



New PKS Surf Fishing Ordinance

By Barbara Milhaven and Janie Price

Due to the number of recent shark encounters along our coast, the Pine Knoll Shores Board of Commissioners has enacted an ordinance that designates swimming only areas at popular beaches. While there has been some opposition from fishermen, Mayor Ken Jones remarked that the ordinance has been enacted "in the interest of public safety," and that "it is a good move in light of *this year, this season* and whatever is happening."

There appears to be an increase in the number of sharks along our coast, and biologists suggest this may be due to warmer and saltier water. Decreased rainfall has resulted in less runoff, causing the water to have a higher concentration of salt, which is attractive to sharks. Because of a consistent southwest wind over the past several weeks, the ocean waters are murky. Sharks are present, looking for food and are encountering humans in reduced visibility.

In addition to the potential for greater chances of shark confrontations with people that can be attributed to fishing, there is the risk of swimmers getting hooked by casting lines or being injured if lines snap leaving the hook floating unnoticed in the waters. Although such ordinances are within the jurisdiction of the North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries, they do not plan to interfere with the beach towns enacting these ordinances since the ordinances are for the good of the general public.

It is common sense to fish in the ocean away from people, and some local homeowners associations (HOAs) have had separate areas marked with blue flags for this purpose for many years. Other HOAs are in the process of doing this and will use blue flags as well. The Pine Knoll Association (PKA) has had this regulation for the past six years, and PIKSCO should have one by the time you read this.

"Swimmers only" areas will be designated by blue flags like the one pictured on



Blue flags will be used to designate swimming areas.—Photo by Brian Kramer

(Continued on page 4)

Safe Deck Construction and Maintenance

By Jim Taylor, Pine Knoll Shores Building Inspector

The July 4 deck collapse in Emerald Isle has brought the importance of proper deck construction and maintenance to the forefront of our minds. Below are some specifics on what homeowners can do to ensure the safe enjoyment of home decks.

Many factors can contribute to the deterioration of deck materials, including ocean salt air as it affects metal fasteners; the integrity of preservative-treated wood; the use of dissimilar metals; and more. Metal components of a deck (including connectors, fasteners and anchors) can corrode in our coastal environment or when they come in contact with corrosive materials. These inevitabilities and variables make it critical that homeowners make certain that appropriate building materials and techniques are used and that regular maintenance and inspections are performed. The best way to be certain that these safeguards are in place is for the homeowner to become an educated consumer or consult a qualified construction professional. Homeowners may contact the Carteret County Home Builders Association for the names of qualified contractors at carterethba.com or 726-1475.

The State Building Codes are minimum standards with prescribed methods of construction. It is important to understand that residential decks are required to meet minimum uniformly distributed live loads (the key word here is *distributed*). Exterior decks are calculated at 40 pounds per square foot live load and a 10-pound per square foot dead load, resulting in a design load of 50 pounds per square foot. For the non-construction folks, "live load" refers to elements that can be moved around (people, furniture, etc.) and "dead load" is the weight of the deck components themselves and any permanently attached components. It's important to know the purpose of your deck when calculating load requirements. Concentrated loads applied to deck structures, such as the placement of a hot tub, require special treatment and the advice of a design professional to be sure that your deck will safely meet your needs.

Once a safe deck is constructed, the responsibility of the homeowner and the need for attention do not go away. Corrosion and deterioration of outdoor structures is normal and unavoidable. While the presence of minor corrosion or wear does not mean that the integrity of a deck has been compromised or that failure is imminent, it is an indicator that more close inspection is needed. It is important to pay attention to the connection of the deck to the building, including the flashing, nails, bolts and structural wood members. Suspect areas would include visible rust on fasteners and pitting or corrosion build-up on the flashing. Buckling of paint where the siding terminates at the deck ledger would suggest possible water intrusion with

(Continued on page 4)

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