

Media release for the month of January 2020.

Bow Island/Foremost detachment area received a total of 68 calls for service during the month of January. Traffic complaints still remain the highest of our call volume. Deer collisions also remain high. Keep a close watch on those critters when driving, they love to jump in front of vehicles for some unknown reason.

During January a total of 61 tickets were issued within the County of 40 Mile, the Town of Bow Island and Foremost by Bow Island Detachment members and Redcliff Integrated Traffic Unit. These numbers indicate that there is still a large number of violators on our roadways. Please remember to slow down, buckle up and stay off of your electronic devices! Our goal is to keep all motorised safe on our highways.

According to Alberta Traffic Safety Calendar February is Distracted Driving Month.

Alberta's distracted driving law applies to all vehicles as defined by the *Traffic Safety Act* and all roads in Alberta. It restricts drivers from doing any of the following, even while stopped at red lights:

- using hand-held cell phones
- texting or e-mailing
- using electronic devices such as laptop computers, video games, cameras, video entertainment displays and programming portable audio players such as MP3 players
- entering information on GPS units
- reading printed materials in the vehicle
- writing, printing or sketching
- personal grooming such as brushing and flossing teeth, putting on makeup, curling hair, clipping nails or shaving

Penalties

The penalty for distracted driving in Alberta is a \$287 fine and 3 demerit points.

Activities that are not specifically restricted under the law are:

- using a cell phone in hands-free mode – the device is not held in the driver's hand and is activated by voice or a single touch to the device
- using an earphone – if it is used in a hands-free or voice-activated manner
- drinking beverages – coffee, water or pop
- eating a snack
- smoking
- talking with passengers
- listening to a portable audio player – as long as it is set up before you begin driving
- calling emergency services such as 9-1-1 with a hand-held cell phone
- using two-way radios or hand-held radios (also known as CB radios) when a driver is required to remain in contact with one's employer, such as when escorting oversized vehicles or when participating in search, rescue and emergency management situations

- permitting the display screen of the following:
 - a GPS navigation system – as long as the system is affixed to the vehicle and programmed before you begin driving or the system is voice activated. You cannot hold the unit or manually enter information while driving
 - a collision avoidance system
 - a gauge, instrument, device or system that provides information about the vehicle's systems or the vehicle's location
 - a dispatch system for transporting passengers
 - a logistical transportation tracking system that tracks vehicle location, driver status or the delivery of goods for commercial purposes
 - an alcohol ignition interlock device

Under the *Traffic Safety Act*, emergency vehicles include police service vehicles, fire response units, ambulances and gas disconnection units. Drivers of emergency vehicles are able to use hand-held communication devices or other electronic devices only when acting within the scope of their employment.

Just try and remember that the call can wait. If you feel it can't, pull over to a safe place and call the number back.

RCMP would also like to remind everyone to report any suspicious activity, keep their vehicles locked and any valuable items out of sight. Vehicle thefts and mischief to vehicles remains high within the Province of Alberta and our area has been the victim to several. Please don't hesitate to call if you have any questions, concerns or want advice on pro-active measures.

Up coming events: Bow Island/Foremost RCMP are looking at having a hockey game involving local RCMP, Fire, EMS and any local adult Community member that wants to play. We are looking at playing the Bow Island/Foremost Midgets in Foremost sometime early mid March. Please feel free to contact the Detachment if you have any questions.

Take care and be safe!

See you next month.

Sgt. Neil BAILEY

NCO/ic Bow Island/Foremost Detachment.