

ITEM 11
MANAGER'S REPORT NO. 64
COUNCIL MEETING 89/10/10

RE: B.C. HYDRO RIGHT-OF-WAY MAINTENANCE

MUNICIPAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION:

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

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TO: MUNICIPAL MANAGER 1989 SEPTEMBER 21

FROM: ACTING DIRECTOR ENGINEERING

SUBJECT: B.C. HYDRO RIGHT-OF-WAY MAINTENANCE

PURPOSE: To respond to a Council enquiry regarding the standard of right-of-way maintenance practiced by B.C. Hydro.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. THAT a copy of the 1988 July 25 motion by Council concerning use of chemicals for vegetation control be sent to Mr. L. Bell, Chairman, B.C. Hydro with a request that Hydro examine eliminating use of chemicals for vegetation control within Hydro Substations located in this Municipality.

REPORT

Council, at its meeting of 1989 August 21, received an item of correspondence regarding the condition of the B.C. Hydro right-of-way in the vicinity of the 7300 block Imperial Street. Arising out of discussion of this matter, Council resolved that staff prepare a brief report on the condition of the B.C. Hydro right-of-way and the standard of maintenance practiced by B.C. Hydro. This report is intended to respond to Council's enquiry.

Staff have been advised by B.C. Hydro that in the Lower Mainland area, B.C. Hydro maintains their "fee owned" properties (eg. Imperial Street right-of-way) to a fair standard compatible to the neighbourhood. This usually entails cutting the area 2-3 times/year. Hydro advised that they do not cut the grass too low because of the generally uneven terrain. In easements, Hydro similarly endeavors to keep growth under control. Hydro refers to this type of treatment as their "good neighbour policy" and it would have application to the right-of-way behind the 7300 block Imperial Street.

As Council is aware, B.C. Hydro Chairman, Larry Bell, invited Burnaby Elected Representatives and staff to meet on 1989 September 06. One of the topics briefly discussed at this meeting was Hydro's approach to vegetation management near power-lines. Mr. Denis Blakely, Manager, Lower Mainland Transmission, spoke on this topic and made liberal reference to Hydro's published brochure on Vegetation Management. Rather than including in this report extensive quotes from the brochure, a copy has been provided under separate cover to all Council members for their information. Staff subsequently requested more specific comments on vegetation management as it pertained to Burnaby. B.C. Hydro have responded in writing stating:

"Policy

The objective of the Lower Mainland Transmission Vegetation Maintenance Program is to provide maximum transmission line reliability consistent with voltage levels, using the most cost effective biological/mechanical and/or chemical methods, consistent with government regulatory agencies and minimum environmental impact.

Transmission Line Right-of-Way

In Burnaby our present Vegetation Program on the right-of-way is all done using mechanical or hand slashing techniques. Where the transmission lines are accessible the most widely used method of tree maintenance is the aerial lift truck or trim truck.

Where transmission lines are located within rights-of-way, slashing with powersaws are common, often supplemented with mechanical mowing, using machines such as brush cutters or Hydro axes. All brush on the right-of-way that will violate the conductor safety zones at maturity must be identified and removed to ensure public safety and provide protection against circuit outages and eliminate the risk of fire hazards. Structure bases are cleared of vegetation to provide maintenance access, eliminate fire hazards and expose the structure to sunlight to prevent corrosion. Tree and brush species that, at maturity, pose no problem to the overhead transmission lines are left untouched to improve the natural right-of-way appearance, enhance wildlife and control erosion.

Substations

Our present Substation Vegetation Program requires us to selectively use the herbicide Roundup to control vegetation growth inside the substations. This is done to ensure safety for our crews as well as eliminate fire hazards. Roundup is readily biodegradable when it enters the environment and is not a soils sterilant. All applications are in accordance with the Provincial Pesticide Use Permit. Applications are supervised by a certified applicator at all times.

We will be contacting the Burnaby Parks Board early in 1990 regarding our 1990/91 Vegetation Maintenance Program to discuss our mutual concerns regarding aesthetics and public safety prior to initiating our annual maintenance program."

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Staff have been advised that no chemicals are used in rights-of-way within Burnaby however as can be seen above, this does not preclude the use of herbicides inside substations.

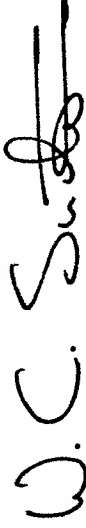
For the information of Council, during the regular Council meeting of 1988 July 25, the following motion was passed:

"THAT the Federal Government, Provincial Government, Crown Corporations and the Greater Vancouver Regional District be requested to cease and desist in the use of herbicides and pesticides within the District of Burnaby."

The Environmental Health Division will review with B.C. Hydro staff their use of herbicides within the substation area to determine if there are alternatives other than the use of chemicals for vegetation control. It is recommended that a copy of the 1988 July 25 motion of Municipal Council be forwarded to the Chairman, B.C. Hydro with a request for their response on the feasibility of eliminating the use of chemicals for vegetation control within substations located in our Municipality.

WCS:je

cc: Director Recreation & Cultural Services
Director Administrative & Community Services
Chief Public Health Officer



ACTING DIRECTOR ENGINEERING

