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To: "Direct to Mayor and Council - DL"
CC: "City Manager's Correspondence Group - DL"
Date: 8/10/2020 7:56:37 AM
Subject: Ammonium nitrate storage in Vancouver

Good morning Mayor and Council,

I am writing in response to a councillor inquiry regarding the use/storage ammonium nitrate: the substance that triggered the massive explosion in Beirut last week.

I can confirm that neither VEMA nor VFRS are aware of any significant storage of ammonium nitrate in Vancouver.

Ammonium nitrate was once a commonly-used fertilizer in Canada, however significant regulatory requirements and associated costs have resulted in a shift to cheaper and more stable forms of fertilizer. We have been advised by the Port that ammonium nitrate is not permitted to be loaded or unloaded at Canadian ports. Some fertilizer products containing small amounts of ammonium nitrate require special procedures and are classified as dangerous goods and heavily regulated by Transport Canada. Natural Resources Canada also regulates storage of the product, including limits on volumes and the proximity of storage facilities to other buildings and infrastructure.

Some small amounts of ammonium nitrate-based fertilizer were shipped through Vancouver by rail a number of years ago. We are currently sourcing the numbers for 2019.

Please let me know if you have any further questions or concerns regarding this matter.

Best,
Paul

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The City of Vancouver acknowledges that it is situated on the unceded traditional territories of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh peoples.