

## **Media Advisory – July 26, 2010**

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### **Reardon asks community's help in catching culprit**

A large playground structure at Lake Goodwin Community Park appears to have been purposely set ablaze early Monday morning, requiring the Marysville Fire Department to extinguish the fire.

The Snohomish County Fire Marshal's Office is investigating the fire as arson. Damage to the playground equipment is estimated to be as much as \$100,000.

Snohomish County Executive Aaron Reardon called the destruction of county parks equipment a malicious offense against taxpayers and local families. He urged anyone with information about the suspects to contact local law enforcement so whoever is responsible may be prosecuted.

"This is undeniably a malicious crime that hurts the community members who use this park," Reardon said. "The person or persons should be prosecuted to the full extent the law allows."

This is the second arson at a county park in less than a year. Perpetrators set fire to a bathroom unit at Wyatt Park on Lake Stevens last November. The arsonist was caught and has since been ordered to pay restitution of \$34,788.62.

The fire at Lake Goodwin was reported by a passerby near 6:30 a.m. One fire unit responded to control the flames that engulfed a large portion of the play structure made of wood, plastic and metal. Bark underneath the playground equipment also caught fire.

"This is a well-used park and to see any loss to it is a misfortune," Reardon said.

A reward of up to \$10,000 is being offered for information leading to the successful prosecution of a suspect or suspects. Anyone with information is asked to call 1-800-55-ARSON to make an anonymous report or to call 911.

Formerly a resort and tavern property, the site was acquired by Snohomish County in 1996 with Conservation Futures and state funding. Lake Goodwin Community Park was completed and dedicated on April 1, 2006. The cost of construction was \$2 million. The cost of construction of the playground and surrounding area was about \$160,000.

"With budgets as tight as they are, it will be difficult to replace the damaged equipment," said Parks Director Tom Teigen.

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