

## Janzen, Heather

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**Subject:** FW: Email - Communication - Laelia Shiell - Porcupine Tree Care - Update on Elm Wood Disposal Initiative and Next Steps - CK 7830-1 x 4200-4  
**Attachments:** The Standing Policy Committee of Environment.pdf

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**From:** Web NoReply <[web-noreply@Saskatoon.ca](mailto:web-noreply@Saskatoon.ca)>

**Sent:** Monday, April 1, 2024 12:15 PM

**To:** City Council <[City.Council@Saskatoon.ca](mailto:City.Council@Saskatoon.ca)>

**Subject:** Email - Communication - Laelia Shiell - Porcupine Tree Care - Update on Elm Wood Disposal Initiative and Next Steps - CK 7830-1 x 4200-4

--- Replies to this email will go to [info@porcupinetreecare.com](mailto:info@porcupinetreecare.com) ---

Submitted on Monday, April 1, 2024 - 12:10

Submitted by user: Anonymous

Submitted values are:

**I have read and understand the above statements.:** Yes

**I do not want my comments placed on a public agenda. They will be shared with members of Council through their online repository.:** No

**I only want my comments shared with the Mayor or my Ward Councillor.:** No

**Date:** Monday, April 01, 2024

**To:** His Worship the Mayor and Members of City Council

**Pronouns:** She/her/hers

**First Name:** Laelia

**Last Name:** Shiell

**Phonetic spelling of first and/or last name:** Lay-Lee-Ah

**Phone Number :** [306-850-5345](tel:306-850-5345)

**Email:** [info@porcupinetreecare.com](mailto:info@porcupinetreecare.com)

**I live outside of Saskatoon:** No

**Saskatoon Address and Ward:**

**Address:** 706 28th Street West

**Ward:** Ward 2

**Name of the organization or agency you are representing (if applicable):** Porcupine Tree Care

**What do you wish to do ?:** Submit Comments

**What meeting do you wish to speak/submit comments ? (if known)::** STANDING POLICY COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT, UTILITIES AND CORPORATE SERVICES Tuesday, April 02, 2024 at 9:30 a.m. Council Chamber, City Hall

**What agenda item do you wish to comment on ?:** Update on Elm Wood Disposal Initiative and Next Steps [EUCS2023-0202]

**Comments:**

I would like to comment on the report on elm wood disposal by having my letter read to the standing policy committee, please see my letter attached.

**Attachments:**

- [The Standing Policy Committee of Environment.pdf](#)108.67 KB

**Will you be submitting a video to be vetted prior to council meeting?:** No



The Standing Policy Committee of Environment, Utilities and Corporate Services

April 1, 2024

Subject: Update on Elm Wood Disposal and Next Steps

Dear Members of the Standing Policy Committee,

I hope this letter finds you well. I'm reaching out to share some thoughts on the recent update about elm wood disposal in Saskatoon. As the owner of Porcupine Tree Care, I have a vested interest in making sure our elm wood disposal policies are fair and practical.

Firstly, let's talk about the numbers in the report. It states that there were three times the number of loads of elm received during the pilot compared to the previous year. This shows how well the program worked and its importance. However, the report also mentions that most of the loads in October 2023 were from customers who did not hold a commercial account. I believe this might insinuate that the majority of elm disposal is done by non-commercial entities. However, the program was not announced until it started, and the first we heard about it was on the city's Instagram on October 3rd. We were already well into our elm pruning season by then, and most of our elm pruning was already complete. If we had known about this opportunity earlier, we could have extended it to our clients, and instead of pruning elms in September, we could have waited until October. Many clients called us upset that they were charged in September after hearing about the free elm disposal. I would be more interested to know how many visits to the landfill were by commercial haulers vrs residents in the entirety of the year. Porcupine dumped elm at the landfill 39 times in 2023 with half of those visits in September when the elm pruning ban lifted. We are one of the smaller companies of over 20 that operate in Saskatoon.

This highlights the disconnect between the city and commercial tree businesses and the importance of communication regarding elm in Saskatoon. This was evident two years ago when the city suddenly added a special handling cost for elm logs, and the additional costs were sprung on us during a visit to the landfill. It appears that the City of Saskatoon landfill may not be adequately equipped or inclined to handle elm logs, which raises concerns about the current system.

The report indicates that we have access to composting chipped elm wood waste through the private sector. However, this is untrue as there are no private composting sites in Saskatoon that

accept elm debris that we are aware of. According provincial Dutch Elm Disease Regulations, published in 2005, Section 9(1) it states that 'Every person who prunes or removes an elm tree shall dispose of the elm tree by transporting it to the nearest elm tree disposal site for the municipality in which the elm tree is located..' In Saskatoon that site is the city landfill.

While it makes sense that landfills might not be the best spot for elm debris, this is the option we have. It doesn't make sense that one party has access to free disposal and another doesn't, while we are all required to follow the same rules.

The majority of Porcupine's tree work is for residential customers in Saskatoon. They hire a professional because we are certified and know how to handle and dispose of elm debris properly to comply with provincial regulations. By waiving the tipping fee for only residents of Saskatoon, you are inadvertently penalizing folks for hiring a professional. How am I supposed to tell clients that they can dispose of their elm for free, but I have to charge them? And how am I supposed to ensure that the elm is disposed of timely and properly if they chose to dispose of their elm themselves.

Here's my suggestion: Let's make elm disposal free or low cost for everyone, whether they're hiring a pro or doing it themselves. And let's not penalize folks who need to hire commercial haulers because they don't have trucks or trailers. Making it easier for everyone to do the right thing will help keep our city green and our elm trees healthy.

I'm asking the Standing Policy Committee to take another look at these proposals and ensure they're fair, practical, and factual. I would like an open dialogue between the city and commercial arborists so we are on the same page when providing elm care for residents in Saskatoon. Whether trees are on city property or private, it's all one tree canopy helping our city together. So let's work together to ensure Saskatoon is a leader in environmental stewardship while promoting the well-being of our elms.

Thanks for listening. I'm here if you want to chat more about this.

Sincerely,

Laelia Shiell  
Owner  
Porcupine Tree Care