

Port Authority moves against construction company's vessel accused of "polluting" Placencia Lagoon

This week residents of the peninsula have been sharing images and videos of the substance, described by Major Swazo to us as "black soot" being discharged into the lagoon, although the problem dates from as far back as March. Following another complaint, the Authority did an inspection and issued the notice, Major Swazo confirmed this afternoon.

The Ports Commissioner could not say when was the last time the barge, owned by A.K. Aggregate and Concrete Supplies Limited, was inspected but noted that the barge is licensed to operate and the Authority does checks on seaworthiness as part of its annual review. The problem appears to have developed since the last such inspection.

The owner of A.K. Aggregate, Albert Loewen, a prominent contractor and hardware store owner in the Maya Beach area of the peninsula, reached for comment this afternoon by phone, indicated that the situation would be addressed but would not say much about how it had happened and how he planned to address it. He first denied that oil or any similar substance had been discharged from the barge and that the Port Authority inspection had found no such substance.

We are also seeking comment from the Department of the Environment (DOE). Both the Port and DOE are investigating the matter although the Port has the lead as it deals with all incidents involving maritime activity.

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