PRESS RELEASE:

Sunken Boat in Sausalito Presents Possible Environmental Hazard

For immediate release:

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Sausalito Police have notified state and federal authorities after a sheen formed around a sunken boat, indicating a possible fuel leak.

Police immediately notified the Warning Center of Cal OES, the U.S. Coast Guard and California Department of Fish and Wildlife after noticing the sheen.

The boat owner has refused orders by police to move his boat from the area. If he does not move it, the department will initiate a process for the boat to be towed away and stored at a boat yard.

The situation began Saturday when two small sailboats beached in Dunphy Park. The operators told Sausalito Police they brought the boats ashore to clean the bottoms of the boats, a process known as "scraping."

Police informed the boaters that beaching the boats was against the law in that area because it is environmentally sensitive and that scraping the boats could also pollute the area.

The boaters initially refused to move. On Saturday afternoon, police issued both boat owners standard 72-hour warnings to move their boats or they would be towed away and impounded at their expense. The police also issued citations to both boaters for violating City of Sausalito Municipal Code section 16.04.070, a violation that is a misdemeanor with a potential penalty of $500.

One of the boats sailed away. The other boat remained, filled with water, and sank. A sheen has now formed around the sunken boat, indicating it may be leaking fuel.

The owner of the sunken boat was also cited for a violation of the Fish & Game Code, Section 5650, for the environmental violation related to the diesel spill.

The Sausalito Police Department has arranged for Parker Diving Service to place a protective boom around the sunken boat to prevent further damage to the environment.

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