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SAFETY CONCERN AT SARATOGA MINE

On March 28, 2018, at approximately 10am, I received a telephone call from, as he described himself, a concerned citizen in Saratoga, Wyoming. He stated that he was concerned about a mining operation that had potential safety issues with a highwall area that might be a hazard to persons working at the mine as well as kids playing in the area or might enter the mine site. He informed me that the operation was owned and operated by Mr. Randy Stevens and the name of his company was Quality Landscape & Nursery, Inc. He stated that he did not believe the hazard was imminent but was concerned about stability of the highwall where steel pilings were installed previously. I informed him that I would be at the site as soon as possible.

On April 3, 2018, I traveled to Saratoga and arrived at approximately 11am and contacted the concerned citizen that I was going to conduct an investigation of his complaint. He asked if he could accompany me and I stated that I did not care but that Mr. Stevens may have concerns. I then called Mr. Stevens and left him a message on his telephone. I then went to the site and took pictures from the road but did not enter the mine site. At approximately 2pm, I was sitting in my truck in front of city hall and Mr. Stevens came over to my truck. He stated that he had received my message and had returned my call. At this time he reviewed the issue that he and the city of Saratoga had regarding the mine site and boundary issues. He also informed me that they were currently involved in court litigation and court decrees. I informed Mr. Stevens of the complaint and he informed me that he would be going to the city council meeting which was scheduled for that evening and that he would discuss those concerns. I stated that I would return the following day to do my investigation and view the results of the council meeting.

I traveled to Saratoga on April 4, 2018 and arrived at approximately 11am. I contacted the concerned citizen and he still wanted to accompany me on the investigation. I also contacted Mr. Dan Ferrin, who is the Planning and Zoning coordinator for the City of Saratoga and asked him to be present to answer questions I might have regarding boundaries of the property. I called Mr. Stevens and informed him that I would meet him at his mine site and that Mr. Ferrin and the concerned citizen would also like to be present. At first, Mr. Stevens did not like the idea of the concerned citizen being on site, but then was agreeable.

We all met at the mine site at approximately 11:45, and started our investigation. We looked at the highwall area where the steel pilings were located and observed some material that had dislodged. You could also see areas where water was going behind the pilings and coming out at the bottom. At this time the area is not in imminent danger of failing, but we all agreed that the pilings should be secured and a more permanent solution to the problem should be developed and implemented.

We then looked at the highwall area that was east of the pilings and observed an area that needed to have the material graded so as not to have a vertical wall where a potential could be where material could fall without warning. At this point, I asked the concerned citizen if these were the areas that involved his concern and he said yes. We then left the site and went to city hall to review our findings and develop a plan to address the safety concern.

At this point I informed Mr. Stevens that we had several options to address the safety concern that was called in to our office. Mr. Stevens could support or reinforce the pilings or barricade the area off to prevent individuals from entering the area. Mr. Stevens stated the pilings were not on his property and he refused to perform any action on this matter. He stated that he would barricade off the area to prevent anyone from entering and that he would grade the area to remove the vertical wall area to eliminate the safety concern there. I asked the concerned citizen if that would satisfy his concerns at this time and he said yes.

Again, there was strong disagreement between Mr. Stevens and the concerned citizen on who had created this safety concern and who should pay for it. I was informed that a tentative court date set for September 2018 might decide this question. Mr. Stevens agreed that he would do the actions requested by the State Mine Inspector which is to, 1) barricade off the area next to the pilings, 2) grade the material from a vertical wall to eliminate the potential hazard of material falling that has no pilings.

On April 9, 2018, I received pictures and telephone call from Randy Stevens and he informed me that the (2) action items were corrected and he sent pictures to show the actions.

On April 19, 2018, I traveled to Saratoga and had a meeting with the concerned citizen and delivered a copy of this report to him and Mr. Stevens. I have attached pictures that show the areas of concern and the pictures that show corrections. I will also, take pictures of the areas that have been corrected.

Terry W. Adcock
State Mine Inspector
April 19, 2018



Picture taken by State Mine Inspector 4/4/2018



Picture taken by State Mine Inspector 4/4/2018



Picture received from Randy Stevens 4/9/2018



Picture received from Randy Stevens 4/9/2018