CITY OF KENNER
PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 19, 2016

KENNER POLICE CHIEF URGES POKE`MON
PLAYERS TO KEEP SAFETY IN MIND

Kenner, LA. – Kenner Police Chief Michael Glaser on Tuesday urged the thousands of residents playing the recently released Pokémon Go app for smartphones to keep safety in mind.

Glaser said locations involving public recreation have been extremely popular spots, particularly the Williams Boulevard Boat Launch.

Police throughout the country are making similar requests – from New York and Denver to Missouri and California.

"We want everyone to enjoy this game, but the crowds that are coming out to the Boat Launch, particularly at night, are creating a number of safety issues," Glaser said.

In the past five nights, officers have seen cars double- and tripled-parked, players on foot walking in front of cars because they are looking down at their phones, and received a report of a stolen smartphone from a game player.

"Sunday night, we had a line of traffic backed up on Williams almost to Joe Yenni," Glaser said. That has forced us to restrict vehicular traffic at times, and we have issued some tickets to drivers who did not move their vehicles when requested."

A number of players have complained about limited access at the Boat Launch recently on the city's Facebook Page, and questioned why Kenner seems to be spoiling the fun.

Glaser said police officers don't want to spoil the fun of residents enjoying the game, but at the same time, others trying to use the Boat Launch are being affected. "You've also got some folks there with their boats or trying to get to the Treasure Chest, and they have just as much right to enjoy the area."

When restricting access in the Boat Launch area is necessary, Glaser said he has instructed officers to only limit vehicular traffic – if at all possible.

"But if conditions get to the point that human life is at risk, we will take appropriate actions to mitigate that risk," he said.

Pokémon Go is an augmented reality game that relies on the cameras and GPS devices in smartphones to create a game environment in any real location – such as Kenner - so that players can locate game characters.

It's based on a game that was introduced in the 1990s by Nintendo that spawned cartoons and all sorts of merchandise and was extremely popular. The characters in the game resemble dragons, dinosaurs, birds, eggs and more. They have powers that can be "trained" by players. Pokémon Go was introduced early this month and is now rivaling Twitter for daily usage.

For more information on the game, see http://www.pokemongo.com/

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