

File Number 23024

Regarding Tree Damage Fines at 10211 W Sharon Lane

On January 20th, 2023, the north Forestry district received a call stating that someone was cutting down City-owned trees between the sidewalk and the curb adjacent to 10211 W Sharon Lane.

The same day, Urban Forestry Manager Eric Wolf drove out to the site and found contractors working on the property. When Mr. Wolf arrived, he observed two City-owned ash trees removed down to the trunk. Privately-owned trees at 10211 W Sharon Lane were also being removed. Mr. Wolf asked the supervisor onsite whether they removed the City-owned trees. The supervisor denied removing the City trees and said they were in that condition when they arrived. Before leaving, Mr. Wolf took several photos of the work being done and the license plates of the vehicles being used by the tree removal contractor.

On January 23rd, 2023, Urban Forestry Technician Dwayne Reinhardt noticed several online posts for free ash wood (the species of the City-owned trees) and locust wood (the species of the privately-owned trees) at 10211 W Sharon Lane. The posts were made by a Wes Frost, who is also the registered owner of the vehicles observed working at 10211 W Sharon Lane on January 20th.

On January 31st, 2023, the Forestry Division sent a letter to the owner of 10211 W Sharon Lane, listed as "UTC Inc" in Madan, North Dakota to recover \$2900 for the value of the removed trees.

Forestry records also show that the two City-owned ash trees adjacent to 10211 W Sharon Lane were never slated for removal and no Forestry crews had been dispatched to remove the trees down to the trunk.

On February 14th, 2023, I called Mr. Owusu in response to a communication from him stating that he was not responsible for the City-owned tree removals at 10211 W Sharon Lane. I provided instructions on how to file an appeal. Later the same day, I received a report that City-owned trees were being removed by a contractor at 7800 W Lisbon Ave, another property owned by Mr. Owusu. I called Mr. Owusu back at 1:42pm to tell him City trees were being removed at the property on Lisbon and he replied that he hired someone to cut the trees back from his fence, not to remove them.