

Janzen, Heather

Subject: FW: Email - Communication - Tom Gode - Update on Elm Wood Disposal Initiative and Next Steps - CK 7830-1 x 4200-4
Attachments: Letter to Committee 2024 Wood Disposal.docx

From: Web NoReply <web-noreply@Saskatoon.ca>
Sent: Monday, April 1, 2024 12:47 PM
To: City Council <City.Council@Saskatoon.ca>
Subject: Email - Communication - Tom Gode - Update on Elm Wood Disposal Initiative and Next Steps - CK 7830-1 x 4200-4

--- Replies to this email will go to [REDACTED] ---

Submitted on Monday, April 1, 2024 - 12:43

Submitted by user: [REDACTED]

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: Sunday, March 31, 2024

To: His Worship the Mayor and Members of City Council

First Name: Tom

Last Name: Gode

Phone Number : [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

I live outside of Saskatoon: No

Saskatoon Address and Ward:

Address: [REDACTED] 2nd st E

Ward: Ward 6

Name of the organization or agency you are representing (if applicable): SOS Trees Coalition

What do you wish to do ?: Submit Comments

What meeting do you wish to speak/submit comments ? (if known):: The Standing Policy Committee of Environment, Utilities and Corporate Services

What agenda item do you wish to comment on ?: Update on Elm Wood Disposal and Next Steps

Comments:

attached

Attachments:

- [Letter to Committee 2024 Wood Disposal.docx](#)1.02 MB

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



SOS Trees Coalition

1618 - 9th Avenue North, SASKATOON, SK. S7K 3A1

www.sostrees.ca

1 April, 2024

To: The Standing Policy Committee of Environment, Utilities and Corporate Services.

Re: Update on Elm Wood Disposal and Next Steps.

SOS Trees Coalition applauds the work that has gone into the 2022 and 2023 Elm wood waste pilot projects and are encouraged by the 2024 proposed plan. The addition of the Education Campaign and the Communications Plan were both badly needed and address the issue in a non-threatening way. The removal of all fees for the disposal of elm wood is a proactive approach to begin addressing the catastrophic plague of Dutch Elm Disease (DED) inching its way into Saskatoon.

As you are aware, the protection of our trees is one of the most significant strategies a city can undertake to reduce air pollution and mitigate climate change. Trees absorb carbon dioxide and release oxygen. They filter the air, have a cooling effect through shading and transpiration and assist in reducing water run-off and erosion. By mitigating the heat sink created by dense urban development they help reduced heating costs and air-conditioning cost. In particular our heritage elms cathedral like canopy are a key to many of our older neighbourhood's identity.

History has demonstrated that each time a community skimps on prevention of Dutch Elm Disease they pay a heavy price.

Regarding the proposed Elm Wood Disposal Strategy For 2024 The extension of the no fee to the end of the year for residents is a great step toward addressing the growing need of Elm Wood Disposal in a safe and timely manner. However, the exclusion of the commercial tree service loads from the project raises concerns.

1. When the cost of disposal of Elm wood is maintained on commercial loads the cost is passed on to the home owner. When a tree removal can cost upward to \$4500 and adding disposal fees of approximately \$650 (for 4,000 kg) just adds insult to injury and becomes one more barrier to a safe and timely removal and disposal. We all know that trees are a part of the city infrastructure, regardless if they are public or private, we all benefit from them and need to accept responsibility for them. In the original pilot survey and focus group of residents in 2021, the residents did voice concern about keeping fees for commercial companies as they said it would be passed on to customers.

SOS Trees Coalition recommends the removal of all disposal fees on Elm wood waste.

2. The report states "the commercial sector has access to composting chipped Elm wood waste through the private sector when the ban is lifted." Are we talking about the Loraas Disposal site North of Saskatoon near Martensville? Disposal at the Loraas site is approved for elm wood in chip format at \$85 per tonne. We inquired it seems it is not used/ or has sporadic use by some tree companies. The distance could be one of the factors.

SOS Trees Coalition recommends the City of Saskatoon urgently re apply to the Minister of the Environment to renew the Elm wood waste composting pilot at 11th Street that was discontinued in 2020 and include a research component to establish the temperature necessary to kill any Elm Bark Beetle larvae and include the installation of elm beetle traps in the surrounding area.

3. The entire commercial disposal process seems less than transparent at the landfill. Sometimes the wood is buried, sometimes the elm chips are dumped in the lagoon, Loraas has different requirements from the City, etc. There appears to have been consultation through a survey and focus group with citizens regarding disposal, however the commercial sector and organizations such as SOS Trees Coalition seem to have been left out.

SOS Trees Coalition recommends consultation with the commercial Tree Services and other organizations who have a stake in our urban forest to explain the process, the inconsistencies and examine alternatives.

The loss of revenue by eliminating all fees on elm wood seems prudent to protect Saskatoon's investment in public trees valued at \$530 million as well as an equal amount of tree value on private property..

The addition of free Elm wood disposal (starting Apr. 25th) and throughout the ban on cutting Elm may be confusing for residents and it will be crucial to re-enforce the pruning ban in the education plan.

Let's accept that it is our civic duty to protect the urban forest.

Respectfully

Tom Gode

SOS Trees Coalition