NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION

Remedial Investigation Progress Report

The purpose of this fact sheet is to announce the start of field work at the New York State Electric and Gas Oneonta MGP and detail the investigation to be undertaken. This fact sheet also summarizes the existing conditions at the site.

If you have any questions, please contact:

Mr. Gardiner Cross
NYSDEC Project Manager
(518) 402-9662

or

For site-related health questions:

Ms. Kristin Kulow
NYS Department of Health
(607) 432-3911

Also available for questions:

John Ruspantini, CHMM
NYSEG Project Manager
(607) 762-8839

Documents are available for review at the locations noted in this fact sheet.

FACT SHEET

NYSEG Oneonta MGP Site
Site No. 4-39-001
November, 2002

Remedial Investigation Begins at the NYSEG Oneonta MGP Site

INTRODUCTION

New York State Electric & Gas Corporation (NYSEG) under the oversight of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) and New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) is currently investigating the former Oneonta Manufactured Gas Plant (MGP) site, which is a Class 2 Inactive Hazardous Waste Disposal site. Field work began on October 29, and we wish to inform neighbors and other interested parties of what to expect as this work progresses.

BACKGROUND

The MGP, which was located adjacent to Damaschke Field in Neawha Park, made combustible gas from coal. This gas was used much the same way that natural gas is used today. It is believed that this plant operated from 1881 to the early 1950s. Most of the buildings on the site were demolished in 1956, however the former gas house remained in use as a storage building, until it too was demolished in late 2001.

The principal environmental problem at the site is the presence of coal tar in subsurface soils in the area surrounding the site. Coal tar is a black, oily liquid which was a byproduct of the gas manufacturing process. Substantial volumes of this tar escaped from the pipes and storage facilities on the site while the plant was operating. Some of this material has migrated beneath adjacent properties near the site.

Prior investigations found that the soil beneath the MGP is heavily contaminated with coal tar and other MGP-related chemicals. The tar has sunk into the sandy soils beneath the site to a depth of roughly 20 feet, where a layer of silt has stopped its downward motion. The tar has migrated laterally along the top of the silt layer. The exact extent of this migration has not been fully determined; however, it is clear that the tar has moved to the east and south of the MGP site, beneath the park and ballfield.

The coal tar is a source of groundwater contamination in the vicinity. Some constituents of the tar are dissolving in the groundwater, some of which appear to be moving off-site in a generally southeasterly direction. This contaminated groundwater is moving in the general direction of a public water supply well in Catella Park; however, quarterly

sampling of the water supply well has shown that no contaminants have reached this well. The contaminants appear to be breaking down naturally within the first few hundred feet of the MGP. The distance to the Catella Park well from the site is roughly 2,000 feet.

The Oneonta MGP site was listed on the Registry of Inactive Hazardous Waste Sites in 1992 as a Class 2 site. In 1994, NYSEG entered into an agreement with the NYSDEC to address contamination at 33 MGP sites across the state, including the Oneonta Site.

In 1997, NYSEG installed a subsurface treatment system using injected air in an attempt to break down the coal tar as an Interim Remedial Measure (IRM). The system achieved only limited success and was decommissioned in 2001, in anticipation of the start of the Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study process.

REMEDIAL INVESTIGATION

Currently, NYSEG is undertaking a Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study (RI/FS). The RI is intended to fill in the data gaps remaining from the earlier investigations, in order to fully delineate the nature and extent of contamination associated with the site. Field work for the RI began on October 29, 2002. This work will include:

1. **Source investigation:** Soil borings will be used to delineate where coal tar is present at depth beneath the former MGP site. Currently, the distribution of coal tar is well documented down to a depth of roughly 12 feet. However, the extent of tar contamination between 12 feet and the top of the silty clay unit at roughly 20 feet has not been fully delineated.

2. **Off-site tar migration investigation:** Soil borings will be used to delineate the extent of tar migration away from the MGP site, beneath Damaschke Field and Neawha Park. This migration appears to be taking place at a depth of roughly 20 feet below the ground surface. Currently, the extent of tar migration has been investigated to the east and south of the site. Additional borings will be completed, progressing away from the site in all four compass directions.

3. **Groundwater contamination:** Additional monitoring wells will be installed between the MGP site and the Catella Park well, in order to further define the extent to which dissolved MGP contamination may be migrating toward the well. Existing monitoring wells will be resampled at the same time, to establish a "clean line", beyond which the groundwater is not impacted by this site.

4. **Surface Soils:** Surface soil samples will be collected in Neawha Park and Damaschke Field to determine whether MGP-related contaminants are present at the surface in these areas.

5. **Stream Sediment Contamination:** Sediment samples will be collected from the bottom of Mill Race Creek at several locations near the site, and at upstream and downstream locations as well. Analyses of these samples will be used to determine whether MGP contaminants are present in the stream sediments.

The attached figure shows the former MGP site and existing area, please note that all locations shown are approximate.

Next Step: The findings of this field investigation will be documented in a draft Remedial Investigation Report, which will be presented at a public meeting and will be available for review at the document repositories. It is anticipated that this meeting will take place in the Summer or Fall of 2003. Once DEC accepts the RI report, a Feasibility Study will be conducted to identify and evaluate alternatives for addressing the contamination beneath the

MGP site, and in surrounding areas.

For More Information: Three locations have been established as document repositories to provide you with access to project information. The RI workplan as well as other historic documents relevant to the site are available for review at the following locations:

Huntington Memorial Library
62 Chestnut Street
Oneonta, NY 13820
Attn: Marie Bruen
(607) 432-1980
Regular Library Hours

NYSDEC - DER
625 Broadway
Albany, NY 12233-7017
Contact: Gardiner Cross
(518) 402-9662
8:30 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. daily
Call for appointment

New York State Electric & Gas
65 Country Club Road
Oneonta, NY 13820
Attn: Huemac Garcia
(607) 431-9122 ext. 275

Your Opportunities to be kept Informed and Involved: Your understanding and involvement in this project will help to ensure an effective remedial program. Release of the RI workplan begins a process to investigate and eventually select a remedy for the former Oneonta MGP Site. Your understanding and involvement in this project will help to ensure an effective remedial program. You are encouraged to contact any of those listed below at any time with questions, comments or concerns.

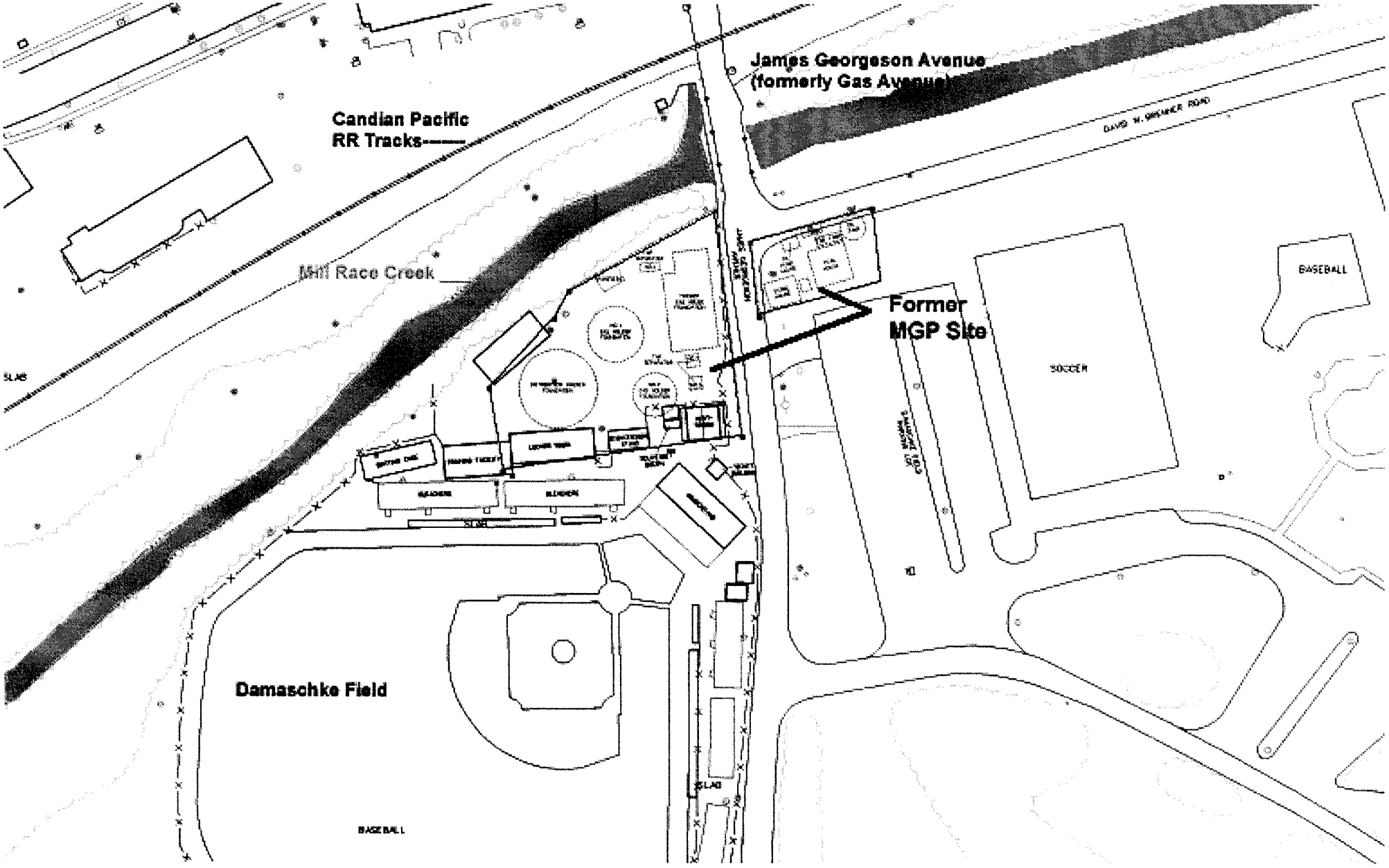
For More Information About the Following Topics Contact the Appropriate Individual:

<u>The RI/FS:</u>

Gardiner Cross
NYSDEC
Div. Environmental Remediation
625 Broadway, Albany, NY 12233-7013
(518) 402-9662

<u>Health related concerns:</u>

Kristin Kulow
NYSDOH
28 Hill Street, Suite 201
Oneonta, NY 13820-9804
(607) 432-3911


James Georgeson Avenue
(formerly Gas Avenue)
Candian Pacific
RR Tracks
Mill Race Creek
Former
MGP Site
SOCCER
BASEBALL
Damaschke Field
BASEBALL