



*In conjunction with*



# Fact Sheet

December 2009

East 21st Street Works

[www.coned.com/mgp](http://www.coned.com/mgp)

Remedial Investigation Report Approved by NYSDEC

## Dear Interested Citizen:

**This fact sheet is to update you about the Remedial Investigation Report for the former East 21st Street Works.**

**If you have questions or would like more information, 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 the investigation activities performed at the former East 21<sup>st</sup> Street manufactured gas plant (MGP), which is currently part of Peter Cooper Village.

## Project Status and Schedule

Initial investigative efforts at the site included collection of historic data and a soil gas/indoor air monitoring survey. Con Edison then conducted a Site Characterization Study in 2004 and an Interim Remedial Investigation study in 2006.

A Site Characterization Study (SCS) was conducted from January 2004 to April 2004 to investigate the site for the presence of contamination due to the prior operation of the MGP facility. The investigation found that there are no impacts in the surface soil and the MGP impacts in subsurface soil were at least 2 feet below the ground surface, with the vast majority of the impacts being 10 feet and deeper. MGP impacts were also found in the groundwater which is well below the ground surface and not used at the site.

An interim remedial investigation (RI) was conducted to delineate the extent of impacts. The interim RI was conducted from January 2006 through May 2006. The results of the RI confirmed the results of the SCS and in general determined the extent of impacts, which extended to the north side of E. 23<sup>rd</sup> Street, the south side of E. 20<sup>th</sup> Street and along First Avenue. On the east side impacts were found in Stuyvesant Cove Park. A link to the Interim Remedial Investigation Report can be found at Con Edison's website at [www.coned.com/mgp](http://www.coned.com/mgp).

NYSDEC and NYSDOH reviewed these findings and required a supplemental investigation for Operable Unit 1 (OU-1), which is the Peter Cooper Village property and surrounding sidewalk, OU-2 which is the East River and Stuyvesant Cove Park and OU-3 which is the bedrock under the property. These investigations were conducted from February to October 2008. This work consisted of 7 soil borings for OU-1 in the western portion of the site to confirm that MGP impacts were at least 5 feet below the surface, over 80 borings in the East River and Stuyvesant Cove Park (OU-2) to determine if MGP impacts had migrated to the river and 9 bedrock borings in OU-3 to determine the extent of MGP impacts that were identified in the bedrock along First Avenue. The findings of Con Edison's investigation were summarized in

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

**Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer's 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/Wed 10-8, Tues/Thurs 10-6; Fri/Sat. 10-5.

Remedial Investigation (RI) reports for each OU. The NYSDEC and NYSDOH have reviewed the OU-1 RI report for Peter Cooper Village and concluded that no additional investigation is required. A link to the RI Report can be found at Con Edison's website at [www.coned.com/mgp](http://www.coned.com/mgp). NYSDEC is still reviewing the OU-2 and OU-3 RI reports on the investigation of Stuyvesant Cove Park and the East River and the bedrock under the property. The next step is for Con Edison to prepare an assessment of remedial alternatives for OU-1 which will be submitted to NYSDEC and NYSDOH. After their review the NYSDEC will propose a remedial alternative for public comment and conduct a public meeting.

## Potential Exposure

A primary goal of these investigations was to evaluate the potential for exposure to these historical operations. Potential human exposure may come from breathing, ingesting or touching the contaminants. Because the soil contamination was found well beneath the surface, the public is not exposed through direct contact with the contaminants. Exposure to contaminated groundwater through ingestion is unlikely because New York City is served by a municipal water system. The NYSDOH has reviewed the data from the soil gas/indoor air monitoring survey that Con Edison conducted in all the building basements and concluded that there does not appear to be any impact to indoor air from MGP-related contamination. Indoor air monitoring will continue as part of an overall Interim Site Management Plan until a remedy is proposed and implemented.

## Site Background

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

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

## What are former Manufactured Gas Plants?

Manufactured gas plants were operated between the 1800s and mid-1900s, before the development of natural gas distribution 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 that were formed during filtration of 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.

## 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/mgp](http://www.coned.com/mgp). A link to reports can be found on the Con Edison website. Information on the MGP program can also be found at the NYSDEC website at [www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/8430.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/8430.html). Document repositories for site related documents have been established and are listed on the bottom of the first page.