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**London**  
CANADA

March 15, 2012

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Dear Resident

**NOTE:** This letter was addressed and sent to approximately 55 properties on Winship Close and Millbank Drive

**RE: Methane Gas Concerns**

We have recently heard from a few residents in the Winship Close area who have had questions about potential methane gas impacts in the area and are aware of the recent coverage on CTV. We have also spoken with your Ward Councillor Sandy White on this matter. As a result, we felt it was appropriate to provide some information to all residents in the area that we believe will help with questions that are generally posed to City staff.

**1. What is methane gas?**

Methane is a colourless, odourless gas which is lighter than air. It is produced naturally by the decay of organic material (e.g., grass, leaves, wood, food, etc.) in the absence of oxygen. Methane gas is also the main component of natural gas which is used in many homes for heating and cooking.

**2. Where is methane gas found?**

Methane is produced wherever there is decaying organic material and no oxygen. Methane gas is commonly found in or near swamps and wetland areas, or areas with peat deposits. Methane is also produced from decaying organic wastes (e.g., garbage from households) in landfill.

**3. Is there an old closed landfill (e.g., containing garbage) below or next to Winship Close?**

No. The nearest closed landfills are the Commissioners Road Landfill (located approximately 600 metres north of Winship Close) and the Pond Mills Road Landfill (located approximately 500 metres east of Winship Close). Commissioners Road Landfill operated from 1965 to 1971 and the Pond Mills Landfill operated for one year in 1960.

**4. What area is producing methane gas below or next to Winship Close?**

It is believed methane in the Winship Close Area is being produced by a combination of organic material (e.g., grass, topsoil, wood) included in the soil used to build up the area prior to construction as well as the natural organic deposits located under and nearby Winship Close.

**5. Could my house be built on land containing methane gas?**

This will depend on the type of soil on your property. If organic material is present in the soil on your property there is potential for methane to be produced as part of the naturally occurring decay process. Homes on Winship Close were built on soils that contain organic matter and therefore there may be methane gas in the soils.

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**6. Why did the City let homes be built on Winship Close?**

The City requires the constructor of new homes to address any methane gas issues at the time of construction. When the home builder applies for a Building Permit, the builder is obligated to provide a Soil and Methane Report. These reports, completed by a Geotechnical Engineer, are to verify the bearing capacity of the soil or if any concentration of methane is present, and must be submitted before any building work is complete. Identified levels of methane may require remedial controls be put in place before construction work can begin. These remedial measures could include venting controls (e.g., vent pipes connected to the drainage stone in your foundation which extent to your roof) or clay soil barriers.

**7. What do I need to do if my home has remedial measures for methane gas control?**

Like any fixture inside your home or on your property, methane gas control mechanisms - such as venting control units or clay soil barriers - may need repairs, break down over time, or be compromised by home maintenance or unaware digging. Review your property purchase agreement or contact the City (519.661.2500 extension 7329) to determine if any remedial controls were required at the time your home was built.

Ongoing maintenance and upkeep of methane gas control mechanisms required at the time of development are the responsibility of the homeowner. Failure to do so could limit the effectiveness of those mechanisms and potentially result in increased levels of methane. Consult a professional for appropriate inspection and maintenance.

**8. Will my taxes go down if I have methane gas on my property?**

Your property taxes are based on the value of your property as assessed by the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC). Any questions regarding the value of your property should be directed to MPAC at 1 866 296-MPAC (6722). Please note that MPAC is not part of the City of London.

**9. Will the City test for methane gas in my home?**

Yes, upon the property owner's request we will offer this as a courtesy service. Please contact Tim Conlon (519.661.2500 extension 7329 or [tconlon@london.ca](mailto:tconlon@london.ca)) if you would like your home tested for the presence of methane. It should be noted that methane released from the soil dissipates quickly when it meets the air. There are no health issues related to methane but it is potentially explosive in confined areas when concentrations reach 5% to 15% by volume of air.

**10. What can I do if I am still concerned about methane gas getting into my home?**

You can gain extra peace of mind by installing a Natural Gas Detector in your home. These inexpensive units are easy to install, are similar to a smoke detector or carbon monoxide detector and can be obtained at any local hardware store. Most detectors are set to sound an alarm if methane concentrations reach 1% by volume of air.

We hope this information is of assistance. The contact numbers have been provided above. If you have further questions or concerns, please contact me or Wesley Abbott (519.661.2500 extension 1812 or [wabbott@london.ca](mailto:wabbott@london.ca)).

Yours truly,

Jay Stanford, M.A., M.P.A., Director  
Environmental Programs & Solid Waste

c Ward 14 Councillor Sandy White