

August 17, 2022

FOI No: 2022-15

VIA EMAIL – Redacted

Redacted

Dear Redacted

Re: Request for Information
Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act
Redacted S. 22

The City of White Rock has reviewed your request for access to the following information pursuant to the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (the "Act"):

- Re: Fire Incident
Date of Loss: May 24, 2022
Location: 1480 Blackwood Street, White Rock, BC
 - a copy of the fire investigation report confirming the cause of the loss

Access to this record is available. However, some of the information in the record is excepted from the disclosure requirements of the Act. I have severed the excepted information so that I could disclose to you the remaining information as attached.

The severed information is excepted from disclosure under section 22 of the Act. Severing under section 22 is necessary to avoid disclosing third-party personal information without permission.

Corporate Administration
P: 604.541.2212 | F: 604.541.9348

City of White Rock
15322 Buena Vista Avenue, White Rock BC, Canada V4B 1Y6

WHITE ROCK
City by the Sea!

www.whiterockcity.ca

Please contact our office if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "K Overton", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Ken Overton
Manager, Property, Risk Management, and FOI
604-541-2104

Att.

If you believe that the City of White Rock has been unreasonable in its handling of your request, you may ask the Information and Privacy Commissioner to review our response. You have 30 days from receipt of this notice to request a review by writing to:

Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner
3rd Floor, 756 Fort Street
Victoria BC V8W 1H2

Should you decide to request a review, please provide the Commissioner's office with:

1. your name, address, and telephone number;
2. a copy of this letter;
3. a copy of your original request sent to the City of White Rock; and
4. the reasons or grounds upon which you are requesting the review.



FIRE INVESTIGATION REPORT

FOR

**INCIDENT:
CWR 2022 05 24 10
1480 BLACKWOOD STREET**

WHITE ROCK





THE CORPORATION OF THE
CITY OF WHITE ROCK
15315 PACIFIC AVENUE, WHITE ROCK, BC V4B 1R1

FIRE/RESCUE DEPARTMENT

TEL 604.541.2121 FAX 604.541.2120

FIRE INVESTIGATION REPORT FOR: CWR 2022 05 24 10

INVESTIGATED BY:

PRIMARY INVESTIGATOR: NORM MACLEOD LAFC #2085, WHITE ROCK FIRE RESCUE

ASSISTING INVESTIGATOR: KEN MOLLAND LAFC #3115, WHITE ROCK FIRE RESCUE

LOCATION: 1480 BLACKWOOD STREET, WHITE ROCK, BC

DATE OF FIRE: MAY 24, 2022 TIME FIRE DEPARTMENT RECEIVED CALL: 10:28:56

DATE OF INVESTIGATION: MAY 25, 2022 AT 0900 HRS

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS:

A. AREA OF ORIGIN:

AREA OF ORIGIN WAS AT JUNCTION OF WALL, FIRST FLOOR CEILING AND SECOND FLOOR ON CHARLIE (EAST) SIDE OF BUILDING. ACCORDING TO ON-SITE PROPERTY REPRESENTATIVE, **Redacted S. 22**, THE AREA OF ORIGIN IS REFERRED TO AS THE 'MANAGER'S OFFICE'.

B. POINT OF ORIGIN:

WITH THE CEILING MATERIAL WITHIN THE MANAGER'S OFFICE REMOVED, IT WAS OBSERVED THAT AN AIR VENT PIPE RAN FROM AN ADJOINING WASHROOM TO THE EXTERIOR WALL ON THE EAST SIDE OF THE BUILDING. THE VENT PIPE WAS SECURED TO THE CEILING ABOVE BY A SERIES OF METAL STRAPPINGS. RUNNING IN PARALLEL WITH THE VENT PIPE WAS A ONE INCH COPPER HOT WATER PIPE THAT ORIGINATED IN THE MECHANICAL ROOM. MECHANICAL ROOM IS ADJACENT TO THE MANAGERS OFFICE AND SEPARATED BY A CONCRETE WALL. BETWEEN THE AIR VENT PIPE AND THE COPPER HOT WATER PIPE, THERE WAS DIRECT CONTACT BETWEEN THE AIR VENT PIPE, THE COPPER HOT WATER PIPE, AND THE METAL STRAPPING. EVIDENCE OF ARCING ON THE METAL STRAPPING WAS OBSERVED AND AT THE POINT OF THE OBSERVED ARCING, THE METAL STRAPPING HAD SEPARATED.

C. IGNITING OBJECT:

EVIDENCE INDICATES METAL STRAPPING WAS IN CONTACT WITH THE AIR VENT PIPE AND THE COPPER HOT WATER PIPE.

D. FORM OF HEAT:

ELECTRICAL ARCING IS SUSPECTED

E. MATERIAL FIRST IGNITED:

WOOD STRUCTURAL COMPONENTS CONSISTING OF FLOOR JOISTS IN THE CEILING OF THE MANAGER'S OFFICE.

F. ACT OR OMISSION:

SUSPECTED ACCIDENTAL ELECTRICAL CHARGE WAS DELIVERED TO THE BUILDING AT 1480 BLACKWOOD STREET VIA THE BUILDINGS NEUTRAL WIRING CONNECTED TO THE POLE AT MARTIN STREET AND WAS A RESULT OF ACTIONS TAKEN BY THE DIXON NETWORKS CREW WORKING AT THE MARTIN STREET SITE.

OTHER AGENCIES INVOLVED:

SURREY FIRE RESCUE SERVICE
WHITE ROCK RCMP
BC HYDRO
FORTIS GAS
TECHNICAL SAFETY BC
WHITE ROCK EMERGENCY SUPPORT SERVICES
WORKSAFEBC
TELUS
SHAW
DIXON NETWORKS
AFL GLOBAL

EMERGENCY SUPPORT SERVICES:

YES. BUILDING NOT TENABLE. APPROXIMATELY 22 RESIDENTS DISPLACED.



THE CORPORATION OF THE
CITY OF WHITE ROCK
15315 PACIFIC AVENUE, WHITE ROCK, BC V4B 1R1

FIRE/RESCUE DEPARTMENT

TEL 604.541.2121 FAX 604.541.2120

FIRE INVESTIGATION REPORT FOR: CWR 2022 05 24 10

BACKGROUND:

ON MAY 24, 2022 AT APPROXIMATELY 1025 HOURS, WRFR WAS DISPATCHED TO A RESIDENTIAL STRUCTURE FIRE AT 1480 BLACKWOOD STREET IN WHITE ROCK BRITISH COLUMBIA.

ENGINE 1 ARRIVED ON SCENE AND REPORTED 'NOTHING SHOWING'. ENGINE 1 CREW WAS DIRECTED TO THE ELECTRICAL ROOM WHERE THE BUILDING MANAGER, **Redacted S. 22** REPORTED TO INCIDENT COMMANDER HEARING POPPING AND CRACKLING SOUNDS PRIOR TO SMELLING AN ODOR OF SMOKE IN THE FRONT FOYER AREA. ALARM WAS ACTIVATED AND ALARM BELLS WERE AUDIBLE. ALTHOUGH THE INTERIOR CREW REPORTED SMELLING WHAT WAS DESCRIBED AS AN 'ELECTRICAL BURNING ODOR', THERE WAS NO VISIBLE SMOKE. USING A THERMAL IMAGING CAMERA (TIC), THE INTERIOR CREW IDENTIFIED A HEAT SIGNATURE IN THE WALL AND CEILING OF THE MANAGER'S OFFICE. ADDITIONALLY, BROWN SMOKE WAS OBSERVED EMITTING FROM GAPS IN THE EXTERIOR WALL AROUND THE PATIOS ON THE SECOND FLOOR INDICATING FIRE CONDITIONS WERE PRESENT WITHIN THE WALL. AS THE INTERIOR CREW OPENED THE WALL IN THE MANAGER'S OFFICE, AND REMOVED THE DRYWALL ON THE INTERIOR WALL, SMOKE AND FLAME BECAME VISIBLE AND THIS WAS REPORTED TO COMMAND.

COMMAND UPGRADED THE INCIDENT TO A STRUCTURE FIRE AND 420 PAGERS WERE ACTIVATED BY DISPATCH. ADDITIONALLY, FORTIS AND BC HYDRO WERE REQUESTED TO ATTEND TO ASSIST.

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT WAS ALSO REQUESTED FROM SURREY FIRE RESCUE SERVICE.

WHILE FIRE SUPPRESSION ACTIVITIES WERE BEING UNDERTAKEN, A BC HYDRO LINEMAN, ARRIVED ON SCENE AND REPORTED TO COMMAND. THE LINEMAN COMMENTED TO DEPUTY FIRE CHIEF NORM MACLEOD THAT HE WAS IN ATTENDANCE, AND WAS IN THE AREA TO ASSIST DIXON NETWORKS, A TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMPANY, ON MARTIN STREET WITH AN ELECTRICAL ISSUE. THE LINEMAN ADVISED THAT, ACCORDING TO BC HYDRO MAPPING, THE POWER DISTRIBUTION TO 1480 BLACKWOOD STREET WAS OFF THE POLE ON BLACKWOOD STREET. THE LINEMAN STATED THAT THE MAP WAS INCORRECT, AND POWER TO 1480 BLACKWOOD STREET CAME FROM A DELIVERY LINE ON MARTIN STREET, APPROXIMATELY 75 METRES AWAY, AND IN THE VICINITY OF WHERE BC HYDRO HAD BEEN REQUESTED TO ATTEND. THE LINEMAN CONFIRMED THAT THE SERVICE LINE FROM MARTIN STREET PROVIDED POWER TO BOTH 1480 BLACKWOOD, AND 1497 MARTIN STREET AND THAT POWER WAS CONFIRMED OFF TO 1480 BLACKWOOD STREET.

STRUCTURE:

THREE STORY WOOD FRAME CONSTRUCTION BUILT IN 1967 WITH TAR / GRAVEL ROOF ON WOOD TRUSS

1480 BLACKWOOD STREET IS A THREE STORY MULTI RESIDENTIAL, WOOD FRAME BUILDING CONSTRUCTED IN 1960. THE ROOF IS TAR AND GRAVEL ON A WOOD FRAME TRUSS.

INVESTIGATION FINDINGS:

AN INVESTIGATION OF THIS INCIDENT WAS UNDERTAKEN BY WHITE ROCK FIRE RESCUE (WRFR) ON MAY 25, 2022 AT 0900 HRS. DEPUTY FIRE CHIEF NORM MACLEOD AND DEPUTY FIRE CHIEF KEN MOLLAND CONDUCTED THE PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATION CONCURRENTLY WITH TIMOTHY LEE OF FIRE PRO INVESTIGATIONS, THE FIRE INVESTIGATOR FOR THE INSURER OF THE BUILDING.

DURING THE FIRE INVESTIGATION, IT WAS DETERMINED THAT A FIRE HAD OCCURRED AND THAT THERE WAS VISIBLE HEAT DAMAGE TO THE TELEVISION CABLE DELIVERY SYSTEM LOCATED ON THE EXTERIOR EAST WALL AND THE GROUND WIRE INSIDE TELEPHONE COMMUNICATIONS BOX LOCATED IN THE MECHANICAL ROOM. THERE WAS EVIDENCE OF SIGNIFICANT HEAT DAMAGE WITHIN THE EAST WALL THAT RESULTED IN CHARRING OF THE WOOD SUPPORT MEMBERS AND EXTENDED FROM THE FIRST FLOOR TO THE ROOF. A COPPER HOT WATER PIPE RAN FROM THE FIRST FLOOR TO THE THIRD FLOOR BETWEEN THE WOOD STUDS. BOTH WOOD STUDS ON EITHER SIDE OF THE COPPER PIPE HAD BEEN DAMAGED DUE TO EXPOSURE TO HEAT. IT WAS OBSERVED ON THE WOOD WALL STUDS THAT THE BURN PATTERN WAS NOT CONSISTENT FROM BOTTOM TO TOP AND GAPS OF UNBURNED WERE PRESENT SUGGESTING THAT THE HEAT DAMAGE WAS NOT FROM CONVECTION OF HOT GASES. THIS HOT WATER PIPING PROVIDED WARMTH TO THE BUILDING VIA RADIATORS IN EACH APARTMENT.

THE AREA OF ORIGIN WAS DETERMINED BY OBSERVING THE AMOUNT AND DEPTH OF CHAR AT THE FIRST FLOOR AND COMPARING THIS DAMAGE TO VISIBLE DAMAGE ABOVE, ON THE SECOND AND THIRD FLOORS. ADDITIONALLY, A THERMAL IMAGING CAMERA (TIC) USED BY SUPPRESSION CREWS DURING THE INCIDENT, SHOWED THE HOTTEST LOCATION ON THE WALL WAS CONSISTENT WITH WHERE THE MOST DAMAGE WAS OBSERVED DURING THE INVESTIGATION. AFFECTED AREAS ABOVE THE FIRE INCLUDED APARTMENTS 201, 208, 301 AND 308. OTHER THAN LOW VOLTAGE WIRING IN THE FLOOR CHASE, THERE WAS NO ELECTRICAL WIRING IN THE AREA OF ORIGIN. NO OTHER IGNITION SOURCES WERE NOTED.

ALONG THE CEILING, WITHIN THE AREA OF ORIGIN, A COPPER HOT WATER PIPE AND AN AIR VENT PIPE WAS OBSERVED. THE AIR VENT PIPE WAS SECURED IN PLACE WITH METAL CORD. AT ONE LOCATION, THE METAL CORD THAT WAS HOLDING THE VENT PIPE WAS ALSO IN CONTACT WITH THE COPPER HOT WATER PIPE. THIS METAL STRAPPING WAS NOT INTACT AND APPEARED TO HAVE BEEN DAMAGED BY ARCING.

ADDITIONALLY, 1497 MARTIN STREET, ADJACENT AND EAST OF THE BUILDING AT 1480 BLACKWOOD, ALSO REPORTED DAMAGES TO ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT AND FIRE PROTECTION SYSTEMS AT THE SAME TIME AS THE FIRE AT 1480 BLACKWOOD STREET, HOWEVER, THERE WAS NO FIRE REPORTED. THE BUILDING'S ELECTRICIAN, **Redacted S. 22**, REPORTED DEFECTIVE LIGHTING IN THE HALLWAYS AND LIGHTBULBS REQUIRING REPLACEMENT IN MULTIPLE SUITES. HE

ALSO REPORTED THAT THE BUILDINGS EXIT SIGNS, FIRE PANEL AND SMOKE DETECTION SYSTEMS HAD BEEN IMPACTED AND WOULD REQUIRE REPLACEMENT, RESULTING IN THE OWNER BEING ISSUED A RESPONSIBILITY NOTICE TO REQUIRE A 24 HOUR FIRE WATCH.

PRIOR TO THE INCIDENT AT 1480 BLACKWOOD, IT WAS DETERMINED THAT DIXON NETWORKING HAD BEEN WORKING ON A TELECOMMUNICATIONS PROJECT IN THE AREA OF 1497 MARTIN STREET. WITNESS, **Redacted S. 22** AN EMPLOYEE WITH CONTRACTOR URBAN 1, PROVIDED VIDEO OF THE CREW PERFORMING WORK ON MARTIN STREET AT APPROXIMATELY 10:19 HRS. IN THE VIDEO, A NEUTRAL LINE IS SEEN FAILING AND CROSSING THE TWO SECONDARY LINES BELOW RESULTING IN A ARCING EVENT. THIS EVENT CAUSED A POWER FAILURE IN THE SHAW TELECOMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT. SHAW RECORDED THE POWER DISRUPTION IN THEIR RECORD AS OCCURRING AT 10:19 HRS. BC HYDRO REMOVED THE DAMAGED NEUTRAL LINE FROM THE SCENE AND DESPITE A REQUEST TO RETURN THE EVIDENCE FOR EXAMINATION, BC HYDRO WAS UNABLE TO DO SO.

DIXON SUPERINTENDENT, DANNY WILKINSON, ADVISED THAT THE COMPANY WAS A SUBCONTRACTOR FOR AFL GLOBAL, WHICH, WAS A SUBCONTRACTOR FOR TELUS. WILKINSON ADVISED THAT A CREW WAS WORKING ON 'LASHING' TELECOMMUNICATIONS CABLES TOGETHER FOR AESTHETIC PURPOSES AND WAS PART OF A LARGER PROJECT TO PLACE WIRING UNDER GROUND. WILKINSON REPORTED THAT THE DIXON CREW LEFT THE AREA AT APPROXIMATELY 11:08 HRS

SUMMARY:

ON MAY 24, 2022, WHITE ROCK FIRE RESCUE CONDUCTED A FIRE INVESTIGATION AT 1480 BLACKWOOD STREET IN WHITE ROCK BRITISH COLUMBIA. THIS INVESTIGATION WAS CONDUCTED IN A GENERAL WAY AS PER BRITISH COLUMBIA FIRE SERVICES ACT. DURING THE INVESTIGATION, IT WAS DETERMINED THAT A FIRE OCCURRED AT THE ABOVE ADDRESS. THE AREA OF ORIGIN WAS DETERMINED TO BE IN THE CEILING AREA OF THE MANAGER'S OFFICE ON THE FIRST FLOOR AND EXTENDED WITHIN THE WALL TO THE THIRD FLOOR, IMPACTING AND ADDITIONAL FIVE APARTMENT UNITS. EVIDENCE IN THE AREA OF ORIGIN SUGGESTED THE CAUSE OF THE FIRE WAS ELECTRICAL IN NATURE. WHEREAS WHITE ROCK FIRE RESCUE INVESTIGATORS ARE NOT SPECIALISTS IN ELECTRICAL CONDUCTIVITY, THE INVESTIGATION TO DETERMINE THE POINT OF ORIGIN AND CAUSE WAS CONDUCTED BY STEVE BAKER, FIRE INVESTIGATOR CFEI, CVFI, REPRESENTING FIRE PRO INVESTIGATIONS. WHITE ROCK FIRE RESCUE INVESTIGATOR, DEPUTY FIRE CHIEF NORM MACLEOD ATTENDED THIS PORTION OF THE INVESTIGATION AS AN OBSERVER. WHITE ROCK FIRE RESCUE CONCLUDED THEIR INVESTIGATION ON FRIDAY, MAY 27, 2022 AT 1200 HRS AT WHICH TIME RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE BUILDING WAS TRANSFERRED TO THE INSURER'S REPRESENTATIVE, TIMOTHY LEE OF FIRE PRO INVESTIGATIONS.

REPORT BY:

DEPUTY FIRE CHIEF NORM MACLEOD LAFC #2085

Photos and drawings for this report are in the file and on the computer for this incident.

