



In conjunction with



Dear Interested Citizen:

This fact sheet is to update you on the investigation of the former E. 115th Street MGP.

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Fact Sheet

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East 115th Street Works

www.coned.com/publicissues

Site Investigation Update

Introduction

Consolidated Edison Company of New York, Inc. (Con Edison), together with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) and the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH), is providing this update on the environmental investigation being performed at the former East 115th Street Works (currently Manhattan Center for Science and Mathematics High School and Isaac Newton J.H.S. for Science and Math), a property which is the site of a historic manufactured gas plant (MGP). Activities at the site have included a study of indoor air quality, soil and ground water testing.

What are former Manufactured Gas Plants?

Manufactured gas plants (MGP) were operated between the 1800s and mid-1900s, before the development of natural gas systems, to convert coal and oil into gas for heating, lighting and cooking. Byproducts of this early production process included contaminants such as tar and purifier wastes.

The substances of concern related to these operations include BTEX compounds, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), and metals. BTEX compounds are benzene, toluene, ethylbenzene and xylene. These are volatile hydrocarbons found in MGP byproducts and also found in most petroleum products such as gasoline. PAHs are also found in MGP byproducts as well as many petroleum products, such as asphalt.


Project Status and Schedule

Investigation activities at the site were conducted in June 2002, August 2003 and August 2004 and involved the collection of soil, groundwater, indoor air and soil gas samples within the school property. Sediment samples from the Harlem River adjacent to the site were collected as part of the investigation in January 2005. The investigation results indicate that soil and groundwater contamination is present beneath the site starting generally at depths of approximately 5 feet in the school basement (south wing) and 10 feet in the school courtyard and extending to approximately 40 feet below grade surface.

The Remedial Investigation Report and the Supplemental Remedial Investigation Report summarizing the site investigation results have been

Documents related to this project are available at the following locations:

Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer's Office, 1 Centre Street, 19th Floor, New York, NY 10007; 212-669-8300, Hours: M-F 9am-5pm; **Aguilar Branch, The New York Public Library**, 174 E.110th Street, New York, NY 10029; 212-534-2930; Hrs: Mon/Wed/Fri 10-6, Tues/Thur 12-8, Sat 10-5 (closed Sunday)



approved by the NYSDEC and NYSDOH and are available for public review. Based on the investigation results, a draft Remedial Alternatives Selection Report has been prepared. Presently, Con Edison is developing a work plan and schedule for conducting a pilot study for the remedial alternatives under consideration. The pilot study will enable Con Edison, NYSDEC and NYSDOH to determine what the most feasible remedial alternatives are given the current use of the site as a school. When the pilot study is completed, the Remedial Alternatives Selection Report will be finalized and available for public review and comment.

Potential Exposure

A primary goal of remedial investigations is to evaluate the potential for exposure to these historical operations. Potential human exposure may come from breathing, eating or touching contaminants. Because the soil contamination was found well below the surface, the public is not exposed through direct contact. As stated below, there are no indoor air impacts from MGP residuals. Exposure to contaminated groundwater through ingestion is also not likely because New York City is served by a municipal water system.

Con Edison conducted an indoor air and soil gas sampling investigation to determine if subsurface MGP contamination was negatively impacting indoor air quality in the building. The NYSDOH has reviewed the data from the soil gas/indoor air monitoring survey that Con Edison conducted at the site and concluded that there does not appear to be any impact to indoor air from MGP impacts in the soil. Con Edison will continue periodic indoor air monitoring until a remedy is proposed and implemented.

NYSDOH is working with the NYC Department of Education in regard to a few chemicals that were found in indoor air at levels above those we might typically expect. The presence of these chemicals in the school at elevated concentrations appears to be related to maintenance products. Although the presence of these chemicals does not pose an immediate public health concern, the levels should be reduced to within levels typically found in indoor air. State agency staff will continue to work with NYC Department of Education staff to identify the source of these chemicals and properly manage them.

Site Background

Historic information indicates that the East 115th Street Works was built and operated by the Standard Gas Light Company of the City of New York from 1895 to 1936 and was turned over to Consolidated Edison Company of New York, Inc. in June 1937, as a result of the companies' merger. According to historic information, the site was not operated as a manufactured gas plant while under the ownership of Con Edison. The plant was dismantled and in 1941, a public high school was erected on the property and is still present today as the Manhattan Center for Science and Mathematics.

Public Involvement

Con Edison, NYSDEC and NYSDOH will be attending the November 13th School Leadership Team and Parent Teacher Association Meetings to update the school community on the MGP investigation.

During the investigation phase (2003-2004) Con Edison, NYSDEC and NYSDOH worked with the NYC Department of Education and the school administration to keep the administration, teachers, parents and elected officials informed of the various stages of the investigation. Public notices announcing dates of work and fact sheets were issued at each phase of the investigation. Eight meetings were held with various groups culminating in a public meeting at the school on March 30, 2004 to present the results of the investigation and answer questions.

Public understanding and involvement are an integral part of a successful investigation and remediation program. To provide you with the most up-to-date and accurate information regarding manufactured gas plants, Con Edison has created a series of informational resources including fact sheets, a toll-free hotline, and Internet content at www.coned.com/publicissues or www.dec.state.ny.us/chemical/8430.html.