

DESERT COVE ESTATES LTD.

No. 1 Desert Cove Estates
Vernon BC
Canada V1H 1Z1

Phone (250) 542-1096
Fax (250) 542-4835
admin.desertcove@shaw.ca
www.desertcove.ca

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Dear Homeowners;

The Okanagan Indian Band (OKIB) provided formal written notice to Desert Cove Estates that they would “*no longer be able to provide any degree of fire and medical responses as of September 30, 2019, unless a fire service agreement could be entered into*”. On October 1, 2019, Desert Cove Estates entered into a 5 year Fire Protection Agreement with the OKIB.

It is reasonable to pay for fire service as a normal part of owning property, typically paid through property taxes.

As you may be aware, Desert Cove’s Fire Protection Service Agreement with the OKIB will expire September 30th, 2024.

Many Desert Cove Residents have expressed concern with the renewal of the existing agreement. A summary of these concerns are listed below:

- The OKIB has not provided yearly reporting to Residents as agreed. Residents believe the OKIB is not being held accountable to provide progress reports and financial reporting (see Fire protection service agreement, paragraph 3.5). Residents would like to know how their money is being spent.
- A written status report received from the OKIB, dated April 15, 2021, indicated the OKIB was “*actively working towards a second fire hall ... near the eagle rock aggregates entrance... completion date of Spring 2023 for a new fire hall with full certification status...*” As of this date, no further communication or status has been received on this item.
- Residents are frustrated with no communication from the OKIB.
- When comparing the amount being paid in other regions/areas for fire services (on property taxes), Desert Cove Residents are paying significantly more, as well as the addition of GST/PST.
- Many Residents agree that including fire protection fees in property taxes will provide a measure of assurance that fees are regulated by the RDNO and funds are allocated appropriately. However, due to the stall in the negotiations between the OKIB and the RDNO on the Lawrence Heights Agreement, work on the Desert Cove agreement is on hold until the Lawrence Heights issue is resolved.

The options available for Desert Cove are:

1. **Renew the Fire Protection Services Agreement for another 5 year period.** It is doubtful that the above issues will be resolved if this option is chosen.
2. **Stop payment on Fire Protection Services Fees.** There is a high risk to Residents on choosing this option. Risks could include, but not limited to, no fire service and increased home insurance.

3. **Pay monthly to mitigate the risk to Residents and provide time and opportunity for negotiations.** After balancing Resident's concerns and risk to the community, Management has made the decision to go forward with this option to pay on a monthly basis until concerns can be addressed or further action is required.

Management will provide an update to Desert Cove Residents as to the results when the information is available.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to call the office. (250) 542-1096.

Desert Cove Management