Project Update

Public Availability Session and Meeting Announcement
September 7, 2005
at the
Fort Edward Firehouse
116 Broadway
Village of Fort Edward

Fort Edward Soil Gas Investigation Results and Mitigation

GE Fort Edward Plant Site
Site No. 5-58-004

Introduction:

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) and the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) are providing this update to keep the public informed about the results of the soil gas investigation related to the General Electric (GE) Fort Edward plant site. In addition, this announcement will provide details on how GE, in consultation with the State, is moving forward to address impacted soil gases and what residents and business owners can expect to see in the area where mitigation is being offered.

The NYSDEC and NYSDOH will be holding a public availability session on September 7, 2005 from 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. and a public meeting from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at the Fort Edward Firehouse. Representatives from the NYSDEC and NYSDOH will be available to provide the results and findings from the soil gas investigation, to discuss on-going mitigation activities, and to answer questions from the public. Staff will be available from 2:00 to 5:00 p.m. to talk one on

one with the public. A formal presentation will be provided during the evening session starting at 7:00 p.m. The public will be provided the opportunity to ask questions following the presentation.

An update on the project status, findings, and mitigation efforts are described below.

Site Description and History:

The GE Fort Edward plant is located on a 32-acre property in the Town of Fort Edward. Historically, GE used trichloroethene (also referred to as trichloroethylene or TCE) in the manufacture of electrical equipment at the site. Historical operations resulted in the release of TCE to the environment, impacting groundwater quality at the site as well as certain off-site locations. In addition to TCE, other volatile organic compounds (VOCs) originating from the site have been detected in groundwater in a limited area in the northwest corner of the site.

Over the past 20 years, GE has implemented several environmental clean-up programs at the facility that have controlled further movement of TCE-impacted groundwater off the site and effectively reduced the concentration of TCE in the groundwater.

Although significant progress has been made, site-related VOCs continue to be found in shallow groundwater in two areas: south of the site extending to West Summit Street and in the northwestern corner of the site near Building 40.

In late 2004, the NYSDEC and NYSDOH requested that GE evaluate whether site-related VOCs in groundwater were evaporating into the overlying soil layer and entering nearby buildings through the process of soil vapor intrusion. In response, GE developed and conducted a soil gas investigation to determine if site-related VOCs were present in soil gas (the vapors found within the pore spaces in soil). In addition, the investigation examined homes and businesses in the vicinity of impacted groundwater to determine if vapors in the soil were migrating into overlying buildings and affecting indoor air quality. Samples were collected within the study area, which included part of Park Avenue, Stevens Lane, Hillview Avenue, Bascom Drive, Griffen Avenue, West Summit Street and part of Upper Broadway south of the site and part of Lower Allen Street west of the site.

Investigation Results and Remediation:

Generally, site-related VOCs, mainly TCE, were detected in soil gas samples collected near contaminated groundwater. The soil gas results indicated that the boundaries of the soil vapor plume were contained within a smaller area than the original boundaries of the study area. All areas where site-related VOCs were detected in soil gas were included within the final delineated area, which is further defined below.

GE also collected sub-slab soil gas samples, indoor air samples, and ambient air samples from more than 60 homes and businesses in the study area. The sub-slab soil gas sample results indicated that concentrations of site-related VOCs, mainly TCE, were present at varying

concentrations below several buildings located within the study area south of the GE plant site. These structures and some nearby structures were included in the final delineated area. Generally, TCE was detected in sub-slab soil gas samples collected in the area where concentrations of TCE and its breakdown products are present in groundwater. TCE was generally not detected in soil gas samples or sub-slab soil gas samples collected from areas where TCE and its breakdown products are not present in groundwater.

No indoor air sample results collected from private homes in the study area exceeded the NYSDOH guideline value for TCE in air of 5 micrograms per cubic meter. The NYSDOH guideline value for TCE is lower than levels that have caused health affects in animals and humans exposed over their lifetime. Some indoor air sample results collected from commercial structures located in the study area south of the site slightly exceeded the NYSDOH guideline value. However, one of the elevated sample results was attributed to a supposable source of TCE within the building and the other was collected within a basement storage space.

TCE was detected in two of more than 50 ambient air samples collected from the study area at a maximum concentration of 0.64 micrograms per cubic meter of air.

The final delineated area includes:

- properties on the eastern part of Park Avenue;
- properties on Stevens Lane, Hillview Avenue, and Bascom Drive;
- properties on Griffen Avenue, excluding homes on the southwest part of the street;
- properties on Upper Broadway south of the GE site to the intersection of W. Summit Street; and
- properties on the north side of W. Summit Street.

No properties on Lower Allen Street were included in the final delineated area, since no site-related VOCs were detected in sub-slab soil gas samples collected in this area.

GE has offered to install and operate sub-slab depressurization systems in homes and businesses located within the final delineated area. Installation, operation, and maintenance costs will be paid for by GE. Similar to radon systems, these systems are designed to capture and intercept soil vapors before they enter a structure. Mitigation offers were sent to eligible property owners through the mail. As of the date of this document, 39 property owners accepted the offer for mitigation.

Currently, GE is meeting with property owners that accepted the offer for mitigation. The purpose of these meetings is for GE's contractor to inspect the foundation of each building and to gather information to determine the appropriate design and placement of each sub-slab depressurization system.

Several sub-slab depressurization systems have been installed in the final delineated area. GE expects to have most of the requested sub-slab depressurization systems installed and operating prior to the date of the public meeting.

NYSDEC and NYSDOH Recommendation:

While concentrations of TCE were predominantly non-detect or below the NYSDOH guideline value for TCE in the homes and businesses sampled, the NYSDEC and NYSDOH recommend that property owners who were offered mitigation allow GE to install a sub-slab depressurization system at their properties. These systems will prevent the potential for future exposures to site-related VOCs present in soil gases in the final delineated area.

Public Participation:

GE, in consultation with the NYSDEC and NYSDOH, has implemented a community outreach plan to promote and encourage public involvement through education and communication during implementation of this project. Public meetings and/or public availability sessions will be held when appropriate. Public inquiries and concerns have and will continue to be addressed. Copies of the final Work Plan and information fact sheets are available for public review at the two repositories listed below. A final report summarizing the results and findings of the investigation is being prepared. Once this document is final, it will be placed in the repositories for public review.

Repositories:

Washington County Office Building
Upper Broadway Ave.
Fort Edward, NY 12828
Hours: 8:30 am - 4:30 pm

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
625 Broadway, 12th Floor
Albany, NY 12233
Hours: 8:30 am - 4:45 pm

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