



News Release

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City Files Lawsuit in Latest Efforts to Clean Up Essex Wire Location

ROCKFORD, III. – The City of Rockford filed a lawsuit this week against A-W-Bennett Enterprises Inc. over the Essex Wire plant property at 2816 N. Main Street. This is the latest attempt by the City to get the location cleaned up. Here is a timeline of recent events:

- Earlier this year, the City initiated code enforcement proceedings against the owner.
- **On May 7, 2018**, representatives from the City of Rockford Department of Law, A-W-Bennett Enterprises, Inc., and their attorney met to discuss the condition of the property and sanctions for the inaction
 - The result of which was an agreed upon fine in the amount of \$50,000 and an agreement that the property be brought into compliance within 30 days. The fine has been paid, but the site remains a hazard.
- **On May 10, 2018**, the City sent notice to the owner's attorney that the City would seek a court order commanding the remediation of the property should they fail to follow through with completion of the work to be done on site.
- **Since May 10, 2018**, the City has communicated with the attorney for the company who has expressed that the owner is still in the process of making arrangements for the site to be cleaned up, or sold to another party who would assume the work to be completed.
- **On June 11, 2018, the City filed suit in the Circuit Court for Winnebago County** under the state's demolition, repair, enclosure, or remediation statute.
 - **The City's complaint seeks an order from the court compelling the owner to remediate site conditions and enforcing that order under the court's contempt powers.** Or, should the owners fail to take action, authorizing the City to enter onto the property and have the site cleaned up and hold any amount expended as a judgment against the land and owners. In addition, the City has initiated another code violation case against the property owner, and will seek additional fines to be imposed for the continuing violation of City ordinance.

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