



Tim Gladhill
Community Development Director
City of Ramsey

July 24th 2018

Mr. Gladhill,

I'm writing to address the city policy regarding the spreading of black dirt on new construction lots at the time of construction.

The current policy requires homebuilders to place four inches of D.O.T. certified black dirt on all sodded areas of the lot. We understand that this certified dirt is an attempt to reduce irrigation need/usage and ultimately decrease water consumption in the city.

The builders are experiencing two negative effects of this policy:

1. The certified black dirt does hold more water, in fact it holds water like a sponge, and the residents often call us to complain about spongy or highly saturated areas of their yard that never dry out. We've experienced problems especially in drainage swales and lower elevation areas of yards remaining wet most of the time.
2. The cost of the certified black dirt is \$425 per load versus \$250 per load for regular black dirt that we use in all the other communities we build in. The typical lot uses approximately 8-10 loads of dirt at \$1400-\$1750 more per yard than what it costs in other communities.

The reason for the saturated, soggy lots is that people run their sprinkler systems too much. They typically set them to keep their lawn green in the driest, hottest months but they don't adjust for cooler days, or upcoming rain.

We would like to propose an alternative that we feel will be more affective at reducing water consumption, provide a better quality yard for the resident, at a lower cost for us and ultimately the resident.

Capstone Homes would like to propose that as an acceptable alternative in lieu of the current certified black dirt requirement that the builder provide an in-ground sprinkler system equipped with a Wi-Fi smart control system and four inches of regular black dirt on the entire sodded area of the lot. Enclosed is a brochure for an example of this product. The product would be installed during construction of the house, and the customer would be educated at the time of final walk through. Capstone homes will do

the system set-up so it is pre-programmed when the resident takes possession of the home and gets internet service

We ask you to consider our request and to reach out to us for further information if desired.

Our goal is a win-win-win for the city, builder and the future residents.

Thank you for your consideration,

Ben Minks

President



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