

PRESS RELEASE

Southeast Michigan Citizens Asked to Serve As Eyes and Ears for Homeland Security Program

Boaters and Waterfront Users Asked to Report Suspicious Activities

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Detroit, Michigan. Southeast Michigan boaters and waterfront users, residents, and businesses, are being asked by state and national authorities to report any suspicious activities as part of a new Homeland Security program entitled, “**River Watch.**” Citizens are being asked to provide additional waterway surveillance and increase the overall security efforts of local, county, state, and federal law enforcement agencies in southeast Michigan. They are being asked to report suspicious activities on the water, along the shore, in and around bridges, tunnels, power plants, water intakes, oil and chemical facilities, fuel docks and military structures, and unattended vessels or vehicles. They are being asked to report any suspicious activities to a special report line number, **1-800-537-3220 or VHF Channel 16.** Both the marine channel and report line number will be monitored 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Citizens can also call their nearest law enforcement agency to report suspicious activities.

The “**River Watch**” program is a cooperative effort between the United States Coast Guard, Michigan State Police, U.S. Customs, U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service, U.S. Border Patrol, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Kicking off today’s announcement was United States Senator, Hon. Carl Levin.

[Quote here from Levin’s people]

“The “**River Watch**” Program is similar to many of the Neighborhood Watch programs around the nation. It is a multi-agency, grassroots public outreach initiative designed to educate and enlist the support of citizens that live, work, and play along Michigan’s waterways,” said LCDR Brian Hall of the United States Coast Guard Marine Safety Office, Detroit. “We welcome

citizens' participation in helping to protect our borders from illegal and suspicious activities that threaten the well-being of southeast Michigan and the nation.”

At today's press conference, authorities outline the program that includes informational brochures, posters, and inserts that educate citizens on what to look for, where to look for, and how to report suspicious activities. **“River Watch”** windshield decals and key chains for Michigan boaters will also be available later in the campaign.

“Law enforcement has always relied on community members to be that extra set of eyes and ears,” said Michigan State Police director, Colonel Stephen Madden. “No agency can be everywhere, every minute, so we truly rely on our citizens to report suspicious activities. Citizen tips on deterring and solving crimes have always played a major role in our efforts to remove criminals from our streets. This time we're asking the citizens to help us take criminals off the water!”

CONTACTS:

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