



## ***Gimli is Awarded the Blue Flag Beach Designation!***

**(Gimli, May 29, 2015)** Today the R.M. of Gimli is proud to announce that Gimli Public Beach has been awarded the prestigious Blue Flag designation. An official flag raising ceremony is scheduled to take place on July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2015. More details on the ceremony will be released closer to the date.

“On behalf of Gimli Council, I would like to express how extremely proud we are of the efforts that went into achieving the Blue Flag Status,” said Randy Woroniuk, Mayor of Gimli. “We will continue to support, move forward and work hard to retain the designation and provide a clean and safe environment for all beach users to enjoy.”

Blue Flag is a symbol of pride and excellence, and it allows a community to join an international network of world class beaches and marinas. Blue Flag beaches must meet rigorous water quality, cleanliness and safety standards to receive and attain the status. At Blue Flag beaches residents and visitors also have the opportunity to learn more about local ecosystems, wildlife and how to protect them through various educational opportunities available in the community throughout the year.

The Rural Municipality of Gimli partnered with the Province of Manitoba, East Interlake Conservation District and the Gimli Environmental Advisory Committee (GEAC) to achieve Blue Flag status and has been working diligently on the project since 2008.

With the new designation Council of the Municipality of Gimli has committed to maintaining a clean and safe beach by implementing the following standards:

- Installed additional lifesaving stations
- Clean the beach sand on a weekly basis
- Renovated accessible washroom facilities in 2014 /Constructing more washroom facilities in 2016
- Use of environmentally friendly cleaning products
- Continuously clean and maintain the washrooms, garbage collection and boardwalk area
- Covered all garbage receptacles to deter birds and wildlife
- Provided more garbage receptacles to avoid overflow
- Continue to restrict BBQ's and open fires on the public beach to ensure a safe environment for all users and help reduce the number of nuisance birds
- Continue to partner with GEAC to provide educational programs on the health of our environment, ecosystems and lake
- Routinely test and post water quality results and daily UV index at the park patrol hut and Lake Winnipeg Visitor Centre
- Ensure adequate signage is always posted along the beach
- Additional training and education for the summer Park Patrol staff
- Enforce the no dogs on the beach legislation, which includes the sand, boardwalk and grass areas, for health and safety of the users along the busy stretch of public beach
- Continue to work with the RCMP, By-law Officer and Animal Control officers to ensure the beach rules are being obeyed and the beach environment be kept clean and safe

