

For Immediate Release

Police issue warning to gay men after robberies in HRM

January 7, 2011

HALIFAX, NS--NSRAP has been asked by the Halifax Regional police to help circulate this public warning which is of particular concern to gay men in HRM. Please read and distribute as appropriate. NSRAP encourages everyone to exercise caution when meeting anyone they've encountered online.

Contact information for the Halifax Regional Police is included in the release. If you wish to contact NSRAP, please email us at nsrap@nsrap.ca, or phone us at 444-3206.

For Immediate Release
Halifax Regional Police/RCMP

Police Issue Public Warning After Two Robberies

In light of two recent robberies, HRM Partners in Policing are warning citizens, particularly gay men, to be cautious when meeting people in person whom they've originally met on-line.

The first robbery occurred on January 2 at 6:43 p.m. at Point Pleasant Park. A 35-year-old man picked up a man on Tower Road whom he had met on-line and drove to that location. Moments later, two additional men approached the vehicle, threatened the victim and demanded his money. The victim complied and was not physically injured during the incident. The main suspect in this case is described as a white man, approximately 20-years-old, with short dark hair and wearing a dark coat and black jeans.

The second robbery occurred last night at 6:39 p.m. in the area of Wellington Street and Lundy Lane in Halifax. A 29-year-old man picked up a man on Spring Garden Road whom he had met on-line and drove to the south end of Halifax. A few minutes later, several additional men approached the vehicle, claimed they had a knife, and stole the victim's wallet and fled the area on foot. The victim was not physically injured during the incident. The main suspect is described as a white man, in his early twenties, 5'10", 170 lbs., wearing a dark jacket and orange hooded sweatshirt.

Investigators believe these incidents are connected, that the person whom the victim picks up is working with the other suspects and that they appear to be targeting gay men through the on-line dating website Plenty Of Fish at this time.

All citizens are reminded to exercise caution when arranging to meet someone in person whom they know little about, regardless of the on-line dating service they use. People should select a well-lit, public location for the meeting where there are a lot of people around. If possible, they should tell a friend or family member(s) where they're going, with who and when they'll be back.

Anyone with information about these or any other similar incidents is asked to contact police at 490-5016 or anonymously through Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-TIPS (8477) or online at www.crimestoppers.ns.ca, or contact Detective Constable Debbie Carleton (HRP Liaison Officer to GLBT community) at 229-8254.