



In conjunction with



**Dear Interested Citizen:**

**This fact sheet is to inform you of the site characterization planned for the former East 138th Street Works.**

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

Eric Soto  
Con Edison  
511 Theodore Fremd  
Rye, NY 10580  
Toll-free (877) 602-6633

**For site-related environmental questions, please contact:**

Randy Whitcher  
Project Manager  
NYSDEC  
625 Broadway  
Albany, NY 12233  
(866) 520-2334

**For site-related health questions, please contact:**

Chris Doroski  
NYSDOH  
Bureau of Environmental  
Exposure Investigations  
Flanigan Square  
547 River Street, Rm 300  
Troy, NY 12180  
(800) 458-1158,  
Ext. 2-7880

# Fact Sheet

August 2010

East 138<sup>th</sup> Street Works

Start of Site Characterization Study

## 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 fact sheet on activities planned for the former East 138<sup>th</sup> Street Works, a property that is the site of a historical manufactured gas plant (MGP). This site is currently comprised of commercial/industrial businesses, a bulk fuel terminal and parking lots.

## 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.

## Project Status and Schedule

Con Edison has prepared and NYSDEC and NYSDOH have approved a Site Characterization Study Work Plan to initiate the MGP investigation activities at the site to determine whether materials from the historical operations remain beneath the surface. The activities will include the collection of soil samples, installation of groundwater monitoring wells, and collection of groundwater samples. The work will take place on all or portion of the properties bound by E. 138<sup>th</sup> and E. 141<sup>st</sup> Streets and the New York, New Haven & Hartford Railroad tracks and East River, and the adjoining sidewalks.

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

**Office of The Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz, Jr.**, 851 Grand Concourse, Suite 301, Bronx, NY 10451; 718-590-3500, Hours: M-F 9am-5pm; **Mott Haven Branch, The New York Public Library**, 321 E. 140<sup>th</sup> Street, Bronx, NY 10454; 718-665-4878; Hours: Mon & Thurs 10am-6pm, Tues & Wed 10am-8pm Fri & Sat 10am-5pm

## Investigation Goal

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 MGP operations ended more than 50 years ago 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 contaminated groundwater through ingestion is not expected because New York City is served by a municipal water system.

During the site characterization study, extensive efforts will be made to protect the community from potential hazards. These efforts will include placing physical barriers to prevent access to work areas and monitoring for contaminants in the air. If any contamination is found that requires remediation, a remediation plan will be developed in cooperation with the NYSDEC and NYSDOH and made available for public review.

## 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 former East 138<sup>th</sup> Street Works were constructed between 1869 and 1879 and were operated by predecessor companies of Con Edison, or Con Edison from 1869 to 1968. Manufactured gas was produced at the plant until 1932 and was decommissioned in 1934/1935, when almost all of the MGP structures were removed.

The associated East 137th Street Holder Station continued operations as a distribution holder until 1961, when it was removed. In Spring 2010 a Site Characterization Study was also conducted at the Holder Station. Results from the study will be reviewed by NYSDEC and NYSDOH and will be made available to the public.

## Public Involvement

Public understanding and involvement are integral to 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). Information can also be found at the NYSDEC website at [www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/8430.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/8430.html). In addition, a Citizen Participation Plan has been approved by NYSDEC 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.