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For Release: July 25, 2018

NORFOLK FIRE DIVISION TRAINS FOR WATER RESCUE

After experiencing high waters and calls for help earlier this month, the Norfolk Fire Division took advantage of the beautiful weather last Friday to practice their water rescue techniques.

The drills consisted of some Fire Division personnel enacting numerous situations on kayaks while others worked together on the rescue boat to figure out the best way to assist the kayakers if they found themselves in dangerous situations.

This training is vital with the heavy amount of recreational traffic on the Elkhorn River, the North Fork and Skyview Lake. With these areas being accessed daily, here are some things to remember when kayaking or tubing this summer:

1. Always wear an approved personal flotation device or life jacket when doing any activity in the water
2. Know your ability and your limits, and choose the appropriate location for your level of experience
3. Always try to have a partner when partaking in water related activities. If you go solo, make sure that someone knows where you are going
4. Avoid drinking alcohol when you have plans to be in the water. Alcohol can slow reaction times, which could alter the outcome of an accident significantly
5. Dress for the conditions – anticipate cool water temperatures which could lead to hypothermia
6. Take plenty of water with you on your adventure!

The Elkhorn River is generally safe for kayakers with water levels at 4 ft. and tubers at 3’9”. Because the North Fork running through town is controlled it is generally safe anytime; but, when water gets over 3’6” it can flow quickly and cause issues with exiting the river at the designated exit point in a timely manner.

To know how high the water levels are and if it is safe to be on the river or the Fork, you can check out these great resources:

North Fork (above Norfolk): <https://waterdata.usgs.gov/ne/nwis/uv?06799100>

Burger King/NFO launch: <https://water.weather.gov/ahps2/hydrograph.php?gage=frkn1&wfo=oax>

Elkhorn River: https://waterdata.usgs.gov/usa/nwis/uv?site_no=06799000

North Fork Outfitting Facebook Page: North Fork Outfitting