

NEW YORK STATE
DEPARTMENT OF



ENVIRONMENTAL
CONSERVATION

This Fact Sheet contains information about the Remedial Action at the Saranac Street MGP site in the City of Plattsburgh, N.Y. If you have any questions on the the Remedial Action, please contact:

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Project Manager
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For Citizen Participation
questions, contact:

Mr. David Winchell
Citizen Participation Specialist
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For site-related health questions,
please contact:

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For site related questions, please
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FACT SHEET

SARANAC STREET MGP SITE

Site No. 5-10-007

May 2007

REMEDIAL ACTION PROGRESS REPORT

The New York State Electric and Gas Corporation (NYSEG) continues remedial action to remove soils contaminated with coal tar from the western portion of the former manufactured gas plant (MGP) site on Saranac Street in the City of Plattsburgh.

The main elements of work and their progress are as follows:

- Construction of a cut-off wall made of a mix of cement, bentonite and natural soil known as "soilcrete" **has been completed.**
- Excavation of contaminated soil from inside the contained perimeter of the lagoon - **This work is 20% complete.**
- Excavation of contaminated sediments from the Saranac River that were deposited near the Broad Street Bridge. **This work has yet to begin.**
- Excavating all contaminated sediments in and on the banks of the Saranac River that are responsible for causing sheens. **This work has yet to begin.**
- Removing all soils and sediments with high levels of contamination and disposing off-site. **This work is ongoing, with 40% of the most contaminated soil removed from the former lagoon area for off-site disposal.**
- Separating soils with low levels of contamination and depositing them on site in an area covered with two-feet of clean soil, seeded and surrounded by a barrier. **This activity continues.**
- Installing at least two bedrock tar collection wells. **This work has yet to begin.**
- Installation of a water line and relocation of a sewer line. **This work is 95% complete**

COMMUNITY PROTECTION

All site activities take place while the quality of air is monitored at the point of work and at the perimeter of the site, in one upwind location and two downwind locations. Before excavation work at the site resumes, two more air monitoring stations will be added to monitor the quality of air moving towards the Stafford Middle School at locations to be determined in consultation with school officials.

Air monitoring stations measure the concentration of particulates (dusts) in the air, and the concentration of vapors. These units are equipped with alarms that are set below applicable numeric action levels. These settings enable the site manager to implement corrective measures before the action levels are reached. Response actions to elevated levels of contaminants in the air range from applying odor control sprays and foam, adjusting excavation and soil handling operations, to shutting down vapor and odor-generating activities until the concentration of monitored contaminants returns to below action levels.

The contaminated soil excavated from the Saranac Street site exhibits an odor that is characteristic of MGP waste, and is similar to coal tar based driveway sealer. Although the odor threshold for this type of waste is much lower than the numeric action level, corrective actions must still be taken if odors are present.

On May 7, 2007, the concentration of vapors at the perimeter of the site, before the Stafford Middle School closure, did not exceed 0.5 ppm (action level is 5 ppm). This level is well below the level at which long-term health effects would be expected to occur. Site activities were shut down after the odor complaint was received from school officials.

NYSDEC and NYSEG will review the work procedures at the site to improve the odor control capability. Additional steps toward odor control improvement may include some or all of the following:

- Excavate in areas of lesser contamination while school is in session
- Limit the size of excavation
- Put material handling operations inside a structure
- Postpone until summer recess
- Postpone until fall / winter
- Install carbon filters on the school's air intakes

Contaminated soil excavation will not be permitted to resume until NYSEG develops an acceptable odor control plan for the remainder of the work.

SITE BACKGROUND

Gas was manufactured at the Saranac Street site from 1896 until 1944 by the Plattsburgh Light, Heat and Power Company and then until 1960 by NYSEG. Manufactured gas was produced by heating coal and other petroleum products in the presence of steam. The gas was used by local businesses and residents for lighting, cooking, heating and other purposes.

Byproducts of the manufactured gas process often remained at former manufactured gas plant sites when plants were closed. These byproducts can include coal tar, purifier wastes and coal ash.

NYSEG began investigating this site in 1976. Work in the 1980s included construction of a soil/bentonite slurry containment barrier around the former coal tar lagoon, construction of a slurry wall adjacent to the Saranac River and removal of river sediments affected by coal tar.

NYSEG installed a groundwater treatment facility in 1987, and since then NYSEG has been actively managing the site. NYSDEC and NYSEG entered into a multi-site Consent Order in 1994, which included the Saranac Street MGP site.

NYSEG completed an interim remedial measure project in 2002 that involved the excavation and off-site disposal of coal tar soil on the east side of Saranac Street. The entire plant area was excavated to a depth of at least 4 feet, and gas holder foundations, piping and other remnants of the manufactured gas plant were removed.

All work is being performed in accordance with a work plan developed by NYSEG and approved by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC). The health and safety plan which is implemented at the site was reviewed by the New York State Department of Health (DOH) and DEC. Air monitoring along the perimeter of the site is being conducted continuously and will continue through the duration of the remedial action to ensure public safety.

Clean up work in the Saranac River is scheduled for 2008, but may begin sooner depending on progress of work at the MGP site and weather conditions. Three specific areas of the river will be excavated in the river and all work will be performed behind cofferdams designed to keep work areas dry. NYSEG will continue investigating sediments downstream in the Saranac River and Cumberland Bay, under the work plan for Operable Unit No. 2.

Following completion of the clean-up work, the site will be covered with two feet of clean soil and seeded.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more information, contact project personnel listed in the box on the first page of this Fact Sheet or visit the document repositories listed below.

Plattsburgh Public Library

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For more information about DEC's MGP cleanup program, please visit our web site at:

<http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/8430.html>