



# FACT SHEET



October 2002

## Monroe County and Rochester Gas & Electric Sign Voluntary Agreement for Investigation and Cleanup at Brewer Street Site

In July 2002, Monroe County and Rochester Gas and Electric (RG&E) signed a voluntary agreement with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) to perform an environmental investigation and cleanup at the Brewer Street site in the City of Rochester (see map). The investigation is being conducted through New York State's Voluntary Cleanup Program (see box at right).

The DEC is providing this fact sheet to explain highlights of the planned investigation and how to get more information.

### About the Brewer Street Site:

This site is located in the Genesee River Gorge adjacent to the middle falls in the City of Rochester, Monroe County. The site is currently owned by RG&E. In 1984 and 1985, Monroe County used a portion of the site under an easement granted by RG&E during the construction of the Cliff Street Siphon Tunnel Project. During sewer tunnel construction, coal tar was encountered. To facilitate construction of the sewer tunnel, two settling lagoons were constructed on-site to separate coal tars from water that was pumped out of the tunnel. The outfall of the lagoons discharged to a wetland adjacent to the Genesee River. The lagoons were closed in-place in 1985, and the property is currently undeveloped.

### NEW YORK STATE'S VOLUNTARY CLEANUP PROGRAM

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation's Voluntary Cleanup Program promotes the return of contaminated property to productive use. These include sites contaminated by hazardous waste, petroleum, and solid waste.

Under this program, a person or entity (such as a corporation) agrees to pay for an investigation and/or environmental cleanup of the site. If the volunteer performs a cleanup of the site, the volunteer receives a limited release from liability for past environmental damage at the site.

RG&E and Monroe County (the Volunteers) conducted an extensive on-site investigation of groundwater, soil and river sediments in 1998 without NYSDEC oversight.

This investigation included installation of 21 groundwater monitoring wells, numerous test pits and soils samples, and 27 river sediment and marsh sediment samples. The results of the investigation indicated coal tar product and constituents in groundwater, soils, and river sediments. Coal tar seeps were noted at the base of the middle falls dam

flood gate. Coal tar is a generic term for wastes generated from a coal gasification plant. Most coal gasification plants in the northeastern United States ceased operation in the 1950s with the advent of natural gas pipelines. Coal tar is commonly found in such products as driveway sealers and dandruff shampoos.

Public water and sewers are used in the area. There are no known private drinking water wells in the vicinity of the site.

### **Details of the Investigation:**

The purpose of the investigation was to further define the nature and extent of contamination at the site. The investigation was completed in 2001, and the report was submitted to the Department in early 2002. This investigation supplemented the existing data and included the following activities: installation of additional monitoring wells; sampling new and existing wells; and sampling of soil and sediment to characterize the extent of contamination in the adjacent marsh area and the Genesee River. Downgradient off-site monitoring wells were not installed due to physical barriers at the site (the middle falls, the river, and steep gorge walls).

The results of investigations confirmed previous sampling and identified an area of sediment in the Genesee River and soils in the former lagoon area which would require removal. Coal tar seeps were noted at the base of the dam and along the ledge of the middle falls. The Volunteers installed a temporary barrier to mitigate further seeps into the Genesee River along the ledge of the middle falls.

### **What Happens Next:**

Monroe County and RG&E (the Volunteers) will finalize the investigation report and provide a design work plan for cleanup of soils and river sediments to the DEC and NYSDOH. This work plan will provide the details for excavation and removal of contaminated sediments and soils. It will also include a health and safety plan to address work and community safety. Prior to implementing the remedy, there will be a 30-day public comment period.

### **For More Information:**

DEC will keep you informed of progress at the site through fact sheets like this one. If there is enough interest at this time, the State will hold a public meeting to discuss the upcoming activities at this site. You can express your interest in attending such a meeting by calling one of the people listed below or by sending in the attached mailer.

Because our mailing list includes property owners of businesses and apartments, we encourage you and the building owners to share this fact sheet with neighbors and tenants, and/or post this fact sheet in a prominent area of your building for tenants, employees, and visitors to view

The work plan and other documents related to this investigation are available for you to review at the following document repositories:

NYS Department of Environmental Conservation  
Region 8 Office  
6274 East Avon-Lima Rd.  
Avon, New York 14414  
*Hours:*  
Monday- Friday 8:30 - 4:45 by appointment only  
*Contact:* Lisa LoMaestro Silvestri  
(585) 226-5326

Rochester Public Library - Lincoln Branch  
851 Joseph Avenue  
Rochester, New York 14621  
*Hours:*  
Monday and Wednesday, 10:00 am - 7:00 pm  
Tuesday and Thursday, Noon - 8:00 pm  
Friday, 11:00 am - 6:00 pm  
Saturday, Noon - 5:00 pm  
*Contact:* Joan Lee, Reference Librarian

We encourage you to contact the representatives listed below with questions, comments or concerns. If you know someone who would like to be added to the mailing list, have them send in the attached mailer or contact one of the people listed below. You do **not** have to return the mailer if you received this fact sheet in the mail; your name will automatically remain on the mailing list.

**% For Question About the Investigation, Contact:**

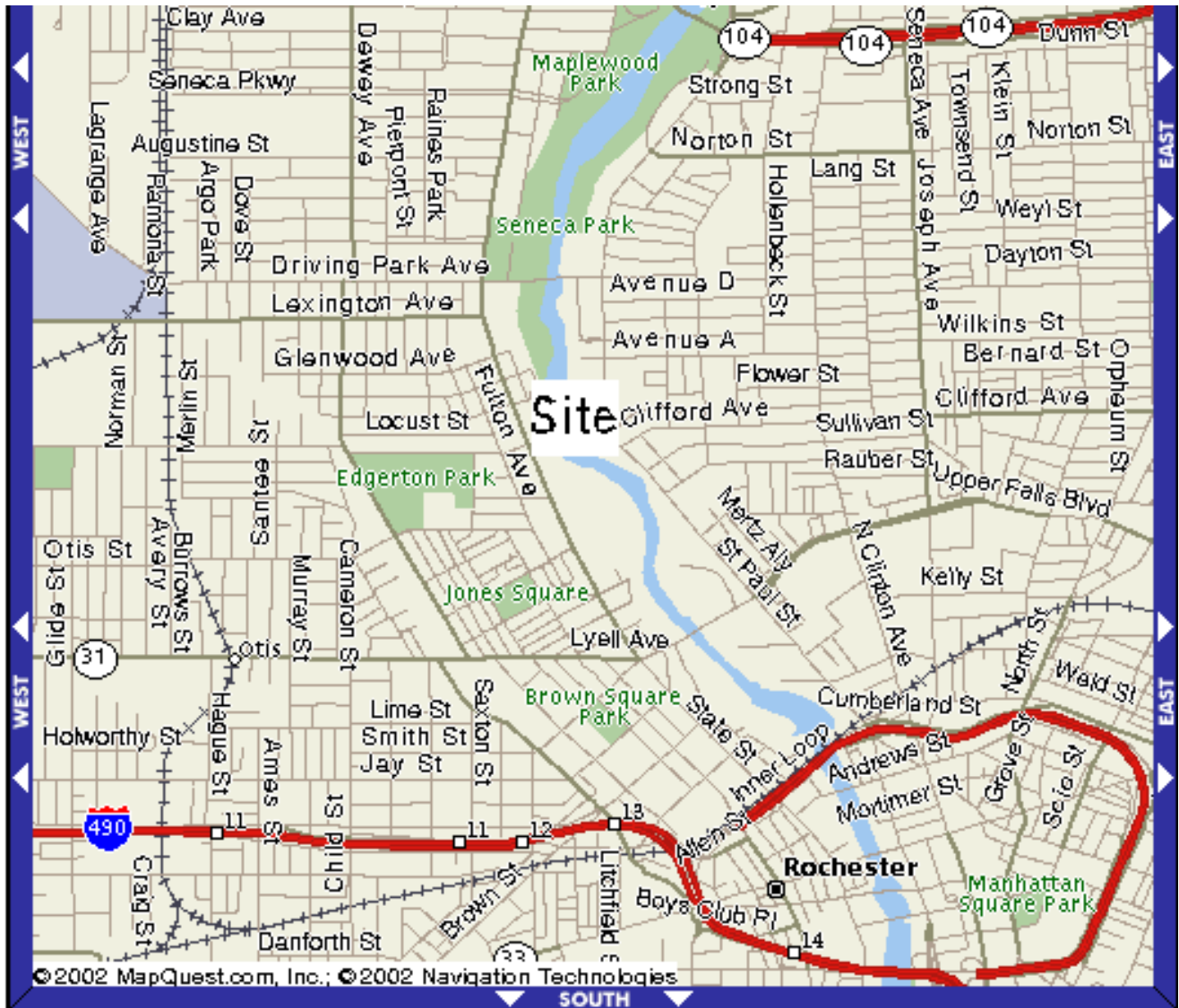
Todd M. Caffoe, P.E., Project Manager (585) 226-5350 or  
Lisa A. LoMaestro-Silvestri, Citizen Participation Specialist (585) 226-5326  
NYS Department of Environmental Conservation  
6274 East Avon-Lima Road  
Avon, NY 14414

**% For Site-Related Health Questions, Contact:**

Charlotte Bethoney  
NYS Department of Health  
Flanigan Square  
547 River Street  
Troy, NY 12180  
(800) 458-1158 ext. 27860 or  
(518) 402-7860

Joseph Albert  
Monroe County Health Department  
111 Westfall Road - PO Box 92832  
Rochester NY 14692  
(585) 274-6904

**Site Map**  
**Brewer Street Site**  
**Rochester(C), Monroe(C)**



# NYSDEC Mailer

Please feel free to use this mailer for any of the following purposes:

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. You would like to be placed on our Brewer Street site mailing list.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. You would like to include the name and address of someone you know who maybe interested in receiving future fact sheets.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. You would like to be taken off our Brewer Street site mailing list.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. You would like to provide us with a change of name or address.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. You would like to provide us with a comment or concern.

---

## FOLD

---

Please complete the form as indicated below, fold and mail directly to the DEC.

Add the following name(s):

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Delete the following name(s):

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Make the following changes:

(Old) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(New) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

---

## FOLD

---

Comments or Concerns:

Todd M. Caffoe, P.E.  
New York State Department of Environmental Conservation  
6274 East Avon-Lima Rd  
Avon, NY 14414-9519