



City of Maple Ridge News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Injunction Enforcement Update

Maple Ridge, BC: Dealing with the St. Anne Camp continues to be a top priority for the City of Maple Ridge. On Friday, February 22, work began to enforce the BC Supreme Court Order.

When City staff arrived on Friday the power supply to the site had been tampered with and BC Hydro was instructed to cut off the power due to the risk of electrocution. The propane service to the warming tent had also been tampered with and there was a gas leak on site creating a significant risk of an explosion. The gas supplier elected to remove their tanks from the site because of this risk.

“Significant progress was made over the weekend with a large quantity of ignition sources and accelerants removed from the site,” said Mayor Morden. “I would like to express my respect and admiration for the professionalism of City staff, Fire Department personnel and the RCMP as they carried out their work.”

“It has been troubling to watch advocacy groups standing in the way of people doing their job to keep the camp safe. There have already been six fires on the site and it’s clear by the amount of ignition sources and accelerants removed over the weekend that there is a real fire safety risk to camp occupants and the neighbouring community. There have already been injuries from these fires and we are fortunate no one has lost their life. To be clear, people standing in the way of our efforts to make the camp safe are putting lives at risk,” said Mayor Morden.

“On Sunday, the RCMP had to arrest individuals who were impeding the enforcement of the Court Order. We are now evaluating our operational plan to determine the best steps to move forward,” he said.

“Citizens should also know that there are programs in place that provide a warm place for every person who’s in the camp to sleep at night. There is no reason for anyone to be out in the cold. There are supports in place that will pick up people at a location of their choice, provide dinner, a warm, safe place to sleep and breakfast provided by experienced local service providers and volunteers,” said Mayor Morden.

He continued, “I want to make sure that all citizens understand that there are two distinct issues here. The first is that we are attempting to address the imminent life safety issues at the St. Anne site. The second is the broader issue around housing and health care services that are needed in our community. Those discussions are underway. We’re working with senior levels of government and their agencies to come up with solutions,” said Mayor Morden.

“I want to finish by thanking citizens for both their patience and support as our staff continue their work to enforce the BC Supreme Court Order. I want to assure citizens that Council is committed to a safe community for everyone as well as doing our part to ensure that the necessary support services are available and accessible for those that need them.”