



Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe

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PUBLIC ADVISORY

For immediate release:

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JOINT EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM PROVIDES UPDATE ON ASBESTOS MATERIAL

TERRITORY OF AKWESASNE - The Joint Emergency Response Team is continuing to provide information to local residents in regards to asbestos material that was detected on Lot #7 in Kana:takon (St. Regis) and extends into Lot #360 in the southern portion of Akwesasne. The Joint Emergency Response team; comprised of environmental, emergency measures/planning and health technicians from the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne and the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe; are monitoring the situation and are able to provide the following update:

- During the summer of 2015, a local contractor was hired to spread land fill that was deposited on the property approximately 15 years ago and left undisturbed. A second contractor was employed to further grade the surface using a power rake.
- The above work revealed suspicious materials that were submitted by MCA's Environmental Health Officer to Pinchin Ltd. Laboratory for a bulk sample analysis on September 18, 2015. The results indicated a large presence of non-fibrous materials (under 75%); with a small presence (5%-10%) of both Chrysotile and Crocidolite—each of them asbestos materials in non-friable form that cannot be easily reduced to powder and dispersed.
- At the same time, SRMT environmental technicians proceeded to control the site with caution tape to restrict access, placed plastic sheathing over the remaining debris pile and anchored it with sand bags, as well as contacted the Environmental Protection Agency to arrange an onsite analysis.
- SRMT's Environment Division contacted the United States Coast Guard given the proximity of the materials to the St. Regis River, whom indicated no public health concern if water is not used for drinking purposes. A visual inspection of the water along the shoreline DID NOT reveal any suspected materials.

- MCA’s Environmental Health Officer also arranged for Pinchin Laboratory to conduct further analysis by collecting Micro-vacuum utilizing indoor vacuum tests at Lot #7 and two adjoining properties—Lot #13-1 and MCA’s Administration Building #1. The results were received on October 9, 2015 and DID NOT detect any asbestos materials indoors.
- On October 14-15, 2015, technicians from the Environmental Protection Agency conducted a site visit and took soil and bulk samples for analysis. Twenty-three soil and twenty-three bulk samples were taken from various locations at Lot #7 and locations were marked with GPS and flags, ten samples were also taken from an adjoining property, and five soil samples were collected from a property that received similar land fill during the same time period.

It is anticipated the Environmental Protection Agency will complete their laboratory analysis of the bulk materials within 24-hours of receiving the materials, while analysis of the soil sample will take seven days. When completed, a report will be provided to SRMT’s Environment Division in one to two weeks, along with any recommended measures for remediation, if needed.

In the meantime, the current condition of the remaining materials poses minimal risk to the public, which continues to be controlled and undisturbed.

More information will be provided as it becomes 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.