



Safety and Security Awareness for the Upcoming Morel Mushroom Harvesting Season

Yellowknife NT, April 28, 2015

In the Northwest Territories, a significant harvest season of morel mushrooms is anticipated in the areas left burned by the forest fires of 2014. Mushroom harvesters, both local people and those who travel to the territory for the season, are expected to begin picking in mid-May.

The Northwest Territories RCMP would like to take this opportunity to raise awareness of the risks associated with wilderness travel and to provide safety tips for harvesters.

The harvesting areas are within a vast wilderness. There is a risk of becoming lost in unfamiliar terrain.

Harvesters should be aware that a great deal of the harvest area is outside of cell phone coverage. Should the need arise for emergency services, alternate communication devices, such as a satellite phone are necessary.

In addition, emergency services are limited in the areas outside of organized communities. The RCMP will be increasing patrols along the highways, however due to distances in isolated areas, there may be delays in emergency response while police travel to the required location. Harvesters are encouraged to bring emergency provisions, including first aid supplies.

Here are a few more tips to help ensure a safe and successful morel mushroom harvest season:

- Become familiar with the terrain and topography of the area you plan on harvesting in.
- A map and compass or GPS should be part of your equipment. Know how to use them.
- Listen to the weather forecast before you leave.
- Always wear suitable clothing.
- Whenever possible travel in a group.
- Inform someone of your travel plans, where you are going, and when you plan to return.
- Carry emergency supplies and learn survival skills
- Carry a satellite phone, spot device, or other means of communication.

Remember you are in the wilderness and the home of many wild animals, including bears. Information on reporting wildlife emergencies, avoiding encounters with bears and other wildlife and updates on the

current wildfire situation is available from local or regional Environmental and Natural Resources officers or on-line at: <http://www.enr.gov.nt.ca>.

This important message is part of Northwest Territories RCMP commitment to public safety.

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