

Salina Amey
283 Curtice St E
St Paul, MN 55107
651-310-0923

Aug. 6, 2021

Robert H. Brandtjen
R H Brandtjen & Co Underground Utilities
2097 NILES AVE
ST PAUL, MN 55116-1138

RE: Contract dated May 3rd, 2021
St Paul License # 2020002211

Dear Mr. Brandtjen,

On Monday afternoon, August 2, 2021, I came home to find a huge pit of water in my front yard, after you used heavy machinery to increase the size of the pit in my yard for purposes of replacing my sewer line. You told me it was the fault of the City of St Paul, for not marking the line all the way to my house, but employees from both the water department and the sewer department told me that you falsely accused me of refusing you entry to my house, and that this was the reason you busted my water line. That was a slanderous, defamatory lie. Stop and desist any and all attempts to blame me for your irresponsible behavior. You had many opportunities to go into my basement to see where my water line was located, and you never availed yourself of those opportunities. I asked you many times to let me know in advance, when you needed me to alter my plans so that I could be home when you needed access to my basement, and you assured me you would do so.

You are 100% responsible for having used heavy machinery to dig into my yard without knowing where my water line was located.

Tuesday, August 3, 2021, I learned that you failed to take out the required permit from the St. Paul Sewer Dept. prior to beginning work at my house. That was a violation of code requirements. Yesterday, August 5, 2021, I learned that you failed to take out a required permit for the replacement of my porch footing. That, too, was a violation of code requirements.

You do not appear to have any kind of license or bond with the MN Dept. of Labor and Industry, but other pipe layers do. I'm wondering why you do not as well.

On Monday afternoon, you attempted to repair my water line by cutting out the damaged section and welding a new section in. Your first weld attempt failed, and it sprung a leak. You are not a licensed plumber, and not qualified to repair water lines. You repaired the area a second time, using the exact same method as the one which failed. Out of concern for the

possibility of the repair eventually failing, I contacted St Paul Water Utility, and Jeremy Miller came out to my house. I showed Jeremy Miller the pipe section from your first repair attempt, and he confirmed it had not been done correctly. You had not reamed smooth the cuts.

Jeremy Miller instructed you to have the plumber you work with, Greg Ryan, owner of Ryan Plumbing and Heating, Inc. of St Paul, do the repairs. Jeremy Miller told me that Greg Ryan would be doing the repairs and left. However, when Greg Ryan showed up, he told me that he would not do the repairs and that he had the right to tell you how to do the repairs and leave. Greg Ryan asked me repeatedly if I would agree to fire you, and I said "no", each time. I told Greg Ryan that all I wished to discuss with him was the damage to my pipe. I asked him how the repairs would be done and Greg Ryan told me it was "none of your business". Greg Ryan left and you were in the pit with your welding torch doing the repairs, unsupervised.

When I came out front you started yelling at me. I stayed away the front yard, hoping things would calm down. I needed to pick up a prescription from the pharmacy, and left for a brief time. When I came home, Jeremy Miller was in the front yard along with you and your assistant. I could hear water running. My garden hose had been disconnected from the spigot and water was blasting out of it along my house foundation, unattended. Why did you disconnect the hose from my house, and run water down along my foundation? The ground there is completely saturated. For two weeks you have worked at my house, and both you and your assistant used the end of the hose. Why did you choose to remove the hose and run water down along my foundation?

You asked me to sign a note you wrote up by hand on that same day, and stated you refused to honor our contract unless I signed it. We had a verbal agreement that you would take precautions to avoid damaging property in my basement in the process of doing your work. We had a verbal agreement that the work area in the basement would be protected with plastic. I purchased materials to protect the basement area, and you offered to help put them up in an appropriate manner, so I waited until you could instruct me on how you wanted them put up.

However, on Tuesday August 3rd, 2021, you went in the basement and busted out the floor before the plastic could be hung. The floor concrete busted out cleanly with minimal dust, so no harm was done, but you told me that cutting through the wall would be dusty. I will not sign this hand written note you wrote, because you wrote it such that it appears that you are asking me to give you permission to damage my home and property.

Robert, you need to take reasonable care to protect my home and belongings from damage. I will not sign away my right for this to occur. I have interacted with you in a polite and respectful manner, but you have returned this consideration with verbal abuse and slanderous statements. This needs to stop.

We have a legally binding contract. You have asked me repeatedly to fire you. That will not happen. You began work on this contract, and in the process did a lot of damage to my property. I am obligated to give you an opportunity to repair this damage and make right to me. I'm giving you this opportunity, to which you are entitled. I expect you to promptly resume

work at my house, and to do this work in a reasonably careful manner, taking reasonable efforts to prevent any further damage to my home and property.

Yesterday, I sent you text messages informing you that rain and thunderstorms were in the forecast for overnight. You texted back that not enough rain to do damage was in the forecast, and did not come to ensure the pit in my front yard would not fill with water. When the storms came, I went out after dark and did everything I could to divert water away from the pit. Unfortunately, the little piece of gutter you left hanging off the roof diverted a huge stream of water right into the pit.

You took the downspout off of the west side of my house, so there was not a way I could divert this water away from the pit. You need to put this downspout back on.

You piled a huge pile of soil on the front yard in front of my house that goes right up to my house, and blocks the downspout attached to my front porch. As a result, I was not able to divert this water. All the roof water went down along the side of my porch wall. This is damaging to my property. It is not acceptable for you to walk off the job, leaving hazards that damage my home.

I spoke to my local building inspector, Isaac Stensland. Isaac told me that as the homeowner, I'm responsible for ensuring that any hazards on my property are addressed. More rain is forecast for this weekend, and it is likely to be heavy. You have put me in a terrible bind. You created hazards on my property and then abandoned your responsibilities. Now what am I to do?

Please provide me with your insurance information. If you are not willing to take responsibility for the work you started at my house, I'll need to ask your insurance company to take responsibility.

My front steps were poured on top of a slab of concrete, which has broken underneath them. This appears to be as a result of your having excavated away the soil immediately adjacent to them. This was careless of you, and you are responsible for remedying this damage.

On Tuesday morning, you were in my basement and you turned both the hot and cold-water faucets on at my laundry tub, to flush the mud that got into the pipes after your repair. I informed you that my new on-demand water heater would be damaged by running muddy water through it and asked you to not run muddy water through it. Shortly there-after I saw that you were running muddy water through my water heater, anyway. Why would you do this? That water heater is new, and was very expensive to install. It required flushing because of what you did. I was fortunate that employees of St Paul Water Utility flushed it for me, so that I did not need to hire a plumber to do so. It was maintenance I did not know how to do. Robert, I understand that you are angry and frustrated that the work at my house did not proceed smoothly, but please stop blaming other people, myself included, for mistakes that you, yourself, made.

Monday afternoon, after you used your heavy equipment to empty the water out of the trench you dug in my front yard, you began making repairs on the water line. I asked you if you had a permit to do so, and you said that you did. You said that when you called St Paul Water to turn off the water, you also pulled a permit to do repairs under Greg Ryan's license.

According to St Paul Regional Water Services, the permit (# 21289781) was issued for work on the water pipe on Tuesday, Aug. 3, 2021. This permit was issued to Greg Ryan under his plumbing license #184852. The plumbing repair work you did on my water line on Monday, Aug. 2, 2021, was done without any kind of license or permit, whatsoever, and you are not a licensed plumber.

On Tuesday, Aug. 3, 2021, Jeremy Miller of St Paul Regional Water Services saw that the pipe had not been repaired correctly, by you, on Monday. He ordered that it be repaired properly by the plumber associated with your business, Greg Ryan, owner of Ryan Plumbing and Heating. Jeremy told me that Greg Ryan would be making the repairs, and left.

After Jeremy left, Greg Ryan knocked on my back door and repeatedly requested that I fire you. I said no, and said I only wanted to talk to him about the repairs he was making on my water line. Greg Ryan told me that he would not be doing any repairs on the line and that he had the authority to tell you to do the repairs in his stead.

Greg Ryan left, and did not do the repairs, arrange for a licensed plumber to do the repairs, or even watch to ensure that you (not a licensed plumber) did the repairs correctly.

My understanding is that a contractor working in the State of Minnesota, that is doing work involving multiple areas of specialization is required to have a General Contractor's license. Robert, I looked you up, and was not able to find a state license in your name of any sort. You have done work at my house as a plumber, replaced a porch footing, and are contracted to do underground sewer line replacement/repair. This requires a MN license, and yet I don't find a license under your business name. That is a very serious violation.

Yesterday, I sent you text messages informing you that storms were forecast for that evening, and that I was very concerned about the pit filling with storm water runoff from not just my yard but my roof and my neighbor's roof. You replied that only light rain was forecast and there would not be a problem.

After dark, a thunderstorm began and I went outside to do everything I could to prevent storm water from getting into the trench you dug in my front yard. The way that you tore off the gutter from the roof, leaving a piece dangling, sent most of the storm water right into the ditch.

More heavy rain is forecast for this weekend. You have left my yard in a hazardous condition. That massive trench, if filled with water, could result in my basement wall collapsing in. My house is 98-years-old, and has hollow concrete block basement walls. They cannot withstand

high levels of water pressure. The ditch cannot be allowed to fill with water. Inspector Isaac Stensland informed me this morning that as homeowner, I'm responsible to ensure hazardous situations are remedied, if you refuse to do so.

I'm asking you right now to reconnect the downspout to my house, and put some kind of extension on to the downspout to safely carry the water all the way to the front sidewalk, so that property damage does not occur. I'm almost 60 years old, and unable to get on a ladder to fix the gutter that you took apart.

The neighbor's house at 279 Curtice St E. has gutters that have not been maintained in many years. The water from their roof pours down between our houses and then runs down grade towards my house. Something needs to be done to prevent their gutter water from getting into the trench, too.

On the side of my house facing East, you put a pile of dirt right up to the porch, and over the bottom of the gutter. It is not possible for me to get a gutter extension there under the dirt and mud. Last night, all the rain water poured down next to my porch wall because of how you left my yard. This is damaging to my porch and foundation. That water needs to be further away from my house. Please deal with this today, before the rains come, again.

My bathtub has no water since you did work on my plumbing. It worked perfectly before you did plumbing repairs. In all likelihood, it needs to be professionally flushed of muddy water, as only a few drops of water now come out of it. My kitchen and bathroom sink faucets also have reduced pressure since your work, and need to be flushed to get the mud out of them.

I called Greg Ryan to tell him of the needed work, and he said he would not take responsibility for flushing them and would charge me to do so. That is unconscionable. He does not have authority to license amateurs to do critical plumbing work under his license, and he is responsible for problems created in work done under his license. This is not acceptable. You are responsible for all damage that you have caused to my house.

Last week I could hear yelling outside. You were yelling at a man who was telling you that you did a "crappy job" on my porch footing. I've since looked at the footing, and the way that you rested the support beam on it, and the odd way you used concrete block to make a footing are of concern to me. If the work you did is not up to code, you will need to bring it up to code.

You took storm windows off of my porch and used some kind of nail gun to attach thin plastic to the aluminum wrap on my porch. Robert, why would you punch holes through the aluminum wrap? There were viable ways to attach protective plastic to my house without putting holes in the aluminum wrap. Also, my new screen door on my porch does not shut or lock. You poured only one of the footings, and it is too early to tell if you can put the windows and door back such that they are operable.

Because there are so many concerns about the impact your work has had on my home's integrity, I need to consider filing a claim against your insurance company. Please provide this information to me, so that it is readily available should I need to file a claim.

Quit insinuating, implying, and/or stating things that insult my character. That is defamatory and illegal and such behavior will not be tolerated. If you have ugly thoughts, kindly keep them to yourself, and do not tell any further lies to my neighbors, the Dept. of Water, the Dept. of Sewer, or the St Paul Dept. of Safety and Inspections.

Robert, it seems clear to me that you are using verbal abuse directed at me in an attempt to provoke me into firing you. Again, this will not happen. I'm obligated by law to give you an opportunity to fix everything that you have damaged, and to fix any mistakes you made in your contracted work so that it is up to code.

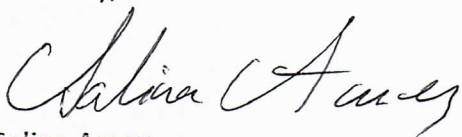
I'm giving you this opportunity. Please respond in writing to all of my concerns, and inform me of a reasonable timetable to complete the contracted work from our contract dated May 3, 2021. Desist from demanding that I acquiesce to altering the contract. It is unreasonable to demand I sign a handwritten statement by you that lets you be "off the hook" for doing damage to my home and the contents of my home. I will not sign an authorization permitting you to do this.

Most important, please get back to me with regards to your intentions. I cannot stop you from breaching our contract and walking off the job, but I hope that you will not do so. If you do so, please make this clear in writing so that I can take immediate action to protect my home.

If you do choose to breach our contract and walk off the job, at the very least, please promptly fix the gutters, and attach downspout extenders to channel the water all the way to the front sidewalk on both sides of my house.

There may be damage to my property caused by you that I am currently unaware of, and if so, I expect you to take responsibility for any unknown as well as known damage that is due to your negligence. Also, due to this situation, I'm sending this letter this morning so you are aware of my expectation of a prompt and polite response. I have not had sufficient time to list all that has transpired, to date, in the work you contracted with me to perform. I reserve my right to bring up other concerns as the need may be. It is my sincere hope is that you will "turn a new leaf", and resume our contracted work with a positive attitude and the care required to do it right.

Sincerely,



Salina Amey