Illegal handling of asbestos waterpipes

Surfside HOA, Ocean Park, WA 5/8/2020

According to sources inside Surfside, employees of Surfside HOA were instructed to cut asbestos cement water supply pipes with power tools instead of hand tools as required by law, not using the correct methods for handling the pipes, removing the asbestos pipe from the ground without proper disposal methods, burying the pipe underground in the water supply pumping area and covering it with a pond.

This resulted in serious health risks to the workers, a State and Federal investigation, and a $27000 fine. The article below that was posted in Surfside's weekly newsletter was sent to me. The attorney's fees have not been disclosed by the HOA.

The risk remains, that should any of the workers become sick due to these actions, the liability to Surfside could be in the millions from lawsuits.

No fines as a result of Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Investigation into Asbestos Pipe Handling after an Investigation into the handling of Asbestos Cement Pipe, the Environmental Protection Agency, EPA has determined there were no criminal or civil violations and have closed the case. Our attorney who handled the response to the EPA noted that the investigation is closed and further that EPA does not routinely send out any written confirmation that they have closed the case. (We asked for a written confirmation.) Our attorney further indicated that EPA was pleased with the way Surf-side HOA took responsibility for its education and compliance. So why is Surfside homeowners Association involved with United States Environmental Protection Agency? In 2018 Surfside had several water main breaks on the south end of J Pl. Instead of continuing to repair feet of line each time we have a break, it is more cost effective to replace several hundred feet of pipe. The usual procedure is to install C 900 PVC pipe, leave the AC pipe in the ditch, cover the pipes with fill, compact, and restore the shoulder or replace the asphalt. To avoid leaving the empty AC pipe under the county asphalt road, the pipe was removed and buried at our water department yard. This was a violation of Washington administrative code regarding the handling of asbestos. Leaving the asbestos pipe in the ground is the prescribed method of abandoning asbestos pipe. As a result of the violation the Department of Labor and Industries fined Surfside $27,000. Because of our management contract with North Beach Water District, North Beach paid half of the fine.

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