

ITEM 6
MANAGER'S REPORT NO. 39
COUNCIL MEETING 85/06/03

RE: OUTDOOR BURNING

ACTING MUNICIPAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION:

1. THAT the recommendation of the Director Engineering be adopted.

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TO: MUNICIPAL MANAGER
FROM: DIRECTOR ENGINEERING
SUBJECT: OUTDOOR BURNING

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RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. THAT Council approve the cancellation of outdoor burning by Burnaby residents and that the Municipal Solicitor be requested to bring forward the bylaw appropriately amended.
2. THAT a copy of this report be sent to all persons who have recently made their views known on this matter including the City of New Westminster.

REPORT:

On 1984 04 24 we reported to Council stating that we were studying the feasibility of using methane gas, generated from wells sunk at the old Stride Avenue dump, to assist the burning process in a designed trench burning system.

Wells have been sunk and production of methane is better than expected. The trench burner together with ancilliary equipment has been built and several test burns have been carried out. While not one hundred percent satisfied at this time, we are sure that with minor modification the system will be satisfactory.

As we have stated before, the Burnaby Fire Department is opposed to any outdoor burning by Burnaby residents but are not opposed to burning of garden clippings at Stride Avenue by Corporation forces provided that burning is carried out in a properly controlled manner.

The Medical Health Officer and the Chief Public Health Inspector are understandably concerned about outdoor burning because of complaints they receive from residents with respiratory problems. The Medical Health Officer also pointed out that the timing of the Spring and Fall burning days is approximately coincident with the worst periods for natural irritants which cause problems for persons who suffer from allergies and respiratory problems. The Health Department Officials stated that they would be prepared to agree with the Fire Department's position on outdoor burning but would also be prepared to accept a properly controlled burning arrangement at Stride by Municipal forces if up-to-date trench burning equipment were to be used and if burning is carried out when atmospheric conditions are the most favourable.

ITEM	6
MANAGER'S REPORT NO.	39
COUNCIL MEETING	85/06/03

118

Although the Engineering Department's views are very heavily weighted by economic considerations, we do nevertheless sympathize with those who suffer and we are prepared to support the position taken by the Fire and Health Departments provided that we continue to burn at the Stride Avenue location using the most up-to-date methods.

We feel that the cancellation of outdoor burning for Burnaby residents will not cause any great inconvenience for the following reasons:

1. From observation, the percentage of residents doing outdoor burning is small.
2. Any garden clippings may be taken to Stride Avenue.
3. Garden clippings and or scrap lumber may be bundled in lengths less than three feet and these will be picked up on regular refuse days.

With respect to #3 above, there would, of course, be an increase in cost through increased refuse disposal costs but with changing times our thinking may have to change when we equate waste management costs with acceptable environmental standards.

It is likely that by the time the incinerator in the Big Bend area is operational, Stride Avenue may be phased out and all refuse including garden clippings will go to the incinerator.

In the meantime we will continue to accept garden clippings at Stride, although to offset rising costs we will, in all likelihood, need to very soon institute a dumping fee. We should state that we do not burn grass cuttings and in fact compost them with leaves and other natural debris with the resulting product being used for Municipal purposes.


DIRECTOR ENGINEERING

WMR/lmy

cc: () Fire Chief
() Medical Health Officer