

Subject: Asbestos watermain replacement - correction

Date: Sat, 20 Jul 2002 00:33:13 +0100 (BST)

From: Elizabeth James <cagebc@yahoo.com>

To: crist@district.north-van.bc.ca, Mayor Bell and Council <council@dnv.org>

CC: "FONVCA \ (E-mail)" <fonvca@fonvca.org>

Dear Clr. Crist:

As discussed, I have now looked up my file on the issue of asbestos watermain infrastructure, and the exact wording of the letter I received from Mr. Huffman is as follows [the highlighted phrases are my own emphasis]:

Date: Thursday, 18 April, 2002 - Watermains and other infrastructure:

Ms. James:

In answer to your question:

*The asbestos-cement (AC) pipes have been **completely** replaced on Floralynn, Greylynn, Merlynn, Alderlynn and Birchlynn. On **20th Street**, the AC pipes have been replaced from **Mountain Highway to Alderlynn**. On **Viewlynn**, the AC pipes have been replaced from **20th Street to 24th Street**.*

I trust this is the information you require:

Yours truly,

*Bob Huffman,
Manager, Utilities*

My original request was addressed to Mr. Richard Zerr (who passed it to Mr. Huffman for reply) and read as follows:

Dear Mr. Zerr:

In view of recent information which has surfaced as a result of Council and staff discussions about dollar reserves available for infrastructure upgrades, it would be much appreciated if you could advise: Is there any asbestos contained in watermain pipes serving, in whole or in part, the following streets:

- *Viewlynn*
- *20th Street*
- *Floralynn*
- *Greylynn*
- *Merlynn*
- *Alderlynn*
- *Birchlynn*

Thanking you for your early response....

Sincerely,

*Liz James
[604] 988-2066*

In view of the above, which seems pretty cut and dried, I find it hard to understand why the burst pipe at 20th and Mountain Highway - and the water bubbling up through the asphalt on 20th Street just below that intersection - should have occurred at all. Moreover, your reply to me which said, in part: [The water pipe break you are referring to on 20th and Mountain Highway was an old asbestos pipe. If the information you have been given suggested that all the old pipes, including the asbestos pipes, have been replaced, or are in the process of being replaced then you have been misled....](#) confuses the matter even further.

Putting everything together, one can only ask:

- was Mr. Huffman misled? Or.....
- was he given the wrong information which he passed on to me?
- were the work records not properly researched before Mr. Huffman's email letter to me?
- are the work records incomplete or incorrect? or....
- was it I who was being misled?

In closing, I know that Clr. Denault and other members of Council express their annoyance with pesky taxpayers who keep asking awkward questions - *saying* it's because they are concerned about the costs of providing answers to taxpayers' enquiries - but I can tell you that taxpayers are becomingly increasingly frustrated at their inability to obtain timely and accurate answers, from Staff or from Council, to what appear to be simple questions.

Clr. Denault should be made aware that the costs arise chiefly because what should be a simple look-up - *were the pipes replaced, or were they not?* - has to mushroom into major research before Staff can discover the right answer.

It would be appreciated if you, or someone at your request, could look into this matter further and clarify. In the event the infrastructure in question *had* been replaced, could you advise who did the work, District Staff or...? Also, and I hardly dare ask the question, is there any way of discovering how much has been spent on replacing the old AC mains, from commencement of the project to date, and how much is estimated yet to be spent?

Thank you for your assistance.

Yours truly,

Liz James, Chair
Coalition for Accountability in Government Enterprises
[604] 988-2066

[Get a bigger mailbox -- choose a size that fits your needs.](#)

http://uk.docs.yahoo.com/mail_storage.html