



Driving safely on the beach

Which agencies deal with vehicle use on our beaches?

Several organisations have responsibilities linked to the use of vehicles on beaches in Northland, including the Police, District and Regional Councils and the Department of Conservation.

Making a complaint

If you want to complain about inappropriate vehicle use on a beach, contact the appropriate agency:

- Dangerous driving or unsafe vehicle – **Police**
- Driver abusing other beach users – **Police**
- Driver under the influence of drugs or alcohol – **Police**
- Underage driver – **Police**
- Unregistered or unwarranted vehicle – **Police**
- Damage to sand dunes/destruction of vegetation – **Northland Regional Council**
- Disturbance of birds/wildlife – **Department of Conservation**
- Driving on Department of Conservation land – **Department of Conservation**
- Noise complaint – **District Council**
- Rubbish dumping – **District Council**

If reporting inappropriate vehicle use, try to provide as many details as you can including:

- the date and time
- the make, model and registration of the vehicle/s involved
- a description of the driver
- any effects (actual or potential).

To report unsafe driving phone *555

For further information go to www.nrc.govt.nz/safebeachdriving

Contacts

Northland Regional Council
 24/7 Environmental Hotline 0800 504 639
 General enquiries 0800 002 004
 Website www.nrc.govt.nz

Department of Conservation
 Hotline 0800 999 005

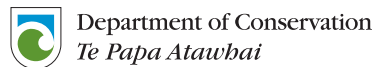
District Councils
 Whāngārei District Council 0800 932 463
 Kaipara District Council 0800 727 059
 Far North District Council 0800 920 029

Police – to report unsafe driving and in an emergency dial *555 dial 111
 Otherwise contact your local Police station.
 See the blue 'Government pages' in the front of the phone book.



Putting Northland first

in association with



Calders Design and Print Co. December 2009



Putting Northland first



Driving safely on the beach



Northland's beaches are under increasing pressure from four-wheel drives, motorbikes and other vehicles.

We have more than 3200km of coastline and hotspots like Ahipara, Tokerau Beach, Bream Bay and Ripiro Beach (which includes Glinks Gully and Baylys Beach) are especially popular with both local and holidaying motorists.

Most drivers are responsible and considerate towards other beach users and the environment when heading to their favourite fishing or picnic spot, launching a boat or just having fun.

However, people have been injured – and even lost their lives – on Northland beaches through inappropriate vehicle use. Of particular concern are careless or dangerous driving, excessive speed and vehicles which travel too close to children and other beachgoers. The sheer volume of traffic at some popular spots is also causing environmental damage, especially to dunes.



Keep motorbikes off the dunes and wear a helmet.



Tips for driving safely on the beach

- Always use established vehicle access routes onto the beach, then stick to hard sand below the high tide mark
- Drive slowly and carefully near other beach users
- Follow normal road rules; wear a safety belt at all times, use your indicators, keep your vehicle roadworthy and never drive under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- Watch for dogs, horses and fishing lines
- Keep motorbikes off the dunes and make sure you wear appropriate safety gear, including a helmet
- If parking, do so away from dunes and well-travelled traffic areas and make sure you don't block access ways.

Environmental damage

As well as posing a risk to human safety, vehicles on beaches can also affect the beach environment itself and the wildlife which makes its home there.

Sand dunes are important, helping to protect land, people and houses from storm surges, cyclones and even tsunamis.

The 'building blocks' of a dune system are its native grasses which help keep the sand from drying out, eroding and are also crucial to the survival of a number of birds, lizards and insects.

However, dunes and dune life are very sensitive to vehicle damage.

Keep vehicles off dunes and where possible stick to existing tracks and access ways.



Photograph: Pete Graham DCC.