



Public Comment Summary

Former Gastown MGP Site

Tonawanda, Erie County, New York
Site No. 9-15-171

Background Information

The Proposed Remedial Action Plan (PRAP) for the Former Gastown Manufactured Gas Plant (MGP) site was prepared by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (the Department or DEC) in consultation with the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) and was issued on February 14, 2007. The PRAP outlines the *proposed* cleanup activities for the contaminated soil, sediment and groundwater at the Former Gastown MGP site.

The release of the PRAP was announced by sending a notice to the public contact list, informing the public of the opportunity to comment on the proposed remedy and inviting them to attend a public meeting.

A public meeting was held on February 27, 2007 to present the PRAP for the Gastown site. The meeting provided an opportunity for citizens to discuss their concerns, ask questions, and comment on the proposed cleanup plans. Below are a list of questions and comments that were raised during the meeting.

Once the public comment period closes on March 14, 2007, a Responsiveness Summary will be prepared to respond to any question, issues or concerns that were raised during the comment period, including those from the public meeting. The Responsiveness Summary will be included in the site's finalized cleanup plan called the Record of Decision (ROD). The ROD for the Gastown site is expected to be available by March 31, 2007.

Summary of the comments and questions raised at the February 27th public meeting:

COMMENT 1: There are a lot of kids in this area. What happens if those kids come in contact with coal tar from digging in their yard or playing on these properties? How much at risk are they for exposure to the contaminants?

COMMENT 2: We are concerned about the health of local teenagers who swim in that area of the canal. Are they at risk?

COMMENT 3: What are the long-term health effects of contact with coal tar?

COMMENT 4: In the soil gas, which chemical that you have found poses the greatest health risks? The Department of Health recently changed their guidelines. Will you have to retest this entire area once those new guidelines are established?

COMMENT 5: How many houses was indoor air sampled in?

COMMENT 6: How do the sub-slab depressurization systems work? What do they look like and are how disruptive will they be to my home? How would they work for homes that don't have basements?

COMMENT 7: Who will pay for the SVI systems? Who will pay for the entire cleanup? Will there be a cost to homeowners?

COMMENT 8: What caused the coal tar to migrate as much as it did at this site?

COMMENT 9: What would stop the coal tar from moving past the area that it is in now?

COMMENT 10: What will stop the coal tar on Carney Street that isn't excavated as part of the remedy from moving in the future? We live just across the street. Couldn't it easily move over to us?

COMMENT 11: Niagara Mohawk installed something in this area in the past few years – could that work have caused the movement of the coal tar?

COMMENT 12: Could the severe October storm that we recently experienced have affected the movement of contamination?

COMMENT 13: What is the range of elevations within the contaminated area?

COMMENT 14: How can you predict where the coal tar will migrate?

COMMENT 15: Do you have any evidence of multiple releases of coal tar, or is there just that one instance?

COMMENT 16: The ground shakes significantly when the railroad cars pass. I know this because my house is nearby to the tracks and it shakes each time a train passes. Could the train's force affect the movement of the coal tar plume?

COMMENT 17: How far down was coal tar or vapor found in the contaminated area that you designated?

COMMENT 18: My house on Carney Street has sunk 3 inches in recent years. I think it is due to your coal tar removal system. If you are removing a significant amount of substance from the ground, you will damage existing structures, such as my house.

COMMENT 19: How much coal tar has already been collected?

COMMENT 20: How often do you monitor the wells that are installed currently? Have you monitored them since you created the map that you are referring to? What if contaminants have moved since then? Has there been any contaminant movement that you have recorded? How do you know that the green spots on your map that represent clean test sites are still clean? Will you recheck wells if there is a long time before cleanup construction occurs?

COMMENT 21: How does the coal tar collection system work?

COMMENT 22: What will the excavated area be backfilled with?

COMMENT 23: How do you clean up the soil that you excavate? Will that soil be treated on-site?

COMMENT 24: What will happen to affected groundwater? Will contamination always remain in the groundwater? Will it always exist along the edges of the removal area?

COMMENT 25: What will happen to the value of our homes? How does this contamination and associated cleanup project affect our property values?

COMMENT 26: What will be the location of the pumping station that you are proposing as part of the remedy?

COMMENT 27: What will the pumping station look like? How large will it be?

COMMENT 28: What will the treatment system do with contaminants that are collected through the pumping station?

COMMENT 29: What is the schedule for this project? Duration of cleanup? Anticipated start date? How long will the entire project take?

COMMENT 30: We (Sportsmen Club) reviewed the PRAP. It says in the PRAP that there will be 2 vents installed in the Sportsmen's building. Is that true?

COMMENT 31: What, if any, buildings will be demolished for excavation work?

COMMENT 32: Please explain Item #7 in the PRAP. What does the site management plan and institutional controls involve and which sites do they affect?

COMMENT 33: How far out will the trenching extend? What will the trenches look like? Do you have a construction plan for the trenches that we can see?

COMMENT 34: Will there be sheet pile put up against the railroad tracks permanently to ensure that contamination doesn't migrate again due to soil movement possibly caused by the passing of trains?

COMMENT 35: Will the railroad let DEC install sheet pile around the tracks?

COMMENT 36: Is there a design available for the remedy?

COMMENT 37: Does the PRP have a right to modify the remedy design?

COMMENT 38: Does DEC have any requirements about public notification for real estate transactions?

COMMENT 39: Please make sure that the Sportsmen's Club is notified of all activity and included on all mailing lists for this site.

COMMENT 40: I appreciate DEC's diligence at this site. It appears that you did a thorough job of delineation and are taking a serious look at the best cleanup options possible. Thank you.

COMMENT 41: Will this be a seven day a week project? I ask because this area has a lot of traffic on Sundays due to the local football games.

COMMENT 42: Will there be dump trucks during cleanup? Which way will they go and will they affect our traffic? Will we be blocked in?

COMMENT 43: Will you have to re-route school buses during cleanup?

COMMENT 44: So during cleanup, everything involved in the cleanup will be contained on site? There won't be anything blocking the road?

COMMENT 45: During remediation, will there be odors? Will our neighborhood will be dusty and smell during the entire cleanup?

COMMENT 46: Will air quality in the Sportsmen's Club be monitored as cleanup proceeds, especially during excavation, to address our inhalation concerns?

COMMENT 47: My husband has severe respiratory issues. Will he be impacted by air odors during cleanup? Should we be concerned? How can we protect him from harmful inhalations?

COMMENT 48: Are there any other MGP sites in Gastown?

COMMENT 49: Will you be coming out to meet with the public again before cleanup?

If you have additional comments or questions that are not included in the list above, please send your comments in writing to:

William Ottaway
NYSDEC
625 Broadway
Albany, New York 12233-7014
Phone: 518-402-9686
E-mail: wsottawa@gw.dec.state.ny.us

The deadline to submit comments is March 14, 2007.

Locations to view the PRAP and other site-related documents:

City of Tonawanda Public Library
333 Main Street
Tonawanda, NY 14150
Mon, Tues, Thurs 10 AM - 8 PM
Fri 10 AM - 4 PM
Sat 10 AM - 2 PM
Closed Wed, Sun.
(See reference desk.)

NYSDEC Central Office
625 Broadway
Albany, NY 12233-7014
(518) 402-9564
Attn: William Ottaway, P.E.
email:wsottawa@gw.dec.state.ny.us.

NYSDEC Region 9 Office
270 Michigan Avenue
Buffalo, New York
(716) 851-7220
(Please call for an appointment.)

The PRAP and additional information for the Gastown MGP site are also available online at the at the City of Tonawanda's website at:

www.ci.tonawanda.ny.us

If you have questions regarding the Gastown site, you are welcome to contact:

**Meeting/Comment Period/
Technical Information:**

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625 Broadway
Albany, New York 12233-7014
Phone: (518) 402-9686
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Health-Related Information:

Cameron O'Connor
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584 Delaware Ave.
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Additional public meetings will be held before any proposed cleanup work begins at the Gastown site.

Thank you for your interest in the Gastown site and for your attendance at the February 27th public meeting. Your input is valued and appreciated.