



January 28, 2005

Safe Streets Act Update

Now that the Safe Streets Act is enforceable you need to know that police will likely take a cautious approach to ensure that court decisions support the legislation. Here are some likely responses from police and what you can do to help.

Police Enforcement

In the first instance, police are likely to try to educate and obtain compliance by convincing offenders that authority now exists for police to take enforcement action, including arrest in aggravating circumstances.

If a person is non-compliant or returns police may issue a ticket and record the incident in PRIME-BC (Police Records Information Management Environment).

If the person refuses to stop or is found later committing an offence under the Act, police may issue a Provincial Appearance Notice requiring the person to appear in court.

In cases where the person refuses to stop or returns later to commit an offence under the Act, police may arrest and release later, by an officer in charge, with conditions.

Subsequent offences under the Act may result in the person being held in custody to appear in court.

What you can do

Read and understand the Act available for viewing on the Safe Streets Coalition website (www.safestreetscoalition.com).

Understand that police want this Act to work and want to avoid proceeding on cases where there is a likelihood that a bad court decision may result. So, they are looking for solid cases where the offender is deliberately non-compliant and refuses to respond to reason.

In cases where the offence is one where a person causes you to be concerned for your safety, realize that police will need your evidence to proceed. If you are not prepared to give a statement and appear in court then calling the police will only result in them speaking with the person and the next person who encounters this offender will be similarly victimized.

Be patient. Police will likely spend their time on chronic problem individuals and in some instances their call load responsibilities may make their response time on this type of call slow.

For more information, please contact Dave Jones, Director of Crime Prevention Services for the Downtown Vancouver Business Improvement Association, by phone at (604) 685-7811 or via e-mail at dave@downtownvancouver.net.