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# Media Advisory

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RCMP News Release

Criminal Code Fraud charges laid against Qualicum Beach Logger

Herbert William GUDEIT, a logger from the Qualicum Beach area, was charged with the Criminal Code offence of Fraud over \$5000 on August 17, 2007. GUDEIT was investigated by the RCMP Forest Crime Investigation Unit with the assistance of Port Alberni District Compliance and Enforcement officials with the Ministry of Forests and Range for allegedly hauling and selling lower value Hemlock timber from a Provincial Crown timber sale to a number of residences in Qualicum Beach, B.C. without scaling the wood. The offence took place between September and December, 2005.

The Forest Range and Practices Act clearly states that all timber is required to be scaled. Timber harvested from Crown land is then assessed a stumpage rate specific to that particular timber sale. The assessed stumpage is then paid by the timber sale holder to the Provincial Government.

Investigators seized a total of 1104 cubic meters of timber from two different locations in Whiskey Creek, Qualicum Beach, B.C. An additional 279 cubic meters of timber is unaccounted for. The unaccounted wood is believed to have been sold to the public as firewood by GUDEIT.

Investigators allege GUDEIT defrauded the Provincial Crown of approximately \$49,200.00.

GUDEIT is known to the RCMP Forest Crime Investigation Unit.

Compliance and Enforcement (C&E) staff at the B.C. Ministry of Forests and Range enforce forest management laws and combat forest crimes such as theft, arson and mischief. Officials conduct about 16,000 inspections a year to assess compliance with forest and range laws relating to environmental management and revenue protection.

The Forest Crime Investigation Unit is a three person provincial RCMP unit that works in conjunction and partnership with the B.C. Ministry of Forests and Range, Yukon Ministry of Energy, Mines and Resources, community and regional RCMP detachments, First Nations, B.C. Conservation Officer Service, other provincial and federal units, the forest industry and the general public. The Unit combats forest crimes and conducts investigations into such matters as timber theft, stumpage fraud and serial wildland arson investigations on a Criminal Code and provincial statute level.

Any questions or concerns regarding the above noted information can be directed to contact Constable Kevin Hamilton from the RCMP Forest Crime Investigation Unit at (604) 598-4648.