



In conjunction with



Fact Sheet

January 2008

Hester Street Works

Continuation of Site Characterization Study at Hester Street

Dear Interested Citizen:

This fact sheet is to inform you of the site characterization planned for the former Hester Street Works.

If you have questions or would like more information, please contact:

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For site-related environmental questions, please contact:

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Introduction

Consolidated Edison Company of New York, Inc. (Con Edison), together with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) and the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH), is providing this update on activities planned for the former Hester Street Works, a property that is the site of a historic manufactured gas plant (MGP). Currently the site is occupied by a commercial parking lot and three store-fronted residential buildings.

Con Edison has entered into an agreement with the NYSDEC to identify, investigate and, if necessary, remediate sites that were operated by Con Edison or its corporate predecessors as MGPs. An initial scope of work has been completed during 2006 which included testing soils and groundwater. Further testing is needed to collect additional subsurface information, therefore an additional scope of soil and groundwater testing has been approved by NYSDEC.

What are former Manufactured Gas Plants?

Manufactured gas plants (MGP) were operated between the 1800s and mid-1900s, before the development of natural gas systems, to convert coal and oil into gas for heating, lighting and cooking. Byproducts of this early production process included contaminants such as tar and purifier wastes. Tar is a dark, viscous fluid with a distinctive acrid odor. Purifier wastes are materials formed during removal of other unwanted chemicals from the gas before it was sent out to customers.

The substances of concern related to these operations include BTEX compounds, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), and metals. BTEX compounds are benzene, toluene, ethylbenzene and xylene. These are volatile hydrocarbons found in MGP byproducts and also found in most petroleum products such as gasoline. PAHs are also found in MGP byproducts as well as many petroleum products, such as asphalt.

Documents related to this project are available at the following locations:

Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer's Office, One Centre Street, 19th Floor, New York, NY 10007; 212-669-8300, Hours: M-F 9am-5pm; **Epiphany Branch, New York Public Library**, 228 E.23 St., New York, NY 10010; 212-679-2645, Hours: Mon/Wed 12-8, Tues/Thurs/Fri 10-6, Sat 10-5 (closed Sunday).

Potential Exposure

A primary goal of these investigations is to evaluate actual and potential risk to the public through exposure to contaminants from these historical operations. Because the historical operations ended more than 100 years ago and the site was redeveloped, pockets of soil contamination have been found at depth, below the present surface of the site. Direct contact exposure to these materials is not anticipated. Exposure to contaminated groundwater through ingestion is not expected because New York City is served by a municipal water system.

Site Background

New York Gaslight Company began operations at the Hester Street Works around 1824 and continued to operate the plant until it was destroyed by fire in 1848. The property was sold to private parties in 1849. New York Gaslight Company later became part of what is now Consolidated Edison. The operational period of the plant pre-dates most available records, therefore the operational details and site layout are unknown.

Project Status and Schedule

In October 2006, Con Edison began a Site characterization Study at the Hester Street site in accordance with a work plan approved by the NYSDEC and NYSDOH. This initial work included the completion of soil borings and installation of groundwater monitoring wells on the Edison Parking property and sidewalk of Baxter Street. The NYSDEC and NYSDOH have requested additional sampling locations to further define subsurface conditions.

During the additional site characterization activities, extensive efforts will be made to protect the community from potential hazards. These will include placing physical barriers to prevent access to work areas and the use of real-time air monitoring in accordance with the NYSDOH's Community Air Monitoring Plan. If any contamination of concern is found during the investigation, a remediation plan will be developed in cooperation with the NYSDEC and NYSDOH.

Public Involvement

Public understanding and involvement are an integral part of a successful investigation and remediation program. To provide you with the most up-to-date and accurate information regarding manufactured gas plants, Con Edison has created a series of informational resources including fact sheets, a toll-free hotline, and internet content at www.coned.com/publicissues. Information can also be found at the NYSDEC website at www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/8430.html. In addition, a Citizen Participation Plan has been approved by State DEC that outlines the steps to be taken to provide for public participation in the remedial program for the site. Document repositories for site related documents have also been established so that concerned citizens can review available information. The document repositories are listed on the bottom of the front page.