow and move over a lane (if possible) when approaching any vehicle, not just emergency and service vehicles, stopped on the side of the road with hazard lights activated.

Virginia Beach Council of Civic Organizations: I attended the May 25 meeting of the VBCCO. Forty-one (41) civic leagues are currently member organizations. A draft of proposed By-Laws revisions was presented. I read nothing untoward in this document, but can make it available to anyone who requests it. It will also be posted on the VBCCO website (vbcco.org).

Delegate Karen Greenhalgh sent two staff members to the meeting, including her Legislative Assistant, Zachary Sykes. Although Del. Greenhalgh represents the 85th District, Mr. Sykes expressed that she is concerned about the Short-Term Rental (STR) issue and continued efforts of realtor associations to lobby Richmond to usurp control of such local jurisdictional issues from localities. Mr. Sykes expressed that Del. Greenhalgh is taking a holistic view towards all of Virginia Beach, not just her District. I believe that we can consider her an ally in the STR issue.

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