



FACT SHEET

Underground Tank to Be Removed at Gastown Site; Environmental Investigation Continues

Superfund

Project No. 915171

November 2009

Introduction

National Fuel Gas Distribution Corporation (NFG), under the supervision of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC), will perform a cleanup action in Fall 2009 to address environmental contamination at the Gastown site, located at 126 East Niagara Street in the city of Tonawanda, Erie County. The cleanup action is part of a comprehensive cleanup plan described in the March 2007 Record of Decision.

Cleanup work at the site is being conducted through New York State's Inactive Hazardous Waste Disposal Site Program. For more information on the program, visit <http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/8439.html>



Aerial view of the Former Gastown MGP Site

What Will the Upcoming Work Involve?

The upcoming environmental work will include:

- Removing an underground metal tank, which still contains some coal tar (a manufactured gas waste product) and a mixture of gravel and water;
- Disposing the contents of the tank at an approved offsite treatment and disposal facility;
- Cutting the tank into pieces, cleaning the pieces, and recycling the steel;
- Monitoring air quality during the tank removal to ensure that vapors are not being released; and
- Applying odor-suppressant foam during the tank removal to control the release of odors and vapors.

A work plan describing the tar tank removal can be found at the locations listed in this fact sheet. An electronic version of the report is available on DEC's website (see back page for website information).

Next Steps

Environmental investigation of the site is expected to continue into 2010. Once all necessary data has been gathered, an engineering design for a comprehensive site cleanup will be developed. The design phase will likely run through 2011. Once the design is completed, NYSDEC will hold a public meeting to explain the cleanup plan. Cleanup work is expected to commence sometime in 2012.

After cleanup activities are completed, a Final Engineering Report will be prepared to describe the cleanup activities and certify that cleanup requirements have been or will be achieved. The report will be available for public review. NYSDEC will continue to keep the public informed during the cleanup of the site through fact sheets similar to this one.

Background

The Gastown site is the location of a former manufactured gas plant (MGP). Prior to the introduction of natural gas and electric lights, these plants processed coal and petroleum to make a combustible gas used for cooking, lighting and heating. The gas production left an oily mixture called coal tar that impacted soils at and surrounding the site.

The Site is listed as a "Class 2" site in the State Registry of Inactive Hazardous Waste Disposal Sites. A Class 2 site represents a significant threat to public health or the environment and requires action.

Activities which have been performed to date include:

- Collecting soil and groundwater samples, along with sediment samples in Tonawanda creek, to determine the extent of the contamination from the site;
- Investigating the site for the purpose of designing appropriate cleanup actions (based on these investigations, the tar contamination west of the railroad tracks may not be as widespread as originally anticipated); and
- Installing subslab venting systems at buildings near the site as an extra measure of safety to prevent soil gas from entering the buildings.

Who Should I Call If I Have Questions About the Site?

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

Environment Questions:

William Ottaway
NYSDEC
625 Broadway
Albany, NY 12233-7014
(518) 402-9662
wsottawa@gw.dec.state.ny.us

Health Questions:

Cameron O'Connor
NYS Department of Health
584 Delaware Ave.
Buffalo, NY 14202
(716)847-4385

Project Questions:

Patricia Paul, Government Affairs
National Fuel Gas Corporation
6363 Main Street
Williamsville, NY 14221
(716) 857-7780

If you know someone who would like to be added to the site contact list, have them contact the NYSDEC project manager 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.

Locations to View Project Documents

Project documents are available at the following locations to help the public stay informed.

City of Tonawanda Public Library

333 Main Street
Tonawanda, NY 14150
Phone: (716) 693-5043

NYSDEC Region 9 Office

270 Michigan Avenue
Buffalo, NY 14203
Phone: (716) 851-7220
(Please call for appointment)

NYSDEC Central Office

625 Broadway
Albany, NY 12233
(518) 402-9564

You may also access documents on the NYSDEC Region 9 Remedial Project Information webpage, <http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/37554.html>. Look for the Gastown entry under the Erie County heading.