

CHAPTER Q

MINISTRY OF NATURAL RESOURCES

GUIDELINES FOR HANDLING ONTARIO NATURAL RESOURCE VIOLATIONS

September 2005

GUIDELINES FOR HANDLING TIPS ABOUT NATURAL RESOURCE VIOLATIONS

Crime Stoppers and the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources have an excellent history of working together to reduce fish and wildlife violations across the province. In many cases, *Crime Stoppers* was the only method by which the public could report a violation of natural resource law after hours.

On 27 September 2005, the MNR instituted the “**TIPS-MNR**” program to allow the public to make 24/7 direct contact with MNR Enforcement. This service is targeted at the caller who does not wish to remain anonymous or receive a reward and is intended to be complimentary to the service provided by *Crime Stoppers*. This program includes a toll free violation reporting line that is active year round and staffed by **MNR** personnel at the Provincial Coordination Centre (PCC) in Sault Ste Marie.

Callers to the “**TIPS-MNR**” reporting line **will be asked to identify themselves**. No financial reward is offered.

Natural Resources violations may include reports of activity related to wildlife, fish, forest resources, aggregates, forest fires, endangered species, and the unlawful use of public land.

The purpose of these guidelines is to clarify how natural resource violation reports should be handled by *Crime Stopper* boards and Alternative Answers

- 1) It is assumed that any caller to *Crime Stoppers* wishes to and must remain anonymous.
- 2) Any person contacting *Crime Stoppers* who wishes to report a natural resource violation and **who wants to remain anonymous** should have all pertinent information collected following Standard Operating Procedures for *Crime Stoppers*. *Callers should never be re-directed in these cases.*
- 3) Natural resource crime often occurs in remote areas. In addition to the violation and suspect information, *Crime Stoppers* must obtain sufficient information from the caller to determine the MNR District in which the violation has occurred (e.g. nearest town, lake, geographic feature, district office if known by the caller).
- 4) Upon the receipt of an anonymous natural resource related tip, the *Crime Stoppers* call taker will call the PCC at **1-877-847-7667** and pass on the details of the tip.

- 5) Crime Stoppers follow-up reports shall **not** be sent to the Provincial Coordination Centre since the PCC, as a dispatch centre, has not supervisory relationship with officers. Local *Crime Stopper* boards should direct follow-up report forms to their respective local MNR office
- 6) All *Crime Stopper* follow-up reports forwarded to Conservation Officers will have the disposition form completed and returned to the appropriate board upon the conclusion of the investigation.
- 7) Any Person contacting *Crime Stoppers* who wishes to report a natural resource violation and who indicate that they **DO NOT WANT** to remain anonymous may be directed to call the **TIPS-MNR** violation reporting line at **1-877-847-7667** (1-877-TIPS-MNR). This line is toll free and active 365 days per year, 24 hours per day. Callers will be asked by MNR to provide their name and contact information.

This is the only circumstance in which callers to *Crime Stoppers* with natural resource tips should be re-directed or provided with an alternative phone number.