



In conjunction with



Dear Interested Citizen:

This fact sheet is to inform you of the site characterization planned for the former East 21st Street Works.

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

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Fact Sheet

January 2004

East 21st Street Works

Start of site characterization study at East 21st Street Work Site

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 the investigation activities planned for the former East 21st Street Works (currently part of Peter Cooper Village), a historic manufactured gas plant (MGP). Initial activities at the site included a study of indoor air and soil gas. These activities have been completed and now a site characterization study will be implemented to investigate soil and groundwater.

What are former Manufactured Gas Plants?

Manufactured gas plants 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. Purifier wastes are materials formed during removal of other unwanted chemicals from the gas before it was sent out to customers.

Project Status and Schedule

Initial efforts at the site include collection of historic data and a soil gas/indoor air monitoring survey. Con Edison has completed the historical site data collection efforts and the soil gas/indoor air monitoring. The NYSDOH has reviewed the data from the soil gas/indoor air monitoring and concluded that it is unlikely that the soil gas has a discernable impact on indoor air.

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

Manhattan Borough President Virginia Fields Office, 1 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 12-8, Tues/Fri 10-6, Wed 12-6, Sat 1-5 (closed Thurs/Sun).

Documents also available at the Ottendorfer Branch 212-674-0947

A site characterization study is scheduled to begin in January 2004 and end in April 2004. The results of the investigation will be available in the Fall of 2004. Site characterization activities will include the collection of soil samples by digging test trenches and borings, installation of groundwater monitoring wells, and collection of groundwater samples. Work will be conducted Monday to Friday between the hours of 8 am and 5 pm with any work generating noise not starting until after 9 am.

During the site characterization study activities, extensive efforts will be made to protect the community from potential hazards, including the use of real-time air monitoring in accordance with the NYSDOH's Community Air Monitoring Plan. If any MGP-related contamination of concern is found, a remediation plan will be developed in cooperation with the NYSDEC and NYSDOH.

Potential Exposure

A primary goal of these investigations is to evaluate actual and potential risks to the public through exposure to contaminants from these historical operations. Because these sites have been closed for many years, and, the site was redeveloped, potential residuals or soil contamination would be located at depth, below the present surface of the site. Therefore, direct contact exposure to these materials is not anticipated.

Exposure to contaminants can potentially occur through direct contact with the waste or through gas contaminants getting into indoor air. Exposure to contaminated groundwater through ingestion is not expected because the areas around these sites are served by municipal water systems. The NYSDOH has reviewed the data from the soil gas/indoor air monitoring survey that Con Edison conducted at the site and has concluded that it is unlikely that the soil gas has a discernable impact on indoor air within the buildings there.

During the site characterization study activities, extensive efforts will be made to protect the community from potential hazards, including the use of real-time air monitoring in accordance with the NYSDOH's Community Air Monitoring Plan. If any MGP-related contamination of concern is found, a remediation plan will be developed in cooperation with the NYSDEC and NYSDOH.

Site Background

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.

The East 21st Street Works was located on the Lower East Side of Manhattan. The former MGP grounds encompassed approximately two-thirds of what is now of Peter Cooper Village. The former site was bound to the north by the former East 22nd Street, south by East 20th Street, east by Avenue C and west by First Avenue.

Gas manufacturing and gas storage began at the E. 21st Street Works in the 1840's and continued until the mid 1940's. The site was sold by Con Edison to Stuyvesant Town Corporation and Metropolitan Life Insurance Company in 1944 and 1945, respectively, for development of the Peter Cooper Village Housing Project.

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. In addition, a Citizen Participation Plan has been approved by NYS 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.