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VALLEYINBRIEF

Zimmermann named to water board

A rookie city councillor will represent Kelowna on the Okanagan Basin Water Board.

Gerry Zimmermann is one of nine elected politicians appointed



Zimmermann

to the board, which helps manage the water supply from Osoyoos to Armstrong. The OBWB's jurisdiction covers about 8,000 square kilometres.

Other Central

Okanagan appointees are West Kelowna Mayor Doug Findlater and Peachland Mayor Keith Fielding.

BACKCOUNTRY RESCUE

Boarder broke key rule

By J.P. SQUIRE

The Daily Courier

An extensively trained, well-equipped backcountry snowboarder apparently forgot or ignored one of the most basic rules on Saturday: don't go out alone.

The 29-year-old Kelowna man, whose name was not released by RCMP, was backcountry snowboarding alone in the mountains surrounding Idabel Lake Resort when he got lost, Const. Kris Clark said Monday.

"Somehow, he completely lost his way. I'm not sure if his GPS wasn't working or what the circumstances were or if he just got too far into the bush to make his way back out until the morning. I'm not sure what the elements were like at that time, whether it was due to darkness or fog," he said.

"The man was extensively trained and well-equipped in the event of an emergency, including a working cellular phone. Although uninjured, he was unable to make his own way out from the backcountry."

The man was able to get to an area where he had cellphone coverage, called his girlfriend for help and she phoned police.

"Kelowna RCMP and Central Okanagan Search and Rescue, with the help of the Kelowna Snowmobile Club, were able to locate the man based on his cellphone GPS co-ordinates and he was retrieved from the bush no worse for wear," said Clark.

"If he had not had his cellphone, the man would have likely had to stay in the bush overnight, putting himself at risk of frostbite and hypothermia."

The man was using a split snowboard which

can be separated for use as backcountry skis. He also had an avalanche beacon and was trained as a ski patroller, said Clark. "He was equipped for everything; he was very well prepared; he was beyond well-trained for that particular type of snowboarding. (But) he probably shouldn't have been going solo," said Clark.

Kelowna RCMP remind everyone the B.C. backcountry can be dangerous at any time of year and that anyone venturing into the bush must be prepared for any number of hazards said Clark.

"It is highly recommended to have a partner in the event of injury and be prepared for an overnight stay. Also, having an avalanche beacon, GPS mapping device and a working cellphone and other such devices are suggestions that should be seriously considered to be essential."