

**County of St. Paul
5015 – 49 Avenue
St. Paul, Alberta
T0A 3A4**

Attention: Tim Mahdiuk, Interim CAO and County of St. Paul Council

Good Afternoon Tim,

Thank you very much for providing me with the opportunity to come before Council, to review my concerns regarding the Fire Call Report/Invoice for my Lake Home at 606 Sante Hills Drive. Also, thank you for taking the time to discuss these concerns with me a few months ago, I really appreciate the professional and empathetic approach that you have taken to this situation, and it has made me further proud to be have a residence in the County of St. Paul. As we discussed, I would like to meet with Council to share how excellent my families experience has been to date having a residence in this municipality, and outline a few of the concerns/thoughts that I have regarding this invoice in the hopes that the County may reconsider this fine.

The first item I would like to address is what was actually taking place on May 19th at our lake lot. Admittedly, we did have a small pile of soil and mulch that was slowly smoldering throughout that afternoon. Although there was smoke, there was absolutely no sparks, or open flames during this time as it was covered in soil. When the first two fire officers showed up that evening, they actually had a debate amongst two of them, whether or not any action was required at all. The one officer was prepared to completely call off the remaining equipment and personnel due to it being such a low risk. Ultimately because the other officer disagreed, they decided it would be best to get another opinion. When the remaining crew arrived to site, the captain was apologetic that they needed to respond to such a small threat. The crew that I spoke with were very complimentary of the responsible smolder we were conducting. They noted specifics like the fact we were monitoring the smolder, that the pile was buried in soil, and that we had a substantial fire break around the perimeter. The original plan that they laid out was actually to just soak the fire break and continue to let it smolder, but in the end they decided to soak some water on it just to be sure. These discussions with the fire officials, as well as their actions onsite, confirmed my thoughts that we were conducting a responsible activity, and that next time, we would be sure to obtain a permit.

The second item I would like to discuss on this matter is that there were two trips made to our address. I was first made aware of the May 12th response by one of the fire officers during the May 19th response. It is confusing to me that there wouldn't be a phone call, letter left on the door, or any communication regarding this trip, yet it is being referenced as one of the deciding factors to issue a fine. I can assure you that if there was a discussion regarding the response on May 12th that we would not have had any smoldering without a permit on May 19th, but without receiving any form of communication or notification about this event, we were not aware that we needed to alter our behaviour.

As mentioned earlier, I am hoping that the County will reconsider these fines considering this information. This is a family lake lot, and we sincerely enjoy our time spent in County of St. Paul, and always conduct ourselves in a safe, responsible manner. We have never had any previous fines/infractions, or even a complaint of any kind. I certainly recognize the importance of fire safety, and can assure you that in the future, we will absolutely obtain permits prior to any open burning. I would

ask that County Council, you, and the Director of Community Services reconsider these fines. I look forward to coming to Council to further discuss this, and appreciate your consideration on this matter.

Sincerely,

David Beck