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Subject: News release: Slow Down and Move Over

Nanaimo RCMP Media Advisory
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Slow Down and Move Over

The Nanaimo RCMP would like to remind the motoring public to **Slow Down and Move Over** when approaching emergency or official vehicles stopped on roads in British Columbia.

On January 1, 2015 the law was amended to require motorists to **Slow Down and Mover Over, for all vehicles stopped alongside the road, which have flashing red, blue or amber lights**. This change under the Motor Vehicle Act Regulations enhances safety for people working on roadways, such as police officers, paramedics, and fire crews. The laws also apply to maintenance crews, tow truck operators, or any other people authorized to work along roadways and utilize emergency lights.

Drivers must decrease their speed when approaching and passing a stopped emergency vehicle with emergency lights activated. Further, if there are two lanes in the same direction, drivers must move into the lane farthest from the emergency vehicle, if it is safe to do so. This gives emergency workers as much space as possible to complete their duties.

On a two lane roadway (single lane in each direction) motorists must slow down and pass the emergency vehicle only when it is safe to do so (motorists must yield to oncoming traffic).

Where the speed limit is 80 km/h or higher, drivers must slow to 70 km/h; where the speed limit is below 80 km/h, drivers must reduce their speed to 40 km/h. (Hint: think of it as the 70/40 rule.)

"We are worried for our safety every time we stop roadside," said Steve Blunt, a local tow truck operator. *"We can only assume motorists don't realize the law also applies to tow trucks. Cars and trucks keep blowing by us forcing us to always be looking back. We're always wondering if one of the passing vehicles will side swipe us or run into. It's just not right."* said Blunt.

City of Nanaimo Fire and Rescue Chief Craig Richardson added *"First responders are at risk on a daily basis. Citizens of Nanaimo can help protect us by slowing down and moving over so we can help others more safely."*

Constable Wayne Vaughn of the Nanaimo RCMP Municipal Traffic Unit sees it all too often. *"Just recently I stopped to assist a family whose vehicle, which was pulling a boat trailer, had blown a tire and as a result, were stranded roadside. I blocked the shoulder lane the best I could with all of my emergency lights on, including my direction arrow. I needed a safe pocket to get the tire repaired. Even then, there were vehicles squeezing past the broken down vehicle and my marked police car, honking their horns and not dropping to the 70 km/h zone. Some were well over 100 km/h."*

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