

Environment and Natural Resources  
Government of the Northwest Territories  
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April 25, 2016

Hamlet of Sachs Harbour  
General Delivery  
Sachs Harbour NT X0E 0Z0

Inuvialuit  
Water Board

APR 29 2016

Inuvik, NT

**Attn: Stephen Wylie, Senior Administrative Officer**

**RE: Ongoing Open Burning of Mixed Garbage in Sachs Harbour**

Dear Mr. Wylie,

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (ENR) has received evidence that as of April 18, 2016, general household and other unauthorized wastes in the Sachs Harbour Landfill were set on fire. The evidence indicates that Hamlet of Sachs Harbour staff started the fire.

As per ENR's position paper on open burning and your Water Licence requirements, the Hamlet is allowed to burn paper products, paperboard packaging and untreated wood. However, the evidence indicates that general household waste has been set on fire. Furthermore, the burning is not taking place in an approved burn pit. In an Environmental Protection Order that Sachs Harbour received last year, any burning of authorized materials will only be allowed to take place in an approved burn pit. The Hamlet of Sachs Harbour neither received approval nor was an application submitted to the ENR Inuvik Regional Office.

ENR has given the Hamlet of Sachs Harbour every opportunity to come into compliance with ENR's Environmental Protection Order and the Hamlet's Municipal Water Licence N7L3-1531. However, Sachs Harbour continues to violate both the order and its Water Licence.

Below is a timeline of events, from August 20, 2015 to present day for your review.

- August 20, 2015
  - Water Resource Officer (WRO) Philippe Thibert-Leduc conducted an inspection of the Sachs Harbour Municipal Water Supply and Waste Disposal Facilities.
  - WRO Thibert-Leduc explained to the Senior Administrative Officer Stephen Wylie some of the key requirements of the Municipal Water Licence N7L3-1531, including Part D, Item 10, which states that the "The Licensee shall not open burn solid or liquid Waste, with the exception of paper products, paperboard packaging and untreated wood in accordance with the guideline Municipal Solid Wastes Suitable for Open Burning, developed by the GNWT Department of Environment and Natural Resources."

- August 31, 2015
  - Environmental Protection Officer (EPO) Rolland Malegana served an Environmental Protection Order addressed to Sachs Harbour's SAO Stephen Wylie.
  - EPO Malegana and Hazardous Waste Specialist Gerald Enns met with Stephen Wylie, Darren Nasogaluak, and Floyd Lennie. All parties agreed that there will be no more burning garbage at the Solid Waste Facility until the order from EPO Malegana is satisfied.
  - The Hamlet agreed to explore the potential of modifying an abandoned fuel tank at the disposal site for burning authorized materials.
- September 9, 2015
  - WRO Thibert-Leduc submitted an inspection report for Municipal Water Licence N7L3-1531 to Sachs Harbour SAO Stephen Wylie
  - In the cover letter attached to the inspection report, WRO Thibert-Leduc outlined certain conditions, including a request for immediate action to be taken in order to prevent further open burning of mixed garbage at the solid waste site.
- November 13, 2015
  - A teleconference took place between the following parties:
    - Sachs Harbour: Stephen Wylie
    - Environment and Natural Resources: Philippe Thibert-Leduc, Rolland Malegana, Gerald Enns, Toby Halle
    - Municipal and Community Affairs: Jeff Hunter
  - The parties discussed the possibility of hiring Yellowknife's landfill manager Peter Houweling to provide technical assistance and guidance for landfill operations in Sachs Harbour.
  - ENR proposed using a pile of granular material adjacent to the Icicle Inn site as cover material at the Sachs Harbour Solid Waste Facility.
- November 19, 2015
  - In an e-mail to ENR, Stephen Wylie said it was not possible to dig into the pile granular material at this time of year.
- November 27, 2015
  - In an e-mail to ENR, Jeff Hunter detailed a proposal to the Hamlet of Sachs Harbour regarding the hiring of Peter Houweling for one week. Sachs Harbour refused the proposal as it was considered too expensive.

For your information, violating an Environmental Protection Order carries fines of **up to \$300,000** for the first violation and **up to \$1,000,000** for subsequent violations. In addition, the Hamlet, by allowing the open burning of garbage, is in violation of the *Waters Act* and its Water Licence N7L3-1531, Part D: Item 10. Violating the *Waters Act* under a type B Water Licence allows for fines of **up to \$37,500** and **up to \$75,000** for subsequent violations.

**The Environmental Protection Order served on August 31, 2015 is still in effect. As per the order, the Hamlet of Sachs Harbour is not authorized to burn anything until the order is rescinded. If Sachs Harbour wishes to burn authorized materials as outlined in the Water Licence, it will have to construct a burn pit which then must be approved by ENR.**

ENR is preparing a public education campaign for Hamlet staff members and members of the community explaining the dangers of open burning of garbage. This will include detailing the harmful effects of dioxins, furans, and other toxins which are released due to open burning of garbage. Exposure to dioxins and furans has been linked to cancers, liver problems, and impairment of the immune system.

Sincerely,



Rolland Malegana  
Environmental Protection Officer  
GNWT ENR Inuvik Region

Cc: Stephen Charlie – Superintendent, GNWT ENR Inuvik Region  
Lorie Fyfe – Superintendent, GNWT MACA Inuvik Region  
Mardy Semmler – Executive Director, Inuvialuit Water Board  
Mayor and Council – Sachs Harbour