



# FACT SHEET

## Manufactured Gas Plant Program

Auburn McMaster St. Former Manufactured Gas Plant Site  
Site #706010  
23 McMaster Street  
City of Auburn, NY

September 2009

### **Remedy Proposed for Former Manufactured Gas Plant Site; Public Comment Period and Public Meeting Announced**

The public is invited to comment on the remedy proposed by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) to address environmental impacts related to the Auburn - McMaster Street Former Manufactured Gas Plant (MGP) Site. The site is located at 23 McMaster Street in the City of Auburn, Cayuga County. See the attached map for the site location. NYSEG (New York State Electric & Gas), the site owner, has agreed to investigate and remediate the site to a level that is protective of public health and the environment. The investigation and remediation are being performed with the oversight of the NYSDEC and the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH).

Public Meeting  
October 7, 2009  
7:00 pm

Legislative Chambers - 6<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Cayuga County Office Building  
160 Genesee Street  
Auburn, NY

NYSDEC invites you to a public meeting to discuss the remedy proposed for this site. You are encouraged to provide comments at the meeting and during the 30-day comment period described in this fact sheet.

### **The Proposed Remedy**

The remedy proposed for the site includes excavation and off-site disposal of contaminated soil and sediments, removal of coal tar from bedrock, and land use restrictions on the site.

The proposed remedy is described in a draft cleanup plan called a "Proposed Remedial Action Plan", developed under New York State's Manufactured Gas Plant Program. The document is available for public review at the locations identified below under "Where to Find Information".

### **How to Comment**

NYSDEC is accepting written comments about the proposed remedy for 30 days, from **September 26, 2009 through October 26, 2009**.

**About the Manufactured Gas Plant Program:**

NYSDEC has one of the most aggressive Manufactured Gas Plant (MGP) Programs site investigation and remediation programs in the country. Since the problems associated with the former MGP sites were identified, NYSDEC has been working with all the utilities on a state-wide basis to identify and address the issue of MGP sites for which they may have responsibility. This effort has resulted in approximately 253 sites identified for action by the eight utilities operating in New York State.

Currently we have multi-site orders or agreements with six utilities, including NYSEG, and several other individual site volunteers, to address 214 MGP sites in NYS. Multi-site agreements are under negotiation with a seventh utility and several other responsible parties which have newly-identified sites. These new sites will add an additional 15 sites to the 214, for a total of 229 sites state wide.

NYSDEC continues to seek to identify any other possible MGP sites throughout the State.

For more information about the NYSDEC's MGP program, visit:

[www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/8430.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/8430.html)

Submit written comments to:

Mr. Bernard Franklin, Project Manager  
NYSDEC  
625 Broadway, 11th Floor  
Albany, NY 12233-7014  
1-866-520-2334  
bcfrankl@gw.dec.state.ny.us

**Summary of the Proposed Remedy**

The proposed remedy represents the alternative preferred by NYSDEC, NYSDOH and NYSEG to address site impacts. The draft cleanup plan includes:

- Removal of approximately 12,000 cubic yards of soil containing visual indications of coal tar and contaminant levels that exceed the cleanup levels established for the site.
- Backfill to the existing grade with clean soil, including construction of an ecological buffer zone along the Owasco Outlet.
- Removal of approximately 2,000 cubic yards of sediment from the Owasco Outlet, the full extent to be based on further investigation of

the sediment.

- Installation of coal tar collection wells in bedrock beneath the site.
- An environmental easement to restrict the use of the site to commercial/industrial uses
- Development and implementation of a site management plan

The proposed remedy was chosen following a detailed investigation of the site and evaluation of alternatives to address MGP impacts, called a "Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study". Other alternatives presented in the Feasibility Study include no action, capping and removal of contaminated soil to varying degrees. The proposed remedy would achieve the remediation goals for the site by permanently removing contaminated soil from the site and contaminated sediment from the Owasco Outlet. The proposed remedy would greatly reduce the source of MGP impacts to groundwater, and it would create the conditions needed to restore groundwater quality to the extent possible.

The estimated cost to implement the remedy is \$7,920,000, of which the cost of construction is estimated to be \$6,900,000. The remainder of the cost is associated with long term monitoring and maintenance. NYSEG will be financially responsible for implementation of the remedy.

**Next Steps**

NYSDEC will consider public comments as it finalizes the remedy for the site. The selected remedy will be described in a document called a "Record of Decision" that will explain why the

remedy was selected and respond to public comments. This document will be made available to the public (see “Where to Find Information” below). The project then moves to designing and performing the cleanup action to address the site contamination.

NYSDEC will keep the public informed during the cleanup of the site.

### **Background**

The Auburn - McMaster Street Former MGP Site is one of approximately 200 former MGP sites that existed across New York State in the early 20th century. The McMaster Street plant was operated by NYSEG and NYSEG’s predecessor companies from approximately 1869 to 1904. Gas was manufactured by heating coal. Freshly-manufactured gas had to be cooled and its impurities removed before it could be used. A coal tar resulted from these processes, some of which was released to the environment. The coal tar contains a number of chemical contaminants, primarily benzene, toluene, ethylbenzene, xylene (BTEX) and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAH). The extent of MGP impacts was delineated by a series of investigations conducted by NYSEG. MGP impacts were found primarily in soil and groundwater within the NYSEG property. Some coal tar impacts were found in the underlying bedrock on the site and off-site, to the north and west. MGP impacts have been found in certain Owasco Outlet sediments.

Most of the site is covered with clean gravel or vegetation and thus direct contact with MGP-related contaminants is not likely. The surrounding area is served by public water, so exposure to MGP-impacted groundwater is not likely.

## **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

### **Where to Find Information**

Project documents are available at the following locations to help the public to stay informed. These documents include the proposed cleanup plan for the site, called the “Proposed Remedial Action Plan”, and the Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Study reports.

Seymour Library  
176 Genesee Street  
Auburn, New York 13201  
(315) 252-2571  
MTW 10am-9pm  
TF 10am-6pm  
S 10am-4pm

NYSDEC  
625 Broadway  
Albany, NY 12233-7014  
By appointment, contact Mr. Bernard Franklin  
(518) 402-9662

### **Who to Contact**

Comments and questions are always welcome and should be directed as follows:

#### Project Related Questions

Mr. Bernard Franklin  
Project Manager  
NYSDEC  
625 Broadway, 11th Floor  
Albany, NY 12233

#### Site-Related Health Questions

Mr. Richard Jones  
NYSDOH  
Central Regional Office  
217 S. Salina St.  
Syracuse, NY 13202

(518) 402-9662  
bcfrankl@gw.dec.state.ny.us

(315) 477-8148

To direct questions to NYS Electric and Gas, please contact:

Mr. Robert Pass  
Manager – Regional Outreach & Development  
NYSEG  
1387 Dryden Road  
Ithaca, NY 14850-  
Phone: 607-347-2148

**If you know someone who would like to be added to the site contact list, have them contact the NYSDEC project manager listed above. We encourage you to share this fact sheet with neighbors and tenants, and/or post this fact sheet in a prominent area of your building for others to see.**

