

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Casino's garish light display pollutes Saskatchewan's night sky

My husband and I live on a small acreage 25 km southwest of Saskatoon. We stay in Saskatchewan because we can enjoy a rural lifestyle in our home province, replete with wildlife, open spaces and Saskatchewan's "living skies" — prairie blue and pristine by day, star-filled and dazzling by night.

That is, we could enjoy this until the Whitecap Dakota First Nation and the Saskatchewan Indian Gaming Authority flipped the switch on the Dakota Dunes casino. This imposed on the night sky a garish, inverted cone of light which, from our location, looks like a giant, lit-up ice-cream cone.

This display is so intense that the entire southeast sky is polluted with light, obliterating stars, planets and even the moon in that quadrant. The light overwhelms the south and southwest quadrants of the night sky.

And it's getting worse. As the nights lengthen, we will witness this ostentatious display for the entire evening — every night.

The view from our living-room window, filled with this man-made light graffiti, will be a constant reminder that the creators of this casino have no regard for the environment or for the hundreds of people who live in the country for miles in all directions from the casino.

While we don't live anywhere near the Whitecap Dakota First Nation, we are victims of a light display and marketing strategy gone mad.

Despite significant opposition, the casino's operators seem determined to keep the lights ablaze. Perhaps if casino customers bypassed the Dakota Dunes in favour of more responsible operations, our night skies might return to their untouched, natural state.

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