

Brookfield Public Safety Education Event 4/16/16

Attendance:

10 adults

8 kids

2 selectboard members (3rd made a brief appearance at the beginning but had to leave)

Public Safety Advisory Committee (Lew Stowell, Stuart Edson, Joy Kacik, Kevin Joyal. Mike Stoddard was out of town)

Presenters

- Vermont State Police – Lieutenant William Jenkins
- Orange County Sheriff's Department – Bill Bohnyak (plus 2 deputies)
- Vermont Fish and Wildlife – Keith Gallant
- Brookfield Fire Department – Kevin Wheatley
- Brookfield Constable – Kevin Joyal

Police coverage for Brookfield

- 911 calls are dispatched from Rockingham E911 Center
 - Call 911 for
 - Medical Emergencies
 - Heart attack or stroke
 - House fire
 - Domestic violence
 - Burglary or theft in progress
 - Car accident with life threatening injuries
- Sheriff and VSP work hand in hand

Vermont State Police

- Primary law enforcement for Brookfield
- Handles major crimes
 - Arson
 - Homicide

Sheriff

- Has contract with town
- Handles smaller crimes
 - Burglary – work with SP
 - Speeding
 - Safe highway grants
 - DUI grants
 - Ridge Rd – constant maintenance

The public needs to let sheriff know about violations (i.e. repeat speeders)

- What road it's on
- Time of day,
- Days of week
- Description of vehicle

- 50/50 tickets/warnings
 - Driving history, demeanor at stop

Brookfield speed ordinance

- Only a handful of roads have established speed limits outside of state speed limit.
- If road is not posted the speed limit is 50 mph, but a driver can be ticketed for driving too fast for conditions
- Selectboard can establish speed between 30 and 50 mph without engineering study.

Police can issue a traffic ticket on citizen's statement without police having witnessed the incident. The citizen would need to make a statement and be willing to testify in traffic court

For example: running someone off the road, sliding around corners

Crime in Brookfield

- 1 year – under 200 cases (very low)
- Domestic assault
- Drug cases – heroin, selling out of their houses
- DUI Accidents
- Drugs not big in Brookfield, but big in Vermont, although there are people using and selling in town
- Used needles have been found in Allis State Park
 - Let the police know if you find them – time of day
- Not a huge danger, but be aware of surroundings if alone
- Both Sheriff and VSP patrol in Brookfield
- Have had some drug related burglaries in homes (around West Brookfield)
- Do need to keep your houses locked
- Burglars tend to move from town to town

When reporting crime

- Make and model of car
- License plates of cars
 - License plates are often easier to remember
- Send email to let law enforcement know

Guns

- What are the rules for carrying hand guns in public?
 - There are no rules
 - Better to have it covered up or you scare people and they call
- Can have a loaded handgun in a vehicle – doesn't matter where it is in vehicle or on your person
- There are restrictions in schools and federal buildings
 - It is illegal to go in a school or federal building with a gun
- Cannot have loaded (chamber or magazine) long guns (shotguns, rifles, muzzle loaders) in car
 - There is no reason to have loaded long gun in vehicle and is a fish and game violation
- Can't fire a gun within 25 ft of public highway
- One can only fire in self-defense if there is an immediate need to protect oneself from serious bodily injury or death
 - You will need to articulate that you needed to protect yourself or your family to justify shooting your gun
- Handguns do not have to be registered in Vermont
- New law – illegal for person convicted of certain violent crimes to be in possession of any firearm – particularly domestic violence
- Can still own guns even if convicted of some felonies
- If crime committed using a gun federal officers can get involved
- Target practice
 - Gun owner is legally responsible for any damage to property
 - If you hear gunfire you need to assume that they have a safe backstop
- Safety zone

- You can post within 500 feet of buildings
- Safety zone posters 200 feet apart
- No one can shoot into or across

Trapping

- Trappers are licensed like fishermen and hunters
- Have to notify landowner and get permission even on town property
- Traps have to be labeled with owners name and address
- Traps in water have to be checked every 3 days by owner
- Foot hold trap (meant to keep animal) owner must check every day
- Snap traps & conibear traps are two other kinds of traps people do use around here in the water and the woods. Sometimes they are in a box or a bucket, but not necessarily - they could just be hidden.
- Takes 2 people to unhinge – hinges on side usually can't pull apart from the anchor point
- Trapping is free on state property without notice
- First 2 weeks Dec. – fisher cat and bob cats

Williamstown & Rood Pond

Ainsworth State Park

Baker Pond

Allis State Park

Constable

- Domestic animal violations
- Goats, chickens, cats, dogs, cows
- No leash law in Brookfield but have to keep dogs on your own property
- Dogs can't chase cars or deer
- If a dog gets into your yard you can recover 3 times cost of repair
- Dogs must be licensed by April 1st with rabies certificate
- If no license and dog bites, Kevin will impound dog for 10 days, if dog has rabies will be put down
- Violation if dog runs out into road after a horse
- Barking not an offence if stay in yard
- Barking constantly more than ½ hour violation
- Constable job restricted to domestic animals

Game Warden

- Game commissioner gets involved if dog chases deer or moose and in danger from dog
- Game commissioner can shoot dog, citizen can not
- If an animal is threatening your animal – you can shoot it
- Can shoot fur bearing animal in your yard, raccoon, fox, fisher, bobcat, skunk, porcupines
- If animal bites human – game comm. will come and get animal and have head tested for rabies
- If you find a sick wild animal kill, double bag, throw in trash
- If you don't have a gun – call neighbor to kill them

Bear, deer, moose

- Attracted to garbage, bird feeders, chicken grain and chickens, honey bees
- Bears are usually the victims of dogs, not the other way around
- Will break into sheds where they smell food
- Suggestion to put carpet tacks or other sharp objects or electric wire around shed to keep bears away
- Can smell in galvanized cans
- April to November for bird feeders to be down
- Can shoot deer if it's eating a crop that you eat or sell

Fire Department

- Dry weather – burn ban right now
- Have to have a burn permit from town or fire department unless in winter with ground covered with snow
- Can only burn wood material, any other materials are illegal to burn (i.e. tires, painted wood)
- Fire Department is dispatched by 911
- Responds to:
 - Fires
 - Hazardous material call
 - Traffic accidents
 - Extraction
 - Traffic control
 - CO detectors
- FD has meter to check air quality
- FD has equipment to check for fires/heat in walls
- Smoke detectors should be hard wired
- Change batteries every six months

Main cause of fires

- Improperly installed wood burners
- Not maintained
- Creosote
- Electrical fires
- Space heater on overloaded circuits

Burn permits

- Fire Warden Jeff Brassard 728-5739
- Fire Chief Kevin Wheatley 272-5512
- Don't call for permit more than 24 hours in advance
- Need to call dispatch when fire is started

Contacts:

Fish & Wildlife

Vtfishandwildlife.com

Good anonymous tip 1-800-75alert

Brookfield Public Safety Advisory Committee

Email address publicsafety@brookfieldvt.org

Orange County Sheriff's Department

Orangecountysheriff.com

Anonymous tip line – 100% anonymous