



ELISENHEIM OWNERS ASSOCIATION

EOA CIRCULAR 19

UJAMS WASTE WATER TREATMENT MEETING: UPDATE.

Dear Homeowners and Residents,

15 JULY 2022

As you are all certainly aware of, about 2 weeks ago 2 of the old disused oxidation ponds south of the Ujams waste treatment facility caught fire as a result of a veld fire that burned next to the ponds. These ponds, although having been cleaned out previously, still contained dried-out sludge which started to smoulder and emitted the familiar obnoxious smoke and smell. We also experienced exceptionally cold weather, which caused inversion conditions that prevented air from rising, and instead the smoke stayed close to the ground and a southerly breeze pushed the smoke and smell right onto the Estate. The rest, as they say, is history and we experienced a most unpleasant week and a half after the start of the fire.

Estate Management were in constant discussions and follow up with the City of Windhoek in order to try and get the situation under control. The fire brigade attended on several occasions, but to the huge frustration of all involved, and a collection of other factors, the fire still smouldered for days. Only when the wind turned, could we eventually breathe some fresh air.

The Estate Management team arranged for a meeting on Thursday 14 July with COW (City of Windhoek), Fire Brigade and the UWTC (Ujams waste treatment company) in order to discuss how this whole issue needs to be addressed in order to prevent a recurrence of this. What follows is a very short summary of how the meeting agreed this issue should be addressed in the short term. A lot more detail is contained in the minutes of the meeting.

The broad outline agreed on, is that the sludge from UWTC will be deposited in a selected amount of old oxidation ponds, which will be made accessible to the trucks depositing the sludge. The sludge will be deposited in a controlled fashion in order to assure maximum water evaporation to dry the sludge as fast as possible. The number of ponds made available will be calculated using data supplied by UWTC. The sludge will be deposited on a rotation basis, and dried-up ponds will be cleaned and the dry sludge to be transported to Kupferberg landfill site for disposal.

Fire breaks will be dozed around and in between ponds in order to prevent any veld fires encroaching on the ponds.

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This is not the first time this scenario has played out, and this fact also contributed to the huge frustration from our residents. I would like to clear up a few aspects surrounding the Ujams waste treatment facility and the old oxidation ponds so that we can hopefully have a better understanding regarding the challenges faced.

1. UWTC, Ujams Waste Treatment Company has a contract with COW to receive raw sewage water from COW, and then to treat that sewage in the Ujams waste treatment facility. This treatment process results in 2 waste products – firstly grey water that is of such a standard that it can be released into the Klein Windhoek river. The other by-product is wet sludge (i.e. solids) that needs to be dried before it can be disposed of at a waste landfill facility such as Kupferberg Landfill Site. Worth noting here is that the by-products (grey water & sludge) belongs to COW and is the responsibility of COW to handle and dispose of.

2. The second point worth noting is that the wet sludge needs to be dried before it can be taken to Kupferberg landfill site to be disposed of there. The method of landfill and compaction at Kupferberg only allows for dried sludge to be deposited there. The wet sludge however needs to be dried elsewhere.

Although the processes as described above falls outside the scope of the Estate Management, Estate Management will always do its utmost in order to engage with COW and all other relevant parties in order to protect and look after the interests of Elisenheim Estate. **I would therefore like to use this opportunity to thank all the concerned residents that offered help, assisted with ideas and just supported the Management team in general.**

I trust and really hope that the above information will assist in providing our residents with a different perspective and understanding in order to minimise the abuse towards members of the Estate Management Team that I unfortunately had to witness.

We will keep you updated on the progress made by COW on the resolves by the meeting.

Kind regards

ESTATE MANAGER