



Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe

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PUBLIC ADVISORY

For immediate release:

Seskéhkó:wa/September 25, 2015

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JOINT EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM ASSEMBLED FOLLOWING DETECTION OF ASBESTOS MATERIAL

TERRITORY OF AKWESASNE —The Mohawk Council of Akwesasne and the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe are providing notification to residents about the detection of asbestos material on a property that spans the northern and southern portion of Akwesasne. Due to the location, a Joint Emergency Response Team has been assembled to investigate and report on material located at Lot #7 in Kana:takon (St. Regis) and extends into Lot #360 in the southern portion of the community.

The material has been contained and the incident is currently being investigated with the assistance of environmental, emergency measures/planning and health technicians from both organizations. The group's findings and recommendations will be shared as they become available. In the meantime, the following information is being offered:

- Approximately fifteen years ago, a Kana:takon property owner accepted land fill. *The origin of the fill and trucking company used to transport the material are not known at this time.*
- The land fill was placed in one pile and remained on the property undisturbed.
- Two months ago, a local contractor was hired to spread the fill; which is comprised of soil, gravel and stones. The work revealed piping containing a suspicious substance.
- The property owner notified MCA Kana:takon Chief Steve Thomas (Public Safety and Environment Portfolio Holder) about the discovery, who requested MCA's Emergency Response Team to investigate.
- Safety measures were taken, with MCA's Environmental Health Officer submitting a sample of the material to Pinchin Ltd. Laboratory for analysis. Plastic was placed over the material, anchored with sand bags, and the area was taped off with caution tape.

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- On September 18, 2015 the laboratory results indicated the presence of non-friable asbestos material, which CANNOT be reduced to powder and NOT easily dispersed.
- A Joint Emergency Response Team was assembled to investigate the incident; comprised of MCA's Emergency Measures, Environment and Health and SRMT's Emergency Planning and Environment Division.

The Joint Emergency Response Team is continuing to monitor the location and is conducting a complete investigation. At this time, there is minimal environmental and public safety risk.

More information will be provided as it become available through the Joint Emergency Response Team.

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The Saint Regis Mohawk Tribal Council is the duly elected and federally recognized government of the Saint Regis Mohawk People.